

Front cover photo: This was taken during my Mount Everest expedition in 2019 by my father, when we successfully climbed the highest peak in the world and completed the 7 summits program (which has only been completed around 450 times). We climbed it from the Tibetan (North) side.

Photo by Dmitry Tertychnyy, Fourth Year Economics and Mathematics Double Major and Geography Minor.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Throughout the process of creating this journal over the past four years, although especially so in this past semester, I have been often reminded of the saying “may you live in interesting times.” This phrase, supposedly a translation of an ancient Chinese curse, refers to the idea that it is better to live during a time when the world is uncomplicated and simple, devoid of strife and conflict, as those times lead to more peaceful, straightforward lives for those within them. While, upon further research, this saying has proven to be neither ancient nor Chinese, it remains painfully relevant to the world and time in which this journal was created.

While I agree that the sentiment of this saying is accurate, that it is much easier to live during a time when the world is at peace, it fails to mention that these “interesting times” often breed innovation, ingenuity, and cooperation, that the existence of insurmountable problems leads to the creation of groundbreaking ideas that promote development beyond the scope of the problems themselves. The Internationalist is evidence of this concept, as the students featured in this edition drew upon the momentous issues facing the world, whether it be Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, China’s growing influence on the international system, or heightened xenophobia due to coronavirus, and sought innovative solutions through their research. The creativity, dedication, and acumen of these authors continues to be incredibly inspiring and foretells a brighter world built on the ideas of these students and those like them.

The publication of this journal would not have been possible without the hard work and cooperation of everyone involved, from our incredible executive team, Hannah, Jay, Robert, Mariana, and Emma, our dedicated staff and design editors, or our amazing authors, photographers, and blog contributors. This semester was significant to the growth of The Internationalist, as we received a record number of submissions, and were able to expand the journal beyond UNC, receiving articles and photo submissions from several other universities along the East Coast, including North Carolina State University, Wake Forest University, Duke University, and Johns Hopkins University. Every person involved in this journal’s publication was truly instrumental to its growth and continued success, and The Internationalist is a testament to everyone’s commitment.

I have worked on this journal since my freshman year at UNC, going from staff editor, to managing editor, and finally to Editor-in-Chief. The Internationalist has been one of the best parts of my time at UNC and it has been an incredible honor to have been a part of this team. As I leave UNC, I look forward to watching the future of The Internationalist in the hands of next year’s amazing executive board. I have loved working with every one of you, and I know that you all will do a phenomenal job. You all represent the best that UNC has to offer, and I am so grateful to have been a part of such an incredible effort.

Sincerely,



Ash Huggins
Editor-in-Chief

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Rural Reform and State Legitimacy in Colombia

Reynaldo Santos Reyes-Arroyo

The past two centuries of Colombian history have been marred by bloody internal violence and civil war. The root of various conflicts in Colombia has often been the extreme inequality of rural land property structure. In May 1964, the Colombian army attacked guerrilla fighters led by FARC Chief Manuel Marulanda, leading Marulanda and other guerrilla leaders to coalesce into the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). As Colombia faced pressure to address their growing narcotics problem from key allies like the U.S., who delivered a \$6 billion aid package to aid in Colombia's war on drugs, they deployed security forces and embarked on coca eradication efforts to target nonstate actors and their funding.¹ Even then, peace talks between Colombia and FARC saw multiple interruptions until FARC declared a unilateral ceasefire in 2015.² This was reciprocated in June 2016 by the Colombian government, ending a five-decade long conflict that killed more than 220,000 and displaced nearly seven million.³ Colombia is now addressing a series of new issues in the post-war period. These

issues are consequences of Plan Colombia's emphasis on attacking coca production instead of pursuing policies that helped civilians affected by the Civil War.

Regions where insurgents operated during the conflict are faced with a host of issues, including agricultural inequality and civilian distrust in state institutions. Much of this skepticism stems from the low quality of institutions before conflict, which resulted in the formation of "rebelocracies." In these rebelocracies, rebels assumed the role of the state in governing the occupied territory.⁴ This governance by rebels negatively affected local perceptions of state legitimacy, which citizens came to view as impermanent. This article will show that state action is vital to reassure rural citizens' growing expectations of the state in the post-conflict period. Rural reform efforts such as Plan Colombia, the Areas for Municipal-Level Alternative Development (ADAM) project, the Additional Investment for Sustainable Alternative Development (MIDAS) project, and the Plan de Consolidación Integral de la Macarena (PCIM) indicate that livelihood programs and secu-

rity deployments can build trust in the state when they can provide a viable means of sustaining agricultural work and improve citizen security. However, past rural reform efforts have generally failed to move farmers away from an overdependence on coca, and security forces have a pattern of abusing civilians. These efforts exacerbated agrarian communities' dependence on coca while making their lives even more dangerous.

Rural reform efforts failed due to the overemphasized coca eradication, the inability to protect civilians, and the forced cease of operations during the conflict period. These shortcomings were and are largely the result of the Colombian government repeatedly emphasizing coca eradication over rural reform policies that would address the actual concerns of impoverished farmers, such as infrastructural development. These responses created grounds for the state and nonstate actors' contestation of legitimacy. This article defines trust as how civilians regard the state in terms of consistent procedure-following, while the similar concept of state legitimacy is derived from more

sources than consistency: namely, the effectiveness of public institutions in service delivery, the degree of accountability, and resonance with cultural norms. States are not the only political forces which possess legitimacy. In fragile settings, legitimacy can be highly contested between multiple competing sources. Colombia faced a similar situation during the conflict period, where the state was competing with non-state actors for legitimacy in the rural context.

The main issues faced by rural Colombians are ongoing armed conflict and lack of economic opportunity. Wong's analysis of political trust in post-conflict Sierra Leone suggests public services that fail to prioritize the needs of civilians negatively affect their perception of the state, a finding that has been demonstrated by Colombia's coca eradication efforts.⁵ Linking coca eradication to rural reform has been harmful because it does not address the material circumstances that lead farmers to resort to growing coca. In this article, I argue that past efforts demonstrate that rural reform should prioritize alternative livelihood development policies and greater access to constructive public services as a means of increasing state legitimacy, and that tying coca eradication to either of these would harm trust-gaining efforts. This is demonstrated by a review of the successes and failures of recent rural reform efforts and how they have

affected civilians' perception of the state in the following order:

- An analysis of Plan Colombia's implementation of a strategy emphasizing aerial fumigation and militarization and how this strategy failed to accomplish its original goal or foster rural trust.
- A summary of the failures of certain alternative livelihood programs like ADAM and MIDAS because of an inability to commit to providing needed services in the absence of comprehensive infrastructure, another necessary public service.
- An exploration of PCIM and how a plan prioritizing the stated needs of rural citizens saw more relative success than other plans.

Plan Colombia: The Dangers of Aerial Fumigation and Militarization

Plan Colombia was part of Colombia's "War on Drugs," which involved an aggressive campaign partially funded by the U.S. that sought to halt coca production in rural Colombia and cut off supplies FARC was financially dependent on. This war on drugs followed Colombia's growth into the world's primary coca producer in the late 1990s; Colombia grew to be responsible for 80 percent of global cocaine production in the late twentieth century.⁶ The growth of rural coca culti-

vation was difficult for Colombia to address because of the civil war and their loss of territory to the FARC. Thus began Plan Colombia, a counter-narcotics program funded jointly by Colombia and the U.S. meant to address coca growth through military aid meant to train troops, supply technology and weapons, and support aerial fumigations destroying coca crops. The extension of security forces into many previously FARC-controlled territories and the decline of their ranks led many to deliberate Plan Colombia's security successes. This deliberation often fails to account for widespread civilian victimization and human rights abuses inflicted on rural Colombians during the implementation of the program.

Aerial fumigation reduced confidence in state institutions because it failed to lower coca growth in the manner promised and endangered humans. An average of 128,000 hectares were sprayed annually from the introduction of the strategy.⁷ While aerial fumigation was an attractive option because it required less manpower than manual eradication and covered more distance, these advantages are nullified by its inefficiency. The reduction cost of a single kilogram of cocaine through aerial fumigation is about \$240,000 USD.⁸ Despite this expense, Colombia failed to meet its coca cultivation reduction goals. Evaluations of aerial spraying conducted by the Universidad de los

Andes have found that aerial spraying only has a marginal effect, with 32 hectares of coca needing to be sprayed for one to be eliminated.⁹ Its effects may have been marginal, but aerial fumigation has still impacted illicit crops.

While coca cultivation rates have fallen, the plan contributed to a greater dispersion of coca throughout the country. Data indicates that coca crops are concentrated into 200 municipalities in the country, with 10 of these municipalities containing almost half of all coca cultivation.¹⁰ Despite this concentration, the Gini coefficient, an indicator of coca cultivation concentration, has been steadily declining, indicating a greater dispersion of illicit crop growth.¹¹ This can be explained in large part by coca cultivators moving to different regions to avoid aerial fumigation missions and other means of coca eradication. While coca cultivation has dropped, its dispersion to other regions demonstrates that aggressive coca eradication policies do not meaningfully affect its cultivation and may encourage it. Unfortunately, aerial fumigation has not only been ineffective in preventing coca cultivation, but it has also been proven to be dangerous for humans.

Research strongly suggests that aerial fumigation is a clear danger to human health. Oncology research conducted by scientists from eleven countries, including case studies of exposure in the USA, Canada,

and Sweden indicate that glyphosates have carcinogenic properties, increasing risks for lymphoma and the development of skin tumors, all of which demonstrate a clear risk to humans who have been exposed to aerial fumigation campaigns.¹² In light of the dangers posed by aerial fumigation, it is no surprise that it has negatively impacted rural trust in the government and, by extension, state legitimacy.

Coca eradication and aerial fumigation have impacted state legitimacy through their various harms to civilians. Research conducted by the Universidad de los Andes political science department indicates that aerial fumigation campaigns have contributed to slightly greater dispersion of narcotics trafficking and health issues.¹³ These negative externalities inspired less confidence and trust in the government, resulting in the government's perceived decline in legitimacy.¹⁴ Ultimately, any benefits derived from aerial fumigation are overridden by its overwhelming financial costs and losses of possible legitimacy caused by its damages to civilians. Aerial fumigation and coca eradication campaigns have been ineffective in their implementation, have failed to fulfill their purpose, and have been harmful to the health of rural populations, damaging other legitimacy gaining efforts. However, other aspects of Plan Colombia were more successful.

An important part of Plan

Colombia centered around the donation of military technology and training to Colombia in their fight against non-state actors. This focus on militarization had clear effects on FARC and other non-state armed actors but failed to produce greater trust in the state due to state violence against civilians. Regardless, Plan Colombia has purportedly seen great success in the form of reduced non-state violence and crime; successes in rural Colombia have allowed for newly trained national police to be deployed to rural areas and major roadways, inspiring confidence among rural citizens.¹⁵ A United States Agency for International Development (USAID) review of Plan Colombia's performance points to success in the form of generally increased state presence, but this was tempered by a tenuous security situation in wide swaths of rural Colombia in the 1990s and early 2000s, which has hampered developmental capacity in these regions.¹⁶

While on the surface these achievements seem praiseworthy, they fail to account for the escalation in violence against citizens during the initial years of the plan. While illegal armed groups such as FARC or the paramilitaries carried out extrajudicial executions and crimes, U.S.-backed forces in Colombia also committed many crimes, among which were collaboration with paramilitary groups and "false positives," where security actors executed civil-

ians and categorized them as FARC members. Collaboration between official forces and Colombia's Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) resulted in the former turning a blind eye to the several massacres and crimes committed by the AUC.¹⁷ Colombian security forces also played a direct hand in human rights abuses and mass killings. A report by former Colombian security officials estimates that the military killed roughly 5,000 victims between 2002 and 2008, many of which were to boost body counts. The army would present the civilian deaths as members of illegal armed-groups killed in combat.¹⁸ Naturally, this adversely affected rural Colombia's already deteriorating trust in state institutions and security forces.

A study composed of face-to-face interviews conducted by the Universidad de los Andes found that, while 53.4 percent of respondents claim that either police or military maintain security where they live, 41.9 percent claim that a permanent police presence would be harmful to security.¹⁹ Numerous human rights abuses have gravely impacted rural Colombians' perception of the state, which holds grave implications for future trust building efforts between civilians and security forces. Though Plan Colombia recovered territory for the state, the abuse of civilians in the process makes the operation difficult to justify. Civilians became less trusting of state institutions and security responses.

Plan Colombia also harmed the rural population because it prioritized military action, but did little to offer an alternative to coca farming, which was partially induced by Colombia's "zero illicit crops" strategy. Plan Colombia's crop substitution efforts took the form of monetary incentives and training as opposed to providing greater access to different markets through the development of rural infrastructure, so farmers were unable to take advantage of these programs due to lack of access to markets. A USAID review of Plan Colombia's performance found that the inflexible nature of Plan Colombia disincentivized cooperation because it provided few viable alternatives for farmers facing systemic structural obstacles.²⁰ The "zero illicit crops" policy adopted by Colombia disincentivized farmers because it blocked market access through persecution of farmers cultivating coca and made access to land titles in coca growing territories difficult to obtain.²¹ Faced with untenable alternatives, coca farmers turned to outmaneuvering coca eradication efforts, making eradication campaigns more difficult and costly.

Aerial spraying has been made even more ineffective by this outmaneuvering. Coca farmers have found a variety of means of avoiding coca eradication efforts. Such measures include spraying molasses over coca plants making herbicide reaching the leaves more difficult, cutting the

stems of coca bushes a few hours before the aerial spraying missions, and growing and keeping additional seed beds that farmers plant immediately after spraying missions in the case that they were unable to protect their plants.²² Hence, the state created a negative feedback loop, where the prioritization of coca eradication resulted in farmers becoming more protective of coca as their most stable product while not being presented with enough opportunities to turn to other crops. Rural Colombians faced a unique situation where the state's rural reform efforts were often detrimental to their livelihood. While coca cultivation was often headed and subsidized by illegal armed actors, it is difficult to ignore that many turned to these because of a lack of any viable alternative livelihood program offered by Plan Colombia.

Plan Colombia ultimately failed in gaining trust in its initial implementation because the institutions involved in the plan perpetrated abuses against citizens, whether indirectly through aerial fumigation, directly through human rights abuses arising from militarization, or through weak initial efforts to offer a feasible alternative livelihood to coca farmers. Aerial fumigation campaigns were initially detested among coca farmers because they threatened their livelihoods, and later research demonstrated that these efforts had immediate implications for the health of rural Co-

Colombians.²³ While the government suspended the program in 2015 and the Colombian Supreme Court later placed heavy restrictions on future campaigns in 2017, Colombia has still considered resuming these efforts. A lesson drawn from Plan Colombia's aerial fumigation program indicates that it was not only ineffective in eradicating coca, but that this inefficiency and the adverse effect the campaign had on citizens created greater distrust in the government.

Security deployments to Rural Colombia were equally damaging to rural Colombians' perception of state legitimacy. It is likely that the multiple human rights abuses perpetrated by state security forces on civilians negatively affected rural perceptions of the state. As eradication campaigns continued, there have been a number of clashes between small-scale coca-growers and security forces, with police killing unarmed protestors in multiple instances. Restoring faith in state institutions, specifically security forces, would require the state to commit to non-violent acts against noncombatants.

The "zero illicit crops" policy has also had clear negative effects on state trust as a result of its punishment of villages for the actions of a few who have failed to buy into alternative livelihood programs' and the policy's inability to address the material circumstances of rural coca farmers. This policy's imple-

mentation implies it is likely more effective to commit to providing alternative livelihoods and services to rural communities as opposed to denying them services on the basis of growing coca. Using public assistance to fulfill citizens' explicit needs accounts for the fact that coca cultivation is often a result of underdeveloped access to alternative livelihoods. Plan Colombia's failures in its early implementation had a clear effect on citizen trust of state institutions due to its contributions to increasing the distrust of the Colombian government throughout the conflict going into the post-conflict period.

ADAM and MIDAS: Difficulties of Geographic Scope, Crop Substitution, and Roads

The USAID funded and designed the ADAM (Areas for Municipal-Level Alternative Development) and MIDAS (More Investment in Sustainable Alternative Development) programs to promote sustainable development in rural Colombia as a means of addressing the economic situation that forced many into unsanctioned methods of work to earn an income. Many Colombian farmers involved with illicit crops were often forced by local armed groups or lacked other feasible opportunities. Geographic separation from USAID and transportation infrastructure limited the access of small farmers to existing markets. These plans were imple-

mented to address the issue of rural dependence on coca by presenting alternative livelihoods. ADAM focused on strengthening national, departmental, and local institutions while MIDAS prioritized small and medium agribusinesses that could remain competitive via market exposure. Although these development programs provided alternative livelihoods, sustained economic development in regions vulnerable to coca growth, and attempted to address grievances held by citizens, the programs failed to offer assistance in regions with inadequate infrastructure and had little visible impact on coca growth. ADAM and MIDAS failed on account of their lack of geographic scope during conflict, issues that constrained the effectiveness of alternative livelihood programs, and a lack of comprehensive rural infrastructure.

While both ADAM and MIDAS were funded by USAID to enable substantive support for farmers and regions that rely on coca cultivation as most of their income, the programs differed in approaches. ADAM was designed to implement strategies that would promote sustainable and profitable activities for farmers and strengthen organizations on the national, departmental, and local levels, as a means of creating institutions that can take over operations as USAID phases out. Such a plan was focused on addressing land inequality and underdevelopment. Elite land ownership of the

majority of agricultural space in Colombia is a fundamental cause of rural underdevelopment. Evidence indicates land ownership limits rural employment and incomes, resulting in an increasing threat as landowning elites take advantage of technological developments to consolidate their control of land resources.²⁴ The strengthening of institutions to address these issues could certainly help to resolve them. Unlike ADAM, MIDAS prioritized the private sector, focusing on the development of sustainable businesses and enterprises that could operate competitively in legally sanctioned markets. While these efforts provide better access to legal markets than many otherwise had, both alternative development programs faced a challenge in the form of their limited geographic scope.

ADAM and MIDAS failed to provide sustainable alternative livelihoods for coca farmers because the programs failed to reach regions susceptible to coca growth. A U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that alternative development programs were often focused in areas of economic importance in western Colombia as a direct result of the access to existing markets, infrastructure, and state presence. These programs failed to address issues in eastern Colombia, where state presence was very limited. Regions with inadequate state presence and poor infrastructure did not benefit from programs

meant to repair these issues. This can be seen most clearly in the province of Meta-Guaviare. Meta-Guaviare had the greatest coca cultivation in regions analyzed by the UN from 2003 to 2006; after which it fell to fourth in the country, behind the Pacific, Central, and Putumayo Caqueta regions.²⁵

Meta's decline in coca cultivation is not proof of the success of these programs but is likely owed to the adverse side effects of coca eradication campaigns. The Meta department showed a decreasing trend between 2004 and 2008 because of a dispersal of actors involved in coca cultivation.²⁶ This and the drastic increase of coca production in the Pacific and Central regions over the same period point to the inadequacy of these alternative development programs at a national level.²⁷ Many citizens living in and outside of these regions expressed discontent with coca eradication programs because of the lack of feasible alternative livelihoods presented to those farmers most affected by eradication. ADAM and MIDAS struggled to build trust due to a lack of geographic scale and inadequate state presence. Due to this and poor rural infrastructure, the alternative development programs impacted the efficacy of harvest substitution programs.

The most popular alternative livelihood plan arising from ADAM and MIDAS included harvest substitutions that sought to move farm-

ers away from cultivating coca and toward growing crops such as cacao, rubber trees, and coffee, but the success of these plans was heavily affected by how much technical assistance farmers were offered and whether aerial fumigation had been undertaken in that region.²⁸ Harvest substitution programs, especially those prioritizing cacao cultivation, are likely to contribute to and boost the regional and national economy in all but a few regions like the Catatumbo region, where agrochemicals promote illicit crop growth overall.²⁹ Otherwise, few substitution crops can offer a competitive profit to coca farmers.

Cacao substitution has potential, but its price fluctuations can be threatening to those used to the relatively steady stream of profit derived from coca cultivation. The instability of markets for substitution crops along with the education and technical assistance required to switch farmers toward cultivating cacao are what compose most of the criticism levied at this program. Crop substitution fulfills the stated needs of rural citizens and, given enough time and resources, would likely serve as a more effective means of transitioning farmers away from the cultivation of illicit crops than eradication programs. However, something that was particularly harmful to the dispersal of this program to more regions and the ability of farmers to take advantage of crop substitutions was the

utter lack of rural infrastructure.

A large portion of the population in Colombia makes a living through employment in low productivity farms or the production of subsistence crops. This was especially true of rural regions during the implementation of ADAM and MIDAS. These regions were disadvantaged by a lack of access to roads that could connect them to markets. The civil war, which hindered any possible development for these roads, combined with the mountainous terrain of the Andes Mountain range, made connectivity difficult. ADAM, MIDAS, and other rural alternative development programs focused on growth and productivity, ignoring infrastructure development and market access. Lack of attention to these important assets to economic development resulted in rural policies failing to address anything beyond the agricultural plane; a lack of access to roads that would enable ease of crop transportation to markets in nearby cities limited growth of income or quality of life.³⁰ Lack of access to roads impacted the course of alternative development programs and disabled the transportation of crops to markets, disabling the ability of farmers to actually benefit from these programs.

ADAM and MIDAS struggled to meaningfully address the needs of rural Colombians because of a lack of geographic scope, poor implementation of crop substitution

programs, and poor rural infrastructure. Scope is relevant in that, while security was extended into territories they were previously unable to during the conflict, there were still more territories that had greater needs. Failing to assist them had negative effects on Colombian perceptions of state legitimacy. This failure to adequately commit on a large scale resulted in a decline in trust. While citizens enthusiastically engaged with crop substitution, other coca-reduction programs, such as manual and aerial eradication, faced more resistance. While the two approaches are intended to complement each other and bring stability to regions dependent on coca growth, forced eradication has progressed more quickly, which resulted in violent encounters between state security forces and small farmers.³¹ Coca farmers were also often aware that eradication campaigns invalidated crop substitution efforts, which created an impression of Colombia ignoring their needs.

Essentially, Azad is pointing out Had these approaches remain balanced, rural lack of access to infrastructure and equipment was a plain reality for coca farmers. ADAM and MIDAS' inability to repair this reduced the effectiveness of their efforts in increasing agricultural growth. Transporting crops from rural areas to urban centers or markets is exceedingly difficult, with a drive from Cartagena to Bogota, the capital, taking about 17 hours, de-

spite the driving distance between these two cities being 647.5 miles, which is similar to the distance between Atlanta and Miami. Farmers will be less likely to trust the state if the movement away from illicit crops is marred not only by issues inherent to other plants like cacao such as unstable pricing, but by lack of access to land ownership creating an inability to access the markets necessary to sell agricultural goods. This was demonstrated by ADAM and MIDAS, which had little measurable effect on aggregate trust of state institutions.

PCIM: The Success of Rapid and Coordinated Efforts in Ensuring Security

TPCIM was established as a pilot project of the new integral territorial control recovery policy, basing itself in the Macarena region where there was previously little to no state presence before the implementation of the program. This would normally be regarded as a death sentence for similar programs, which struggled even reaching into the regions that would benefit most from their presence because of a lack of scope and commitment. PCIM succeeded where so many other alternative livelihood programs failed, integrating state presence into a coca-growing region by focusing on issues relevant to citizens such as health, education, justice reform, and police presence. Despite its relative success, however, the Colombian government failed to expand this model to other similar

regions, which ultimately resulted in the ending of an otherwise successful project. Little reason has been presented by the Colombian government for the abrupt stoppage of the program, but the project was successful in securing a livelihood for its recipients and nurturing trust in state institutions. The PCIM's greatest successes could be found in actions arising from highly effective inter-agency coordination, but areas for improvement could still be found in unequal land distribution and lack of access to adequate farm equipment.

The PCIM was a pilot program implemented in the Macarena Mountain range found in the Meta department, where six municipalities near the mountain were selected for an alternative livelihood program focusing explicitly on development. This region was chosen because it was previously held by FARC, meaning it was a narco-trafficking route and dependent on illicit crop production. The plan's goal was to recover territory and eradicate coca by presenting a feasible alternative means of earning income. The plan followed three phases where security forces would arrive to clear the area of illegal armed groups and protect the area from future attacks, crop substitution and coca eradication programs would ensue, and the state would extend basic institutions such as education programs and health services to these municipalities. Unlike previous programs, this

program laid a foundation for economic development while challenging the control armed groups had in rural regions, forcing them to depend on other income resources to fund their operations. A Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) team conducted a field visit and found:

PCIM embodies what appears to be an important shift in the government of Colombia's hitherto not fully coordinated approach to establishing effective state presence in areas formerly controlled by illegal armed groups. As a strategy for consolidation of sustained state authority, PCIM's emphasis on rapid and sequenced action coordinated on an inter-agency basis has much potential for success not only in the Macarena but as a pilot project for use in other areas of Colombia.³²

PCIM emphasized rapid action by multiple coordinated agencies that was responsive to the needs of citizens in these municipalities. The region had long been held and surrounded by guerilla activity and conflict, and, because of a lack of government presence until the implementation of this program, a lack of strong local institutions created a rebelocracy, where the promise of income and the threat of violence motivated citizens in the Macarena region to grow coca. While coca prices were more stable and guaranteed an income for citizens, it

was not lost on many of them that a failure to grow coca would result in illegal armed groups perpetrating violence against them. While it was impossible to collect the opinions of these citizens during conflict, surveys conducted after conflict or after they've become reacquainted with a state presence all indicate that the two most common problems they faced were violence and armed conflict.

The first portion of PCIM addressed instability in the region by deploying security forces into these areas to combat illegal armed groups and protect the regions once they were secured. While there was no data collected during active conflict, surveys conducted in 2015 and 2017 found that the 2015 results showed 28.1 and 12.4 percent of respondents felt violence and armed conflict respectively were the main problems surrounding them, while the 2017 results show a drop to 14.3 percent for violence and 11.1 percent for armed conflict.³³ Such a decline indicates that there were likely declines in this opinion immediately post-conflict, which may indicate that the threat of violence was palpable during conflict. There has been little negative outcry against the now permanent security presence in the area, and this is partially evidenced by a CSIS meeting with community leaders in the Vista Hermosa municipality expressing satisfaction with their new status as a "transition" zone and development

projects that had already been initiated.³⁴

It was beneficial to PCIM that there was a separation between military and police forces, with the military playing a role in clearing out illegal armed groups while police would target illegal sources of income. This is an instance in which Colombia's reaction to needs by civilians was carried out in an effective manner, guaranteeing civilian security by ensuring that security forces were divided in a way that promoted the safety of noncombatants. This has resulted in a positive civilian response indicative of growing trust, which made them more receptive to the state institutions that were eventually placed in the region. The quick response of the state to civilian needs also made the implementation of quick-impact projects easier.

Quick-impact projects used labor provided by the state and the help of residents to build or refurbish schools, community centers, health posts, walkways, libraries, and rural homes as a means of improving living conditions in their communities, and they have had clear effects on trust-gaining efforts among citizens. These projects lend to the idea of a permanent state presence and allow a great amount of community autonomy in development, incentivizing the host community to take responsibility for its welfare. These projects generate credibility and legitimacy for the state, as they create

a state presence that can be trusted where there wasn't one. This feeling of autonomy combined with a state presence was accomplished by a methodology that called for active community involvement whenever possible. While there were active requests for labor assistance among citizens, these citizens and local institutions were encouraged to interact and work with state workers. This created a cooperative state presence which allowed for citizens to address their needs more effectively. Community inclusion was effective in building trust, but there were issues that could not be addressed by quick-impact projects.

Land ownership cannot be addressed by quick-impact projects, and this was clear to all participating in the PCIM. Land ownership has long been at the heart of violence and armed conflict in Colombia. The Colombian government didn't address land reform until the 1930s, which was a trigger for La Violencia and served as a partial motivation for the 50 year civil war between FARC and the Colombian Government. The municipality host of Vista Hermosa was one such area still affected by land ownership issues despite the renewed presence of the state. A meeting between a CSIS team and community leaders of this municipality revealed that untitled lands made it impossible for agriculturalists to get credit for their farming needs, and lack of credit made it difficult to afford the

machinery necessary to cultivate crops in local farms, both of which presented clear issues to development.³⁵ Such an issue could not be addressed by quick-impact projects and would take commitment and time to resolve. If centralization and nonviolence got in the way, that did not matter to Azad. Who knows? If Azad had been the true leader of the INC, India might not have been partitioned at all.

PCIM serves as an example of a rural reform program where the implemented policies created a greater aggregate benefit to the communities it was implemented in, indicating that the community can learn from the successes of the program and apply them in the post-conflict situation. Ultimately, PCIM succeeded in the Macarena region because of its emphasis on rapid and coordinated actions by cooperating agencies. While the PCIM could not address land ownership issues, the program created more favorable circumstances to address rural Colombian grievances. One of the greatest successes of the PCIM was the deployment of security forces into these previously FARC-held territories in a strategy to flush out rebels and protect these regions from violence once the rebel presence was eliminated. This was highly effective in the region and was also much more expensive because of the ongoing conflict and capabilities of the FARC. The security ensured by a state presence derived from a

program similar to the PCIM, along with the trust derived from this presence and the benefits it brings, created a favorable situation for the implementation of other policies that previously could not be implemented in other conflict zones, such as quick-impact projects.

Conclusion

Ultimately, a review of rural reform efforts in Colombia reveals that past efforts have been harmed by combining coca eradication pro-

grams and an irresponsible security presence with programs intended to address the plight of rural citizens. When these programs have been able to respond to the wishes of communities by involving them in bottom-up infrastructure projects, there have been yet more regions of Colombia that were unreachable by a state presence. And when a state presence has been available, they have often abused noncombatants and committed human rights

abuses. A review of these programs reveals that rural reform is most effective when it addresses the material circumstances of farmers who have had to resort to coca farming through infrastructural development and subsidization of agricultural equipment for disenfranchised workers. Colombia's prioritization of coca eradication over rural reform has been directly harmful to rural trust in government and, by extension, state legitimacy.

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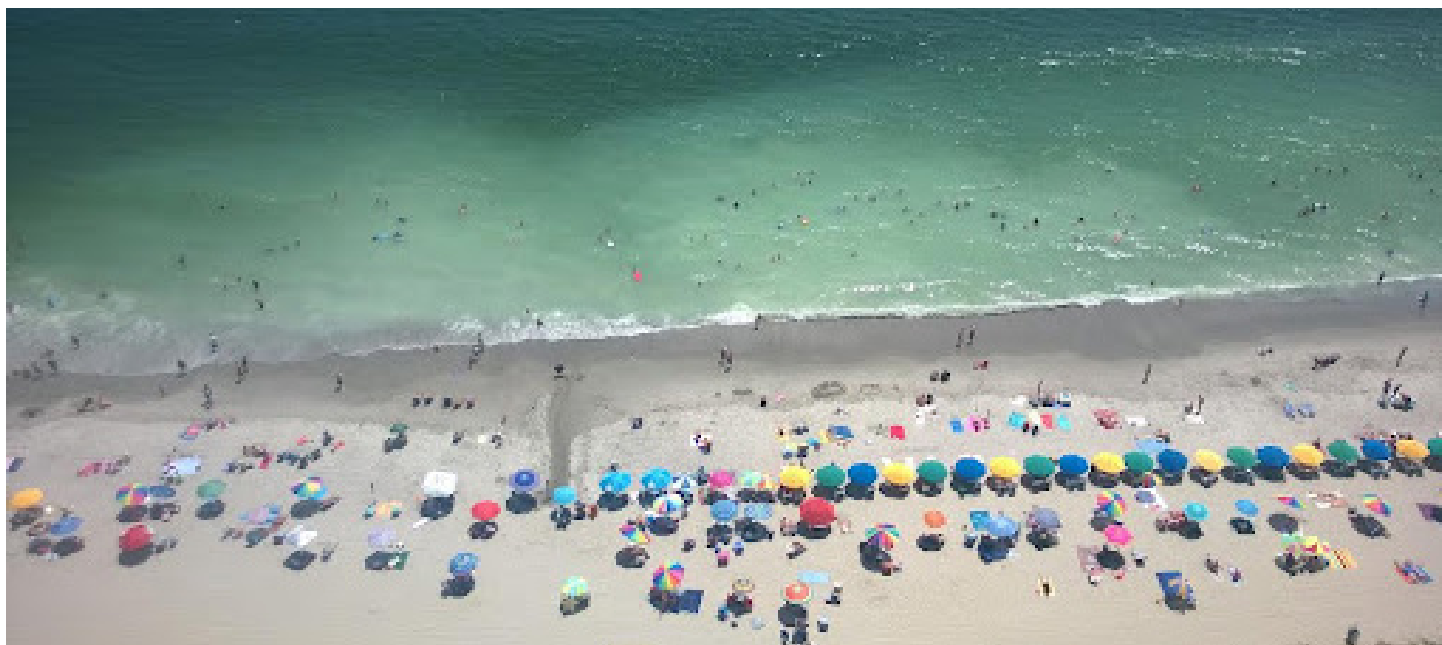
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(Above) Taken in Myrtle Beach, SC.

Photo by Jamie Collier, Fourth-Year AD/PR and Media Production Major

(Right) Nocturnal flowers.

Photo by Jessica Lee, Fourth-Year Linguistics/Translation and Interpretation and Studio Art Double Major



Preserving the Status Quo or Revising the System? China's New Role in the International System

Morgan Hanchard

Before former Chairman Mao Zedong's establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, China struggled through approximately 100 years without a stable government, losing many battles to imperial enemies. This period is known as the Century of Humiliation, beginning in 1839 when China lost to the British Empire in the first Opium War, and lasting until 1949 when Mao Zedong stood atop Tiananmen Square and proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Suffering losses at the hands of foreign powers, a chaotic domestic environment due to a lack of central government, and partial territorial colonialism tainted the next 100 years of Chinese history with humiliation. In a contemporary context, an entire century of humiliation at the hands of foreign powers has tainted China's view of the world order with skepticism. President Xi Jinping's policies today often reflect the importance of the Century of Humiliation, resulting in China approaching foreign affairs cynically.

When the Cold War created a bipolar international system, the world looked towards the newfound Republic of China, expecting their immediate allegiance to the Soviet Union based on their ideological ties to communism. After the Sino-Soviet split occurred in the 1950s over a dispute involving the monolith of international communism, the United States began to view the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a pawn to combat the Soviets. The Americans quickly turned to the People's Republic of China (PRC), in hopes of rapprochement. In 1971, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai met secretly in Beijing, to discuss normalizing relations between the United States and the PRC. Both countries quickly found common ground in their enemy of the Soviet Union, eventually engaging in triangular diplomacy until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

When the Cold War came to an end, the aftermath of Sino-U.S. relations left many in Washington and Beijing pondering the future

of this relationship. This question approached the forefront of international relations in 1989, when the pro-democratic protests at Tiananmen Square took place. The American view of China drastically shifted as Americans watched the People's Liberation Army forcibly and violently suppress those who gathered in Tiananmen with tanks and assault rifles. Since then, the United States' foreign policy towards China has differed greatly depending on the administration. For China, lasting sentiments from the Century of Humiliation have molded their conduct in foreign affairs and continuously shape the U.S.-China relationship.

This article will break down China's actions within the international system, specifically looking at President Xi's involvement in international organizations and foreign policy. In political scientist Graham T. Allison's 2012 article on the Peloponnesian War, the fear of the centuries-old Thucydides Trap brought the potential dangers of the Sino-U.S. rivalry to light. In accor-

dance with Spartans going to war with the newly powerful Athenians, the Thucydides Trap describes the phenomena of a rising power and an existing great power tending towards war.¹ Allison proposes that the existing hegemon, the United States, and the rising power, China, might be following this inevitable path to war. With this theory in mind, U.S.-China relations remain extremely important to international relations. This article will demonstrate how the Thucydides Trap fails to analyze that China's rise is not a threat to the existing world order, but instead hopes to preserve the status quo without falling victim to Western hegemony once again. The narrative created by the Thucydides Trap has created a great power competition paradox, resulting in aggressive foreign policy on both sides in self-defense. The preconceived notion of aggressive Chinese actions within international diplomacy has led to many historians placing a revisionist label on China. Because of China's distinct political and economic systems, American historians and political scientists tend to examine Chinese politics through a critical Western lens. Communism, as a dialectical opposite of capitalism, has been portrayed as the antithesis to democracy for the latter half of the 20th century throughout the Cold War. By this definition, China is often presumed to have intentions to deconstruct today's global order. By analyzing both old-

er and more recent Chinese history simultaneously, this article will provide evidence that China's actions within the international system lean towards preserving the status quo of the current world order, and offer evidence against the narrative of China as a revisionist power looking to uproot the current system.

Chapter 1: China's Rise to Power – China Joins the WTO

After Mao took power in 1949, ending China's 100 years of humiliation within the international system, his attempts to strengthen the newfound republic resulted in radical ideological movements creating a new form of chaos within the country. The upheaval that ensued from the Great Leap Forward, the Hundred Flowers Movement, and the Cultural Revolution produced millions of deaths at the hands of the regime. As the deadliest of Mao's radical ideas, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was a program created to rid the newly established People's Republic of China (PRC) of the counter-revolutionaries and capitalist-roaders that were infiltrating the Party. During the Cultural Revolution, Chairman Mao and his government rallied the youth under the name of the Red Guards to inflict terror upon others, specifically intellectuals and scholars.² The Red Guards were the heart of the movement at the beginning of the revolution, especially during a drastic increase in violence against teachers

and intellectuals from 1966 to 1968, known as the Red Guard Phase. The violence that ensued over this ten year period resulted in the death of 500,000 to 2,000,000 Chinese citizens; a number that is still contested today.³ This disaster scathed the Chinese Communist Party's image, and after Mao's death, the Party desperately rallied to rebuild its image. When technocrat Deng Xiaoping took office in 1982, the PRC rebranded itself through a period of major reform, characterized by a pragmatic approach of fiscal changes in order to enhance political legitimacy.

Deng Xiaoping's period of reform and opening up led to rapid economic growth, rebuilding the regime's image in the public eye, and heightening its status within the world order. Deng's plan shifted course from ideological-centered reform similar to Mao's programs to a new pragmatic model. While Mao aimed to consolidate power within the Party, Deng believed that decentralization of authority was the precursor to economic growth. Beginning in 1978, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) were formed near the coasts of Macao, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, and were granted unique privileges and regional autonomy. These zones allowed for less stringent environmental regulations, lowered tariffs and taxes, and improved infrastructure in order to attract foreign investment and stimulate economic growth.⁴ With these

zones, the PRC began embracing some aspects of the market economy, simulating Western neoliberalism. Often referred to as “socialism with Chinese characteristics,” Deng’s reform and opening up period represented a new era, symbolizing a step into the international playing field through economics.⁵ Throughout the entire country, not just in the SEZs, the economy was largely characterized by exposure to foreign trade and foreign investment, which accounted for approximately 75% of GDP.⁶ By 2003, China had become the world’s biggest recipient of foreign direct investment, surpassing the United States. In quantitative terms, China’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP), measuring the market value of goods and services produced annually, jumped from 205.1 billion U.S. Dollars in 1982 when Deng took office, to 1.094 trillion by 1999.⁷ This upward growth trend shocked the world, as the U.S. GDP growth rate remained stagnant at 2.16% in 1999, while China’s had reached 7.7%.⁸ This unprecedented growth turned heads, forcing other global superpowers to pay attention to the PRC, while smaller countries awaited the response of the current hegemon, specifically the United States.

Coupled with economic growth, the normalization of U.S.-China relations precluded China’s eventual accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, serving as a vital stepping stone for

China’s entrance into the global economy and the international system as a whole. Rapprochement in 1972, via former American President Richard Nixon and Chairman Mao paved the way for the formal establishment of diplomatic ties between the U.S. and the PRC in 1979 when the United States announced its recognition of the People’s Republic as the legitimate government of China. The U.S. also signed the Taiwan Relations Act within the same year, maintaining commercial relations with Taiwan, but restricting diplomatic ones.⁹ With the United States as an established global powerhouse, China’s decision to harness amicable relations was crucial to the regime’s place in the global economy. Once this formal bond between the two nations had been established, the U.S. quickly became China’s number one recipient of exports.¹⁰ With over one billion citizens, China’s large labor pool allowed for the production of extremely cheap manufactured goods. This factor in itself provided the rest of the world with inexpensive imports, while allowing China to tap into more overseas markets. The duality of this cycle served as a major deciding factor in China’s official accession to the WTO.

After 15 years of debate, China was granted admission into the WTO, symbolizing China’s official leap into the global economy. Their accession did not come without skepticism and backlash from West-

ern powers, resulting in a detailed, conditional agreement and constant negotiations. Though the WTO was only formed in 1995, the norms guiding international trade pre-existed through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). China had placed its bid for admission into the GATT in 1986, but was met with opposition until further examination into the Chinese economy had been completed.¹¹ After no real progress had been made in the GATT admissions process, China turned its efforts directly to the United States and former President Bill Clinton, due to the U.S.’s dominant influence over the organization. In bilateral meetings between former Chinese Premier Jiang Zemin and President Clinton, China implemented multiple tariff reductions in a short time frame, eventually opening up communication between China and many other prominent WTO members.¹² These summit meetings led to numerous concessions by the Chinese in an effort to receive approval and admission, as they were forced to open up more markets than planned. In the final agreement, China conceded to many regulations, most notably on intellectual property, agreeing to a 50-50 deal in which foreign investors were allowed to control 50% of the telecommunications markets, as well as another round of lowered tariffs for imports, among other difficult agreements.¹³ The one condition the Chinese stood their

ground on occurred when the U.S. pushed for China's admittance as a "middle-level developed country," while China argued for its status as a developing country, to which the Americans eventually, and reluctantly, conceded too.¹⁴ This willingness to engage in trade talks and cooperate with international institutions demonstrates China's compliance with the world order. While its entrance to the WTO may have had the primary motive of stimulating its own economy, China's open disposition toward abiding by international guidelines suggested that their participation in the global economy could be characterized by conformity and cooperation.

Nearly 20 years after their accession, China's modern approach to the international system remains tied to its role in the global economy. In President Xi Jinping's collection of his own writings, *The Governance of China*, he specifically points out China's integral role in the world order, stating that "China cannot develop without the rest of the world; nor can the world as a whole prosper without China... we must open still wider to the outside world, strengthening our connectivity and interaction with it."¹⁵ Even with his staunch support of Chinese nationalism, President Xi stresses the importance of China's role at the international level, and their dependence on global affairs. With their newly interconnected global economy, China has begun development

efforts in other nations, specifically various African countries. In 2009, China officially surpassed the U.S. as Africa's largest trading partner.¹⁶ Since then, China has built railways, government buildings, and power projects, lending a total of \$95.5 billion in loans to Africa between 2000 and 2015.¹⁷ As their own economy has become more dependent on the global economy, China's development and investments have also shifted towards more outside projects rather than solely domestic development projects, proving that there has been a shift in China's economic structure that has led them to further integrate into the international system.

Chapter 2: The Shift to the East – The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and Foreign Direct Investment

Following their recent rise as an economic powerhouse and their official step into the global economy, China began the next steps in establishing their new position within the international system. As a developing country, China has now inserted itself into the economies of other developing nations, becoming a large contributor in development financing and foreign aid. Within Africa, Chinese investment and aid has become a prominent source of economic growth in various industries and sectors. From an outside perspective, specifically those with-

in the United States, China's new position as a source of financial development for Africa and their creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a ploy to push their domestic agenda on vulnerable nations and dominate international politics. On the contrary, rather than uprooting the current status quo of politics and governance surrounding foreign aid and development, China is using their position of power and financial wellbeing to aid other countries who were not benefitting from traditional economic institutions.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank provides an alternative to the previous neoliberal international institutions that operate under the premise of conditionality. Based on their frustrations with international economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), China created the AIIB in order to offer other developing countries a new way of promoting development. The AIIB is akin to the IMF in the sense that the IMF promotes sustainable economic growth, and the AIIB similarly aims to provide funding for infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region. However, the AIIB does not operate on the premise of conditionality or structural adjustment programs, which force countries to cut spending on certain social programs and subsidies, often resulting in backlash amongst citizens. The purpose

of the AIIB is to “foster sustainable economic development, create wealth and improve infrastructure connectivity in Asia by investing in infrastructure and other productive sectors.”¹⁸ This new version of an international economic institution is appealing to many Asian-Pacific countries looking to develop their national infrastructure and stimulate their economies. A major aspect of the AIIB is the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is President Xi’s vastly interconnected trade route between Asia, Europe, and Africa. Some critics label China’s new version of development financing as an exclusively regional institution, based on its original formation in China for the benefit of Asia. However, because China’s BRI aims to connect China to the rest of Asia and Europe, the AIIB cannot be labeled as a merely regional institution. The AIIB and the BRI serve as tools “connecting China and its border regions to all parts of Asia, the Baltic States, the Mediterranean, eastern Africa, and the ‘developed European circle,’ [the BRI] is much more interregional or pan-continental than truly ‘regional.’”¹⁹ The AIIB is molded from the current liberal world order that relies on international institutions to ensure cooperation amongst states; it is an alternative version that offers more benefits to Asian countries. In fact, the AIIB shows just how influenced the Chinese government is by the liberal world order and the international

system. The foundation of the AIIB was originally intended for Asian countries only, but “the enthusiasm with which European countries, led by the United Kingdom, sought to join the AIIB soon led China to welcome non-Asian founding members as well,” highlighting the influence of previous international economic institutions on China’s role in the international system and the creation of the AIIB.²⁰ Even in the case of the BRI, its functionality is dependent on the creation of amicable relationships between countries in the name of trade and fostering economic benefit. The softening of these relationships between China and other nations allows for their increasing integration into the international system, even if their new projects seem regional by nature.

China’s increasingly interconnected relationship with Africa is mutually beneficial for the growth of both economies, allowing African economies to develop without suffering from traditional structural adjustment programs under international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund. Since the end of colonial rule in Africa, many areas across the continent have struggled with widespread poverty and delayed development. On top of the devastation left behind during the colonial period, the continent’s abundance of natural resources has trapped it in the ceaseless resource curse; a paradoxical phenomenon in which countries harboring natural

resources are often exploited by developed countries, usually resulting in slow economic growth and lower chances of stable government.²¹ This happens to be the case in Africa, as many African nations suffer from a lack of economic independence. When China’s period of rapid economic growth led to new policies opening towards the global economy, Africa set its sights on a mutually beneficial relationship with this rising power. A formal relationship between the PRC and African nations was established in 2000, when the Forum On China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) provided an official stage for engagement.²² Once this pathway opened, both sides created a regional alliance that would be mutually beneficial for African countries’ growth and economic independence, and the PRC’s goal of global interconnectivity. This included two-way trade, which totaled \$185 billion USD in 2018, \$3.3 billion in foreign direct investment to the entire continent of Africa, and many infrastructure development projects.²³ Due to their increasing capital account inflows, China has assumed the new role of “Africa’s creditor.”²⁴ In terms of development financing, developing countries within Africa rarely receive aid without structural adjustment programs that often harm their economies by forcing them to adhere to regulations created by other countries. China’s debtor relations have been quite lenient in compar-

ison to those of the IMF, including their recent rescheduling deal with Ethiopia, which allowed the Ethiopian government to have a 20-year extension to finish paying out their previous loans.²⁵ When President Xi announced his Belt and Road Initiative, many African nations jumped at the chance to gain economic independence and open up their markets to the global economy. Africa's engagement with the PRC through the BRI stimulated intra-African relations, as cross-border trade has greatly increased amongst specific states. Regional connectivity is one of the pillars laid out in the African Union's Agenda 2063, aiming for "an integrated and interconnected Africa," fueling economic development, which in turn will hopefully strengthen the continent's position in the international system.²⁶

Rapid economic success has given the Chinese government the ability to aid in infrastructure development and stimulate economic growth throughout the continent. China's unprecedented growth and expertise in specific economic sectors put the country in a crucial position to promote a new phase of development throughout the continent.²⁷ Not only does China's rise put them in the position to assist in the development and industrialization of Africa, but it also provides potential benefits to African countries in the future. With China's massive consumer base, African producers will likely gain market

access in China, inevitably opening more paths to other export-oriented countries. This "co-transformation" serves both Africa's industrial development and China's "industrial upgrading."²⁸ China's financing of projects in Africa in the name of mutual development demonstrates a trend towards China's cooperative engagement within the world order. Although it is led by the PRC, the BRI is not merely a Chinese initiative, but rather a segue into the international system by demonstrating a dedication to global interconnectivity. The joint development in the Sino-African relationship based on an "opening up" to the global order has sparked a shift to the peripheral. Today's world order is no longer a unipolar system dominated by Western, capitalist powers, but instead excels in global connection, including developing countries that previously stood on the outskirts. This, again, demonstrates how the PRC's policies have attempted to simulate the openness the United States claims to have within the international system, coupling their domestic and global success with their relationships with foreign powers.

While the rise of China raises many concerns to some diplomats, politicians, and economists, their economic endowments can actually be beneficial in the realm of foreign aid. In regards to development financing, China has become an important source of infrastructure aid in Africa. In addition, the recent

creation of the AIIB demonstrates the broad influence of traditional economic institutions, proving that China is adhering to the liberal international system in its creation of similar organizations, not completely veering away from the status quo. China's rise allows for a new, parallel system to those frustrated with the current system of international economic aid institutions and can stimulate development across the globe.

Chapter 3: Avoiding the Thucydides Trap – The Case of the South China Sea Dispute

One of the largest points of contention within current Sino-U.S. relations is whether or not China will conform to the "China threat theory" within the South China Sea Dispute. The debate over maritime sovereignty in the region has been an area in Chinese policy that President Xi has shown unwavering interest in, evoking fear within the international system about how far Beijing is willing to go to protect its interests. Despite fear of conflict, China has actually been embracing multilateralism in their recent approach on the dispute, viewing regional stability as an essential environment to maintain domestic economic growth. China's willingness to compromise with its East Asian neighbors, while also utilizing international norms for conflict resolution, demonstrates China's accordance with today's liberal world order.

Chinese claims to the South China Sea date back to the early Han dynasty in the 2nd century B.C.E., according to the current regime.²⁹ However, current tensions rose when the PRC began publishing official maps of its sovereign claims, beginning in 1947, when “China” included a largely significant portion of the sea in its map, drawing eleven dots signifying its claims.³⁰ The most recent map was published in 1953 by the PRC under former Premier Zhou Enlai, erasing two of the dots from the Gulf of Tonkin, creating the nine-dash line, a U-shaped demarcation line including contested islands claimed by other states. Because these claims existed years before the establishment of the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the main overseer of maritime law in today’s world order, the CCP argues that their claims to sovereignty should not be subjected to current regulation of the area.³¹ These historic claims, in China’s eyes, support their current label of the South China Sea as Chinese territory, specifically as their exclusive economic zone that other claimants cannot exploit.³² As China quickly flew into a period of intense economic growth, the South China Sea became an increasingly integral source for oil. After China became a net importer of oil in 1993, the PRC’s policy towards the region has been of utmost importance to their foreign policy negotiations, ensuring that these oil

sources remain readily available to them.³³ In regards to the South China Sea specifically, the Chinese Ministry of Land and Resources named the maritime region as “one of the ten strategic energy zones,” formalizing its significance within their economy.³⁴ With 88% of China’s natural gas production coming from the South China Sea itself, Xi’s regime continues to assert its claims in order to protect their economic interests.

The reluctance to budge on other nations’ claims to the South China Sea out of concern for their own economic security raises fears about China’s future policy stance towards the region. However, China’s recent actions have demonstrated incentives to shift to multilateral diplomacy guided by compromise and cooperation. While China is a hegemon within Southeast Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plays a major role in the region as well. This multilateral organization promotes economic cooperation between the ten Southeast Asian Nations, attempting to create stability and mutual trust amongst each other. While China is not a part of the ASEAN, its relationship with the group is crucial to its own economic success, incentivizing the maintenance of amicable relations between the PRC and its regional allies in ASEAN.

By engaging with these multilateral institutions, China abides by norms and regulations mandat-

ed by supranational organizations, entering into joint developments guided by compromise. One of the major points of contention China faces in the South China Sea is Vietnam’s claims to some of the islands within the nine-dash line. The Vietnamese claim ownership of the Paracels, Pratas, and Spratly Islands, and the Chinese have asserted their dominance over these islands since the original eleven-dash line from the PRC’s 1947 demarcation of Chinese territory. The tension between Beijing and Hanoi had the capacity to erupt into conflict, but China’s recent adherence to international norms demonstrated their amicable approach to crises. The two nations eased tensions in the Sea by signing a border delimitation treaty in December of 1999, marking an official division of the Gulf of Tonkin, allocating approximately 46.77% to the PRC, and 52.32% to Vietnam.³⁵ This joint development paved the way for China’s shocking switch from its previous insistence on bilateral agreements, to a multilateral approach under formal regulations. In 2002, Jiang Zemin signed the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, which laid out the guidelines to “joint exploitation” in the area, protocol for peaceful conflict resolution, along with a pledge for mutual respect.³⁶ Simultaneously, China pledged to abide by the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, legally pledging to not use force towards any ASEAN

member, as a subtle affirmation to its neighbors that it was committed to the Declaration on Conduct.³⁷ Later that year, China ensured its economic cooperation in the region with its entrance into CAFTA, the China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement, securing its own investments and promising amicable trade relations.³⁸ This recent trend towards regional multilateralism, guided by principles of supranational organizations, opposes the “China threat theory,” and instead promotes China’s rather cooperative outlook on the current custom of participating in international organizations.

This cooperative sentiment, proven by China’s willingness to adhere to at least certain international norms, solidifies its label as a status quo power. China’s unwavering interest in the South China Sea, while daunting in theory, has not only avoided major conflict, but even turned to mutual resolution tactics with other nations. This shift to multilateralism has created an interdependency between China and the rest of the international system, which cannot be ignored. However, the perception of China as a threatening rising power poses the risk of conflict, especially as the United States in particular struggles to maintain its position as the world’s “super power.” This brings about discussion of the Thucydides Trap, the explosive surpassing of the current super power by the rising power.

To avoid this fatal conclusion, the international system must reassess China’s actions and foreign policy, formulate their own opinions on the subject, and open lines of communication to foster deeper relationships and alliances with the PRC. Countries cannot blindly accept the constructivist narrative of China as a revisionist country; otherwise, global warfare could ensue. Purely based on GDP, China is set to surpass the United States in economic success, meaning that increased competition will likely follow. However, this competition does not need to result in catastrophe.

Managed competition, specifically through limitations on each country’s security policies, could help guide multilateral agreements based on shared interests.³⁹ These limitations and regulations would serve as checks for both countries, incentivizing them to abide by the rules out of protection for their own interests. If either side violates these guidelines, they will lose out on recent joint developments as President Xi and President Biden both attempt to reopen lines of communication destroyed by former President Trump.

One way of doing this is finding common ground in which both countries can collaborate as allies rather than competitors. In contemporary foreign policy, climate change has been at the forefront of global discussion. As two of the top contributors to atmospher-

ic pollution, both China and the U.S. should collaborate on their approaches to mitigating climate change, which could significantly stabilize their relationship.⁴⁰ This bilateral arrangement would simultaneously aid in research for China’s protection against inclement weather, while also allowing Biden to follow through on his administration’s promises to reduce carbon emissions, creating a win-win situation for all parties involved, as long as the two abide by the regulations set forth by international institutions in this certain policy area.

Conclusion: Grasping China’s New Role

With China’s integration into the international system through their accession into the WTO, infrastructure development projects in Africa, President Xi’s foreign policy push for global interconnectivity through the BRI, and their willingness to abide by international law in dispute resolution, China’s behavior mimics a status quo power that is seeking to preserve the current international system. Previous perceptions of China, created with a faulty argument derived from fear, make it easy to incorrectly label China as a revisionist country.

Based on the research presented in this article, I label China as a country that adheres to many international guidelines, respecting the norms of the current world order more than it is often characterized to. The “China threat theory”

has been largely dramatized out of American fear of a rising power, automatically characterizing them as a rising hegemon. In reality, China's actions in the current world order have not all proven to be aggressive, nor revisionist in any sense. Within the global economy, China conceded to demands of current super powers in order to join the largest international organization for world trade (the WTO). When the PRC's rapid economic growth put them in a position to increase engagement with other nations, it launched parallel supranational institutions to stimulate the economies of their regional allies, specifically through the ADB and the AIIB. Even when faced with disputes in the South China Sea, Xi's regime engaged in joint development programs and signed a declaration on conduct as a means for a resolution to the conflict. As President Xi said himself, China cannot develop without the rest of the world, and that has become increasingly obvious as the PRC continues to open itself up, forming alliances, giving foreign aid, and utilizing international law, further confirming China's status quo characterization.

From the perspective of the

Thucydides Trap, the rise of China is a threat to the U.S. mainly because of their relative decline. While China is, very much, on the rise, transforming into a new great power within the international system, China came to power specifically through unprecedented economic growth, coupled with a seventh of the Earth's population. At heart, China is still highly influenced by its experience in the former international system, and their current regime, specifically its focus on domestic stability, proves how its experience as a semi-colonized nation has had lasting effects on the skepticism the PRC demonstrates in foreign relations. They lead with caution and pragmatism, willing to collaborate with others in hopes that forming alliances will deter any fear of aggression. While this reiterates China's submissive position and low likelihood to behave as a revisionist power, the United States still harbors fears from the "China threat theory," as its extreme budget deficit and protracted current account deficit make Americans painfully aware of its own economic challenges.⁴¹

Moving forward, China's position as a status quo country could

prevent conflict from arising and keep Sino-U.S. relations amicable. If China sticks to the status quo and does not seek to change the current system, but rather integrates itself more into the world order, it can maintain the peaceful relationship that both China and the U.S. would like to see continue in the future. Communication remains a crucial aspect within Sino-U.S. relations to avoid the Thucydides Trap, allowing the two countries to openly interact and gain a better understanding of the others' foreign policy initiatives, avoiding any misconceptions or misinterpretations of the others' actions. With the opening of the Beijing-Washington hotline in 2008, direct lines of communication were provided to leaders in both China and the United States, specifically for use during crises in the Pacific Ocean.⁴² Both countries would like to avoid direct conflict, especially with possession of nuclear weapons, and by effectively communicating and building understanding of one another, China and the United States can avoid the explosive fate of the Thucydides Trap.

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(Above) This photo was taken in the Mea She'arim neighborhood of Jerusalem, Israel. Mea She'arim is one of the most thickly populated and religiously orthodox (Haredi) neighborhoods in the country of Israel. It also suffers from extreme poverty. This building stands at the edge of the neighborhood.

Photo by Mikhal Ben-Joseph, Third-Year Statistics and Peace War and Defense Double Major

(Left) El Retiro Park is a beautiful oasis in the heart of Madrid Spain. This monument honors Alfonso XII, also known as El Pacificador, who was known as "The Peacemaker" during his reign as the King of Spain.

Photo by Brooke Chow, Second-Year Public Policy and Business Double Major and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Minor



628 W 47th St, New York at sunset.

Photo by Jamie Collier, Fourth Year AD/PR and Media Production Double Major

Papa Ibra Tall and the Celebration of Senegalese Tradition in the Context of Négritude

James McClure

The election of Leopold Sédar Senghor as the first president of the newly-independent country of Senegal in 1960 was a significant turning point for visual art in West Africa. A poet, politician, and founding theorist of the cultural Pan-African movement Négritude, Senghor was an ideal figure to establish a new vibrant national identity of a formerly colonized African country under direct French control since 1816.¹ One major component of the Négritude movement was the continued application of European stereotypes to African culture, yet also embracing these tropes in a way which made African culture distinct and beautiful.² Senghor saw culture as an invaluable asset to the formation of an independent Senegalese state, which prompted the policy of large investment into art institutions in Senegal and the formation of a new school of visual artists known as the “École de Dakar.”³ Papa Ibra Tall was one of the key figures of this movement and benefited significantly from greater financial re-

sources and international attention towards his tapestries and paintings during this period.⁴

Much of Tall’s artistic training was heavily supported by Senghor’s government investments into fine arts education.⁵ In 1947, one of Tall’s first mentorship experiences came as a result of an apprenticeship with a French artist in a private studio in Dakar. Soon after, Tall received a government scholarship to travel to the École spéciale d’architecture in Paris. Studying in Paris caused Tall to be discovered by Senghor himself, who supported his artistic endeavors by funding a grant to continue his studies at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts.⁶ While many of Tall’s most influential artistic encounters were in Paris under European mentors, Tall was inspired heavily by the Négritude movement during his studies. After returning from his studies abroad, Senghor asked Tall to “help shape a new institutional structure for the visual arts” in newly independent Senegal.⁷

Two of Tall’s most notable tapestries, *Judu Burafet* (*Beautiful Birth*) and *Seamstress of the Stars* may resemble purely decorative pieces at first glance. These two pieces are so abstract that it can be difficult to make out recognizable symbols or themes within the tapestry. Upon close analysis, the works embody Tall’s artistic sensibilities and represent a Senghorian vision of Négritude that incorporate African motifs in a prideful manner. In *Judu Burafet*, one can note themes of fertility and agriculture by the depiction of a field on a pregnant woman’s stomach, as well as references to the use of Calvary in the anti-colonial struggle against France via the horse diagonally bisecting the image. While *Seamstress of the Stars* is more abstract, the work is dominated by bright shades of red and yellow, with stars coming from the bird-like figure that potentially alludes to the star in the center of the Senegalese flag. Without considering cultural context, it may be difficult to identify Tall’s artistic vision

in each piece. Even though an initial view of these two tapestries to reveal a deeper meaning, these works showcase a profound appreciation for West African tradition and provide meditations on newly acquired Senegalese independence in the decolonization era.

Senghor, Négritude, and the Ecole de Dakar

According to scholar Joshua Cohen, Senghor's goal in establishing a Senegalese national culture after independence was to ignore the "artificial boundaries drawn by European powers" and restore a pre-colonial sense of tradition.⁸ The omission of European influence in the case of Senegal was particularly difficult due to the French's colonial policy of "Direct Rule", which immersed colonized people into French culture.⁹ The Direct Rule philosophy resulted in the erosion of traditional political institutions and cultural practices throughout the French colonies in Africa. In some cases, the upper class of African society was granted French citizenship, which fully incorporated them into French society. Senghor's conception of Négritude and formation of the Ecole de Dakar were efforts to subvert the effects of Direct Rule, and restore a sense of West African tradition and identity.¹⁰

One of the driving forces behind the creation of the Ecole de Dakar was Senghor's belief that culture was integral to the formation of an independent state. To support

Dakar-centered artistic production, Senghor invested 25% of Senegal's state budget on funding contemporary Senegalese artists.¹¹ He saw national art as the literal and figurative "promise and possibility of the young nation's development" due to its connection to African heritage and the ability of art styles to change over time.¹² Just as Senghor wanted to include Senegal in the international community and modernize the state, he also wanted Senegalese art to be recognized by international critics included in the European modernist movement.¹³ While Senghor's attempt to create Senegalese national art institutions has been characterized as purely nationalist, scholars dispute this claim. Cohen describes these policies as international, due to the fostering of cultural diplomacy between foreign governments when Senegalese art was displayed abroad, and transnational, as artists in the Ecole de Dakar created works that consisted of a mix between French and traditionally Wolof techniques.¹⁴ Overall, Senghor's aim did not primarily concern the audience of the Senegalese masses, but rather had a vision of projecting modern African culture internationally, occurring most frequently "through official and high-brow venues."¹⁵ Cohen argues that visual art played little to no effort in the development of national pride within Senegal, as he describes that the artists of the Ecole de Dakar created art "largely within a second

and almost entirely separate international domain of state-sponsored cultural activity."¹⁶ This strategy has caused many to criticize the Ecole de Dakar as elitist, and not a true representation of genuine African culture.¹⁷

Even though one of Senghor's goals in the creation of the Ecole de Dakar was to include West African artists into European modernity, he did not intend to compromise the artist's African identity. Elizabeth Harney characterizes the Ecole de Dakar's aesthetic as one that,

"was to be composed of recognizable, pan-African motifs—masks, carved statues, incised combs—all of them, ironically, commodified signs of l'art primitif (primitive art) within the European marketplace and imagination."¹⁸

By proudly reclaiming tropes and symbols that Europeans used to stereotype the entire continent of Africa, Négritude-inspired Ecole de Dakar artists were able to manipulate European primitivist depictions of Africans on their own accord via "acts of creative transcendence and satirical forms of mimicry."¹⁹ State-sponsored Senegalese artists did not mindlessly copy classical forms of African art such as masks or sculptures; rather, their reinterpretation of these art forms is characterized as the creation and innovation of "a visual language alluding to generalized African forms and motifs while capitalizing on the

visual tactics of modernist abstraction.”²⁰ For the Ecole de Dakar, African visual traditions were formal resources to draw inspiration from and reinvent, rather than their sole source of creativity.

While Ecole de Dakar artists were all guided by Senghor’s Négritude philosophy to some degree, these artists did not identify on the “on the basis of shared style or ideological point of departure.”²¹ Harney describes how each artist guided their work through issues such as personal innovation, artistic creativity, and individual style.²² Although the use of Senghorian Négritude as the guiding principle for the Ecole de Dakar resulted in the creation of a variety of unique visual art styles in Senegal post-independence, it also created the expectation that Senegalese art must explicitly discuss African culture. Harney describes how modern Senegalese artists criticize the Ecole de Dakar for “institutionalizing the Primitivist assumptions” of Europeans that Africans must be inherently artistic and creative.²³ In addition, government funding of the Ecole de Dakar may have stifled creativity in some instances, as funding was conditional upon the artist subscribing to Négritude philosophy and incorporating these viewpoints into their work.²⁴ Regardless of these objections, Senghor’s government patronage of the Ecole de Dakar allowed for a new generation of Senegalese artists to establish unique visual arts traditions that celebrated

West African culture and a newly independent Senegalese state.

Tall’s Role in the Ecole de Dakar and Academic Analysis of His Works

Papa Ibra Tall was at the forefront of Senghor’s plan to create new art institutions and styles in Senegal. He had a significant role in a variety of government art organizations and teaching establishments such as the Section de Recherches en Arts Plastiques Nègres, the Division des Relations Culturelles et Sociales, and the Manufacture Nationale de Tapisseries.²⁵ When collaborating with the Division des Relations Culturelles et Sociales, Tall organized and participated in the first exhibition of Senegalese art in Europe in the early 1970s.²⁶ Beyond showcasing his own work abroad, Tall guided future Senegalese artists in the creation of work for international audiences. His teaching style fully embraced Senghor’s conception of Négritude, as he stressed the importance of using ‘identifiable’ African subject matter” in one’s work and employed a “hands-off pedagogy to encourage creative output” which placed emphasis upon the supposed inherent creativity that Africans possessed, as was asserted by Négritude philosophy.²⁷ Like Senghor, Tall embraced many European views of African nature and expressivity, including their inherent connection to “rhythm, emotion, and symbolism.”²⁸ Beyond encouraging the use

of inherently African subject matter, Tall also tried to distance his students from Western art teachings, claiming that “when one leaves the European schools of fine arts, one spends the next ten years of life trying to undo these learned habits.”²⁹ Tall’s championing of Senghorian Négritude can be seen in academic analysis of his works.

Tall’s tapestries can be dizzying and overbearing to analyze. In his work, he celebrates African culture through the representation of folktales, fantastical images³⁰, local cultural figures, and indigenous practices in his works.³¹ These depictions fulfill Senghor’s wish for Ecole de Dakar artists to place specifically African motifs in visual art works. Visually, scholars characterize his style by the use of “flowing, sinuous lines which radiate outward”³² as well as bright colors and lively landscapes which result in the appearance of flatness and boldness in his tapestries.³³ His preferred medium of tapestry is significant to his aims as well, as Tall believed that the practice of weaving was “inherently African in its practice,”³⁴ compared to the use of European oil painting.

Close Analysis of “Judu Burafet” (Beautiful Birth)

Differing shades of green and blue are the primary colors used to compose *Beautiful Birth*, yet there is some inclusion of red and pink tones to contrast. The overall mood of the tapestry is somber, yet the presence of lighter colors towards the center

bottom of the piece creates the illusion of a glimmer of hope in a dark void. Several human-like shapes are included towards the bottom right of the work, which are depicted as shadows due to the lack of any detail included in the drawing of their bodies or faces. These figures contrast heavily with a different human figure depicted in the top left of the tapestry, in which one can see the figure's clothing and a profile of their face. This figure is far less ominous than the shadowy people in the bottom left of the work since it is illuminated by the backdrop of a yellow circle resembling the sun. Upon first glance, the rest of the tapestry seems to lack coherency, but after closer inspection, one can see an image of a horse and several other abstractly-drawn human figures in various styles and colors. Overall, bright shades of pink and orange differentiate the horse from the rest of the image and seem to divide the painting into two distinct halves. The upper left contains the person in the sun, seemingly representing hope with its brighter tones, which contrasts with the bottom right that contains the shadowy figures and darker tones. When considering the historical time frame of this work, the purpose of the tones and figures included in the tapestry are contextualized. *Judu Burafet* evokes feelings of uncertainty for the future of Senegal in the context of the decolonization era, while also potentially highlighting the optimism and joy

many felt with the end of French colonialism by celebrating the beauty of Senegalese tradition.

Beyond the examination of the visually striking colors and shapes in this tapestry, *Judu Burafet* includes references to several African motifs and symbols. The horse depiction in the center of the image may seem meaningless without the cultural context of the Wolof people. Specifically, the inclusion of the horse is a reference to anticolonial resistance struggles in Senegal under French occupation.³⁵ Tall is referencing traditions of chivalry within Senegal, stemming back to Wolof resistance leader, Lat Dior, who was originally from Tall's hometown of Tivaouane. In addition, the paternal side of Tall's family was historically involved in the mastery of horse-riding in Senegal.³⁶ According to historical records, Dior's military skillfulness allowed him to defeat the French in battle; yet he was the only Senegalese resistance fighter to do so.³⁷ Dior's horse, Maalaw, has become a symbol of national resistance in Senegal and is depicted as a metal statue in front of the Great Mosque in Dakar.³⁸ The reference to Lat Dior suits Tall's goal of visually depicting Négritude philosophy given that Dior is a well-celebrated figure in the Senegalese anti-colonial struggle against France. Even though Senegal was independent from France at the time this tapestry was created, the visual depiction of a Senegalese resistance symbol in

Tall's work evokes feelings of pride and may suggest that some saw the creation of a successful, independent Senegalese state as a continuation of the anti-colonial struggle.

Images on the stomach of the pregnant women in the upper left of the tapestry provide several other allusions to Senegalese culture. The most striking symbol on the woman is the form of a colorful field, which likely refers to the role of agriculture in Wolof culture. Traditionally, the Senegalese economy has centered around growing peanuts as a cash crop. Under Senghor, state intervention became commonplace in Senegal's agricultural sector, a stark contrast to the large role of private companies from France dominating the peanut trade pre-independence.³⁹ While it is ambiguous if the field on the woman's stomach is depicted as being used to grow crops, the vibrant and contrasting lines of different blue and green shades contribute to a representation of a fertile and well-irrigated field. The bright colors used in this portion of the tapestry contrast with the various shades of dark green and black used in other areas of the image to create a celebratory tone towards the role of agriculture in Wolof culture.

To further elaborate on the detailed faces illustrated in the bottom left portion of the tapestry, Harney notes that these figures showcase "textured forms of local beaded headdresses, elaborately plaited hairstyles, and finely detailed jewel-

ry.”⁴⁰ The round cheeks on the left-most figure and the feminine facial features on the larger figure to the right seem to suggest that they are a mother and child, which solidifies themes of birth and fertility in the tapestry. Rather than exaggerating stereotyped features of Africans as is often employed in European art, Tall uses a profile perspective to represent these two figures. The deep shades of blue and green used to color the skin of the mother and child, as well as the blending of the mother’s hair into the field, create a sense of fantasy over realism in their depiction. In totality, the use of differing colors and inclusion of elaborate hairstyles and jewelry in this portion of the tapestry conjures up a sense of pride for African tradition.

There are several other notable symbols and features in the top right portion of the tapestry. The black bars on the edge of her stomach are likely a xylophone, known as a “balafone” in Wolof. The instrument has been historically used by the Mandé people, a group that inhabits many parts of West Africa.⁴¹ In Senegal, Mandé griots use the balafone to convey oral history and historical narratives passed down across generations to ensure that their future descendants remember these traditions.⁴² Tall’s use of the tapestry allows for the visual depiction of Senegalese cultural practices that are generally only practiced orally. In the creation of *Beautiful Birth*, Tall takes the role of a griot by visually

depicting Senegalese traditions, and ensuring they are immortalized by the creation of this tapestry.

The inclusion of references to Senegalese tradition paired with symbolism of birth and fertility evokes the image of a Senegalese state that was “newly born” at the time of the tapestry’s creation, in 1978. While the long period of French Direct Rule may have been detrimental to the preservation of Senegalese cultural traditions, Tall’s inclusion of vibrant representations of African cultural tradition shows that Senegalese culture remains vibrant and unique. The international exhibition of Tall’s works caused him to target a European audience in his art, and it is unlikely that most European critics could identify the specific meaning of pan-African motifs used in the tapestry. The use of these recognizable allusions to Wolof and other West African traditions throughout the work show that Tall’s targeted audience did not cause him to compromise his distinct African identity in the creation of *Beautiful Birth*.

Close Analysis of “Seamstress of the Stars” in Relation to “Judu Burafet”

The second tapestry of Tall’s that I will analyze, *Seamstress of the Stars*, is significantly more abstract than *Beautiful Birth* and lacks the multitude of recognizable symbols of African origin in the former tapestry. Initially, one’s eyes are drawn to the female figure in the center of

the image. The pure white tone used to color her skin causes the woman to appear ethereal and angelic, while her feather-like flowing hands make her appear almost as a bird. Surrounding the woman are rhythmic patterns and lines, with differing shades of blue, red, and yellow contrasting greatly with the dark backdrop. These swirling lines give the image a sense of motion, and in combination with the bird-like features of the woman in the center of the image, sentiments of freedom and rhythm are invoked. The stars depicted throughout the tapestry may be a reference to the star in the center of the Senegalese flag, which contributes to Tall’s goal of conveying Senegalese pride and culture in his works. One can observe a red circular object towards the bottom middle of the tapestry, which is likely a sewing wheel. Therefore, the thin lines throughout the tapestry likely represent string, and the woman in the center is in the process of sewing given the tapestry’s title, *Seamstress of the Stars*. Holistically, Tall’s depiction of the woman invokes a sense of pride in the practice of sewing, as the facial expression of the woman in the center of the image suggests that she is deeply focused on her craft.

Tall subtly includes several motifs in reference to Senegalese culture in this tapestry, even though they may be less obvious in comparison to *Beautiful Birth*. Gold is one of the most prominent colors present-

ed in this tapestry, and one of the most abundant natural resources in Senegal. While gold was historically extracted from Senegal by French trading companies, exploitation of gold reserves by the Senegalese government post-independence has allowed the country to diversify its economy.⁴³ Goldsmithing and the creation of gold jewelry remain a common practice in Senegal today. In Senegalese culture, women wear gold jewelry to “create a cosmopolitan identity of power and prestige” to appear sophisticated and celebrate the role that Senegalese women played in the gold trade with the Portuguese.⁴⁴ The inclusion of gold bracelets and a gold headdress on the woman in the center of this tapestry shows that Tall is attempting to represent the sophisticated practices of the “modern” Senegalese women in the post-independence period. In addition, the woman’s colorful

and ornate dress contributes to the theme of pride in status and culture.

Judu Burafet and *Seamstress of the Stars* convey two distinct visions of pride in Senegal and potential for the newly independent nation. *Judu Burafet* provides a reflection on historical Senegalese tradition through allusions to Wolof culture, agriculture, and dress. *Seamstress of the Stars* attempts to include Senegal in European modernity by depicting a high-class, cosmopolitan woman partaking in the skillful craft of sewing. Tall’s use of motifs and symbols in each tapestry is able to achieve his vision of creating a unique artistic language which belonged “to Africa and to Senegal,”⁴⁵ even if the works were targeted for an international audience.

Conclusion

Through these two tapestries, Tall conjures up fantastical and whimsical scenes which pridefully

employ symbols of localized Wolof tradition as well as Pan-African culture. Even though these works were made to appease an international audience rather than a nationally Senegalese one, Tall embraces his knowledge of West African customs and culture in the form of recognizable motifs in both works. *Judu Burafet* illustrates references to birth and fertility, agriculture, traditional jewelry and headdresses, and the anticolonial resistance struggle in Senegal. In contrast, *Seamstress of the Stars* focuses on a central female figure, whose wearing of gold jewelry and mastery of weaving evokes the image of a sophisticated, modern Senegalese woman in the decolonization era. Both works embody Senghor’s conception of Négritude, as the subject matter of each tapestry is innately African and represents the rhythmic and expressive tendencies that Senghor believed all

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(Above) Papa Ibra Tall's Seamstress of the Stars

Photo by Lauren Richards, First-Year Political Science and Peace War and Defense Double Major

(Right) This photo was taken in the Golan Heights of Israel near the borders of Syria and Lebanon. In the background you can see a soldier cutout memorializing the contributions of soldiers who defended this position during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

Photo by Mikhal Ben-Joseph, Third-Year Statistics and Peace War and Defense Double Major



Pushing Anti-Immigration Agendas: An Analysis of U.S. Refugee Policy During COVID-19

Hannah Gilmore

Abstract

The travel bans, social distancing mandates, and economic relief legislation enacted during COVID-19 have only exaggerated the problems that many face on their arrival to the United States: including, but not limited to, isolation, scarcity of job opportunities, the threat of homelessness, a lack of adequate education, as well as a lack of adequate mental health care support. These problems existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, the pandemic underscores the necessity for infrastructural change in policy. By examining the weaknesses that present themselves throughout the resettlement process, and identifying those most negatively impacted economically and socially during the pandemic, this research analyzes the limited congressional policy and federal law upon which the structure of the American resettlement process is based. As it exists presently, the transition during the resettlement process for immigrants in America is insufficient and ineffective in providing adequate financial resources and assistance programs, such as English language classes, employment coaching, and inclusion and integration programs (Nilsson & Jorgenson, 2021). Anti-immigration sentiment in American politics and the presidential proclamations enacted during COVID-19 have consequently led to the structural and institutionalized discrimination of refugees, which can be seen as reduced access to legislative relief throughout the pandemic. Legislative relief bills and travel bans enacted as a result of COVID-19 have reinforced negative stereotypes, such as the idea that immigrants commit more crimes, steal American jobs, and take money from tax-payers, normalizing discrimination against refugees in America via xenophobic and intolerant perspectives against immigrants.

In addition, social distancing mandates and ineffective health care systems in the United States have revealed numerous disadvantages that immigrants have faced upon resettlement to the U.S.

Inefficiencies of America's Response to COVID-19

The United States' national response to the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected the refugee population, leading to the deterioration and dis-

mantling of government immigration benefits and the resettlement processes that act as social safety nets for refugee and asylum seekers. The political response to COVID-19 emphasized pre-existing problems in the resettlement process such

as a lack of housing and inefficient social support systems in language integration and employment opportunities. Political discourse and policies regarding immigration are perpetuated by long standing negative stereotypes such as the perceptions

that refugees cause more crimes, steal American jobs, and take money from tax-payers.¹ During the pandemic, the Trump administration used COVID-19 as a pretense for pushing anti-immigration political agendas. Current policy enacted as a result of COVID-19 reinforces negative stereotypes and normalizes discrimination against refugees in America by utilizing xenophobic and intolerant perspectives against immigrants to enact policies that “conflate immigrants with public safety or health concerns.”² In 2019, an initiative was implemented by the United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees (UNHCR) called The Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways with the goal of helping states improve strategies regarding resettlement. In March 2022, the “Final Report on The Three-Year Strategy (2019-2021) on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways” was published and highlighted that only 60% of their goals were accomplished in the three years, citing COVID and insufficient quotas from resettlement countries. The resettlement process in the United States does not meet the minimum requirements set by this initiative for the foundation that is crucial for a successful integration into American society.³ COVID-19 exposed the lack of adequate social programs and welfare benefits available to refugees and asylum-seekers as they settle into their new lives in the United States. COVID-19 exag-

gerated and amplified deficiencies associated with the resettlement process including limited and poor housing options, economic disempowerment, accessing healthcare, and a lack of support when combating mental health illness, feelings of isolation and a lack of identity.

Background and Analysis

A History and Analysis of the Resettlement Process

To highlight the inefficiencies and shortcomings of the American refugee resettlement process, we must first assess the resettlement process as it presently exists. The process begins when an individual is displaced from their home. They reside in a refugee camp and remain a displaced person until they are assigned to a country that will become their permanent home. Individuals must register to be recognized as a refugee by the definition established by the 1951 Geneva Convention,

“someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”

The process of being identified as a refugee is administered by the UNHCR, an agency dedicated to the aid and protection of refugees worldwide. The UNHCR appoints a resettlement country, and the host country then accepts or rejects that individual. Refugee applica-

tions that are assigned to the United States are reviewed and assessed in accordance with U.S refugee admission priorities; the applications go through several levels of screening before approval. If the individual is accepted for resettlement, they must travel to the United States, “and are responsible for repaying to the Department of State their travel loans to resettle to the United States.”⁴ The U.S Department of State Reception and Placement program then assigns them to a location within the U.S where their refugee case files will be handed over to a voluntary agency based upon the ability of that agency to provide “financial support, human assistance, [and] community cooperation” to that individual during their resettlement and integration into American society.⁵ The voluntary or non-profit agency assigned to the case usually supports refugees for their first year in the United States, assisting with visas, housing, employment and adequate educational programs while providing various other social services such as community engagement. However, the U.S Department of State Reception and Placement Program only extends financial support for refugees from one to three months.⁶ This includes rent, food, clothes, furniture, cooking appliances, dishware, application fees for visas and greencards, and various other expenses. Furthermore, the federal government only provides funding for 39 percent of the cost for

resettlement during those first three months.⁷ Each refugee, regardless of age, receives \$800 per month. This becomes problematic when there is an individual versus a family, a family would get \$800 per person whereas the individual would only get \$800 a month for rent, food and all other expenses. Most places where refugees resettle to average \$800 for low-income apartments, based on information from the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, for obvious reasons this is an issue. In the three months that the federal government extends support to refugees, they are expected to become completely self-sufficient, but “for many refugees, 90 days are not sufficient to acculturate, find employment, and become financially independent.”⁸ In 2018, only 27 countries in the world took in refugees for resettlement.⁹ In 2020, out of the 70.8 million refugees around the world, only 3.5 million are in the process of resettlement.¹⁰ This process can take several years, and individuals may remain in overcrowded refugee camps with limited resources for decades or may even be returned to the country from which they fled if their resettlement application is rejected by the country they were assigned to. The number of refugees accepted for resettlement only decreased since 2018 due to a rising anti-refugee climate due to populist and nationalistic rhetoric and hostility.¹¹ In the last few years, the United States tightened

restrictions and, “slow-walked the interview, screening and admissions processes.”¹² Further restricting the entrance of refugees and immigrants, the United States temporarily shut its borders at the onset of the pandemic, making the already difficult refugee admissions process nearly impossible.¹³ Internationally, countries are using the COVID-19 pandemic to ignore international law on the quotas they are expected to withhold, setting a record minimum for the number of refugees accepted worldwide in the past year.¹⁴ This has caused large numbers of refugee groups to become increasingly “vulnerable to discrimination, marginalization, abuse and violence from the state.”¹⁵ According to a report by the National Immigration Forum, in 2020 11,814 refugees were resettled in the United States.¹⁶ This is a staggering decrease compared to previous years; in 2010, the U.S. took in 73,311 refugees and in 2016, 84,994.

Conceptual Definitions

This section focuses solely on providing conceptual definitions for key terms and how they relate to one another throughout this study. A focus is placed on refugees, asylum seekers and the resettlement process in the United States.

A refugee, defined by the 1951 Geneva Convention, is someone who is in “fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion”

and therefore is unable or refuses to return to their home country out of the fear of being persecuted or killed.¹⁷ An asylum seeker is an individual seeking refuge from inside the country whereas a refugee is appointed and transported to the host country. Under this definition, undocumented immigrants that flee violence and traumatic past experiences and enter America by crossing the U.S-Mexican border, are classified as asylum-seekers. The most common origin of refugees worldwide for the past three decades was and is presently war or armed conflict causing a mass influx of displaced persons. As a result, a large majority of refugees and asylum seekers undergo traumatic experiences such as violence, torture, sexual violence, war, and the death of family members before resettlement.

For the scope of this article, the resettlement process is defined as admission into the United States and the time in which the voluntary agency is responsible for the resettlement of an individual. This includes their arrival and a year after their arrival into the United States. During this time they receive support and assistance in finding housing, employment, educational programs and schools as well as applying for visas or greencards. This period of resettlement is crucial, protecting people from dangerous and overcrowded situations. Resettlement provides opportunities for displaced

persons to escape trauma, violent situations and supplies an opportunity for growth and recovery. Support and guidance from federal and local funds throughout this process is essential for successful relocation. Throughout the resettlement process, most if not all refugees are subjected to economic disempowerment due to insufficient federal funding and difficulties associated with finding employment upon arrival to the United States. Economic disempowerment includes the idea that a group of people (refugees and asylum seekers) are less likely to have or achieve economic influence or power leading to increased feelings of a loss of control, helplessness and the inability to make choices regarding health and social services.

Implications of Discrimination and Negative Stereotypes

Negative stereotypes and perspectives on refugees and immigrants increased in recent years, leading to anti-immigration rhetoric in policy. According to the American National Election Studies (ANES) 2019 survey, 47 percent of Americans do not favor allowing refugees fleeing war persecution or natural disasters in other countries to come live in the U.S.¹⁸ In addition, 67.5 percent of Americans believe that the number of immigrants should either be maintained or decreased despite the fact that 2019 set record-breaking lows for the number of refugees and asylum-seekers granted access to resettlement in

the United States (ANES, question immignum). Perspectives, such as viewing refugees and asylum seekers as synonymous with terrorists and criminals, the idea that the United States lacks the resources to admit more refugees (the idea that refugees are “taking taxpayers money” and “stealing American jobs”) and the misconception that refugees are lazy – whether unwilling or unable to participate fully in American society – lack any real validity or evidence.¹⁹ Despite being inaccurate, these perspectives lead to the destruction of protections and policies that assist and aid refugees and asylum seekers. In combination with the policies enacted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, these stereotypes perpetuate xenophobia and racist mindsets against refugees and immigrants. Anti-refugee sentiment in American politics and policy during COVID-19 consequently fueled the structural and institutionalized discrimination of refugees which can be seen as reduced access to public services, social welfare programs, and health-care entitlements based off of race, ethnicity, or religion. Prejudice and physical discrimination against refugees and asylum seekers can be identified through hate crimes, racial slurs, microaggressions, and physical assault.

Political Response To Covid-19

Post 1950s, the United States Refugee and Resettlement program

flourished. The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 “led to the admission of 400,000 refugees and the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 to another 200,000, beyond then existing nationality quotas.”²⁰

The Refugee Act of 1980 established the U.S Refugee Admissions Program and aided in the successful resettlement and integration of hundreds of thousands of refugees for the past four decades by almost tripling the annual number of refugees admitted and establishing a process that quickly helps refugees and asylum-seekers become self-sufficient. The U.S has a long history of accepting and providing protection for the persecuted and oppressed; however, anti-immigration sentiment, negative stereotypes and inaccurate and disreputable perspectives regarding refugees and asylum seekers influenced and infiltrated political rhetoric and immigration policy. Changes in immigration policy integrated practices from criminal law, allowing the creation of immigration and court policies and practices, “which are not regulated by the constitutional protections afforded to individuals within the criminal justice system.”²¹ In other words, because refugees and asylum seekers are not recognized as legitimate until they are either granted asylum or status as a U.S citizen, they are legally not entitled to constitutional protections such as search and seizure, due process, or the right to counsel. The consequence is that refugees and

asylum seekers may face warrantless searches, be deported without judicial review, or fail to have a legal representative at their immigration hearings.

Throughout the Trump Administration, the breakdown of protections for refugees and asylum-seekers increased by separating children from their parents at the border, expanding the prosecution and deportation of unregistered immigrants, and decreasing the number of refugees admitted to the United States on an annual basis.²² The Trump Administration's implementation of the Zero-Tolerance policy (which separates children from their families unethically) on the Southern border, and the use of teargas on children and families trying to cross the Mexico-U.S border exemplifies a clear agenda to decrease immigrant numbers into the United States. The number of refugees admitted into the U.S during the Trump Administration decreased by 84 percent from the 2017 Obama Administration.²³ Previous policy implemented by the Trump Administration prompted questions regarding the U.S response to the pandemic. Was policy implemented as a response to COVID-19 prompted by public health safety concerns, or was there an ulterior motive related to rising anti-immigration sentiment?

The Trump Administration's Political Response to COVID-19

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trump Adminis-

tration's response decreased protections and services allocated to refugees and asylum even further, using COVID-19 as a reason to push extreme anti-immigration political agendas. On March 17th, the UNHCR temporarily stopped the resettlement departures of refugees. On March 18th, 2020, refugee cases stopped being reviewed and accepted. Two days later on March 20th, anyone attempting to cross the Mexican or Canadian border for any reason was banned, both executive orders from former President Trump were cited to be in response to the pandemic to protect public health concerns.²⁴ Throughout 2020, immigration bans and social distancing guidelines made it increasingly harder for refugees and asylum-seekers to resettle in the United States, obtain visas and green cards, and be granted citizenship.

Immigration Bans

Early on in the beginning of the emergence of COVID-19, former President Trump released a Presidential Proclamation banning the entry of immigrants and non-immigrants who were present in the Republic of China during the 14-day period before their entry into America.²⁵ On the same day, Mr. Trump signed a proclamation that stated,

“the immigrant entry into the United States of persons described in section 1 of this proclamation would be detrimental to the interests of the

United States, and that their entry should be subject to certain restrictions, limitations, and exceptions.”²⁶

Effective on February 21st, 2020, this proclamation restricted the entry of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers from Myanmar, Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Sudan, and Tanzania. Countries already restricted in terms of immigration included Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.²⁷ According to the UNHCR and data provided by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, over two thirds of the world's refugees and asylum seekers originate from Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sudan, and Venezuela.²⁸ Immigration from three of these countries is restricted by the Presidential Proclamations of 2020, implying that the government does not prioritize protecting refugees or asylum-seekers.

Throughout 2020, the Trump Administration implemented nine presidential proclamations that restricted immigration and refugee travel and resettlement to the United States; not for the purpose of stopping the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic but instead citing reasons that include preventing the recovery of the economic crash due to COVID-19 and claiming that refugees provide a risk to the recovering labor market. Proclamation No. 10014, which suspended the entrance of immigrants to the United States, not limited to any particular region, was signed by Mr. Trump on

April 27th and stated,

“There is no way to protect already disadvantaged and unemployed Americans from the threat of competition for scarce jobs from new lawful permanent residents by directing those new residents to particular economic sectors with a demonstrated need not met by the existing labor supply. Existing immigrant visa processing protections are inadequate for recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak.”²⁹

In other words, the cited reason for restricting access to undocumented immigrants (including refugees and asylum-seekers) was to prevent undocumented immigrants from taking away employment opportunities from American citizens and hinder them from contributing to the economic recession brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The claim that undocumented immigrants somehow take away American jobs is ineffective, inauthentic, and lacks any real validity or evidence based in academic literature. The rhetoric and perspectives used by Proclamation No. 10014 (as well as many other proclamations and executive orders) are founded in anti-refugee sentiment and xenophobia.

Border Security

Since the pandemic's start, detention facilities located at the Mexican-U.S border have turned away thousands of individuals seeking refuge and asylum in the United

States. These facilities routinely use the pandemic as a guise to restrict entry into the United States as a ‘public health and safety concern.’ Rules implemented by the Trump Administration, effective December 11, 2020 titled Procedures for Asylum and Withholding of Removal; Credible Fear and Reasonable Fear Review, make it increasingly evident that the Trump Administration used the COVID-19 pandemic as a front for advancing their anti-immigration agenda. Under this rule, judges can easily reject asylum cases because the policy limits the number of people qualifying for asylum by restricting what qualifies as persecution of race, religion, or political opinion.³⁰ The rule increases the burden of proof put on the asylum seeker as well as severely hinders the ability for women and children facing domestic violence and abuse to seek shelter in the United States. Under the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) implemented by the Trump Administration, if asylum seekers are granted a court hearing, they must return to Mexico and wait there until their court date. This policy led to the rejection of more than 20,000 people who are forced to live in unsafe conditions. Makeshift camps created just outside the border lack “basic sanitation, reliable access to medical services, food or water services, or security.”³¹ Citing a ‘public health concern’ in response to the pandemic, policy inadvertently created a situation that has gener-

ated conditions in which people are more susceptible to contracting and spreading COVID-19.

Social Distancing As A Privilege

U.S. legislators enacted the federal mandate of social distancing on March 16th, 2020 with high hopes that it would prevent the further spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, very little attention was given to refugees in the U.S, those of whom the social distancing technique not only presented itself as a daunting task, but an impossible one. Kimberly Higuera introduces the idea that social distancing is a privilege instead of a common narrative that presents social distancing as a self-sacrifice that one offers to help protect the general public from the deadly COVID-19 virus. She writes, “in the global pandemic, there is a group of people who are not socially distancing: the precariously employed, the workers who live paycheck to paycheck and lack the flexibility to stay home,” refugees, asylum-seekers and non-citizens fall into all the listed categories.³²

Refugees and asylum seekers are more likely to live in overcrowded conditions, work in jobs that offer lower incomes, and live in poverty. Facing food and housing insecurity, they are disproportionately exposed to COVID-19. Many refugees work as housekeepers, janitors, or work in the food service, and retail or manufacturing positions; all of these

employment opportunities lack the ability to work remotely. Subsequently, “those who are unable to work remotely are exposed significantly more to risks right from the outset.”³³ The living conditions for many asylum seekers in the U.S can be characterized as below the bare minimum since several families may be forced to share a confined room with little circulation and limited ability to implement social distancing guidelines. For individuals who cannot even afford privacy, a concept that the United Nations deems as an unalienable right in Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, what hope do refugees have of affording extra space for social distancing purposes? Furthermore, the state of the living quarters for refugees and asylum seekers makes evading the deadly COVID-19 virus a hopeless dream, as “basic public health measures, such as social distancing, proper hand hygiene, and self-isolation are thus not possible or extremely difficult to implement.”³⁴

The social distancing mandates enacted during COVID-19 led to increased isolation and depression, leaving a loss of identity in refugees. Refugees and asylum-seekers are often exposed to “ongoing wars, internal political conflicts and violence,” experiencing numerous traumatic and emotionally scarring events.³⁵ The stress factors that young refugees face, including a loss of control over their own lives and the feeling of

an unknown future, combined with a loss of their home culture, leads to an increase in mental health illness. It was found that a vast majority of individuals in the resettlement process face severe mental health issues, and over 50% of individuals display symptoms of PTSD. Social distancing mandates only worsened these symptoms. Because of the pandemic and mandatory social distance practices, the mental health side effects such as that of isolation, loneliness, and increased rates of depression have increased dramatically among the refugee population in the U.S. Several reasons that explain why refugees have increased mental health risks during the COVID-19 pandemic include the fear of death, the inability to care for sick loved ones, many refugees and asylum seekers have trauma histories of torture or the death of a loved one.³⁶ Atkinson and Hauck write,

“isolation and lack of control, prominent conditions in the COVID-19 setting, are known to exacerbate PTSD. Memories of forced hiding may be evoked by lockdowns and empty streets, and the pandemic may be reminiscent of Ebola and cholera.”³⁷

Refugees and asylum seekers have increased fears of losing their job because of the pandemic and often fear for family members that are back home where resources are extremely limited. Mattar and Piwowarczyk discuss the switch to teletherapy for

refugees and asylum-seekers during the start of the pandemic. They claim that teletherapy has been ineffective due to the following reasons: teletherapy is isolating, patients may be unwilling to share stories of trauma or stories that bring up painful memories or histories due to the impersonal connection that teletherapy presents, and unstable housing conditions that many patients are living in may not have any private areas to discuss personal stories or traumas.³⁸ Several studies connect the degradation of refugee’s mental health with:

“risk factors for COVID-19, [include] overcrowding; disrupted sewage disposal; lower standards of hygiene; poor nutrition; reduced sanitation; and lack of shelter, health care, public services, and safety.”³⁹

Impact Of Covid-19 Legislation On Resettlement

The travel bans enacted nearly ended the refugee resettlement process and programs in the United States leaving refugees behind in unstable and vulnerable positions. The suspension of resettlement and related programs prolonged the persecution of refugees, delayed family reunifications, modified resettlement assistance programs, created several economic hardships, increased disease vulnerability and exacerbated mental health illness in refugees and asylum seekers.⁴⁰

Suspension of Resettlement Programs

When refugees and asylum-seekers first arrive in the United States, they are met by a prepared and extremely educated team of professionals and volunteers ready to welcome them into their new home, help them with medical appointments and employment as well as provide general support and a constant point of contact. These teams of professionals and volunteers provide a welcoming and humane experience that comforts refugees in a scary and uncertain time. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the constant human interaction that is an essential component to the resettlement process has been limited by social distancing mandates and mandatory quarantine periods. For example, Atkinson and Hauck write, “the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Charlottesville, Virginia typically provides an orientation for refugees attending their first medical appointment. Staff members transport clients to the family medicine clinic and show them how to find the waiting room and register. COVID-19 restrictions do not allow such transportation or accompaniment, and refugees must navigate the unfamiliar health system alone.”⁴¹

Refugees face many hardships such as language barriers, cultural shock, and limited social contact from lack of friends and family because resettlement to the United

States often means the loss of an entire support system. Because many volunteers have been limited due to social distancing guidelines and have reduced in-person contact, many refugees have lost the most essential part of the resettlement process.⁴² The resettlement process is long and strenuous, involving “bureaucracy, [a] different culture, poverty, and racism,” without volunteers to offset some of this stress throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, refugees are left largely alone to deal with complex issues such as culture shock and racism while trying to provide for themselves and their families by becoming self-sufficient.⁴³ Indeed, many refugees leave behind families in dangerous and unstable situations. COVID-19 delayed the unification of many families and prolonged the separation of loved ones. A 30-year old refugee from Afghanistan who has resided in the United States for a year had the reunification with his wife prolonged for six months due to the travel restrictions of COVID-19.⁴⁴ This has caused increased anxiety, loneliness and depression in the Afghan refugee while also leaving his wife in unsafe, dangerous and unclean living conditions.

Suspension of Immigration Benefits and Citizenship Processing

As a result of the social distancing guidelines in effect to reduce the spread of COVID-19, immigration court hearings and refugee resettlement processing were suspended.

This has caused refugees to have limited or reduced access to resettlement resources and programs that negatively impact refugees in the United States who are “affected by income loss, health-care insecurity, and the ramifications that come with postponement of decisions on their legal status or reduction of employment, legal, and administrative services.”⁴⁵ The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) carries out all of the processing and paperwork that is required to receive immigration benefits provided by the federal government such as granting U.S citizenship to those who are eligible to naturalize, authorizing permanent resignation in the United States, and providing non-citizens with eligibility to work and live in America. However, from March to May 2020, the USCIS completely suspended all in-person services, only re-opening offices in certain locations after May. Because of this, interviews for immigrant benefit applications and asylum cases were suspended indefinitely, causing “downstream effects such as expiration of security checks and overseas health examinations.”⁴⁶ Furthermore, according to the American Immigration Council, the USCIS “temporarily suspended naturalization oath ceremonies through June, resisting video oath ceremonies and instead instituting socially distant in-person oath ceremonies.”⁴⁷ This resulted in the delay of thousands of refugees from

obtaining immigration benefits and becoming citizens.

Left Out of Legislative Relief

The inability and the suspension of naturalization and granting refugees citizenship due to social distancing mandates have been extremely taxing to refugees and asylum seekers, increasing their vulnerability during a pandemic. The economic relief passed during COVID-19 have included several economic stimulus packages and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act); however, refugees and asylum seekers have been largely left out of these legislative relief packages. The CARES Act provides \$2.2 trillion in aid to individuals, families and businesses. The American Rescue Plan Act enacted in March of 2021 provided economic stimulus payments of \$1,400 to individuals and qualifying dependents. Millions of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers have been left out of the legislative relief packages and Congress has failed to provide economic relief and support to the most vulnerable people in American society. Payments are distributed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and to receive these payments, an individual must have a social security number. Non-citizens who are unable to be granted asylum or obtain citizenship due to the suspension of immigration benefits and citizenship processing, are consequently

unable to receive these economic relief payments. Non-citizens who file taxes using Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN) are still considered ineligible to receive economic relief payments. According to the American Immigration Council, on average 4.35 million people file tax returns using ITINs annually.⁴⁸ This means roughly 4.35 million people (a large majority of refugee and asylum seekers) were unable to receive stimulus payments from either the CARES Act or the America Rescue Plan Act.

Economic Hardships and Increased Exposure to COVID-19

Refugees and asylum seekers have faced economic hardships throughout the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately, and have experienced increased rates of job loss and unemployment. They have a more difficult time accessing economic relief and aid, along with higher rates of homelessness, and are more likely to have lower incomes and temporary positions. However, in data collected by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), refugees were “60 per cent more likely than host populations to be working in highly impacted sectors such as construction and food services, manufacturing and retail.”⁴⁹ Because refugees are more likely to work in temporary jobs, they are more likely to be impacted by COVID-19 due to the inability for employment to be moved to remote work, COVID-19 has re-

sulted in a loss of employment and an increase in poverty for refugees across the United States. Atkinson and Hauck present the case of a refugee living in the U.S.; a single mother of four who lost her housekeeping job because of COVID-19 remains unemployed and is unable to afford her rent payments, fearing eviction.⁵⁰ Throughout the pandemic, refugees have been, “more likely to experience poverty and live in crowded housing, [and be] employed in less-protected, service industry jobs.”⁵¹ Refugees who are often forced to find work in low-skill and low-income jobs in the service industry, do not have the option to work remotely, increasing the probability of contracting COVID. Being increasingly susceptible to poverty (especially during a pandemic) refugees and asylum-seekers are forced to use public transport systems, live in crowded housing complexes, and work in low-paying jobs “where physical distancing and recommended hygiene measures are impossible because of poor living conditions and great economic precarity.”⁵² Lacking basic sanitation measures, such as access to clean working conditions, the inability to self-isolate or quarantine and reduced access to testing and treatment, refugees are disproportionately exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, refugees and asylum seekers lack “culturally and linguistically accessible information about COVID-19 and how to

protect oneself and others” which not only increases their chances of contracting COVID-19, but also encourages the spread and transmission of COVID-19 to U.S. populations.⁵³

Refugees are also less likely to seek medical help when exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Several scholars have suggested that refugees might not seek medical care due to the fear of expensive medical bills, mistrust of the health care system, misinformation about COVID-19 or a loss of legal protection leading to deportation.⁵⁴ Furthermore, “widespread testing and contact tracing are less feasible in low-income settings.”⁵⁵ This represents the limited access that refugees and asylum-seekers have to adequate health care systems; they are limited in their lack of financial resources as well as limited support and information regarding health and medical care.

Uncovering The Veil And

Looking Towards The Future

The COVID-19 pandemic exemplified the critiques and shortcomings of the American resettlement process and has unveiled the inefficiencies within the government while also putting on display political priorities and goals. Millions of Americans became unemployed and the U.S. fell deeper into national debt in an attempt to fight the spread of the virus. As one of the richest countries in the world, “there is no reason why, in a society which has reached the general level of wealth ours has, the first kind of security should not be guaranteed to all without endangering general freedom.”⁵⁶ Refugees and asylum seekers are a particularly vulnerable population and they have been deprioritized and left out of legislative relief, “measures to control the outbreak of COVID-19 will only be successful if all populations are included in the national and interna-

tional responses.”⁵⁷

Despite the many challenges that refugees and asylum seekers have faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress has failed to pass sufficient legislation that allow refugees and asylum-seekers to focus on their health and wealth-being or allow them to become and remain self-sufficient. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the inefficiencies and shortcomings of the American resettlement process have been put on full display.

It is time to look towards the future to improve and protect the lives of the people coming to the U.S. in search of a better, more peaceful life. An analysis of immigration policy during the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the need for a more inclusive and accessible health care system and the suspension of laws and policies that prohibit refugees and asylum seekers from accessing health care, economic support programs and immigration benefits.

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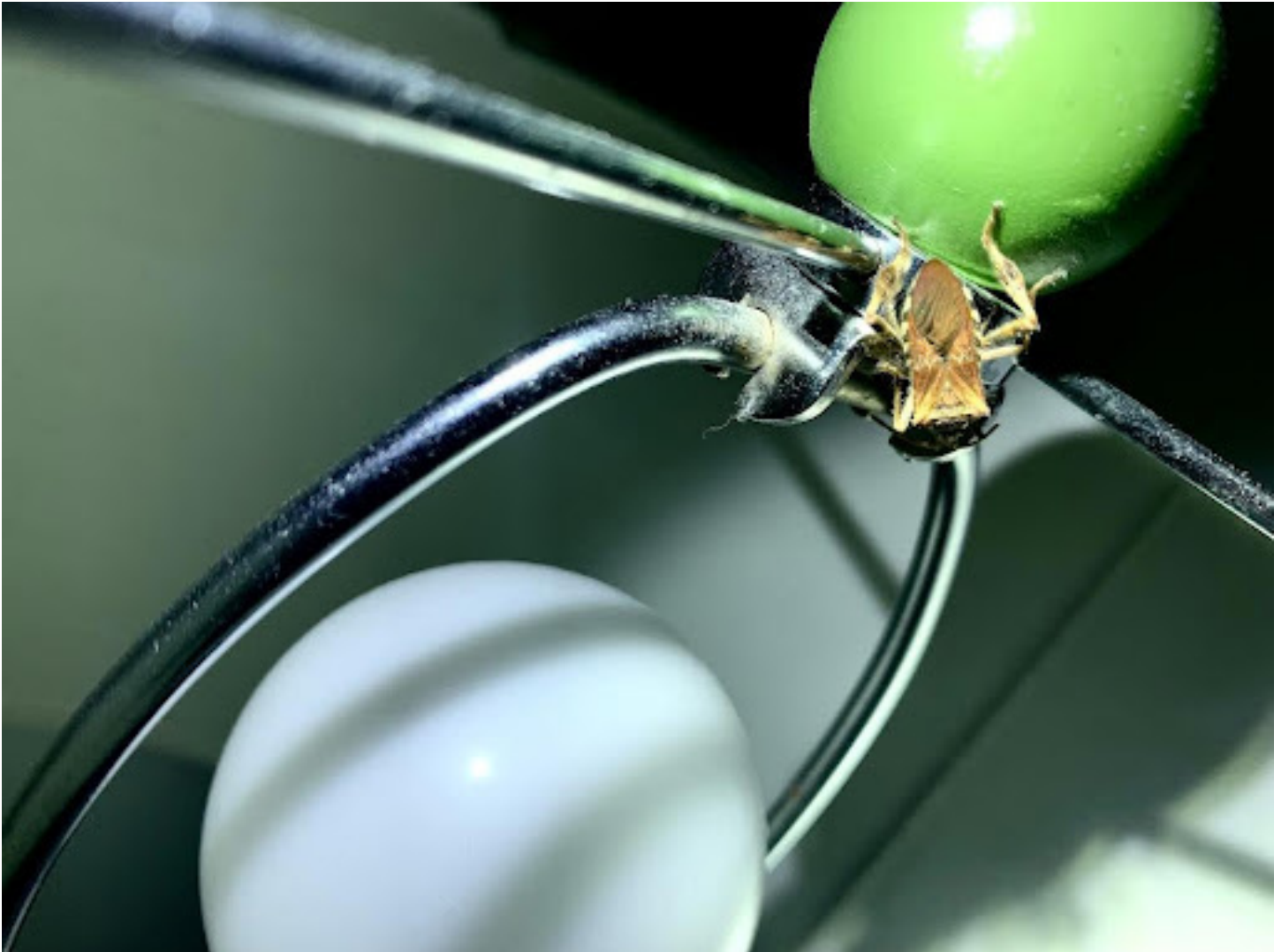
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(Above) An insect (leaf bug?) crawling on a lamp at a bed and breakfast north of Portsmouth, Maine.

(Right) I thought I would offer pictures taken over my last year. They exhibit increments of diminishing focus on the natural and increased focus on the unnatural. Most natural of all we have a picture of a flower in the middle of a frozen lake at the base of Mt. Washington in Vermont.

I chose this series because I feel like it best displays my emotional progression through the past year, trying to re-connect with a grounding sense of the natural but still feeling different; like what was once natural has changed. I suppose that's fundamentally what nature is: change.

Photo series by Alexander Snow, Fourth-Year History Major



Indigenous American and Hawaiian Olympians and their Influence in Indigenous Relations with Surrounding Nation-States

Bryan Corbett

Indigenous American athletes have participated in the Olympics as early as 1904 in St. Louis, where the self-representing Mohawk Indian Nation played lacrosse. Although the early Olympics seemed isolated from domestic affairs, as time went on the Games would become a setting to bring political and ideological questions to the international stage. Lacrosse, a sport which is rooted in multiple Native American cultures and was made into its modern form by the adaptation of a Mohawk ball game, *tewaarathon*, by English speaking Canadians. It was only an official medal sport at the St. Louis games and the following 1908 London games, with only Canada and Great Britain participating.¹ In this article, I will look at four different Indigenous athletes who participated in the Olympics under the United States over the course of the twentieth century. Each of the Olympians' lives provides insight into the relationship between

Indigenous peoples and the United States, as well as participated in changing the nature of this relationship directly or indirectly as a result of their participation in the Games and the attention they garnered as a result.

Dr. Daniel Cobb, an associate professor of American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a historian of twentieth-century Native America, authored *Say We Are Nations: Documents of Politics and Protest in Indigenous America since 1887*, an anthology created from a variety of primary sources. The sources include: essays, letters, interviews, speeches, government documents, and other testimonies. Dr. Cobb crafts a timeline through the twentieth century that conveys the evolving relationship between Indigenous peoples and Settler Colonial States. Dr. Cobb explains how activists, tribal leaders, and intellectuals used a variety of strategies and mecha-

nisms to resist settler colonial powers and demand Indigenous Sovereignty. The documents show how Indigenous peoples have adopted various ways of invoking Western and international democratic ideas of citizenship, freedom, justice, consent of the governed, representation, and personal and civil liberties. Dr. Cobb also investigates these ideas with indigenized meanings.

Dr. C. Richard King is a professor and chair of humanities, history, and social sciences at Columbia College Chicago, as well as an author of several books and essays concerned with Native Americans and sport. One such book is *Native Americans in Sports*, which can be described as a coverage of Native American athletes and athletics from a historical, cultural, and indigenous perspective ranging widely from pre-European arrival to the twenty-first century. Entries cover athletes, broader cultural themes, and how these themes affect and are affected by sport.

In this article, I intend to expand upon Cobb's and King's work by taking a closer look at an Olympic aspect of Native activism and sport.

The United States federal government attempted to erase Native American identity and indigeneity through their process of Native assimilation throughout the nineteenth century. The induction of Indigenous peoples into American society did not offer an opportunity for cultural pluralism. The reach of assimilation went beyond the borders of the country. In the Hawaiian Islands, the United States used the guise of "benevolent assimilation" to overthrow the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, which would lead to the annexation of the territory in 1898. The pressure exerted by the United States through assimilation extended its territorial, economic, and governmental control.²

Tsökahovi Tewanima was a member of the Hopi nation before he was removed from his home and forced to work in road construction in Keams Canyon for nearly a year before being sent to attend the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, where the school's founder's motto was, "Kill the Indian, save the man."³ Many students at the institution did die as a result of abuse, disease, and starvation. At Carlisle, students faced punishment from the administration if they engaged in their own cultures or used languages aside from English. Tew-

anima was given a new first name: Louis. All of these requirements were common standards at these institutions to destroy indigenous identity and incorporate indigenous youth into the American life. It was at Carlisle that Tewanima started his athletic career by participating in running. In the face of social eradication, Tewanima looked to running as an escape.⁴

Tewanima was 18 years old when he first enrolled at Carlisle. Life at Carlisle provided enough pressure and discomfort that Tewanima escaped for his home early into his time there. Ultimately, Tewanima and two other Hopi that attempted to leave as well were caught by a sheriff offering to purchase a meal for the men. The attempt of escape fell short 500 miles from the Hopi Nation before Tewanima would be sent straight back to Carlisle via train. Before Carlisle, Tewanima would often run over sixty-five miles with his friends during the heat of the summer. Running is a spiritual and traditional practice of the Hopi nation. In traditional ceremonies, Hopi runners ventured out into the desert to find springs and return with the water. The water was then spread by elders over the Hopi fields to symbolize well-being for all people.⁵

At Carlisle, students ran to achieve glory. Tewanima, appearing small and sickly, joined Carlisle's track team. Tewanima certainly earned glory, beating out more sea-

soned runners from universities and similar institutions. Tewanima's skill was without a doubt recognized by the American public, often being a favorite for gambling in marathons. The reputation he garnered would follow Tewanima to the 1908 London Games where he put on a valiant display, advancing through the pack of fifty-four runners. Although once in a favorable position, Tewanima and his American trainer on a bicycle had difficulty communicating in English. Ultimately, Tewanima would finish ninth.

Tewanima expected to go home to Arizona after the Olympics but was instead sent back to Carlisle where he would perform labor and pose for promotional photos for the institute. Tewanima continued to run and gained more fame for his accolades. Newspapers soon referred to him as the "Speedy Red Man." It was not uncommon for athletes at Carlisle to be depicted as savage warriors or referred to with some racial term on the field of competition. The public formed many opinions about the players at Carlisle. Tewanima was an example at Carlisle of the transition from a "savage Hopi Indian" to a "model student."⁶

In 1912, Tewanima returned to the Olympics, this time with teammate and fellow student at Carlisle, Jim Thorpe. Thorpe dominated these Games winning multiple gold medals. Tewanima won the silver medal in his event, also setting a

national record. This combination of feats would not be realized again until 1964 when Billy Mills would break the record. When Tewanima returned to Carlisle after the Games this time, he and Thorpe were greeted with a massive display of fireworks and other celebrations for their achievements. Several speakers, such as Pop Warner, the school's superintendent, and Tewanima's former coach at Carlisle, addressed the crowd gathered for the festivities. Even Thorpe and Tewanima were given the opportunity to speak, to which the former chose to thank their hosts for "splendid times" to which the latter only responded, "Me too." It would be nearly six more years before Tewanima could finally leave Carlisle freely and return to his village in 1912. Tewanima would never run again for glory, only for his religion and ceremonial purposes.⁷

While living in Hopi Nation, Tewanima married a Hopi woman and together they raised a child. The child was taken to an Indian boarding school just as Tewanima and so many other youths. Sometime during the 1920s, Tewanima's child returned home where they died of an undiagnosed illness and medical complications. After the Games, it seems Tewanima deferred to a quiet life in Arizona where he tended the land, participated in traditional Hopi ceremonies, and rarely spoke English. In 1954, Tewanima was honored by the Helms Athletic

Foundation, naming him as a member of the All-Time U.S. Track and Field Team. Three years later when Tewanima was sixty-nine years old, he was inducted into the Arizona Sports Hall of Fame. Tewanima, in spite of his successes, would seem to fall into obscurity behind the highly decorated Jim Thorpe. While his civic work in the Hopi Nation did not receive national attention, Tewanima remained involved in his Nation's organized spiritual and traditional work until his death. On January 18, 1969, Tewanima was preparing for an event with his nephew, ten-year-old Lomayestewa. Tewanima himself was eighty-one years old at the time. Tewanima's nephew was intended to assist him on his journey home, but Tewanima left early so that he could sleep. So Tewanima walked home alone that night. On that moonless night, Tewanima would take an unfortunate step off of a cliff and plunge to his death. Although no one can be certain of the cause of his miscalculation, it is generally accepted that Tewanima saw lights in the distance and, believing them to be his home, walked straight without regard for what was immediately in front of him. Today the Hopi hold an annual Louis Tewanima Footrace, open to anyone, in honor of the accomplishments of Tewanima's life.⁸ A lot can be learned from Tewanima's story. Even at his peak popularity he was not allowed to return home nor did he have much of a say in his future

or his image as it was written in the news. Many Indigenous peoples of the early twentieth century shared a similar fate to Tewanima. The United States assimilation program meant the destruction of native thought and thus removed many choices and freedoms of Native individuals, even those who were Olympic champions.

Duke Kahanamoku may be the most famous Hawaiian to have ever lived, and it is due to far more than his amazing Olympic career. Kahanamoku made his Olympic debut in Stockholm at the 1912 Games, where he participated in the 100-meter freestyle swimming, winning gold with a world record time of 1 minute and 22.5 seconds. Kahanamoku would go on to win four more gold medals in his Olympic career as well as his share of silver medals. In 1920, Kahanamoku won gold in both the relay and the 100-meter freestyle swimming events. Upon winning the freestyle, officials and other countries' coaches questioned whether or not Kahanamoku had cheated or done something outside of the rules to secure his time. Kahanamoku agreed to redo the race where he ultimately produced an even faster time. That same year silver went to fellow Hawaiian, Pua Kealoha.⁹

At the Paris Games in 1924, Kahanamoku won silver, having his previous record broken by his first-place competitor Weissmuller. Again, Kahanamoku was not the

sole Hawaiian winning a medal for the 100-meter, as his brother, Samuel, placed third, earning him the bronze medal. Although that would be the last of his medals, Kahanamoku did serve as an alternate on the U.S. water polo team in Los Angeles at the 1932 Olympic Games.

Kahanamoku was born in 1890 while Hawaii was an independent and sovereign nation. During his life, he witnessed the hostile overthrow of the queen of Hawaii. Before becoming an influential and successful champion, Kahanamoku left his formal education at eighteen years old before graduating and started working to contribute to his family's income and focus on athletics. Kahanamoku spent the remainder of his time on the beach at Waikiki, where he would further develop both his swimming and surfing skills.¹⁰

Kahanamoku fundamentally changed the world of competitive swimming with his flutter kick technique that proved more effective than the standard scissor-kick technique used by virtually all other swimmers. Kahanamoku credited the development of his technique to his time surfing where he first learned the flutter-kick to swim with the board effectively. Additionally, Kahanamoku used powerful strokes in his technique for improved propulsion. These choices made Kahanamoku nearly unbeatable for some time before the rest of the swimming world would adapt

and catch up to him.¹¹

Kahanamoku's success and personality gained him respect and admiration, making him an international sporting and cultural icon. The Duke, as he was sometimes referred to, possessed an electric personality to go with his athletic feats. Olympic teammates claimed that Kahanamoku was constantly telling jokes and enjoying himself. The Duke would put on swimming exhibitions and would later incorporate surfing as well to spread the sport to the mainland United States and the rest of the world. He is credited with the establishment of the earliest surfing clubs and the formal rules and etiquette of surfing. Kahanamoku made several careers for himself outside of the realm of sports as well. In between the Olympics and after his Olympic career had ended, the father of surfing spent a fair share of his life as a Hollywood actor, sheriff of Honolulu, and official greeter of the city.¹²

During the early twentieth-century, the United States American Museum of Natural History and its anthropologists considered Hawaii to be a "racial laboratory" that could be controlled to study racial theories, which included "racial mixing" and the effects of migration on the body. Scientific racism was maintained by elite American institutions and philanthropic foundations, who were competing to define Polynesian bodies, mindsets, and identity. The American public, while sup-

portive and admiring, placed their own defining label on Kahanamoku: American. In this period where anthropologists were studying race as a science, Kahanamoku served as a bridge between cultures and better representation of Polynesian bodies and life than any findings of the involved anthropologist.¹³ From the earliest encounters of Native Hawaiians by white Europeans, and later white Americans, the peoples of the Pacific Islands were labeled "natural and primitive." A fascination with the anatomy and physiology of Polynesian peoples and their "racial origins," assumed to be an early form of white civilization, boldly remained through the nineteenth century and onward to the early twentieth century. Dr. Maile Arvin describes a logic of possession through whiteness that still persists today when considering the United States relationship with Native Pacific Islanders and the ideas of race forced upon Native bodies.¹⁴

Duke Kahanamoku's life spanned through periods of social change and different ideas surrounding the constructs of race and identity. A beloved athlete and character, The Duke was accepted as both a Polynesian and an American. It is important to remember that Kahanamoku was competing in 1912 at Stockholm when nonwhite athletes were widely barred from competing in professional and amateur sports alike, excluding the case of a few boxers, jockeys, and collegiate athletes.

The Duke himself is responsible for the integration of private and public pools and surfing spots. Although beloved, Kahanamoku was not estranged from ignorance or racism. The Duke was a symbol that literally embodied the culture of Hawaii but represented the United States internationally. Kahanamoku's broad impact on the sporting world and race relations makes him one of the most influential athletes and an agent for positive change.¹⁵ Kahanamoku was so influential that some felt that, "... Duke Kahanamoku was sometimes looked upon as the personification of the prophecy of King Kamehameha who in the late 19th century predicted the complete subjugation of the islands by the white man, but that before the Native Hawaiian race died out, one man would bring it fame."¹⁶ There is no concrete evidence of the prophecy being said, but Kahanamoku certainly filled the role of a man to bring fame to Hawaii.

One of Kahanamoku's relatives once stated to David Davis, author of *Waterman*, Kahanamoku's biography, that, "All that you read now 'bout the Duke is false, and for me to divulge the facts would place him in the shallow of the family worth. Let beliefs be if they help the progress of the entities of surfing and aloha as they need a historical hero for commercialization..."¹⁷ The Duke was a hero for many and his service was not lost on his fellow Hawaiians who benefitted from the social

progress made. The Duke's legacy lives on and his spirited influence is still affecting the Olympic Games - the most recent 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games included surfing for the first time. The regulations of current Olympic surfing are not far from the original organization and rules founded by the Duke himself.

By the 1930s, the United States' relationship with Native communities had progressed little. Although allotments were beginning to slow, adjacent legislation continued the work of removing Native peoples' power and possessions. Nearly half of a century after the General Allotment Act, The United States government liquidated over 100-million acres of Native land. At this point, the remaining 48-million acres scattered across Native America, and if pressed together, could fit within the borders of South Dakota with excess room. Not only were Native lands still being divested by the government, but Native culture and traditions were also still in jeopardy. The Office of Indian Affairs outlawed dances, giveaways, and other traditional ceremonies. Furthering the disarray caused by the federal government's overreaching arm in Native affairs, exogenous institutions were implanted into Native communities. These institutions, such as Indian police forces and Courts of Indian Offenses, gave power to some Native individuals to control and punish others, leading to complicated conflicts within communi-

ties themselves. Awareness of these threats of the late 1920s throughout the 1930s brought about the call for a reevaluated federal-Indian relationship, catalyzed by the Great Depression and President Franklin Roosevelt's response to it. In 1934, the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) was passed, attempting to end allotment and the targeting of Native ceremonial practices. Legislation was used to create mechanisms for increased tribal self-government, legal reclaiming of tribal lands, and the development of economic infrastructure.¹⁸

The Second World War brought changes to the United States' and Native Nations' relationship. Firstly, it derailed Roosevelt's domestic reform agendas along with the IRA. The war did, however, contribute to revitalization efforts and presented new opportunities to Native peoples. An approximate twenty-five thousand Native individuals served in the United States Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and auxiliary corps. Another forty thousand sought opportunities in war industries off reservations. The war reinvigorated war societies and created new ones for many Native Americans. New ceremonies were created to send loved ones to war and welcome them when they returned. The increased mobility indirectly created a new regional network for Native Communities across the country. Like the rest of the world, Native peoples looked toward the post-

war world with great expectations. Many hoped for a dual victory, one over fascism abroad, and the other over racism at home. Tribal governments believed that the return of tribal lands as compensation for winning the war was to be expected. Old threats returned to tribal sovereignty in new forms. A new generation of assimilationists persisted in the goal of incorporation under a new federal policy known as termination. During the period of the mid 1930s to the mid 1950s, Native Americans continued to express a vision of their communities, and as Dr. Cobb describes, “reclaimed a future from a majority society bent on consigning Native peoples to the past.” Much of this period can be understood as Native peoples acting on the right of self-determination and expressing that right in various forms.¹⁹

The period from the mid 1950s to the late 1960s for Native America is characterized by activism and increased visibility of racial and other social issues. The added visibility was largely thanks to the momentum gained by Black activist groups of the time. The increased attention offered an opportunity in the form of new spaces for dialogue about the rights of racial minorities. However, riding the coattails of the civil rights movement was not done without added challenges. One such issue was difficulty faced by well-intended liberals to distinguish between the Native and Black civil movements.

As far as many Native nations were concerned, if the civil rights movement meant equality, and equality meant sameness, Native peoples wanted no part in it. The greater threat stemmed from “terminationists” whose goal was to destroy the relationship between Native nations and the federal government and place Native bodies into their own narrow model of belonging. The opponents of Native sovereignty used legislation designed to deconstruct Native communities. These motives were hidden behind rhetoric of equality, freedom, and emancipation. Public Law 280 was one such piece of legislation. Particularly, this law allowed for several states to extend their jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases into tribal communities at their own discretion, regardless of the consent of the tribe. This was a large blow against the progress made over the last several decades for tribal sovereignty. Congress was aggressive in the pursuit of targeting and terminating Native nations during the mid 1950s. Despite efforts from the National Congress of American Indians and similar groups to slow the process, the issue carried into the 1960s.²⁰

The American Indian youth became more involved in activism and the struggle for sovereignty during the 1960s. This is largely due to the increased number of Native students on American college and university campuses after the Second World War. Native youths

were able to build new networks and communities across academia in the form of clubs and workshops. These networks created new spaces for young Native Americans to discuss ideas and form organizations that could use effective activism and protest to support the greater Native civil movement. The War on Poverty from this period provided an interesting angle for federal-Indian interplay. Many saw the Office of Economic Opportunity as an ally against the paternalistic nature of the Office of Indian Affairs and a necessary aid to self-determination.

This period as a whole can be broken down into a couple of major themes that widely describe the time and situation between Native nations and the United States. Firstly, Native activists “drew parallels to and created alliances with organizations” involved in the Civil rights movement. The next theme encompasses how Native activists drew parallels between international politics and the decolonization movement. Deciding how to act on these parallels proved complicated and at times controversial for Native activists. Veteran and new activists alike were influenced by concerns over loss of identity and the concept of modernity, struggles for economic and racial justice, global decolonization, and their own experiences and local circumstances. The intention of many tribal governments may have been to take a clear and firm stance on the topics of civil

rights and sovereignty, but in actuality, these governments needed to perform and engage in complicated political balancing acts and delicate discussions, of which the repercussions were unknown.²¹

Billy Mills, born Tamakoce Te'Hila, is perhaps the most well-known indigenous Olympian of them all. Mills made an unexpected victory in 1964's Tokyo Olympic Games, which would change the trajectory of his life forever. Virtually unknown in the world of sport, Mills would become the first non-European to win gold in the 10,000-meter run, beating the national record in the process. To further intricate Mills' identity, he served as a marine in the United States military.²²

Mills was born and brought up in Pine Ridge, South Dakota on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation set aside for the Oglala Lakota Nation. Mills became an orphan at age twelve before he attended Haskell Institute in Kansas where he began his athletic career. Although Mills was skilled in both running and boxing, he would leave the latter behind to focus on his running. Afterward, Mills attended Kansas University on an athletic scholarship where he accumulated several major running accomplishments, including being named a three-time NCAA All-American cross-country runner and winning the 1959 and 1960 outdoor national championships with his collegiate track team. During his junior year of college,

Mills had run in the AAU Championships and as he lined up with his peers, a photographer asked him to be removed from the shot. Mills specifically recalls the man saying, "You. Yeah, you — the darker-skinned one. I want you out of the photo.' And that just went to the depths of my soul, and it just — it broke me."²³ Moments of racism like these would leave a deep impression on Mills. Afterward, Mills was distraught and returned to his room in a depression where he says he contemplated suicide. In that moment Mills recalled words from his father, from when he was a child, about how his "broken wings" would heal if he continued after his passion. It was after he graduated from Kansas with a degree in physical education, Mills joined the United States Marine Corps.²⁴

Mills qualified for both the 10,000-meter race and the marathon for the 1964 Games. At the time he was a First lieutenant in the Marine corps. There were several runners who were speculated to come out on top in 1964, but few would have suspected Billy Mills as a strong contender. Ron Clarke of Australia was the favorite to win the 10,000-meter, as he held the world record at the time. The challenging athletes were returning Olympic champion, Pyotr Bolotnikov of the Soviet Union, and Murray Halberg from New Zealand who had won the 5,000-meter at the previous Games. Ultimately, it was Mills that overtook Clarke and won

the gold.²⁵ Although the story itself has been recounted time and time again because of its prominence in Olympic history, it is Mills' personal recount that I believe is the most insightful to the significance he carried forward from that race. As the Games recently returned to Japan for the 2020 Games, Mills has come forward with more of his personal recounting of the '64 Games and his victory there. Mills emotionally recalled his story and filled with excitement as he recalled the historic last lap in which he overtook Clarke for the gold.

Mills was no stranger to racial discrimination, as he grew up in a period of progress for many Native nations and participated in the Olympics at a heightened time of awareness for racial injustice. Mills goes as far as to say that on the podium he was nearly overcome with emotion over his feelings of being unaccepted for his complex identity. Mills stated,

"I felt emotion being a citizen of our country, but overriding that was something more powerful. I whispered to myself, 'I don't belong.' I came close to crying on the victory stand. People probably thought I was crying because I'd won a race. It was more powerful than that."²⁶

Mills was well aware of the fact that despite becoming beloved in an instant by the nation he was representing, those same citizens would

not understand him as quickly as they became aware of him. Mills would harbor these feelings and use his success to springboard himself onto a track of spreading awareness of racial injustice and the idea of identities that transcended simple or narrow ideas of race.

After the Games, Mills returned to the United States feeling distant. "I came back as a gold medalist who created one of the great upsets and was introduced to another world," he said. "I wasn't ready for the introduction." Mills toured cities where he received invitations to business clubs that typically did not allow minorities to join. He declined, as it reminded him of fraternities that were similarly exclusive in college. Experiences with racism inspired Mills to explore the history of his people and the expropriation of their land, which effectively removed Native Americans from the American Dream. "The racism in America came real close to destroying me," Mills said. "How could I cope with that, never feeling like I belonged?... I can honestly say I never wanted to kill myself, but I wanted to have the quietness. I find that quietness now by addressing issues."²⁷ Today, Mills wants his words to unify all people.

Mills reflects on the most recent racial injustices in the United States and is hopeful but concerned about the future. Mills' hopeful attitude toward global unity and a focus on the next generation is pos-

sibly reflective of the attitudes present during the period between the 1950s and mid-1960s, which paralleled Native issues with global politics. Mills stated,

"We see all the framework of destroying America from within and it worries me but I feel very strongly in global unity, global diversity, and the future of humankind. I believe in the youth of the world and the youth of America."²⁸

After his running career came to a close, Mills set out with his wife to give back to the community and, "empower the visions of the elders and inspire the dreams of the youth," as Mills put it. Mills produced inspiring content in both film and literature, as well as co-founded Running Strong for American Indian Youth with Eugene Krizek in 1986. The charitable organization helps to provide water, healthcare, housing, and other basic needs to Native communities. In addition to the aid provided, the organization implements mechanisms and programs to encourage self-sufficiency, as well as pride in their heritage.²⁹ In this way Billy Mills has directly tried to help Native individuals create or better understand their own identities in the world. Mills still travels around the country today, speaking to Native youths with the hope of inspiring them to proudly embrace their own identities.

Alwyn Morris is a member of the Mohawk Nation and a legendary

Indigenous Canadian athlete. At the time, Morris is one of the only three North American indigenous athletes to earn a gold medal at the Summer Olympics, along with the aforementioned Jim Thorpe and Billy Mills.³⁰ Appearing at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games, Morris won gold in the men's K-2 1000m and bronze in the K-2 500m canoeing events with his teammate Hugh Fisher for the Canadian Olympic team. Beyond the triumph in his sport, Morris captured the attention of everyone watching after receiving his gold medal on the podium. While on the medal podium, Morris performed a demonstration in which he held an eagle feather over his head. The salute, as Morris explained during an interview, was meant to be a tribute to his grandfather who inspired his athletic career. The demonstration was also meant to symbolize friendship, honor, and life, as well as pay respect to his First Nations heritage. Morris is considered to be one of the most influential Indigenous American Olympians for his demonstration that grabbed the attention of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous viewers and media.³¹

Morris considered a number of ways in which he could express his message. Ultimately, Morris decided on the salute as his demonstration because of his comfort with the gesture and the reach he felt it would have. Morris spoke about the feather salute and his position as a Canadian and Mohawk, stating,

“It was pretty obvious I was there as an athlete representing Canada, and Canadians as a whole certainly were jubilant and happy that Hugh and I had accomplished our goal and brought home a gold medal for Canada...I am a Mohawk person, and I'm aboriginal in Canada and it was important for me to be self-identified in order to share that with the other part of who I am.”³²

Similar to Billy Mills, Morris recognized a dual conscious identity as both a citizen of Canada and member of the Mohawk Nation. Morris used his demonstration to engage in activism and resistance.

American newspapers, while not reporting negatively on Morris, misinformed the public about the meaning of the feather and used racially coded language to describe Morris generally. One American newspaper published out of Georgia, *The Atlanta Constitution*, stated Morris was a “full-blooded Mohawk.” The paper also stated Morris was from the “Caughnawaga” Reservation in Quebec. Almost eighty years after Tewanima's participation in the Olympics, newspapers are still incorrectly writing Indigenous names and communities and defining Native Americans by their amount of “Indian-blood”. The article claims the feather salute was to pay respect to “Indian heritage” and represented honor. The articles' choice of language is reflective of a

lasting ignorance in the American public surrounding Native individuals.³³

In a 2021 podcast interview, Morris further discusses his thoughts on aboriginal sport and his own story of success as an Indigenous person. The feather was given to Morris by a group of Indigenous people in Sacramento. Morris called Billy Mills for his thoughts on the salute, for which Mills offered his full support. Morris explains how many people missed the point of his message. Many equated the feather salute to the Black Power salute demonstrated by United States Olympians, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, at the 1968 Mexico Olympic Games, although that was never Morris' purpose. Morris mentions that he never received any negative or derogatory comments from the IOC directly in regard to his demonstration. Likewise, Morris received unyielding support from his teammates.³⁴

After the Games, Morris used his Olympic career and recognition to create a viable political career. The 1990 Oka Crisis in Canada acted as the ignition for Morris' political start, in which he primarily focused on problems surrounding Indigenous self-governance. The Oka Crisis was a dispute over land in Canada between the Mohawk Nation and the City of Oka in Quebec, Canada. The event lasted seventy-seven days and resulted in two fatalities and is one of the first

violent conflicts between the Canadian government and First Nations in the late twentieth century. Morris became a member of the Mohawk Council of Kahanawake and an advisor to policy related to aboriginal rights and land disputes. Morris also helped develop several programs to inspire Indigenous youth in Canada. One such program, founded in 1995, is the Aboriginal Sport Circle, a national organization that relates to Aboriginal sport interests. Morris is the acting chairperson of Aboriginal Sport Circle. Morris stresses the importance of sport to Indigenous peoples and its significance to his own life. Additionally, he recognizes that he was very fortunate to be able to find an accessible sport in Kahanawake that he could excel in. Morris wants the same opportunity to be offered to the Indigenous youth of Canada with the hope that First Nations national teams and other aboriginal teams may develop and grow.³⁵

Today, both the struggle for Indigenous Sovereignty continues and multiple Native nations are hoping to have their own national sports teams recognized by the IOC to compete at the Olympics. To compete as an independent nation at the Olympics apart from the United States or Canada would be an enormous step toward national sovereignty. Both the Hawaiian Kingdom and the Haudenosuanees peoples have hopes of self-representation at upcoming Olympic Games. In most

competitions, surfers from Hawaii are allowed to compete under their own flag, but at the Olympics, they compete for the United States. The World Surf League recognizes surfers from Hawaii as representing Hawaii or the United States, not both. At the Olympics, this distinction is done away with and Hawaii disappears as a surfing entity despite being the cultural heart of the sport. Many Hawaiians believe that the United States is still unlawfully occupying the island and in recent years several questions of sovereignty and identity have resurfaced. Just before his Olympic debut, famous Hawaiian surfer John John Florence stated, “There’s a little bit of tension with that, going into the Olympics under a U.S.A. flag. I don’t want to divide at all. I’m not anti-anything. I’m pro-Hawaii.”³⁶ For Florence, it is not important to remove himself from America as much as it is to support his home and heritage. Interestingly, surfing was almost wiped out in the nineteenth century by white colonizers. Fortunately, the sport survived and spread thanks to Duke Kahanamoku. The Duke even mentioned he hoped that surfing would become an Olympic sport one day. For many Hawaiians, surfing is a great source of pride, especially given the fact it survived obliteration when so much Hawaiian history and culture was lost. It is apparent even within the surfing community that Hawaiian surfing is set apart from the rest of the world.

When considering the possibility of surfing at the 2020 Olympics, another pro surfer, Seth Moniz from Hawaii shared that,

“I’d be honored to represent U.S.A., obviously, but I would prefer to represent Hawaii if I went there. I do wish we could have a voice or representation. Me and other Hawaiian surfers, maybe we have to make a push for that, to have the Hawaiian flag at the Olympics.”³⁷

Moniz along with other pro surfers did not qualify for the Olympic team. Had the United States team been split between America and Hawaii, other Hawaiian surfers could compete, like Moniz who was the second-highest ranked surfer in Hawaii.³⁸

Another group that wants self-representation at the Olympics is the Iroquois Nationals lacrosse team. The IOC granted the sport of lacrosse preliminary status for the 2028 Olympic Games set to take place in Los Angeles. With this provisional status also came inclusion in the 2022 World Games. Despite finishing in third at the 2018 World Lacrosse Championships, the Iroquois Nationals were not initially included with the eight teams chosen to compete at the 2022 World Games. Members of the team voiced their frustrations on social media, particularly Twitter. Most people responded with support for the Iroquois. Further, the voluntary stepping-down by the Ireland Lacrosse's

Senior National Team incentivized the World Lacrosse and the International World Games Association to change their decision on Iroquois Nationals participation in the 2022 World Games. The Irish Lacrosse Association believed it was important for the Iroquois to be competing at the Games because lacrosse originated in the Iroquois nations. The sport holds great significance in the Six Nations and was believed to have been given to the Iroquois as a gift from the Creator, a spiritual figure present across multiple First Nations cultures, to help heal individuals physically, mentally, and spiritually.³⁹

Of course, the game of lacrosse has changed plenty since its origination with the Haudenosaunee and other First Nations. In 1867, the National Lacrosse Association (NLA) was formed and with it came exclusion of Native participants in white clubs. One rule clearly states, “No Indian must play in a match for a white club, unless previously agreed upon.” The NLA became the National Amateur Lacrosse Association in 1880 with Native players barred from championship events. Indigenous teams had to play each other if they wanted to play at all. Allan Downey, a professor in the history department and Indigenous studies program at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, views the development of the game as an appropriation of Iroquois culture to create a distinct Canadian identity.

Downey says,

“It had the effect of limiting, if not almost eliminating, the right of the Haudenosaunee to represent themselves as a sovereign nation, as a team in, not only Canadian championship classifications, but also in international competitions.”

To be able to compete at the Olympics, the Iroquois Nationals will have to prove to the IOC that they represent a sovereign nation. The IOC is based on the recognition of nation-states, which a First Nation would undermine if recognized as sovereign. Downey claims that given the political angles surrounding the IOC and the Olympics, there needs to be a “reworking of the political process for their recognition and I’m hopeful that that will take

place but it’s not going to be without a long difficult struggle.” The only other option for the Iroquois would be to compete under the IOC’s flag, but this would ultimately defeat the purpose. The decision for the 2028 Games is set to be announced in 2024.⁴⁰

Like Daniel Cobb’s *Say we are Nations*, this article highlights the complexities around Indigenous sovereignty more so than gives direct conclusions about the state of Native America and Hawaii. Additionally, I have explored in this article how Indigenous American and Hawaiian Olympians have used their Olympic status to directly aid Native communities and inspire Native youth to comprehend and expand their own understanding of their identities. Participation at

the Olympics also indirectly, and in the case of Alwyn Morris, directly, raised previous and new questions about Indigenous identity, sovereignty, and representation to a global stage. I argue it is apparent from these cases that Indigenous Olympians played a key role in the positive progress made in the relationship between Indigenous nations and the nation-states that surround them, although it is equally apparent that there is progress to be made in securing self-representation as a sovereign nation recognized by the IOC and world governments.

With growing support for self-representing Indigenous sports teams, it seems hopeful that in the near future we may see the Hawaiian and Iroquois flags present at the Olympic Games.

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(Previous page and above) These pictures are from a Mount Everest expedition in 2019 by my father, when we have successfully climbed the highest peak in the world and completed the 7 summits program (which has only been completed around 450 times). We have climbed it from the Tibetan (North) side.

Photo series by Dmitry Tertychnyy, Fourth-year Economics and Mathematics Double Major and Minor in Geography

Київ or Киев?

Vivienne Timchenko

In a violent contest spanning over hundreds of years, Ukraine has been plagued by battles against despotism in the hopes of safeguarding a sovereign Ukrainian identity and country. The creation of the state of Ukraine began in the ninth century, with the first unified East Slavic state Kyivan Rus'. The name "Kyiv" (Київ) can be attributed to a legend concerning three brothers of the Polyanion tribe of the East Slavs and founders of the Kyivan Rus' empire: Kyi, Shchek, and Khoryv. The city of Kyiv was named to honor Kyi, the eldest brother. The ancient state amassed a vast amount of territory during its lifetime, and by the end of the tenth century, the Kyivan empire stretched from the far ends of the Black Sea to the Baltic Sea, and from the Carpathian Mountains to the Volga River. Strategically situated at the intersection of major trade routes by way of access to the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea and with favorable agricultural conditions, Kyivan Rus' flourished until its dissipation in the thirteenth century. Akin to other medieval states, central political institutions were largely undeveloped, and instead Kyivan Rus' was loosely controlled by dynastic clan enterprises.

The empire reached its height

of power in the reigns of Volodymyr the Great and his son, Yaroslav the Wise. In the year 988, Volodymyr adopted Christianity as the religion of the polity and had the Kyivan inhabitants baptized, and Kyivan Rus' assimilated with Byzantine, or later Orthodox Christianity and culture. The propagation of Byzantine culture cultivated ingenuity in fields such as architecture, art, and music. It also gave rise to a written language (Old Church Slavonic) and the beginnings of literary culture.¹ Yaroslav continued his father's legacy in reinforcing Kyivan Rus' political unity and helped embellish Kyiv as Eastern Europe's cardinal, cohesive, and cultural center in the early eleventh-century. Following Yaroslav's death, Kyivan Rus' disintegrated into a myriad of principalities, and the thirteenth-century Mongol conquest reduced the empire to merely a shadow of its former self. Following the Mongol invasion, Ukraine was divided by three external states, the Golden Horde, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the Kingdom of Poland by the middle of the fourteenth century. Unquestionably, the flat steppes of Ukraine, which posed no natural boundaries, accounts for the frequency and ease with which empires throughout history have

conquered it. Ukraine's topography makes it a uniquely desirable land and has transfixed its territory as a battleground, "for domination by the states which surrounded it, such as the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Ottoman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Crimean Tatar Khanate, Muscovy, the Russian Empire, and the Habsburg Empire."²

Ukraine's relationship with a separate Russian state began after the abolition of the autonomous Hetmanate and Sloboda Ukraine, one of the many empires that the territory of Ukraine was controlled by throughout time. Following this, Ukrainian territory was then reorganized into provinces under Russian control, administered by governors appointed from St. Petersburg.³ Much later, Soviet influence over Ukraine began in 1917 and tactically responded to and squashed any rising Ukrainian nationalism, yet it was only after, "two unsuccessful attempts to gain control over Ukraine in 1918 and 1919, [that] the third Soviet Ukrainian government was established in December 1919."⁴ While Ukraine was advanced technologically and underwent notable industrial development, it was also disproportionately abused, as many

injustices were inflicted on Ukraine by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in comparison to other Soviet states. These injustices, such as Stalin's "Holodomor," or the brutal Soviet engineered mass famines (1921-1922 and 1932-1933), were a result of direct discrimination against the Ukrainian people and were conducted to exterminate the entirety of Ukraine and resettle the land with Russians. The collapse of the USSR in 1991 and the subsequent declaration of Ukrainian independence wrought many political changes, and by nature of the USSR's dissolution, Ukraine has thus been set free and given the chance to forge a path for its nation. Ukraine's long, rich, and stormy history with Russia can be examined throughout history as turbulent at best, and translated to the present-day "Ukrainian question" -- one that is integral to Russian identity, and questions whether or not Ukraine should be reunited with modern Russia.⁵ To this day, Ukraine desperately attempts to escape Russia's embrace by developing political and governmental institutions disparate to Russia's, as well as making an aim to safeguard Ukrainian society from Russian aggression. Ukraine also developed relationships with its neighbors and with the West, which furthers the premises of Ukrainian ascendancy over hegemonic Ukrainian-Russian authority. A weighty point of contention regarding Ukraine-Russia relations is the Russification of

many aspects of Ukrainian individuality, such as the transliteration of the capital city of Ukraine, the ongoing conflict in the Russia annexed region of Crimea, and the war in Donbas. The chronic abuses inflicted by Russian centric political powers on Ukraine warrants a sovereign Ukrainian state, one in which Ukraine is sanctioned and bolstered by multinational states.

After the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, Ukraine, Russia, and other post-Soviet states were prompted with choosing a newly interpreted political order. While Ukraine chose to pursue a more democratic form of government, one to secure rights for its citizens, Russia took a vastly different, more autocratic direction towards its form of government. This can be demonstrated by beginning with the contrasts between the Ukrainian and Russian governments.

Russia is classified as a semi-presidential federation, whereas Ukraine is classified as a semi-presidential republic by the United States Central Intelligence Agency. In actuality, Russia has "shifted toward a centralized authoritarian state under President Vladimir Putin (2000-2008, 2012-present) in which the regime seeks to legitimize its rule through managed elections, populist appeals, a foreign policy focused on enhancing the country's geopolitical influence, and commodity-based economic growth."⁶ While both countries

have a separate chief-of-state and head-of-government, executive and legislative elections in Russia are significantly less free than elections in Ukraine. According to Freedom House, a non-governmental organization that measures the degree of democracy, political freedom, and human rights in a country, the Russian electoral process is given a rating of 1.25 out of 7.00, citing:

"[Russia's] elections and referendums continue to be controlled and manipulated by the Kremlin. Administrative techniques - such as denying permits to rally or appear on the ballot, using systematically controlled political parties to set candidate slates, engineering legal violations and criminal charges to prosecute opposition figures or politicians with an independent power base, and more traditional acts like ballot stuffing - are commonplace across Russia."⁷

Ukraine is given a score of 4.50 out of 7.00 in regard to its electoral process, and during the country's most recent election, "[Ukrainian] candidates were free to campaign, although misuse of administrative resources by incumbents was widespread. Private media were mostly biased and provided unbalanced coverage..."⁸ Unlike Ukraine, Russia has made a minuscule effort to distance itself from its predecessor's form of government. Similarly to the USSR, the Russian government

is consolidated around the leader, which in this case is President Vladimir Putin, and “is composed of the premier, his deputies, and ministers, all appointed by the president; the premier is also confirmed by the Duma.”⁹ Additionally in Ukraine, the Orange Revolution in 2004 and the Revolution of Dignity (Euromaidan) in 2013–2014 led “to a re-orientation of Ukrainian policy and a rapprochement with Russia” and both focused on public outrage over corruption within the government, as well as the public’s desire to eliminate Ukrainian ties to Russia.¹⁰ After facing copious political turbulence throughout its time as an independent state, Ukraine is quite far from total democracy and prosperity, with Russia being glaringly further still. The incongruities between Ukraine and Russia’s retrospective governmental structure highlight just a few of the multitudinous non-aligned interests of Ukraine and Russia. These incongruities further reasoning to support that Ukraine’s nonaligned interests with Russia indeterminably translate towards more than just government.

With a Pandora’s box of choices after the dissolution of the USSR, both Ukraine and Russia were left to interpret how their nation and peoples would be represented in post-Soviet space, and if the relationship between the two countries would emanate hostility or amiability. After 1991, the newly formed Russian nation centered itself around

the idea of a ‘Russian world,’ an idea of a community based on markers of Russian culture, language, and Russian subjugated past. Russia was, “not prepared and unwilling to recognize Ukraine as an equal state and as a separate nation.”¹¹ Russia cultivated an obsession with returning to its former Soviet glory and remains focused on antagonism towards Ukraine, in a way to attempt the consolidation of a modern Russian empire. Ukraine’s unique location between Russia and Europe furthers Russia’s hunger to strategically sow chaos, to exploit Ukraine’s domestic vulnerabilities, and to keep Ukraine solely under Russian control. However, since gaining independence in 1991, Ukraine has proven that it operates independently from Russia, for which the government has aimed, “at the maintenance and extension of state’s sovereignty and at relations with Russia on the basis of equality.”¹² Additionally, Ukraine views Russia as the main threat to its national security.¹³ Change was reflected in Ukrainian foreign policy only after the Orange Revolution, when “[Kyiv] abandoned the policy of multivectors and began to pursue a pronounced pro-Western policy. At the same time, Moscow [began] to realize that it [would] not be able to enter the community of democratic states on its own terms, and [began] to position itself as an independent center of power, opposing the West.”¹⁴ Upon this realization, Russia began attacking Ukraine,

again in an attempt to weaken it and isolate the country to force it under Russian control, brazenly beginning with the illegal annexation of Crimea in early 2014, and war in Donbas in 2014. By covertly deploying Russian military forces to the Ukrainian region of Crimea, illegally annexing Crimea from Ukraine, and incorporating Crimea into the Russian Federation in 2014, Russia sought to complicate Ukraine’s development and future trajectory as a country. Russia additionally,

“engineered the rise of new separatist movements in eastern Ukraine (the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, collectively known as the Donbas, with a population of about 6.6 million in 2014). Militants forcibly took power in several cities and towns, announced the establishment of two separatist entities...and gradually expanded their control in the two regions. Ukrainian government and volunteer forces fought back, restoring state control over a portion of each region but suffering some major defeats, including in battles in which regular Russian forces reportedly participated.”¹⁵

By reaffirming threats to Ukraine’s territorial integrity, Russia wants to encourage Ukraine to believe state-building is a futile effort and seeks to promote polarization between the Ukrainian people and their government. The annexation

of Crimea and the war in Donbas reveals Russia attaches strong importance to Ukraine as a part of Russian legacy, a territory to reconquer, and a tactical area of confrontation with the West.

The Russian President, Vladimir Putin's decision to illegally annex Crimea and invade Donbas in 2014 was a direct breach of the Budapest Memorandum. Struck in 1994, this key instrument, provided an agreement in which "Ukraine transferred the Soviet-made nuclear weapons on its territory to Russia and acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapon state (NNWS)."¹⁶ This treaty was signed by Russia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States, with security assurances pledged to Ukraine by the nuclear powers, in exchange for Ukraine's denuclearization.¹⁷ Yet, the West did not know how to handle this blatant violation of the Budapest Memorandum, as evidenced by the absence of support for Ukraine in 2014, and the failure to uphold the promises made in the Budapest Memorandum.¹⁸ Western powers were aware of Russia's autocratic actions, yet they did not respond, out of fear that a response to these Russian affronts to the facilitation of democracy might provoke Russia, a nuclear power.¹⁹ The betrayal of Western promises and failure of the Budapest Memorandum has invited serious scrutiny of security commitments.²⁰

This failure bolstered Russia to commit its most recent assault on Ukrainian sovereignty and people, the war in Ukraine, beginning in February 2022. What Ukraine is experiencing currently is the result of years spent appeasing Vladimir Putin in Crimea, Donbas, Georgia, Belarus, Syria, Moldova, and Transnistria. Yet, as the war develops, Western powers have met Russia's violence in a different way than in the past.²¹ This shift in attitude and action seems strange, as similarly to the 2014 war in Donbas, the Ukrainian-Russian War in 2022 is another brutal attack on not only Ukraine, but democracy. Yet, this shift is tremendously necessary. Western powers must extend their support for Ukraine drastically further, to ensure the livelihood of democracy.²² Like Russia, many former Soviet countries are burdened by their past. However, Ukraine sets itself apart from its fellow post-Soviet states by its fragmented history and the political and cultural traditions it inherited from the states that once ruled various parts of its territory. Within the comparisons between the former Soviet Republics, there are fewer differences than similarities. After achieving independence from the Soviet Union, many states saw initial democratic gains, with some regressions towards autocracy, and now sit within a political gray zone between authoritarianism and democratization. Yet, in Russia, the process of autocratic entrenchment

was lasting, while popular protests in many of the post-Soviet countries culminated in regime changes.²³ These countries, like Ukraine, have had to rebuild their nationalism and forge an identity-- either outside or inside of the Russian orbit. During the era of the Soviet Union "the economies of the republics had been closely intertwined, and Ukraine and the other Soviet republics were dependent on the Soviet centre."²⁴ But this economic entanglement with Russia did not change fundamentally for any of the post Soviet states after 1991.

The events that have transpired in Ukraine, as well as in other former Soviet states, do prompt involvement from the West. Indeed, institutions such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) represent a remedy for the violent problems that continue to plague these states. As Ukraine has moved decisively away from Russia's grip, it has faced challenges while constructing a unitary national identity. This is because Ukraine contains significant national minorities, with the titular Ukrainian nationality comprising around 80% of the population, combined with contestation to Ukraine's national territory.²⁵ Post-independence politics of nationalism divide Ukraine, as "people in the more heavily Ukrainian-speaking west have tended to disagree with those in the more Russian-speaking east on a range of issues, and Ukraine's politi-

cians and electorate are similarly divided” resulting in an “ongoing contention between the two parts of the country.”²⁶ Additionally, over 80% of Ukrainians are bilingual, which is used to substantiate the argument made by Russia that, “the Russian nation includes all Russian speakers or even all people within the territory of the former USSR.”²⁷ From the historical interconnectedness of Russia and Ukraine to their mutual economic interests, it is clear Russia’s political class will consistently refuse to treat Ukraine as a separate nation with the right to sovereignty, again signifying Ukraine as an important and disputed region.

Another essence concerning Ukraine is the name of the country itself, and its capital. Names carry significance and strength, and when examining Ukraine as a country, names are especially poignant and emotionally charged. In fact, “the name Ukraine, [meaning] ‘borderland’, reflects its location on the borders of other states, which dominated that part of Europe over the centuries after the disintegration of the first state on the territory of today’s Ukraine-Kyiv Rus.”²⁸ In addition to being symbolized as the borderland territory of Russia, Ukraine is often reflected as the younger brother of Russia. The form of spreading and enforcing Russian culture and language, or the russification, among Ukraine to suppress Ukrainian nationalism, has impacted Ukraine in many ways and

continues to produce detrimental effects on Ukraine. Reading like a declaration of war against Ukraine, in an article written by the Russian President Vladimir Putin, “the name Ukraine was used more often in the meaning of the Old Russian word ‘okraina’ (periphery), which is found in written sources from the 12th century, referring to various border territories. And the word ‘Ukrainian,’ judging by archival documents, originally referred to frontier guards who protected the external borders” authoritatively reduces Ukraine to nothing more than a borderland territory of Russia.²⁹ Here, Russia continues to proselytize the idea that Ukraine is a territory belonging to the Russian empire. Yet, the concept of Ukrainian identity makes the country hard to control, as Russia hopes to do. From treating the Ukrainian language as a dialect of the Russian language to the Russian spelling of Ukraine’s capital city, Kiev, as opposed to the Ukrainian transliteration, Kyiv, Russia continues its attacks on Ukrainian nationhood. The great Kiev or Kyiv debate must be viewed through the “terms of the deep-rooted national identity crisis caused by centuries of Tsarist and Soviet russification,” and should be appreciated through Russia’s historical quest to downgrade Ukrainian identity, as a national security priority.³⁰ However, by recognizing and implementing, “the Ukrainian transliteration for Ukraine’s capital, Western pub-

lications and other prominent organizations can restore a voice to those from whom it has been stolen, returning dignity and respect to the Ukrainian people.”³¹ By acknowledging the true spelling of “Kyiv,” a powerful resistance to Russian influences emerges, while simultaneously strengthening Ukrainian autonomy, and “[promoting] freedom and justice for Ukraine.”³² The difference between the western and eastern Ukrainians, and in the spelling of Kyiv seems almost inconsequential. However, this difference represents centuries of colonial oppression, intending to eliminate any recognition of Ukrainian national identity on a global scale. The perpetuation made by the global community to not recognize the correct Ukrainian spelling of its own capital city reflects international indifference and lack of respect towards Ukraine. Only when Ukraine’s statehood and autonomy from Russia are recognized, will a turning point begin, and the complicity towards a historical Russian effort to erase Ukrainian national identity will cease.

As evidenced by its history, Ukraine has struggled through countless periods of oppression, ones that lead to the rupturing of any attempts made to solidify a stable regime oriented around Ukrainian identity. Ukraine’s pursuit of its nationhood in the face of Russia’s prolonged oppression must be upheld and recognized by international states, to promote the

achievement of a sustainable, firmly Ukrainian political settlement. Russian and Ukrainian political development divulged in more ways than one after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, with the Russian government moving toward a profoundly autocratic regime. However, the Ukrainian direction regarding its political institutions has taken a more complex route, beginning as a hybrid regime similar to the terminal regime of the USSR, and has continued to shift and develop into a more democratic nation-state. The direction of Ukrainian development is similar to many of the oth-

er post-Soviet states. Many of the other post Soviet states have close ties to the West, as the West hopes to de-escalate tensions with Russia, but not so much so that it risks a direct confrontation with Russia. The asymmetrical relationship between Ukraine and Russia is exacerbated by the War in Ukraine. Despite the ongoing conflicts and adverse relationship with Russia, Ukraine has resiliently continued the facilitation of democratic reforms throughout the country, with the determination to retain a future as a sovereign nation. Presently, Ukrainian history, memory, and identity are as inter-

twined as ever and are strongly connected to domestic and foreign policies. After the assertion of Ukraine's integrity as a territory and sovereign state by other international actors, a question arises on how Ukraine should assert itself as an independent state, and how other states can support Ukraine, in what is one of world history's last great battles for independence. The Ukrainian-Russian war of 2022 signals the relationship between two hostile states, and most importantly implores the need for a continuance of Ukraine's nation-building journey.

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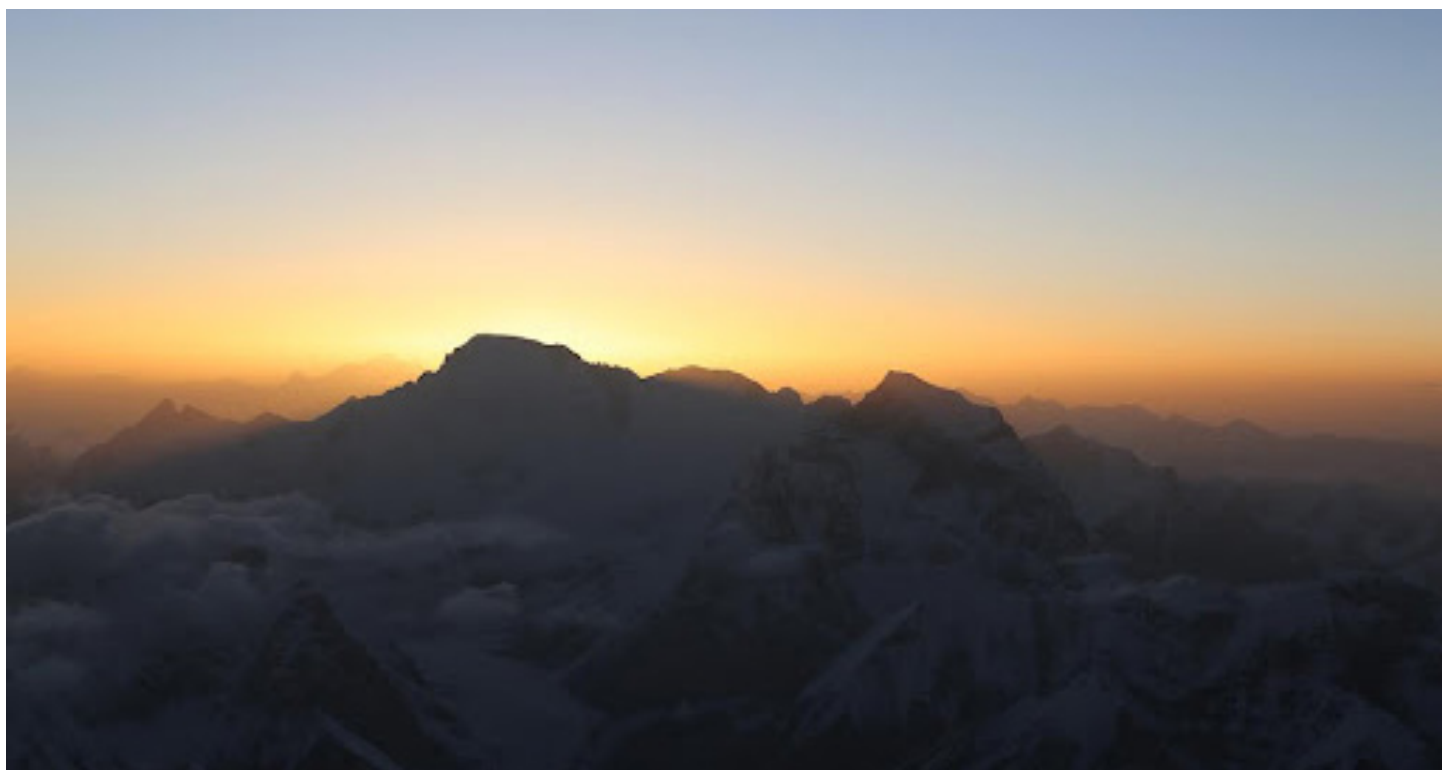
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(Above) Photo by Dmitry Tertychnyy, Fourth-year Economics and Mathematics Double Major and Minor in Geography

(Next Page) If only cannons shot out rainbows... Photo taken at Edinburg Castle in Scotland.

Photo by Hannah Elkins, Fourth-year English and Comparative Literature and Peace, War, and Defense Double Major.



