

# The World Bulletin

Bringing the World to the Island

Rohingya Refugee Crisis

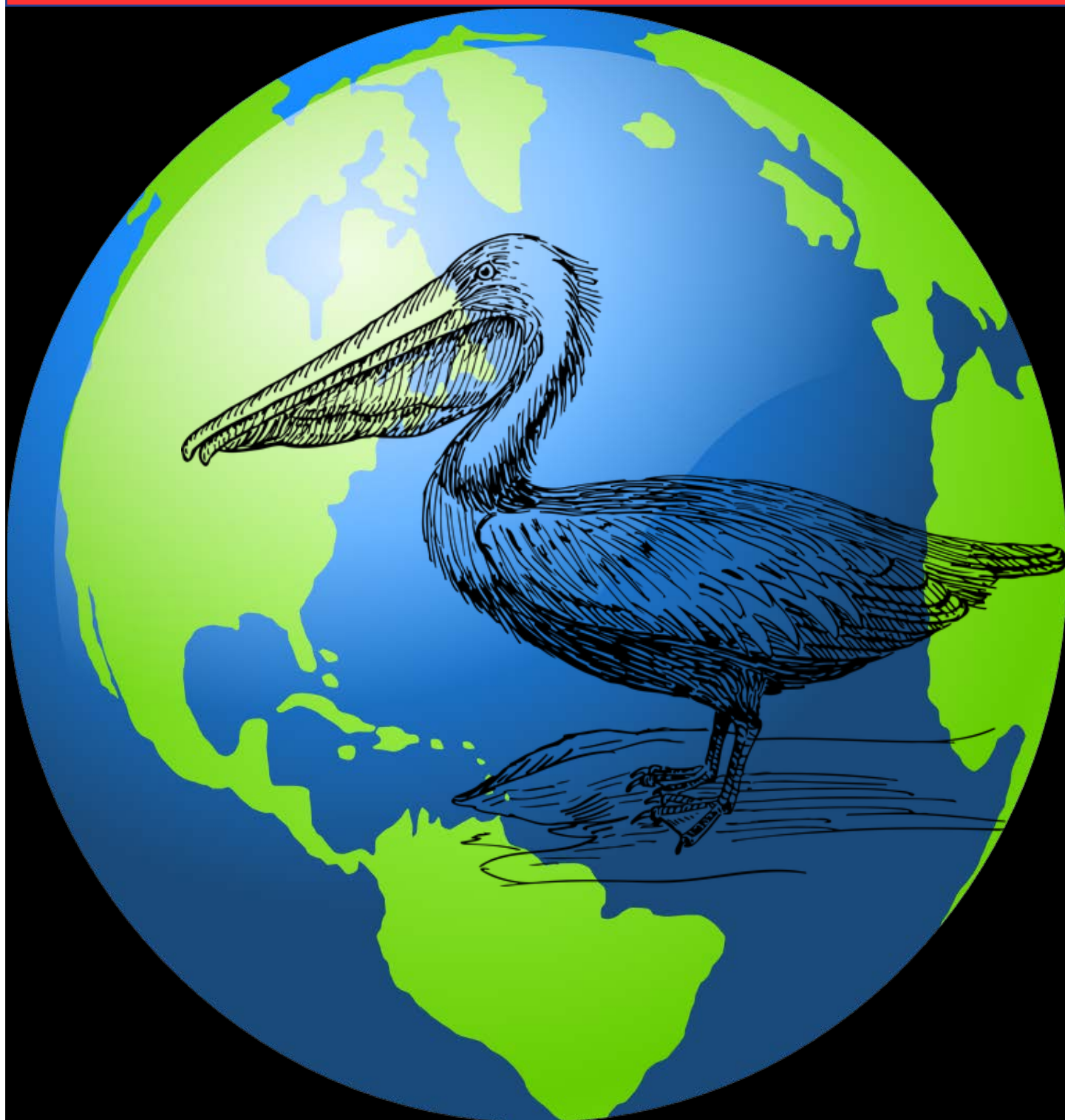
Archaeology Finds Spotlight

NBA Goes to Africa

China's Social Credit System

El Chapo Is Finally Caught?

Alvord Center Trip to Cuba



# The World Bulletin

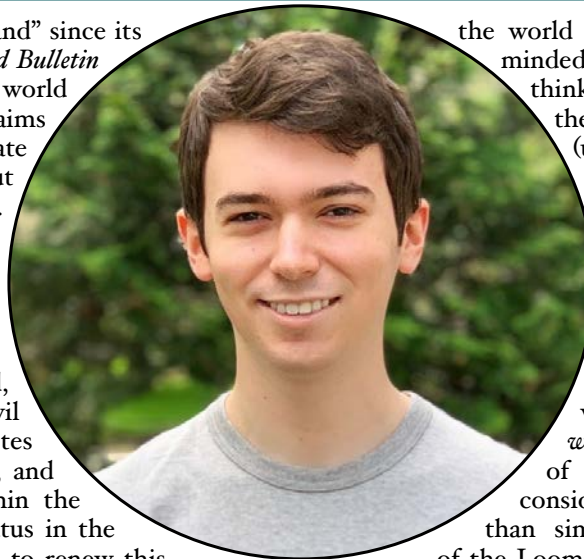
From the Desk of the Editor-in-Chief

*Welcome Back to the World Bulletin!*

“Bringing the world to the Island” since its inaugural issue in 2010, the *World Bulletin* is Loomis Chaffee’s biannual world affairs journal. The publication aims to expose, enlighten, and educate the Loomis community about the world beyond the Island. Discussing issues and events from five regions - the Americas, Asia/Pacific, Middle East, Africa, and Europe - and including writers drawn from all four grade levels and hailing from across the world, the *World Bulletin* encourages civil and global awareness, promotes discourse on international affairs, and fosters global consciousness within the LC student body. Though on hiatus in the 2017-18 school year, I am pleased to renew this staple publication in the Loomis Chaffee community with the Spring 2019 issue of the *World Bulletin*.

It is important for us Loomis students to be attuned to the events of the world, even though it may be easy to focus our thoughts only on what occurs on campus and neglect what lies beyond. Though we may feel encumbered by tests and assignments and may become lost in the business of our everyday lives, it is important to remember that there is so much occurring in the world around us, as is so clearly illustrated by the articles in this issue. To consider world affairs at face value, distorted by supposition and bias, to remain complacent with a reductionist picture of global issues, to be satisfied with a cursory knowledge of the world, unchallenged by discourse and research, is to isolate oneself and dredge deeper the moat around Loomis’ little island. I can see no time more apt for the resumption of the *World Bulletin*, a publication that breaches the bourn that corrals us, educates the Loomis community, challenges suppositions among the student body, and unites us with a common understanding and global consciousness. Through careful research, *World Bulletin* writers provide factual assessments of world events intended to add complexity to students’ opinions and stances already formed by glances at Snapchat news or *Wall Street Journal* headlines. Some *World Bulletin* articles uncover events and illuminate global movers-and-shakers who would otherwise have been glossed over by the mainstream media. Others challenge traditional stances on world issues by framing them within broader historical contexts. The *World Bulletin* will fill a void on campus by once again igniting discourse on world issues and according students a forum in which to read, write, and learn about the world.

On campus, we stress the importance of serving the common good and developing the best self. One cannot fully abide by this moral precept without an understanding of the world beyond the Island. Global awareness renders students more empathetic; to learn about conflict in Yemen, strife in Venezuela, and social credit in China is to consider more deeply the experiences of others around



the world and to become active and open-minded global citizens. When LC students think of serving the common good, their definition of common good may (unconsciously) extend only so far as the tracks to Windsor Avenue or underpass to Geissler’s. It’s no wonder that this may be the case, since we read weekly emails that highlight our so-called “Pelican Pride,” we emblazon our school website with the accomplishments of our illustrious alumni, and we lionize donors; we often look *within* our community for models of altruism and charity. We should consider the common good to be more than simply “common” among members

of the Loomis community, but rather a uniting force among residents of Windsor, Connecticut, New England, the United States, and the world. The “common good” touches all individuals in this world and is a force that transcends school affiliation, geographical location, or political alignment. It’s something our founders hoped to promote when they opened the Loomis community to all individuals regardless of their religious convictions, political beliefs, national origin, and financial resources. The *World Bulletin* helps to mold students’ perceptions of belonging and identity; by researching and actively assessing world issues, by implicitly proclaiming that all stories worth hearing – not simply those that pertain to campus life – *World Bulletin* writers enforce the notion that we are connected by a shared humanity, and they thus extend the definition of the common good from one caged in by our campus “loop” to one unbridled by borders. By sharing the stories and experiences of individuals across the globe and expanding students’ scope of consideration, the *World Bulletin* opens the door for connections across seas, valleys, and mountains; with publication in hand and a global consciousness uniting them, Loomis students can share in this quest for the common good with others across the world.

Ethan Levinbook '20, Editor-in-Chief

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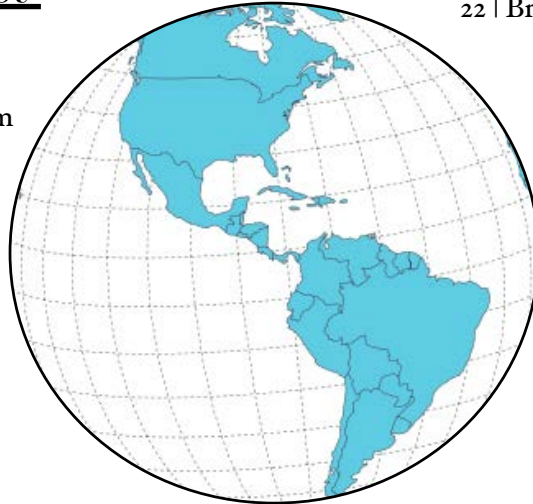
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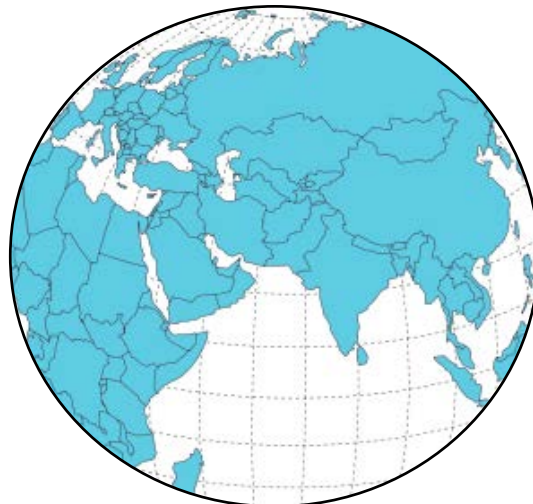
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**ANDY CAO '21** (“#MeToo Reaches the Holy: Vatican Responds to Sexual Abuse”), a resident in Carter Hall, is from East Longmeadow, Massachusetts. A member of the swim team, the Communications Coordinator of StuActs, and a staff member on the *Confluence*, Andy was a 2019 HPRESS Tea honoree.

**VICTORIA CHE '21** (“Is Brexit Still On?”) is from Dalian, China and makes her home on the Island in Cutler Hall. A newly-selected *Log* Opinions Section Editor, Victoria is a captain of the LC Debate Team and a key Model UN envoy, where she was awarded Outstanding Delegate at YMUN and Honorable Delegate at BosMUN this year.

**EMMA DEVLIN '21** (“As Nigerians Reelect President, Tribal Ties Are a Question”), a resident in Richmond Hall, is from London, United Kingdom. She is an active contributor to *The Log*, and is a member of both StuActs and the Pelican Service Organization.

\* **JULIA DEITELBAUM '19** (“Top Score: How to Ace China’s Social Credit System”) is a day student from Ellington, Connecticut. A Head Delegate in Model UN and a member of the LC girls varsity golf team, Julia is principal harpist in the West Hartford Symphony Orchestra. In November 2017, she traveled to Budapest, Hungary to participate in Yale Model Government Europe. An HPRESS honoree in 2019 and recipient of the Junior History Award in 2018, Julia will attend Duke University this fall.

**JACK GLASSIE '20** (“NBA Goes to Africa”), a resident in Batchelder Hall, hails from Newport, Rhode Island. Former Web Director and newly-selected Web Editor of *The Log*, Jack is a captain of LC’s varsity alpine skiing team. He currently serves as a tutor for elementary school students through Loomis’s community service program.

\* **ARJUN GROVER '20** (“The Plight of Rohingya Refugees”) is a day student from Avon, Connecticut. A pitcher on the varsity baseball team, Arjun is also a tour guide and a junior officer in the PSO. An HPRESS honoree last year, Arjun traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies in 2018.

**THEO HALLAL '20** (“El Chapo...At Last!?”), a resident in Warham Hall, is from Irvine, California. He is pursuing a GESC Certificate, and in summer 2017 he traveled to Iceland with the Alvord Center.

\* **ETHANITO '20** (“Sorry, No Returns: Former ISIS Brides Seek Asylum — at Home”), a prefect in Carter Hall, recently relocated from Singapore to Greenwich, Connecticut. The captain of thirds basketball, Ethan plays ultimate frisbee in the spring.

\* **RYAN JONES '20** (“Who’s Running Venezuela?”), a prefect in Carter Hall, is from West Hartford, Connecticut. He works as an e-proctor, tutors in the Writing Studio, and is a member of the boys cross country and track teams. He is a newly-selected Opinions Section Editor of *The Log*. Ryan was a speaker at the 2018 English Honors Tea, and had an essay honored again this year. A recipient of the Junior Foreign Language Award (Spanish), last summer Ryan traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies.

**KAVYA KOLLI '20** (“Ni Una Menos in Latin America”) is a junior from Kansas City, Kansas. At Loomis, Kavya works in the Archives, plays singles on the JV girls tennis team, and performed in *Shrek: The Musical* last winter at the NEO. A Norton Fellow, Kavya traveled to India in Summer 2018 to lead a self-defense class for young girls. Kavya is a 2019 HPRESS honoree, and she was the recipient of both a Founders Prize and the William C. Card Junior Music Award.

\*\* **ETHAN LEVINBOOK '20** (“Archaeology Digs the Spotlight”), a day student from West Hartford, Connecticut, is a tour guide, the Editor-in-Chief of the *World Bulletin*, and a newly-selected Editor-in-Chief of *The Log*. A three-time HPRESS honoree, a 2018 and 2019 English Honors Tea invitee, and the recipient this spring of a Founders Prize, Ethan also received Junior Awards in English, History, and Foreign Language. He has been playing cello for 11 years, and currently performs in the Loomis Chaffee Orchestra and the Connecticut Youth Symphony Orchestra. In 2017, Ethan founded the Loomis Chaffee Music Mentors community service program. This is his second published article in the *World Bulletin*; he previously reported on the passing of South African activist Ahmed Kathrada (Spring/Summer 2017).

**GRACE LYONS '19** (“Detention of Uighur Muslims in China”), a 3-year boarder from Chicago, Illinois, is a resident of Howe Hall. She has been an active member of the Model UN team, and spent her junior year in Beijing with SYA. Grace previously wrote for the *World Bulletin* in the Spring/Summer 2017 issue (“French Voters Embrace E.U., Emmanuel Macron”). Combining her dual passions for both French and Chinese, it is no surprise that Grace was awarded the Chérny Senior Foreign Language Prize this spring, honoring her achievements in *both* languages. Grace will attend the University of Chicago this fall.

**ANDREW PARK '22** (“Frenemies in Hanoi: U.S.-North Korea Summit”), a resident in Kravis Hall, is from Seoul, South Korea. A 2019 HPRESS Tea invitee, Andrew is a Pelican Service Organization officer, a member of the LC Robotics team, and a newly-selected Melange Section Editor for *The Log*.

## About the Writers

\* **TARA PUGLIESE '19** (“*Les Gilets Jaunes: Civil Unrest in France*”), a 2-year boarder from Los Angeles, California, is a resident in Palmer Hall. She serves both as a Peer Health Educator and as a tutor in the Writing Studio. An invitee to both the HPRESS and English Honors Teas this spring, Tara was also awarded the Norris E. Orchard Senior English Prize and is a recent inductee in the Cum Laude Society. This fall, Tara will head back home and attend University of California, Santa Barbara, where she plans to double major in physics and philosophy.

**ANYA SASTRY '20** (“Yemen: New Middle East Battleground?”), a resident in Longman Dormitory, calls Barrington, Illinois her home. She is the president of the Loomis Chaffee Young Democrats club and is a member of the LC girls varsity tennis team. A newly-selected National Outreach Director for the Youth Climate Strike, Anya led a rally for climate change in Chicago during March break. A 2019 HPRESS honoree and a Founders Prize recipient, Anya is an active member of the Model UN delegation. This February, Anya traveled to Washington, D.C. through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies.

\* **LIAM SCOTT '19** (“Remembering the Rwandan Genocide”), a day student from Glastonbury, Connecticut, is out-going Editor-in-Chief of *The Log* and a member of the varsity equestrian team. A multiple award-winning Model UN delegate, Liam traveled to Budapest with YMGE in November 2017 and, in summer 2018, traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies. A four-time English Honors Tea invitee and the recipient of the Junior English Prize, Liam also received the Samuel C. Suisman Senior History Prize, the Sarai Ribicoff Senior Journalism Prize, and was inducted into the Cum Laude Society. Liam will attend Georgetown University this fall.

**NEALA SWEENEY '20** (“Bridging the Pearl River Delta”), a resident in Palmer Hall, is from Hong Kong. A newly selected Editor-in-Chief of *The Log*, Neala is a captain of girls varsity water polo and is also a member of the varsity swimming and cross country teams. This spring, Neala won the Junior Female Physical Education Award.

**TING-YOTAN '22** (“The Warsaw Summit: Creating Peace or Tension?”), a resident in Carter Hall, is from Taipei, Taiwan. A member of the boys varsity tennis team, Ting-Yo is also an accomplished violinist; in winter 2019, he served in the Loomis Music Mentors Program.

**EMMA TISHLER '20** (“Language Is Not This Country’s Barrier: Catalonia and Spain”), is a day

student from Glastonbury, Connecticut. She runs varsity track and cross country, works in the Writing Studio as a tutor, and participates in the community service program. In summer 2018, Emma traveled to Puerto Rico through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies.

**ANGELA WANG '20** (“Nord Stream 2 Ignites Controversy”), a resident in Ammidon Hall, hails from Shanghai, China. A newly-selected Managing Editor of *The Log* and an Assistant Editor of the *Loom*, Angela is active in the NEO Theater. In summer 2017 she traveled to Iceland through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies. A two-time HPRESS Tea honoree, Angela won gold and bronze in the Katherine Brush Creative Writing Contest in her sophomore and junior years, respectively, and this spring was a recipient of the Junior Foreign Language Award (Spanish).

**GRACE WOLF '20** (“Is Benjamin Netanyahu Finished?”), a prefect in Cutler Hall, is from Appleton, Wisconsin. In the NEO, she serves on the tech crew and performs in Dance Company, and she is a member of Water Warriors, a community service group that provides swimming lessons to children from the Windsor area. In summer 2018, Grace traveled to Vietnam and Cambodia through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies. Inspired by her trip, Grace fundraised for the PEPY School throughout her junior year. A three-time honoree at both the English and HPRESS Honors Teas, Grace participated in the Emerging Writers program in summer 2017. This spring Grace received both a Founders Prize and a Junior Theater & Dance Award.

**STEPHANIE ZHANG '21** (“Reflections on a Visit to Cuba”) is from Houston, Texas, and lives in Cutler Hall. A 2018 and 2019 HPRESS Tea honoree, Stephanie is a co-News Editor of *The Log*, a student council representative, and a captain of the girls JV lacrosse team. She is also a two-year member of the Model UN program, and this November will participate in YMGE Lisbon. In her article for this issue of the *World Bulletin*, Stephanie recounts her experiences traveling to Cuba with the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies.

**SOPHIE ZHUANG '21** (“Protests in Sudan”), a resident in Cutler Hall, makes her home in Shanghai, China. Sophie is a member of the varsity equestrian, varsity swimming, and thirds lacrosse teams. During Head’s Holiday weekend in February 2019, Sophie traveled to Washington, D.C. through the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies.

\* = Editor

\*\* = Editor-in-Chief

# MIDDLE EAST

## Sorry, No Returns: Former ISIS Brides Seek Asylum at Home

by Ethan Ito '20

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), in recent years one of the world's largest and most dangerous terrorist groups, has lost its last stronghold in Syria. Their once expansive territory, which stretched across the two countries, was subsequently reclaimed by a coalition force against the terrorist organization. At its height, ISIS enlisted terrorists from all over the world. As ISIS has lost power, more and more of its members have requested to return safely to their homes; debates have ensued regarding whether they should be allowed back into their countries of origin.

At the age of 20, Hoda Muthana, then a student in Alabama, travelled to Turkey; she told her family she was headed to a university event. To her family's shock, she joined ISIS and supported attacks on western society (Rukmini Callimachi and Alan Yuhas, "Alabama Woman Who Joined ISIS Can't Return Home, U.S. Says," *New York Times*, 20 February 2019). With ISIS nearing its collapse, Muthana is attempting to reenter the United States by claiming that she is a U.S. citizen. Muthana, born in New Jersey, was born to Ali Muthana, a naturalized U.S. citizen and a former U.N. Ambassador to Yemen. Her family claims that she is a natural-born U.S. citizen. The United States argues that she was issued an American passport incorrectly, and that she was never, and never will be, an American citizen. Further complicating the issue, "Ms. Muthana says she applied for and received

who has openly supported a terrorist organization raises concerns. U.S. President Donald Trump, in a tweet, said that he directed the Secretary of State "not to allow Hoda Muthana back into the Country!" (Callimachi and Yuhas). However, Trump's proclamation is not so simple. If Muthana is indeed a U.S. citizen, she is free to reenter the country; the only way the U.S. could legally bar her entry is if she were entering as a non-citizen. Justice Department lawyer Scott Stuart believes that "Muthana's access to the media [is] proof that she's not in immediate harm's way" (David Shortell and Jennifer Hansler, "Judge Denies Motion to Fast-Track Case of American-Born ISIS Bride," *CNN*, 4 March 2019). The fact that she is not in immediate danger is crucial because this allows the U.S. to protract the decision-making process.

An analogous case is that of Shamima Begum, a British citizen who left for ISIS at age 15 and, four years later, has asked for permission to return to the United Kingdom. She admits that she has felt guilt for leaving the U.K., but also admitted that she is "still in the brainwashed mentality," raising security concerns about letting her back into the country (Jacob Jarvis, "Isis Bride Shamima Begum: 'I Regret Everything and I Was Brainwashed... Give Me a Second Chance,'" *Evening Standard*, 2 April 2019). Her husband, a Dutch terrorist, also planned to reenter the Netherlands; however, the Dutch government refused his plea. One argument for letting Begum reenter the U.K. was that "the government has accepted 400 people who have picked up a gun and actively fought for ISIS and then been allowed to reenter Britain," raising questions as to why Begum, who "was just a housewife for the entire four years," would be barred from entering the U.K. again (Hillary Leung, "The Family of Shamima Begum Is Appealing the U.K. Government's Decision to Revoke Her Citizenship," *Time*, 21 March 2019). Begum was never involved in direct conflict. The argument is that if active fighting members of ISIS were allowed into the U.K., Begum, who was not an active militant member of the organization, should be allowed to reenter. Nonetheless, Begum must fight an uphill battle to return to the U.K. In an interview, she stated, "[the U.K.] has no proof that I'm a threat, other than that I was in ISIS, but that's it" (Sarah Vine, "Shamima Begum Was an Impressionable Girl When She Left for Syria, but Now Her Lack of Repentance Shows She's a Snowflake Terrorist Who Deserves to Have the Door Slammed," *Daily Mail*, 19 February 2019).



Hoda Muthana in a northern Syrian camp with her infant son in April

a United States passport before leaving for Turkey" (Callimachi and Yuhas).

Aside from the question of the legitimacy of her citizenship, the issue of granting reentry to someone



The U.S. and U.K. face a dilemma of whether to allow Muthana and Begum, respectively, to return. If they do indeed grant them reentry, they are setting a potentially dangerous precedent: people previously associated with terrorist organizations are welcome in American and British society. If the U.S. and U.K. decide to bar Muthana and Begum from returning, it sends a message of no tolerance for those involved in terrorist activities. This debate is likely to rage on, and whatever the outcome, it is sure to be mired in controversy for years to come.

British citizen Shamima Begum seeks a return to her home in the U.K., where she left at age 15

## The Warsaw Summit: Creating Peace or Tension? by Ting-Yo Tan '22

Led by the United States, the Warsaw Summit was held February 13–14 in Poland's capital. The original purpose of the meeting was to allow different leaders from all over the world to express their interests and opinions, while making an effort to create a better Middle East in regards to security and, in a broader sense, peace. However, controversy arose during and after the conference when people began realizing the purpose of the summit was to isolate Iran (Jan Smolenski and Virginia Pietromarchi, "U.S.-led Middle East Conference in Warsaw: All You Need to Know," *Al Jazeera*, 13 February 2019). In recent decades, the United States has clearly expressed animosity toward Iran due to security reasons. Especially for the U.S., the absence of Iran on the attendance list emphasized that the international community has no intention of hearing the Iranian perspective.

Upon his arrival, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was warmly welcomed by the Foreign Minister of Poland, Jacek Czaputowicz. The two-day conference seemed successful for the participants in terms of promoting peace, but what went on behind the scenes stimulated tension: before the meeting took place, it was unclear who would be there, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu even spoke with U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, along with Pompeo, to address the summit. However, it soon became evident that Tehran officials were clearly missing from the list.

In an effort to create peace, the U.S. never explicitly commented on Iran's absence: "There won't be a tangible outcome with a statement that isolate[s]

Iran," warned Ellie Geranmayeh, the deputy head of the Middle East and North Africa programme. "European countries are going to be very cautious on what statement they will sign or to join any conclusion that point[s] fingers on Iran" (Smolenski and Pietromarchi).

Throughout the summit, Poland tried to remain neutral, despite its presence at this "anti-Iranian meeting." The U.S., which initiated the conference, cleverly presented its agenda of isolating Iran by devising a method of implying, rather than explicitly expressing, its hostility towards the nation. While Iran's absence might seem offensive enough, the U.S.

pointed out that it did not mention the Islamic republic in the meeting at all. Instead, it tried to avoid the fact that the focus of this summit was to politically isolate Iran. "We will discuss violent instability in Syria and Yemen, as well as efforts to achieve a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians," Pompeo and Czaputowicz wrote on

CNN (Raphael Ahren, "Organizers Don't Mention Iran as a Topic for Warsaw Summit," *Times of Israel*, 13 February 2019). "Further sessions will feature discussions on missile proliferation, energy security, emerging cyber-based threats, counterterrorism, and humanitarian aid. Our broad goal is to hear every nation's unscripted, candid ideas for how to make progress on these issues, and more," they wrote.

Another primary effort of the United States was to isolate Iran as a group, rather than individually, by emphasizing that the "anti-Iranian" summit was attended by over 50 countries. For the White House,



the main goal of the conference was to consolidate a U.S.-Israel-Arab camp against Iran (Robert Czulda, “The Warsaw Summit: Not So ‘Anti-Iranian’ but Still a Success,” *Atlantic Council*, 19 February 2019). The U.S. used the Warsaw Summit to clearly present its goals and demonstrate “how many states—both actively and passively—support [...] this vision.”

Although Iran was excluded from the summit, it has not failed to make its voice heard. Not surprisingly, Iranian officials have claimed that the U.S. has aimed



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, center, participates in the Warsaw Summit in Warsaw, Poland on February 14, 2019.

to shut Iran out for decades. Iranian media heavily criticized the U.S. after the meeting, while Poland remained clear of the tension as a neutral player (Czulda).

What has caused the tenuous relationship between the United States and Iran? While disputes lead back decades, specifically to Operation Ajax, the 1953 covert U.S./U.K. operation to oust nationalist Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq, tensions intensified when the U.S. withdrew from the 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal, an agreement in which Iran was offered billions of dollars in exchange for restraining its ongoing nuclear program, in May 2018. The initial agreement stipulated that Iran must stop exporting all of its machines that make bomb materials. However, Israel’s Netanyahu claimed that Iran has been lying about its goals and ambitions in developing nuclear weapons



Front from left, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, Polish President Andrzej Duda, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pose for a group photo at the Royal Castle in Warsaw, Poland in February. The Polish capital was host for a two-day international conference on the Middle East, co-organized by Poland and the United States.

(F. Brinley Bruton, “What Is the Iran Nuclear Deal?,” *NBC News*, 10 May 2018). What followed afterwards made President Trump both anxious and furious, calling it “the worst deal ever” while on the campaign trail. He even claimed that Iran tried to acquire a nuclear bomb, when the truth was that neighboring Europeans did not see any sign of it. Eventually, Trump withdrew from the 2015 deal, brokered under then-President Barack Obama, and continued to impose sanctions on Iran (Bruton).

Though the Warsaw Summit has ended, tensions are still present. Even though the purpose of the conference was to untie conflicts and disagreements among Middle Eastern nations, the clear goal of the summit was to isolate Iran, instead of identifying the problem and defusing the animosity between it and the United States. Although this summit has created more distance between the U.S. and some countries in the Middle East, with the support of Europe it is up to the Trump Administration to set clear rules and, hopefully, organize a new summit that truly promotes peace (Frida Ghitis, “U.S. Commits Another Diplomatic Fumble in Warsaw,” *CNN*, 16 February 2019).

## Yemen: New Middle East Battleground?

by Anya Sastry '20

On April 4, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to end American involvement in the Yemeni Civil War on the grounds that Saudi Arabia’s combative intervention continues to worsen the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Saudi Arabia’s persistent participation in the war can be characterized as an offensive against the rebel Houthi movement and, with the support of various Arab countries and intelligence provided by the United States government, they have been countering the Houthis’ siege with a multitude of air strikes and ballistic missile launches. Despite the

fact that both the House and the Senate voted to end U.S. involvement in the war, President Trump vetoed the bill on April 16. His support of the austere Saudi Arabian regime has been apparent throughout his time in the White House, especially after he failed to condemn Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for the horrific murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

All aspects of the conflict began with the transfer of power between former President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. When Hadi came to power, he failed to resolve



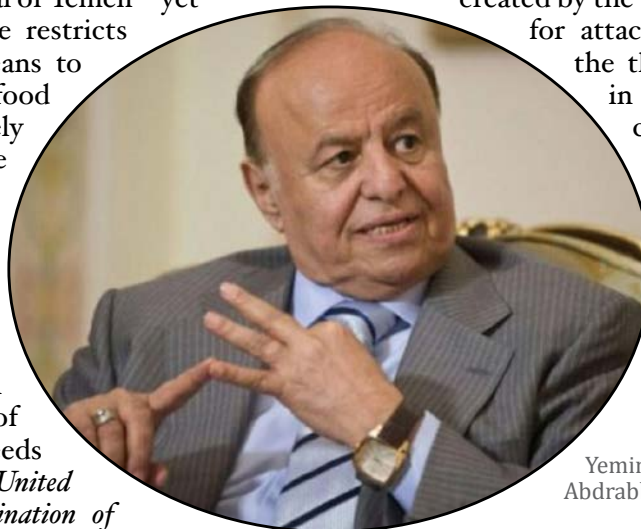
various issues within Yemen, and this lack of political strength allowed Houthi rebels to take control of a northern Yemeni province named Saada. After receiving support from many Yemeni civilians, the Houthi rebels attempted to take over the entire country, which caused Hadi to flee the country in



A man carries a wounded child after a Saudi-led airstrike that killed eight members of her family in Sanaa, August 2017.

hopes of escaping the inevitable violence. The war has continued over the past four years in a stalemate pattern, with the Saudi military combatting rebel forces through the use of offensives and air strikes. While discussing the problems caused by the Saudi-led strikes in a 2018 BBC interview, President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi directly commented, “I don’t regret [the strikes] at all, otherwise we would not have liberated parts of the country” (Orla Guerin, “Yemen President Defends Saudi-led Strikes,” 17 July 2018). The president’s straightforward response shows no hesitation on his part towards Saudi involvement, and reflects his willingness to sacrifice the lives of his people in order to regain control of his country and his position of power.

Hadi’s government has been able to establish a temporary base in parts of Yemen—mainly Aden, a port city and the temporary capital of Yemen—yet his current position of exile restricts him from accessing the means to provide basic services and food to his citizens, ultimately prolonging and worsening the humanitarian disaster. This crisis has been branded “the worst in the world” by the United Nations, as 24 million people in the country need assistance and protection, with 14.3 million of those people in dire need of aid (“2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Yemen,” *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*, 14 February 2019).



Yemeni President  
Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi

Yet starvation and lack of supplies are not causing the deaths of Yemeni people, but rather the vicious air strikes being carried out by the rebel forces, as well as the Saudi military. Without consideration for the innocent civilians they are impacting, the two opposing groups have been inflicting as much damage as possible on each other, damage that has ruined the lives of so many Yemenis. *Washington Post* correspondent Sudarsan Raghavan commented that, “The air strikes have struck hospitals, schools, markets, motels, even funeral gatherings,” showing how the war has completely altered the state of life in Yemen, leaving communities across the country with no homes and no hope (“A Yemeni Village Copes With the Aftermath of an Airstrike,” 4 April 2019).

Many Middle Eastern and Arab countries have been heavily involved in this conflict due to the fact that the results of the war could alter and sway the power dynamic in the Middle East. In response to the Saudi-led support of the Hadi government, Iran and its military have been backing the Houthi rebels by sending in advanced weapons. A senior Iranian official, in regards to their support of the rebels, said Iran “agreed to increase the amount of help, through training, arms, and financial support” and then continued on to say that “Yemen is where the real proxy war is going on and winning the battle in Yemen will help define the balance of power in the Middle East” (Jonathan Saul, Parisa Hafezi, Michael Georgy, “Exclusive: Iran Steps Up Support for Houthis in Yemen’s War—Sources,” *Reuters*, 21 March 2017).

Ultimately, Yemen is being used as a battle field for the power-hungry countries of Saudi Arabia and Iran, who are engaging in combat through a channel of government versus rebels, Sunni versus Shia. The tension-filled relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran stems from the attack on the Saudi embassy in Tehran in 2016. Since that attack, the two countries have forgone all diplomatic relations and are purely combative with each other. In Yemen, the utter chaos created by the war has perfectly set the stage for attacks from al-Qaeda and ISIS, the threat of which instills worry in the governments of Western countries, such as the United States. All eyes are focused on the war and its outcome, as it will define and influence not only the Middle Eastern power structure, but also global affairs, for an indefinite period of time.





The Blue and White alliance is led by Benny Gantz, center, and two other veteran generals. They have teamed up with a centrist party led by Yair Lapid, left, a former television host and finance minister.

security's knowledge, with six people potentially being charged in the scandal.

Gantz continually uses these allegations to his advantage, centering his platform on the protection of democratic values. Claiming that “[Netanyahu] has come to threaten Israel’s very democracy — with the courts, law enforcement and the media all the focus of his sustained attack,” Gantz accuses Netanyahu of “destroying the country” (David Horovitz and Raoul Wootliff, “Benny Gantz to ToI: Future of Israel as a

Democracy Is at Stake in This Election,” *Times of Israel*, 3 April 2019). Gantz has furthermore compared his rival to Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan based on actively preventing justifiable investigations into his conduct.

While Netanyahu has been deemed unreliable and untrustworthy by many Israelis, some feel that

his continued governance would be better than time under the leadership of Gantz. Gantz’s cell phone was recently hacked, presumably by Iran, leading to widespread concern that he may be a security risk. His quick rise to leadership within the military, while lacking much political experience, caused several blunders in his career that have been criticized, including late response at times while in command of the West Bank city of Hebron. Gantz has been described as having “little initiative” and “letting bad things happen on the warfront” (Halbfinger, “Meet

Benny, the Three Star General Seeking Netanyahu’s Job,” *New York Times*, 23 January 2019).

Both Gantz and Netanyahu have publicly criticized each other’s behavior and agendas. Gantz and his platform have accused Netanyahu’s right-wing supporters of embellishing Netanyahu’s successes as a leader. Gantz avidly discredits Netanyahu’s campaign, citing the prime minister’s authoritarian traits and his tendencies to exonerate himself from investigations into his own government’s corruption. In February, Gantz and Yair Lapid joined forces as the two main opposing left wing branches to Netanyahu, forming the Blue and White alliance. Netanyahu has called the grouping “[a] weak left-wing party” and bashed the alliance’s plans to make Palestine its own independent state, claiming that Arab parties working with Gantz and Lapid “not only don’t recognize Israel; they want to destroy Israel” (“Netanyahu Urges Israelis: Don’t Elect Weak, Incompetent Leftists Gantz and Lapid,” *Times of Israel*, 21 February 2019).

With the elections coming to a head on April 9, tensions are high in Israel. However, because Israelis do not directly elect their prime minister, they will have a waiting period after the election to see who takes the role. Once the elections take place, the winner of the

race will have 28 days to form his government; if not assembled in time, the prime minister-elect will be replaced by the runner-up to form his government. The polls show Netanyahu pulling ahead of left-wing Blue and White, as many religious voters decide to stick by his traditional side. The question now rests on the weight of Israeli shoulders: does

the country want to take its chances with a three-star general with a bad track record, or continue to deal with scandals of corruption?

*Editor’s Note: Israel’s legislative election was held on April 9. Netanyahu’s conservative Likud party and Gantz’s centrist Blue and White alliance each earned 35 seats (out of 120 total in the Knesset). Unable to build a coalition majority of 61 seats by the May 29 deadline and, therefore, unable to form a government, Netanyahu and his leadership are in doubt. New elections will be held on September 17.*



A billboard near Tel Aviv bearing portraits of Blue and White political alliance leaders Moshe Yaalon, Benny Gantz, Yair Lapid, and Gabi Ashkenazi, alongside another billboard showing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu flanked by extreme right politicians Itamar Ben Gvir, Bezael Smotrich, and Michael Ben Ari fleeing the traditional leftist Labour party.

# EUROPE

## Is Brexit Still On?

by Victoria Che '21

*Editor's Note: through no fault of our fine author, this article was written in early April – while Theresa May was still very much in the throes of negotiating Brexit and, at least publicly, remained hopeful that a deal would be approved by Parliament. However, appearing to admit that successful execution of Brexit could no longer take place under her leadership, Prime Minister May announced on May 24 that she would resign her post, effective June 7.*

The scheduled date for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union passed on March 29. Two years ago, British Prime minister Theresa May officially triggered the two-year countdown to Brexit by invoking Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. Unfortunately, the British Parliament has not successfully passed a withdrawal agreement as the clock continues to tick. On March 21, in an effort to give May and the British Parliament more time to negotiate and to lower the risk of a disruptive no-deal exit, European Union leaders agreed to extend the deadline of Brexit

to April 12. Six days later, in a bid for Tory Members of Parliament (MP's) to back her E.U. withdrawal plan, May promised that she would step down as prime minister before the next phase of Brexit negotiations. In a meeting of the Conservative Private Members' Committee, May expressed that she is "prepared to leave this job earlier than [she] intended in order to do what is right for our country and our party" ("Brexit: Theresa May Vows to Stand Down If Deal Is Passed," *BBC Live*, 27 March 2019). Despite May's continuous effort and promised sacrifice, her Brexit deal suffered a third defeat in Parliament on March 29. This third rejection of her withdrawal agreement plunged Brexit into further uncertainty while protests and chaos continued to loom.

The two-week extension presents a sort of crossroads to the Brexit plan. If May's renegotiations eventually win parliamentary approval of her deal, then the E.U. will grant her a two-month technical extension to complete the formalities. If her withdrawal agreement continues to suffer defeat in Parliament, she will face the choice of either requesting a much longer extension—which many E.U. countries are reluctant to grant—or leaving the E.U. without a deal. April 12 is the new deadline, the day by which

the U.K. must decide whether to participate in the European Parliament election to be held from May 23–26 (Emma Ross-Thomas, "What You Need to Know as the Brexit Deadline Nears," *Washington Post*, 26 March 2019). May will face a dilemma if Parliament cannot agree on a Brexit deal before April 12: participating in the election will inevitably lengthen the U.K.'s involvement in the E.U., which defeats the purpose of Brexit.

With other options dissolving, political leaders on both sides of the English Channel are planning for the worst possibility: a no-deal Brexit. If this worst-case scenario were to occur, there would be no legal arrangements for trade between Britain and the E.U. countries. Potential crises such as food shortages and unpredictable financial meltdowns are on the horizon. Ongoing Brexit divisions within the U.K. itself give E.U. leaders little faith in May's ability to reach a negotiated U.K. departure with her Parliament, government,

and party. After the third defeat of her Brexit deal on the day that the U.K. should have left the E.U., May explicitly stated "that we are not leaving today is a matter of deep personal regret to me" ("Voting for the Deal Is Voting for Brexit, May Tells MPs" *CNN Live*, 29 March 2019). While May ponders a fourth vote to pass her deal, other E.U. leaders contemplate the possibility of the U.K. ever uniting around a departure deal. Danish Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen called the third defeat "very discouraging" and declared that Denmark will intensify its no-deal preparations (William Booth, Karla Adam, Michael Birnbaum, "Parliament Again Rejects Theresa May's



Outgoing British Prime Minister Theresa May



Theresa May arrives in Brussels for a summit with EU leaders

Brexit Deal, on the Day Britain Was Supposed to ‘Take Back Control,’” *Washington Post*, 31 March 2019).

May’s failure to deliver Brexit so far is a result of opposition on all sides. During the two-year negotiation period, she faced resignation from her cabinet and other MP’s. Both the pro-Brexit and pro-E.U. bloc of her Conservative Party, the Northern Irish Party, and the opposition Labour Party have demonstrated unprecedented agreement in striking her Brexit deal down. The main objection to May’s deal is the promise that no new physical border will emerge between Northern Ireland (part of the U.K.) and the Republic of Ireland (which remains in the E.U.). Critics of this guarantee have accused May of compromising too much with the E.U., betraying her own goal of regaining sovereignty, and giving special treatment to Northern Ireland. On the other hand, her nonbinding political declaration, which was purposefully vaguely worded in an effort to pass Britain’s divided Parliament, also suffered scrutiny. British lawmakers contend that vague wording will produce a “blind Brexit,” by which the people of the country will be forced to sign a blank cheque for an uncertain future.

Brexit negotiations have stumbled their way through the two-year period, and escalating tensions within the British Parliament do not herald a smooth and orderly Brexit any time soon. Prime Minister



As lawmakers debate Brexit inside the House of Commons, crowds of protesters gather outside. The pro-Brexit demonstrators are voicing their opposition to the prospect of a further delay to the process, amid a heavy police presence.

May, who made the ambitious promise to lead a “one nation” government upon her inauguration nearly three years ago, has leveraged her own departure in order to table her withdrawal agreement. Political leaders on both sides of the English Channel have devoted much time negotiating for a peaceful U.K. departure over the past two years, yet the current situation has fallen into a stalemate without a clear solution on the horizon. As many E.U. countries, noticeably France, start to question any further delay of Brexit, it is critical that the U.K. come to a true solution before their next deadline arrives.

## Nord Stream 2 Ignites Controversy by Angela Wang '20

Nord Stream 2 is a natural gas pipeline running from Russia to Germany. Operated by Nord Stream AG with its main shareholder, the Russian state company Gazprom, the 1,224-kilometer pipeline is an expansion of Nord Stream that connects Vyborg, Russia with Greifswald, Germany through the Baltic Sea (Paweł Rybacki, “Nord Stream 2: Russia’s Geopolitical Trap,” *Harvard Political Review*, 17 January 2019). This new project aims to transform the European energy infrastructure by increasing the annual capacity of Nord Stream from 55 to 110 billion cubic meters, but it threatens the goal of gas diversification in Europe and undermines Ukraine’s role in gas transit traffic (Rybacki). Thus, many European countries, along with the United States, have firmly opposed its implementation, fearing that it will bolster reliance on Russia and compromise international security.

Natural gas is a low-carbon fuel that delivers a more stable output to complement the intermittent renewable energy. As the biggest natural gas consumer in Europe, Germany supports the construction of

the pipeline, expecting it to propel its Energiewende decarbonization policy, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas by 80–95 percent (relative to 1990) and increase renewable energy by 60 percent by 2050 (Paul Hockenos, “Carbon Crossroads: Can Germany Revive Its Stalled Energy Transition?” *Yale Environment* 360, 13 December 2018). Moreover, a close alliance with Russia not only opens Germany up to a cheaper and safer gas supply, but it also ensures more independence from the complicated situation in Eastern Europe.

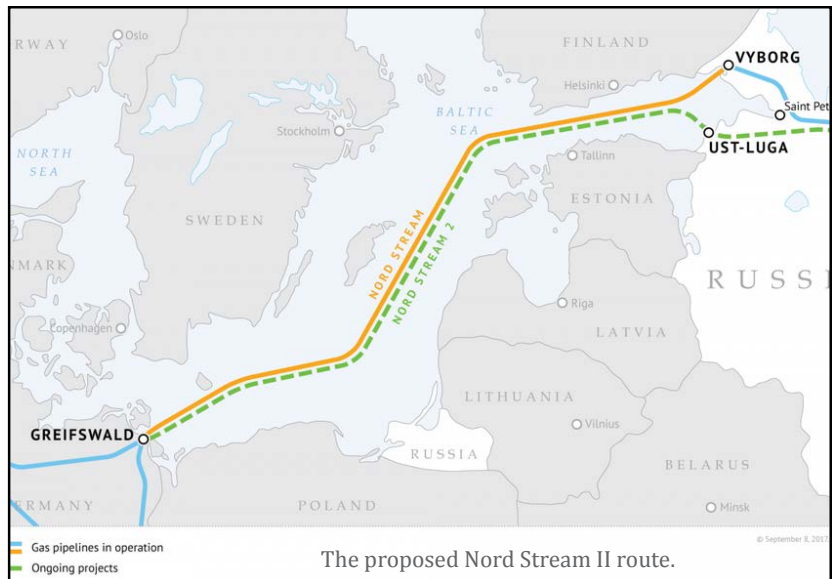
However, cooperation between Germany and Russia has not been as smooth as expected; economic and political implications have stirred up international opposition. For other European countries, Nord Stream 2 not only alters the flow of the pre-existing pipelines—such as the Yamal-Europe pipeline that traverses Russia, Belarus, and Poland—but with means of directly transporting gas to its biggest buyer, the Russian government might even shut down other projects. Subsequently, these countries will experience tremendous economic loss if Russia attempts to



deepen the price gap between them and Germany. Currently, Russia supplies Europe with 30 percent of the natural gas it needs, with 40 to 50 percent transported through Ukraine (Darko Janjevic, “Nord Stream 2 Gas Pipeline — What Is the Controversy About?,” *Deutsche Welle*, 14 July 2018). Gas transit fees are the Ukrainian government’s main source of revenue; therefore, as Nord Stream II meets Europe’s demand for gas, Ukraine will lose around \$2 billion and have to pay higher prices for natural gas (Janjevic). It may also receive less political support when confronting potential territorial aggression from Russia, since those reliant on Russian gas may hesitate to take resolute decisions. Currently, American companies have been selling gas to the European countries, but since U.S. gas is more expensive than that supplied through Nord Stream II, companies will suffer from severe deficits if Europe seeks alternatives from Russia. Hence, President Donald Trump claims, “Pipeline dollars to Russia are not acceptable!” (VOA, “Opposition to Russia’s Nord Stream Pipeline Growing in Eastern Europe,” *Radio Free Europe*, 9 March 2018).

In addition, even though Russian President Vladimir Putin has promised that “[Nord Stream II] is a purely economic and moreover purely commercial project,” European countries are still suspicious of Russia’s growing political power, which they believe would pose a threat to the region’s stability and economy. Thus, they endeavor to prevent Russia and Germany from developing into two regional hegemony that can act bilaterally to affect Europe (VOA). As the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs states, “the project has far-reaching consequences for Europe’s energy security and competitiveness of the gas market in the E.U.,” and the initiators of Nord Stream II “are trying to avoid common market and legal rules” (Rybacki).

Meanwhile, the United States has also expressed its deep concerns about the pipeline’s geopolitical effect. According to Sandra Oudkirk, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Diplomacy at the State Department’s Bureau of Energy Resources, America is becoming wary of Russia’s growing international



power (Rachel Ansley, “The Battle Over Nord Stream II,” *Atlantic Council*, 16 March 2018). “Because it has such a potentially large impact on the national security of some of our largest partners in the world, it has an impact on our national security,” says Oudkirk. A nonresident senior fellow in the Atlantic Council’s Eurasia Center, Agnia Grigas also believes that “This is not about a pipeline. This is a Kremlin project, a project by a country that is under sanctions right now for waging war in Europe.” Grigas urges the U.S. and European governments to take caution when making future policies, and asks all international stakeholders to “assess this long-term, generational project from its security and political perspective” (Ansley).

In spite of the setbacks, countries such as Sweden have already granted the pipeline permissions to bypass their land, leaving Denmark the last one to approve. However, Russia has already started looking for new routes to avoid Danish waters, so its consent may not be absolutely necessary for the completion of the project (Rybacki). Consequently, both Europe and America have reasons to fear the threats to the peace and solidarity of the world due to Russia’s domination in the energy sector and its future collaboration with Germany. The short-term benefits of Nord Stream 2 are undoubted, but in the long run, it will trigger a domino effect of geopolitical strife in both Europe and America.

## *Les Gilets Jaunes: Civil Unrest in France*

by Tara Pugliese '19

Beginning last November, mass demonstrations and violent protests led by *Mouvement des gilets jaunes*, or Yellow Jackets, have wracked France. Originating online through social media, the movement began as a protest against increased fuel prices, with the first demonstration organized for November 17. Organizers took to Facebook, calling for supporters to block roads and don the yellow high-visibility vest

required by French law to be kept in all motorists’ vehicles (Holly Ellyatt, “Yellow Vests, Blue Vests and Red Scarves – Here’s Why the French Are Protesting,” *CNBC*, 1 February 2019). This first nationwide demonstration garnered nearly 300,000 participants throughout France, with gatherings occurring mostly in rural areas and small towns. The protest amounted in several hundred arrests, multiple injuries, and one

fatality, garnering much media attention.

Initially, the protests consisted of members of the middle class in mainly rural and outer-urban areas who felt neglected by the political elite in the big cities. Angered by the rising cost of fuel, high cost of living, and burdensome tax reform, supporters began a grass-roots, populist movement centered around economic grievances (Saphora Smith, “Who Are France’s ‘Yellow Jacket’ Protesters and What Do They Want,” *NBC News*, 24 November 2018). As the movement progressed, demonstrations became more structured through social media, and the message of the Yellow Jackets quickly spread to urban areas. Weekly protests in Paris ensued, with smaller demonstrations taking place throughout the nation.

As the Yellow Jackets movement grew, economic grievances evolved into a broader anti-establishment sentiment, as well as a growing opposition to President Emmanuel Macron and his reform agenda. Fueled by sometimes biased information disseminated by social media groups, protestors claimed that the country’s Parisian political elite live a “life of luxury” and enjoy a large portion of the tax revenue that burdens so many working- and middle-class citizens (John Lichfield, “In the Yellow Jackets’ Heartland,” *Politico*, 17 January 2019). Anti-establishment supporters have also expressed their disillusionment with the mainstream political framework of recent decades that has prioritized metropolitan areas over rural and suburban ones. However, critique concerning President Macron has centered largely on his ambitious reform; one such contentious act of reform was the measure to increase a tax that led to a higher price for diesel fuel, enacted as part of an environmental protection measure to decrease the nation’s dependence on fossil fuel and encourage the use of clean-energy vehicles (Smith).



French anti-riot policemen stand outside the restaurant Le Fouquet’s, which was partially burnt down on the Champs-Élysées in Paris on March 16, during the 18th consecutive round of Yellow Vest protests.

While the majority of demonstrators are peaceful, the protests became increasingly violent, especially in Paris, as far-left and far-right militant groups took over the movement. Two protests, on December 8, 2018 and March 16, 2019, proved particularly violent, resulting in serious injuries. The violence has been



The Yellow Vests movement began in response to a proposed gas tax rise, but quickly grew into a much wider expression of popular anger.

condemned by initial supporters of the movement, who claim that these protests no longer reflect the initial aims of the Yellow Jackets. The conduct of the French riot police has also been criticized for its excessive severity, especially with regards to the use of sub-lethal weapons called Defense Ball Launchers (Ellyatt). Despite the violence being condemned by outsiders and Yellow Jackets alike, the movement likely would have failed to gain much of the resulting concessions without such aggression (Lichfield).

The French government was initially resistant to concessions, but as the movement became more widespread and violent, Macron responded on December 5 by abandoning the planned rise in fuel taxes that had inspired the movement in the first place. After this announcement had little effect on the size and severity of the protests, he vowed five days later to increase the minimum wage and halt a planned tax increase on pensions; however, these concessions are expected to cost ten billion euros and exceed the country’s intended budget deficit (Ellyatt). As the president’s already-low approval rating began to plummet—only 26 percent of the French population have a favorable opinion of him—Macron launched a so-called “Grand National Debate” in January that would involve town hall meetings across the country for citizens to voice their grievances (Eleanor Beardsley, “Will Macron’s ‘Great National Debate’ Help Defuse France’s Yellow Vest Unrest,” *NPR*, 8 February 2019).

So far, the community debates have indeed increased Macron’s favorability, offsetting some of the turmoil from the Yellow Jackets movement. However, the impact the movement will have for Macron and his party, *En marche*, when it comes time for parliamentary and presidential elections is less clear. Polls have shown that support for a “Yellow Jackets” party, if candidates were to run, would be substantial and would take away significant votes from Macron’s rivals, namely Marine Le Pen’s far-right National Rally party and Jean-Luc Mélenchon’s France Unbowed movement (Nicholas Vinocur, “Why the Yellow Jackets Movement Is a Gift to Macron,”

*Politico*, 28 January 2019). Both Le Pen and Mélenchon voiced their support for the Yellow Jackets, but have been rejected by the movement's members, who view them and their parties as elements of the political mainstream. Ultimately, such a scenario would aid Macron and his party by splitting opposition support. However, the very possibility of a successful Yellow Jackets candidacy is unlikely, given the movement's anti-establishment nature and desire for bottom-to-top politics.

As of late March, the movement had subsided, with the number of those participating in weekend protests dropping from 280,000 in November to only 40,000 today ("France's Yellow Jacket Protests Are Small, But Still Fierce," *Economist*, 28 March 2019). National support for the movement has also fallen, from 72 percent in December to 46 percent in March. Increased violence, internal division, and



French president Emmanuel Macron takes part in a meeting in Évry-Courcouronnes on February 4.

generous concessions from Macron have weakened the movement and decreased external support.

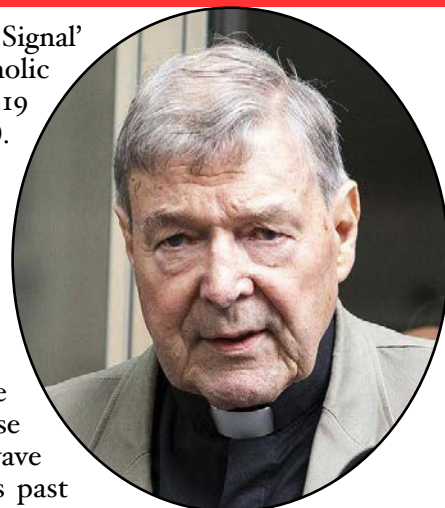
## #MeToo Reaches the Holy: Vatican Responds to Sexual Abuse

by Andy Cao '21

The recent influx of prominent sexual abuse cases involving leaders of the Roman Catholic Church might cause one to assume that these allegations are new and shocking; however, sexual abuse has already had a deep and disappointing history in the Church community. The earliest reports of such sexual abuse cases appeared in the 1950s, while the rise of media attention on the issue began during the 1980s ("Catholic Church Child Sexual Abuse Scandal," *BBC News*, 26 February 2019). In 2004, a Church-commissioned report stated that within the past 50 years there were an estimated 4,000 priests accused of sexual assault and around 10,000 children, mostly boys, reported as victims (*BBC*). In response to the #MeToo Movement in the United States and abroad, the efforts in support of sexual abuse victims has steadily grown. As a result of the momentum of the movements, Pope Francis called a summit against sexual abuse following a huge insurgence of global disappointment in the handling of recent cases. In a society that is finally beginning to acknowledge the abhorrence of sexual abuse, the Catholic Church began its long overdue process to discover ways of meaningfully confronting the massive amount of sexual abuse cases.

The wave of new allegations has included all levels within the Catholic Church, from clergymen to cardinals. In the United States, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick was defrocked from his position for sexually abusing both adults and children. Some say McCarrick's expulsion symbolized the Pope's commitment to punishing those who sexually abuse others, as defrocking is considered the highest punishment applicable by Church law (William Brangham and John Allen, "Why McCarrick's Defrocking Represents

an 'Extraordinary Signal' for the Catholic Church," *PBS*, 19 February 2019). McCarrick was also the first cardinal ever to be charged for sexual abuse, which may be the reason why so many people believed his case would initiate a wave of justice towards past



Catholic Cardinal George Pell seen outside the court in Melbourne, Australia, after his conviction for sexually abusing two choirboys in the 1990s.

and future offenders. On the other side of the globe, Cardinal George Pell of Australia was also recently convicted of sexually assaulting two 13-year-old choirboys in the 1990s (Chico Harlan and Michelle Boorstein, "At Vatican 'Summit, Pope Francis Calls for 'All-Out Battle' Against Sexual Abuse but Is Short on Specifics," *Washington Post*, 24 February 2019). Pell's case plays a significant role in the wave of new allegations, as he was discharged of his position as the economic minister, "widely considered the Vatican's third most powerful position" (A. Odysseus Patrick and Chico Harlan, "Australian Cardinal George Pell Convicted of Sexually Assaulting Two Choirboys," *Washington Post*, 26 February 2019). Cardinal George Pell's actions brought disappointment and horror to the worldwide community, not just because of his



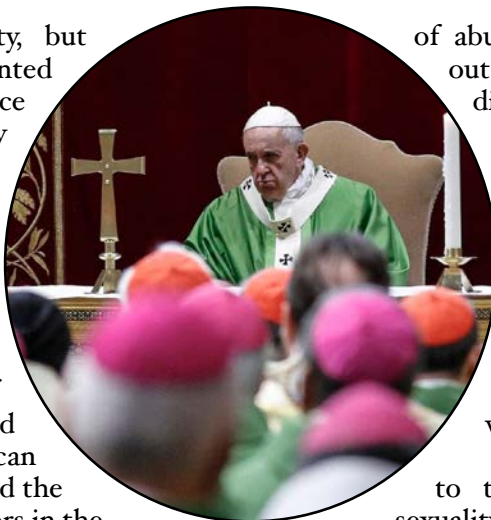
political influence and popularity, but also because Pell led an unprecedented response against sexual violence during the time he was sexually abusing the two boys. Both of these cases outwardly demonstrated the need for proper discussion of how to protect the members, and especially the youth, of the Roman Catholic community.

To acknowledge such major cases and present ways of prevention, Pope Francis composed a summit that took place in the Vatican from February 21–24, officially titled the Meeting on the Protection of Minors in the Church. The four-day summit included speeches calling for action, moving testimonies from victims, and persistent calls for the end of sexual violence. During the first days of the meeting, Pope Francis handed out pamphlets of his “21 Reflection Points,” a guide for bishops to prevent future incidents of sexual abuse (Harlan and Boorstein). Such points included how to handle abuse cases, how to determine punishment in proportion to the crime, and when one would need to leave the public ministry. Throughout the summit, Pope Francis consistently condemned all acts of sexual abuse and encouraged all members of the Church to have zero tolerance for such hateful acts.

Many attendees and preachers across the globe commended the Pope for his strong stance against sexual violence; however, many victims and advocacy groups protested the Vatican’s lack of structured plans and legislative action. This disappointment stemmed from the Pope’s lack of willingness to change Church law and instead attempt to commence the action with local bishops and priests. Some argued that the lack of drastic change to Church law may cause the movement to be too slow to prevent the large amounts of sexual violence as well as to acknowledge past victims. An outraged coalition of past survivors



Pope Francis attends a penitential liturgy at the Vatican on the third day of the conference, February 23, 2019.



Pope Francis celebrates a Sunday Mass to conclude the Vatican’s clergy sex abuse summit.

of abuse and advocacy leaders marched outside the Vatican wall to call for more direct action and the banishment of cover-up culture. Other activists also called for full transparency, which would include releasing the names of charged priests and their case files. Even with the outbursts of disappointment, many have declared this summit a major and revolutionary step towards justice against sexual abuse within the Catholic Church.

The Vatican summit contributed to the growing conversation around sexuality within the Roman Catholic Church to an unprecedented extent. Once thought of as extremely taboo topics, gay priests, the

abolition of celibacy, and the abuse of nuns have come to the forefront of the conversation about sexuality in the Church. Many have blamed homosexuality in the priesthood as the cause of sexual abuse against young boys. Others—including out, gay priests—have called for validation of their positions in the Church and condemned the assumption that all gay priests will perpetuate abuse. Pope Francis’s outlook and comments on homosexuality have fluctuated within the past few years, leaving an uncertain future for the estimated 30–40 percent of Catholic priests in the United States who are homosexual (Megan Specia, “Gay Priests, Secret Rules and the Abuse of Nuns: Some of the Vatican Controversies as Bishops Meet,” *New York Times*, 21 February 2019). North of the Vatican, a conversation sprouted in Germany of whether or not priests should swear to celibacy. Many are afraid this issue may “tear the Catholic Church apart” and cause more tensions over the sexual abuse debate; however, the subject is still growing stronger around the world because of these cases (Christoph Strack, “Sex Abuse Scandal in German Catholic Church Sparks Celibacy Debate,” *Deutsche Welle*, 24 September 2018). During the summit, Pope Francis also made the first comments in his career regarding the sexual abuse of nuns (Specia), especially emphasizing the vulnerability of nuns who financially depend on priests. Like many topics of the summit, the abuse of nuns is another subject on which many suspect the Vatican will take direct legislation to abate.

The conference is sure to leave an imprint in the Roman Catholic Church’s history. Some commend the Vatican for its unprecedented response and others call for the Church to apply more direct changes. Pope Francis must carefully lead the Roman Catholic community through this crisis, and his future actions may determine the Church’s survival through the 21st century.

# Language Is Not This Country's Barrier: Catalonia and Spain

by Emma Tishler '20

Catalonia is located within the northeast region of Spain. Until the 19th century, Catalonia was well integrated in Spain, but afterward, Catalonia emerged with a new sense of regional self-identity. Catalonia today has a distinct identity; it has its own language, flag, and anthem. It is one of Spain's richest and most highly industrialized regions. Today, Catalonia is semi-autonomous; it has its own parliament and police force ("Catalonia Region Profile," *BBC News*, 11 June 2018).



Demonstrators marched in support of independence for Catalonia in Barcelona, Spain, on October 1, 2018.

Catalan nationalists are seeking independence due to cultural and economic differences between Catalonia and Spain. Moreover, the Catalan population does not want Madrid, the capital of Spain, to control the taxation of the region, for wealthy Catalan citizens do not want their tax money funneled to the poorer regions of Spain. Separatist movements have skyrocketed since 2010 ("Region Profile").

Most of Spain's banks are located within this wealthy region. Additionally, although Catalans make up only 16 percent of the population, they produce over a quarter of Spain's exports, suggesting that Spain needs Catalonia more than Catalonia needs Spain ("Catalonia Crisis in 300 Words," *BBC News*, 2 June 2018).

Catalonia called a referendum on October 1, 2017. The Spanish government declared this act illegal and attempted to prevent the vote. Of the 43 percent of Catalans who voted, 90 percent supported separation from



Catalans hold pro-independence flags during celebrations of Catalonia National Day, or La Diada, in Barcelona in 2014.

Spain. On October 27, Catalan separatists declared independence ("Catalonia Crisis"). The government of Spain responded by shutting down the Catalanian parliament. The former President of Catalonia, Carles Puigdemont, fled Spain, and two ex-ministers were imprisoned (Patrick Jackson, "Carles Puigdemont: The Man Who Wants to Break Up Spain," *BBC News*, 26 March 2018).

Without the constitutional right to break free from Spain, Catalonia was forced to remain under Spanish authority. Since then, there have been lingering calls for independence. Moreover, those who were deeply involved in the referendum and the calls for independence were set to be tried in the beginning of 2019, the charge being treason. On February 12, the anticipated trial commenced. Broadcast live around the world, the trial held 12 dissidents in court for their participation in the secession attempt. Specifically, their crimes were rebellion, disobedience, and misuse of public funds.



The trial of 12 Catalan leaders facing charges of rebellion and sedition opened in Madrid on February 12, 2019.

While the referendum tore Catalan apart, Spanish politics has slowly pieced the country back together. Spain's new prime minister Pedro Sánchez was elected last June and, since then, has made efforts to seek peace with Catalonia. In order to maintain his position in office he must appeal to the wealthy regions of Spain, which includes the Catalan population (Raphael Minder, "Catalan Leaders' Trial Starts, and Spain's Government Fights for Its Survival," *New York Times*, 12 February 2019). Mr. Sánchez publicly mentioned he was willing to consider another referendum, a ground-breaking notion.

# ASIA/PACIFIC

## Detention of Uighur Muslims in China by Grace Lyons '19

In the region of Xinjiang in western China, many Uighur Muslims live in fear of being separated from their families and sent to the Chinese government's "re-education camps." These camps began in 2014 in a supposed effort to combat religious extremism and terrorism. Although these camps are run by the Chinese government and have been compared to "boarding schools," the facilities' operations are conducted secretly and outside of the legal system (Chris Buckley and Amy Qin, "Muslim Detention Camps Are Like 'Boarding Schools,' Chinese Official Says," *New York Times*, 12 March 2019). In addition to Uighur Muslims, other ethnic minorities including Kazakhs, Hui Muslims, Turkic Muslims, and a small number of Christians and foreign citizens have been targeted, often detained without a trial or valid reasoning.

Within these camps, officials have banned the practice of religious rites, the religious education of children, and the use of names with religious connotations (Nick Cumming-Bruce, "Rights Groups Seek U.N. Inquiry Into China's Mass Detention of Muslims," *New York Times*, 4 February 2019). "The program aims to transform scattered Uighurs, Kazakhs and other ethnic minorities—many of them farmers, shopkeepers and tradespeople—into a disciplined, Chinese-speaking industrial workforce, loyal to the Communist Party" as outlined by the program's official agenda (Chris Buckley and Austin Ramzy, "China's Detention Camps for Muslims Turn to Forced Labor," *New York Times*, 16

December 2018). Due to the strict secrecy regarding China's re-education camps, the number of detainees currently being held in is unknown. However, using satellite technology, the United Nations has estimated that around 1 million people have been forced into indefinite detention in such camps (Cumming-Bruce).



A map showing some Belt and Road Initiative land routes that run through China's Xinjiang. The Uighurs, a mostly-Muslim ethnic minority in Xinjiang, western China, are living in one of the most heavily-policed and oppressive states in the world. According to *Business Insider*, this map helps explain why.

Operated in an effort to restrict religious freedom and uphold the People's Republic's philosophy of "correct thought," the international community has condemned these camps, while academic journals have referred to them as concentration camps imposing cultural genocide. Many human rights organizations have also called for a thorough investigation conducted by the United Nations to ignite a widespread response to the violations occurring in China. Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, spoke at a news conference in Geneva and called for action, stating that "the Human Rights Council's integrity demands that states not allow China to hide behind its membership or economic might to escape accountability" (Cumming-Bruce).

Turkey has been particularly vocal in condemning the atrocities occurring in Xinjiang. The death of a renowned Uighur poet and musician Abdurehim Hevit sparked outrage, with Turkish media spreading that he was "tortured to death in a so-called re-education camp in China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region" (Cagan Koc, "Turkey Demands China Close 'Concentration Camps' Holding Muslim Uighurs," *Time*, 9 February 2019). Furthermore, Turkish foreign ministry spokesman Hami Aksoy underscored his



The perimeter fence of what is officially known as a vocational skills education center in Xinjiang, in western China.



Chinese state television showed Muslims attending classes on how to be law-abiding citizens. Evidence is emerging that detainees are also being forced to take jobs in new factories.

nation's reproachful stance on the camps when he released a statement saying, "The re-emergence of concentration camps in the 21st century and China's systematic assimilation policy toward Uighur Turks are [a] great embarrassment for humanity" (Koc).

Initially, China blatantly denied the mass incarceration of Uighur Muslims. However, its stance shifted when an August 2018 United Nations panel on the topic of promoting religious freedom touched upon contentious religious and ethnic problems occurring in China. Diplomats diminished the reality of the conditions in the re-education camps, vaguely describing them as "vocational training centers designed to improve the economic prospects and living standards of China's minorities" (Cumming-Bruce).

In order to improve its international image, China has sent diplomats and government journalists to the camps, but independent journalists seeking to investigate the camps have been turned away. In December 2018, following a large influx of international media condemning the Chinese government for these centers, the government televised Muslims in school classrooms learning how to be loyal, law-abiding citizens. However, external investigations have

suggested that the majority of detainees in Xinjiang are not spending their days in classroom studying Chinese civics. "Accounts from the region, satellite images and previously unreported official documents indicate that growing numbers of detainees are being sent to new factories, built inside or near the camps, where inmates have little choice but to accept jobs and follow orders." Manufacturing mainly textiles and clothing, these so-called "black factories" are marked by low wages and deplorable conditions. Interviews conducted by the founder of Atajurt Kazakh Human



A satellite image taken in September shows an internment camp in Xinjiang. The buildings in the upper left corner appear to be of a design commonly used by factories.

Rights, Serikzhan Bilash, have further corroborated such claims. This reported system of forced labor will likely ignite only further opprobrium of "China's drastic efforts to control and indoctrinate a Muslim ethnic minority population of more than 12 million in Xinjiang" (Buckley and Ramzy).

The Chinese re-education camps in Xinjiang are garnering much international attention, especially by human rights groups who question the program's ethicality. A testimony to China's increasingly tightening grip on its people, it will be interesting to see how China's diplomacy evolves in a world where government-conducted human rights violations are regarded as intolerable on the international stage.

## The Plight of Rohingya Refugees

by Arjun Grover '20

Over the past few months, approximately 700,000 Rohingya Muslims have made the perilous journey from Myanmar to Bangladesh to escape persecution, a number large enough to fill Boston's Fenway Park 17 times (Jason Beaubien, "Rohingya Settle in for the Long Haul, Even as Bangladesh Wants Refugees to Go Home," *NPR*, 5 April 2019). "The refugees joined hundreds of thousands of Rohingya who were already in Bangladesh seeking refuge after previous attacks, bringing the total to 1.2 million. Today, more Rohingya live as refugees than remain in Myanmar"

(Meenakshi Ganguly and Brad Adams, "For Rohingya Refugees, There's No Return in Sight," *Foreign Affairs*, 5 June 2019). Of those who have stayed, most live in the western state of Rakhine, on the border with Bangladesh, which is considered one of the poorest areas in the country, Journalists have been denied access to the region for years, as the government wishes to disallow the public from viewing the atrocities ("Myanmar: Who Are the Rohingya?," *Al Jazeera*, 18 April 2018).

Myanmar is a diverse country with 135 official

ethnic groups; however, the Rohingya are not counted among them, effectively making them a stateless population. Since the Rohingya are not technically citizens, they hold virtually no rights; they even need permission to leave the region to visit other parts of the country. The Rohingya have been named “the world’s most persecuted minority” (*Al Jazeera*).

Their migration is nothing new; since 1982, members of the Muslim group have fled Myanmar for Bangladesh or Malaysia, with the majority going to the former. However, two recent conflicts have opened the floodgates, including an October 2016 attack in which nine border police were allegedly killed by armed Rohingya fighters. To avenge the deaths of their border police, military crackdowns in Rakhine became common. But what really caused the crisis to boil over was an incident on August 27, 2017 in which Rohingya militants raided numerous Myanmar borders and police outposts, leaving approximately 71 people dead (Beaubien). Immediately following



The Rohingya are one of the world’s most persecuted peoples, and hold no civil rights in Myanmar.

the incident, the government of Myanmar launched “clearance operations” in what the United Nations called a clear case of “ethnic cleansing” (*Al Jazeera*). During these military raids, villages were burned and destroyed, children and women were raped, and many were forced from their homes, leaving them no other option but to migrate west to Bangladesh. By April 2018, 600,000 Rohingya had fled Rakhine in what the U.N. described as “the world’s fastest growing refugee crisis” (“Myanmar Rohingya: What You Need to Know About the Crisis,” *BBC News*, 24 April 2018); more than 100,000 additional refugees migrated in the last year.

The government of Myanmar, led by State Counsellor (similar to a prime minister) Aung San Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, has denied these allegations of abuse, and have even barred United Nations officials from accessing the region (Hannah Beech, “Across Myanmar, Denial of Ethnic Cleansing and Loathing of Rohingya,” *New York Times*, 24 October 2017). A statement issued by the government affirmed that it has “the right to defend the country by lawful means” from what it believed were terrorist

activities (*Al Jazeera*). Ms. Suu Kyi, once hailed as a champion of human rights who led her country out of military rule, is now being criticized by much of the international community for treating the Rohingya inhumanely, with many even asking that her Nobel Prize be rescinded.

In 2015, Ms. Suu Kyi led the National League of Democracy (NLD) to a triumphant victory in the first openly contested election Myanmar had seen in decades. One may wonder, then, how a country that was recently celebrated for its transition from a military rule to democracy turns to murdering, raping, and displacing a group of its own people?

Amidst one of the largest migrations in history, Bangladesh was not prepared to accept hundreds of thousands of refugees (Michael Sullivan, “For Nearly Half a Million Rohingya Fleeing Myanmar, Bangladesh Is a Reluctant Host,” *NPR*, 16 October 2017). As the Rohingya of Myanmar continue to make their way over the border, Bangladesh is doing its best to give every Rohingya a temporary identification; however, these papers do not officially make them refugees; instead, they restrict them to the eastern regions of the country and ensure the Rohingya cannot stay in Bangladesh permanently. They also claim that their relocation of the Rohingya to the eastern region of Bangladesh is merely an attempt to protect both Rohingya and citizens of Bangladesh, as they do not want radical extremist groups to recruit these extremely vulnerable people (“UN Envoy Fears ‘New Crisis’ for Rohingya Muslims If Moved to Remote Bangladesh Island,” *ABC News*, 11 March 2019). Until recently, the majority of the Rohingya in Bangladesh were living in makeshift camps with nothing more than tarps held up by bamboo sticks. Disease is rampant. Since they are not allowed to work, the Rohingya are supported entirely by foreign aid. In the coming months, the Rohingya will be moving to a ‘mega camp’ being built by the Bangladeshi government where all Rohingya will be mandated to live (Sullivan). Slow progress has been made to better the conditions for the Rohingya and a lot of work is still to be done in order to ensure survival of these people.

As of now, the future for the Rohingya Muslims looks bleak. Bangladesh, one of the most densely populated and poorest nations in the world, insists that Myanmar take the refugees back, but Myanmar



Children play at a refugee camp outside Cox’s Bazar in Bangladesh.



Sin Ma Kaw, where an official said “he was proud to oversee one of Myanmar’s “Muslim-free” villages.

does not want to repatriate the people they just displaced. For the time being, the Rohingya have to rely on international support. In Geneva, the United Nations organized an event called the Pledging Conference for the refugee crisis, inviting donors from various countries. However, there was no Rohingya representation, continuing to reinforce the perception that they have no say in their own future (ABC News).

## Bridging the Pearl River Delta by Neala Sweeney '20

Hong Kong and Macau, two islands in the Pearl River Delta and Special Administrative Regions of China, are now physically connected to the mainland. In October of 2018, the bridge-tunnel connecting Hong Kong and Macau with the Chinese city Zhuhai opened. The bridge was built in an effort to unite the Pearl River Delta.

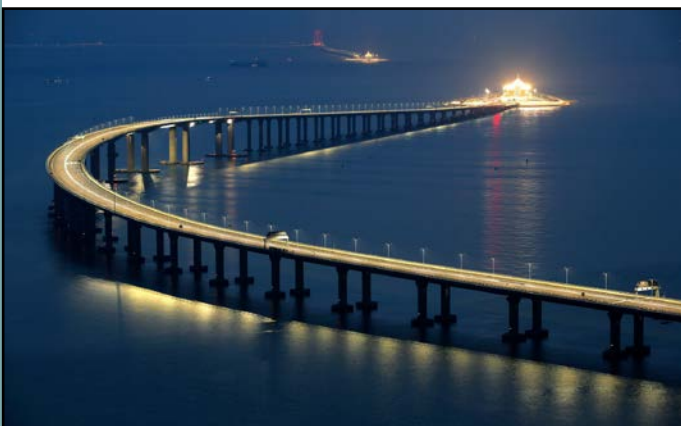
The Pearl River Delta includes multiple cities: Hong Kong, the semi-autonomous financial capital; Shenzhen, the technological hub; and Macau, the epicenter of the Chinese gambling industry. However, Macau is a significantly less developed city than Shenzhen and Hong Kong. The only real source of revenue in Macau comes from the numerous casinos that operate within the city. Macau is fondly referred to as the Monte Carlo of the East. A significant part of the reason to build the bridge was in hopes to develop Macau.

Another hope for the project was that the two ex-European colonies would seem closer to the mainland with a physical representation of that connection. Macau, a former Portuguese colony, and Hong Kong, a former British colony, are seen at some kind of a disconnect with the rest of the country. The Chinese government hopes to bridge those gaps with the bridge-tunnel.

The project has been in the works for almost nine years, and over that span of time, lots of money and labor went into the construction of the bridge. The largest span of the bridge, approximately 22 kilometers, cost \$7 billion (Austin Ramzy, “China Opens Giant Sea-Bridge Linking Hong Kong, Macau, and Mainland,” *New York Times*, 18 October 2018). The Hong Kong government spent almost another \$14 billion on parts of the bridge and an artificial island near the island of Lantau. The building of the bridge was not completely smooth sailing. Ten workers were killed during its construction and 19 people face criminal charges from falsified concrete tests (Ramzy).

There are multiple things that set the bridge apart from other projects of its kind. For one, it is an engineering marvel. Since part of the bridge is very close to the Hong Kong International Airport, there were height limits for the bridges in an effort to prevent interference with plane takeoffs and landings. The bridge also needed to allow ships to pass beneath it since it was constructed in an extremely busy port. The project also required over 400,000 tons of steel (Ramzy). Since Hong Kong was a British colony, drivers drive on the left side of the road, whereas in Mainland China drivers drive on the right side. As a result, there are multiple places on the bridge where drivers have to change sides.

Although advertised as something that could be used by all, it is, in fact, extremely difficult to drive on the sea-bridge. In order to drive on the sea-bridge, one must possess a number of permits and licenses, including a Hong Kong license, a Chinese license, and a special permit. The bridge was promoted to be something that everyone could drive on; however, since its opening the only vehicles allowed to drive on it have been tourist buses coming into Hong Kong for the day. Once the bridge is open to regular citizens, China will have created a mega-city, the first of its kind. Connecting the different cities together will have created a significant international hub with unparalleled accessibility. The area itself will have a GDP of about \$1.31 trillion, which is more than the national economies of Australia, Spain and



The 34-mile Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, or HZMB, which connects the three major cities of the Pearl River Delta, is the world’s longest sea crossing bridge.

Mexico combined (Natasha Kahn, “China’s New 34-Mile Bridge Links Up 70 Million People in Planned Megalopolis,” *Wall Street Journal*, 22 October 2018).

The concerns of Hong Kong citizens have been rising. The bridge has been seen as something that might impeach their freedom. Many locals and expats alike see the year 2047 as the end of Hong Kong. Whether this bridge will accelerate that is still unknown. The aim of the bridge has been seen as way to integrate Hong Kong into the mainland. There is still a fair amount of prejudice between Hong Kong and Mainland China. Many Hong Kong Chinese have also questioned the efficacy of the bridge. Hong Kong shouldered most of the cost, and yet most people in Hong Kong still cannot use the bridge.

Some of the only vehicles allowed to drive on the bridge are tour buses. A certain area of Hong Kong was flooded with tourists. Tung Chung, a town close to the airport, saw thousands and thousands of mainland tourists on multiple Sundays in October. The tourists, also, were only there for a day and none spent a substantial amount of money. The trips did not benefit Hong Kong’s economy, nor did they benefit the residents of Tung Chung who were overwhelmed and unaware of the arrival of their guests. An investigation opened in November of 2018, investigating whether some of the Chinese tour agents responsible for the influx of visitors in Tung Chung are operating illegally out of Hong Kong. The executive director of Tourism for Hong Kong pointed out that 20,000 people had been brought into the city without registration (Kanis Leung, “Police to Investigate Reports of Mainland



President Xi Jinping of China at the opening of the bridge in Zhuhai, China, on October 23, 2018.

Chinese Tour Agents Operating Illegally in Hong Kong, Government Says,” *South China Morning Post*, 6 November 2018).

Although still relatively new, the bridge-tunnel connecting Hong Kong, Macau, and Zhuhai has yet to prove itself as something effective or practical. If, in fact, China’s vision is seen through and Hong Kong, Zhuhai, and Macau become the first megacity, history will have been made. Nonetheless, Hong Kong will be resistant to the integration and Beijing will have to work hard for the Hong Kong Chinese to bend to their will. Only time will tell whether the bridge-tunnel will remain useless and exclusive, or become the key to a powerful and accessible megalopolis in the Pearl River Delta.

## Frenemies in Hanoi: U.S.-North Korea Summit by Andrew Park '22

The 2019 North Korea–United States Summit in Hanoi, Vietnam was a two-day meeting between North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-un and U.S. President Donald Trump. Held at the Metropole Hotel in February, this summit was the second conference between the two leaders; they previously met in Singapore in June 2018.

After the summit, the White House announced that it had been cut short by President Trump, who later stated that no agreement was made (Everett Rosenfeld, “Trump-Kim Summit Was Cut Short After North Korea Demanded an End to All Sanctions,” *CNBC*, 28 February 2019).

According to Trump, the main roadblock to a successful deal was Kim’s condition that, in exchange for shutdown of just one of his many nuclear facilities, the United States would remove all economic sanctions placed on North Korea. Trump refused his offer and considered it unfair; it would have left North Korea with a great nuclear arsenal (Philip Rucker, Simon Denyer, and David Nakamura, “North Korea’s Foreign Minister Says Country Seeks Only Partial

Sanctions Relief,” *Washington Post*, 28 February 2019).

“It wasn’t a good thing to be signing anything,” Trump said during a post-summit news conference. “We had some options, and at this time we decided not to do any of the options, and we’ll see where that goes” (Rosenfeld). He added, “Sometimes you have to walk, and this was just one of those times” (Rucker, Denyer, and Nakamura). However, just a few hours later, North Korean foreign minister Ri Yong-ho argued his country wanted only partial relief from five



United Nations sanctions in return for dismantling its nuclear weapons.

Speaking to reporters directly afterward, North Korea's vice foreign minister, Choe Son-hui, said "The impression I got observing this summit from the side was that our chairman seems to have difficulty understanding the U.S. way of reckoning." She explained, "I felt that our chairman has lost the will to engage in deal making, with the U.S. saying that even a partial lifting of sanctions for the civilian economy is hard." She also said the United States was losing a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," and elaborated that there were no further meetings planned (Rucker, Denyer, and Nakamura).

Since the falling-through of the summit, tremors have rattled East Asian financial markets; the stock market in South Korea fell sharply to end down 1.8 percent, and the South Korean won also experienced a large drop in value. Nearby, Japan's main Nikkei 225 Index ended 0.8 percent down. The failure of the summit also affected the United States, and on Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average was down (Rucker, Denyer, and Nakamura).

Even after all the turmoil, Trump stated that the status quo will be maintained; North Korea will continue to suspend all nuclear and missile tests, and the United States will not partake in any joint military exercises with South Korea. According to Trump, he "gave [U.S. military exercises with South Korea] up quite a while ago because it costs us \$100m to do it. I hated to see it. I thought it was unfair." Trump added that South Korea should hold most of the burden of security on its shoulders (Julian Borger, "Vietnam Summit: North Korea and U.S. Offer Differing Reasons for Failure of Talks," *Guardian*, 1 March 2019). On Twitter, Trump said "The reason I do not want military drills with South Korea is to save hundreds of millions of dollars for the U.S. for which we are not reimbursed. That was my position long before I became President. Also, reducing tensions with North Korea at this time is a good thing!"

On one hand, indicating to North Korea that the United States does not pose a threat is possibly very good and could eventually lead to the building of trust between the two countries later on. On the other hand, Trump's reasoning that not doing the drills saves "hundreds of millions" is not very accurate, as one joint drill has an estimated cost of around \$14 million (Idrees Ali, Cost of One of Those 'Expensive' U.S.-South Korea Military Exercises? \$14 million, *Reuters*, 7 July 2018). "Exercising is fun and it's nice they play their war games. I'm not saying it's not necessary. On some levels it is. On other levels it's not" (Borger).

On March 1, South Korea's president Moon Jae-in tried to relieve his people of any disappointment during his national holiday speech. "I believe this is part of a process to reach a higher level of agreement. Now our role has become even more important," Moon said.

"My administration will closely communicate and cooperate with the United States and North Korea so as to help their talks reach a complete settlement by any means" (Borger).

Directly after the talks broke down, Trump was protective of the North Korean leader and their relationship during a press conference. "We spent all day with Kim Jong-un," he said. "He's quite a guy and quite a character. And our relationship is very strong" (Borger). Trump added, "This wasn't a walk away like you get up and walk out. No, this was very friendly — we shook hands," he said. "When we walked away, it was a very friendly walk" (Rosenfeld).

Trump went as far as to defend Kim over the death of Otto Warmbier, a U.S. college student sent home in a comatose state in June 2017 and who died shortly



University of Virginia student Otto Warmbier is escorted at the Supreme Court in Pyongyang, North Korea in 2016.

after. "He says he [Kim] didn't know about it and I will take him at his word," Trump proclaimed (Borger).

This outraged the Warmbiers, who said in a statement after the summit, "We have been respectful during this summit process. Now we must speak out. Kim and his evil regime are responsible for the death of our son Otto. Kim and his evil regime are responsible for unimaginable cruelty and inhumanity. No excuses or lavish praise can change that" (Julie Bosman and Kevin Williams, "Trump Faces Fury After Saying He Believes North Korean Leader on Student's Death," *Washington Post*, 1 March 2019).

This sparked controversy, as in the beginning of his presidency, Trump had been extremely opposed to Kim's regime and referred to the North Korean leader as "Little Rocket Man," threatening to rain "fire and fury" onto North Korea. However, as his presidency went on, Trump has become increasingly chummy with Kim, who he claims "wrote me beautiful letters," and that "we fell in love" (Bosman and Williams). After the summit, Trump described Kim as "a real personality and he's very smart. He's sharp as you can be, and he's a real leader, and he's pretty mercurial," which had mixed responses (Winston Wang, "Trump Praises Human Rights Abuser Kim Jong Un as 'Real



Leader,” *Bipartisan Press*, 2 March 2019).

Even though the Hanoi Summit was concluded with no real or satisfactory agreement, it was one more step toward the denuclearization of North Korea and

the improvement of political bonds between the two countries. Hopefully, as time goes on, North Korea will become more open to international relationships.

## Top Score: How to Ace China’s Social Credit System

by Julia Deitelbaum '19

As 2020 approaches, the time by which China promises to have implemented its social credit system, reports are increasingly emerging amongst small and large news corporations alike. Unlike anything that currently exists, this system is being coined “Orwellian” by U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, and a “scheme” by Western headlines, but others argue it is far from dystopian (Jamie Horsley, “China’s Orwellian Social Credit Score Isn’t Real,” *Foreign Policy*, 16 November 2018; (Alexandra Ma, “China Has Started Ranking Citizens With a Creepy ‘Social Credit’ System — Here’s What You Can Do Wrong, and the Embarrassing, Demeaning Ways They Can Punish You,” *Business Insider*, 29 October 2018). Though this social credit system has not yet been implemented everywhere across China, numerous areas already have access to it—hence the abundance of available information regarding the system’s premise, function, and consequences.

In an attempt to control the nation’s massive population of over 1.3 billion people, the Chinese government developed the social credit system as a means of ranking its citizens. An individual’s ranking is akin to a far more invasive and all-encompassing American credit score. The score will be based upon numerous factors, including the activities in which the individual takes part, the people with whom he or she associates, and the places he or she frequents. Similar to a financial credit score, each social credit score is variable; however, the exact algorithms of how each grade moves will remain secret (Bernard Marr, “Chinese Social Credit Score: Utopian Big Data Bliss or Black Mirror on Steroids?,” *Forbes*, 21 January 2019).

Though some incorrectly believe that the system is entirely government-operated, some of the information will be obtained from private tech corporations. The types of information that will be utilized in determining each person’s social credit score include “an individual’s finances, social media activities, credit history, health records, online purchases, tax payments, legal matters, and people

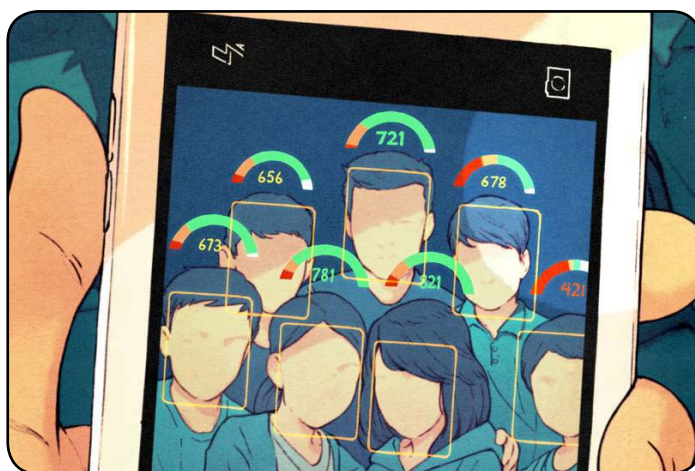
you associate with in, addition to images gathered from China’s 200 million surveillance cameras and facial recognition software” (Marr). Thus, if you are in debt, post pictures or messages that speak out against the government on social media, have poor financial credit, frequently attend events where illegal activity is known to occur, get arrested, or have a close friend or family member with a low social credit score, your own rating will go down. *The Guardian* cites similar offenses as examples of ways your score may decrease, including “not paying individual taxes or fines to spreading false information and taking drugs” (Lily Kuo, “China Bans 23M from Buying Travel Tickets as a Part of ‘Social Credit’ system,” *Guardian*, 1 March 2019). Smaller offenses, which may include “smoking on a train or not walking a dog on a leash” may also negatively impact your social credit score (Kuo). That said, promptly paid bills or well-behaved acquaintances,

for example, can cause one’s social credit score to rise.

The most direct impact of the social credit system is the creation of a “blacklist,” a list comprised of those deemed poor citizens. *Business Insider* explains that “people will be notified by the courts before they are added to the list, and are allowed to appeal the decision within 10 days of receiving the notification,” which

means a private company cannot penalize someone (Ma). However, Li Xiaolin faced a different experience: In 2015, he had been placed on the blacklist for failing to show up in court, but Xiaolin only discovered his placement on the list after being “unable to purchase plane tickets home while on a work trip” (Ma). Evidently, one of the results of being on the blacklist is a ban from buying plane tickets. In fact, China banned 23 million people from buying tickets—Li Xiaolin was only one of them. In 2018 alone, travelers were banned 17.5 million times by Chinese courts (Kuo).

Other consequences of being added to the blacklist include “keeping you out of the best hotels” or “getting your dog taken away” (Ma). Though Li Xiaolin’s offense might seem trivial, the social credit system



## Experimenting with carrots and sticks

China's Social Credit System materializes in local and national pilots<sup>1</sup>

- Round 1 (August 2015)
- Round 2 (April 2016)

**Zhengzhou (Henan):**  
Refusing to comply with a court order to pay debt results in dial tone of the person's phone to be changed to a "shaming" announcement.

**Wuhan (Hubei):**  
Files for students over 18 recording misbehavior like cheating on exams, plagiarism, and unpaid tuition fees.

**Luzhou (Sichuan):**  
Social Credit System for the liquor industry. Baijiu-producing companies are monitored for compliance with regulations.

**Rongcheng (Shandong):**  
Individual scores and grades for residents. Misbehavior (littering, jaywalking) results in score deduction and punishment; exemplary behavior (caring for aged parents) in good ratings and benefits.

**Shanghai:**  
Facial recognition app retrieves data on residents from 100+ government sources and assigns ratings. App is also used for ratings of local businesses and restaurants.

### Selected measures applied nationwide or across multiple provinces

- Limits on so-called "high-end consumption" for individuals defying court orders to repay money and representatives of blacklisted companies: no high speed rail, no flights, no private schools for their children, etc.
- Renting apartments deposit-free if a background-check conducted through the Sesame Credit app is positive.
- Different classification and treatment of natural and legal persons for tax purposes, customs, etc. depending on their rating.
- Restricted access to public procurement, government land, social media platforms, and subsidies for blacklisted enterprises.

Source: Information compiled from www.chinacredit.gov.cn

does guarantee that the blacklist "applies] only to people who have defaulted on penalty payments or who have refused to comply with court decisions," ensuring the system is not abused (i.e., according to this promise, someone who made a single innocuous decision cannot automatically be blacklisted) (Bing Song, "The West May Be Wrong About China's Social Credit System," *Washington Post*, 29 November 2018). Hence, the blacklist is likely not a concern for many Chinese citizens, nor will it directly affect many citizens' lives.

The premise of the social credit system is to "allow the trustworthy to roam everywhere under heaven while making it hard for the discredited to take a single step" (Maya Wang, "China's Chilling 'Social Credit' Blacklist," *Human Rights Watch*, 11 December 2017). On that note, the blacklist serves a dual purpose: to punish the untrustworthy and to make China safer for the rest. Additionally, the social credit system rewards those with a high credit score. *Forbes* cites "one hospital [that] allows an individual" with "a social credit score above 650 [...] to see a doctor without lining up to pay" (Marr). Other benefits for having a high social credit score include being able to send your children to the best private schools, book top hotels, and "rent things without deposit."

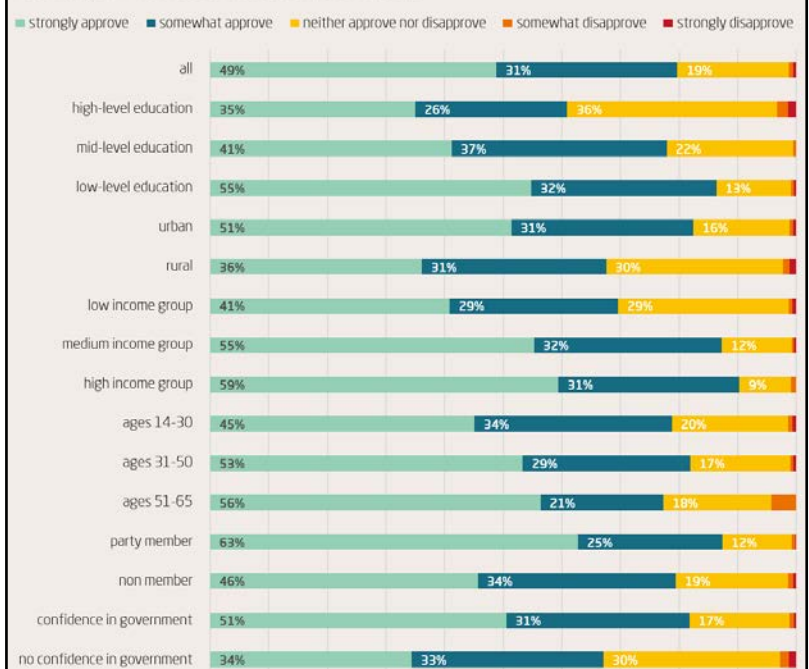
As noted, the global community has already criticized the social credit system, calling it "Big Brother" and "chilling" (Ma). That said, components of the social credit system may be comparable "to travel restrictions for those who have filed for bankruptcy in countries like Australia or Singapore." Without labeling the social credit system as good or bad, statistics show "3.5 million people or companies paid

taxes or debts they owed because of the social credit system" (Kuo). Interviews with some Chinese citizens are also promising with regards to the success of the system: "A 32-year-old entrepreneur, who only gave his name as Chen, told *Foreign Policy*: 'I feel like in the past six months, people's behaviour has gotten better and better. For example, when we drive, now we always stop in front of crosswalks. If you don't stop, you will lose your points. At first, we just worried about losing points, but now we got used to it'" (Ma).

Despite the multitude of information regarding the social credit system, much is still undisclosed or yet to be determined. For instance, the true effectiveness of the system cannot yet be concluded until it is fully implemented across China. And information regarding the nuances of the blacklist—like how to get off of it or to what extent China will stick to its promise of only blacklisting people who owe payments or did not show to court—is difficult to pinpoint this early. The world will just have to wait and see how the rest of China feels about the social credit system, and if it really works.

### "How much do you approve of social credit systems?"

Percentage of internet-connected Chinese citizens



Note: Based on a survey of 2,209 internet-connected Chinese citizens, conducted from February to April 2018.  
Source: Freie Universität Berlin

# AFRICA

## Remembering the Rwandan Genocide by Liam Scott '19

To remember actively is to recognize something's significance. Conversely, to forget is to disregard and disparage. Historical memory is an extremely powerful mechanism not only for change but also for honoring the past. Still, historical memory functions slyly. Nevertheless, the mechanics behind the picking and choosing are incredibly important. They reveal much more than one might first think. In short, memory matters.

Although the Rwandan genocide began on April 7, 1994, the day after President Juvénal Habyarimana was assassinated, ethnic conflict between Hutus and Tutsis, the country's predominant ethnic groups, was present in Rwanda for decades before. This conflict was precipitated primarily due to German and Belgian colonization earlier in the 20th century, which put the Tutsi minority in power. Ethnic conflict intensified and resulted in a revolution in 1959; many Tutsis were forced to flee to neighboring countries like Burundi and Uganda, the Hutus claimed power, and Belgium officially left Rwanda in 1962. The next few decades were characterized by guerilla warfare — Tutsis against Hutus who remained in Rwanda. Sporadic fighting culminated in a civil war in 1990 between the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a rebel Tutsi-led group, and Rwanda; the civil war ended in 1993. In response, the United Nations implemented the Arusha Accords, a power-sharing agreement between the two ethnic groups, and UNAMIR, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda; however, these actions were taken too late. When President Habyarimana's plane was shot down several months later, a genocide finally was sparked.

The Rwandan genocide is particularly interesting due to the important role that media played in inciting violence. The two main culprits were Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), a radio station, and *Kangura*, a newspaper. These media spewed hate speech and rumor; they were responsible for stereotyping the Tutsi and for encouraging the murder of Tutsis. An RTLM broadcaster who once said, "So, we must take revenge on the Inyenzi Inkotanyi [the Tutsis] and exterminate them as the whole youth is ready to do" (Valérie Bemeriki "RTLM 50," *RTLM*, 20 June 1994). The same transcript records a song that included the lines "Friends, let us rejoice ... / The Inkotanyi have all perished ... / Friends, let us rejoice ...

God is fair ... " Another radio transcript called for the "exterminat[ion] of the Tutsis (Kantano Habimana, *RTLM*, 2 July 1994).

*Kangura* served a similar purpose, even though it was not published during the genocide. One particularly famous 1991 cover asked, "What weapons shall we use to conquer the inyenzi once and for all?" — problematic not only because it encouraged violence but also because it worked to normalize referring to Tutsis as inyenzi, or cockroaches (Susan Benesch, "Inciting Genocide, Pleading Free Speech," *World Policy Journal*, 2004). *Kangura* also published the Hutu Ten Commandments in 1990, which included unofficial rules such as a "Hutu must stop taking pity on the Tutsi." Benesch writes that, according to one witness, "[*Kangura's*] crime was to 'spread petrol throughout the country little by little, so that one day [they] would be able to set fire to the whole country.'"



The same could be said about RTLM.

It is hardly debatable that RTLM and *Kangura* were, in part, responsible for the Rwandan genocide. Through the dehumanization of Tutsis and through the direct encouragement of violence against the Tutsis, these media were responsible for countless murders. RTLM even ordered direct killings and went so far as to announce details about specific cars owned by Tutsis, as well as the general whereabouts of the Tutsi targets (Alison des Forges, Human Rights Watch).

The Rwandan media played an important role in the Rwandan genocide, and, in a way, the current government recognizes that. Rwanda remembers the genocide today; through the Unity and Reconciliation



From L to R: Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki, President of Rwanda Paul Kagame, the first lady of Rwanda Jeannette Kagame, and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker light the flame of remembrance during a commemoration event at the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre on April 7, 2019.

policy, the government ensures that no one forgets (Megan Specia, “How a Nation Reconciles After Genocide Killed Nearly a Million People,” *New York Times*, 25 April 2017). And interestingly, memory of the Rwandan genocide manifests itself, in part, in the state’s lack of freedom of the press.

A 2013 Freedom House report summarized the state of Rwandan media: “The [2009 media] law prohibits the propagation of ideas based on ‘ethnic, regional, racial, religious, language, or other divisive characteristics.’ Public incitement to ‘divisionism’ is punishable by up to five years in prison and fines of up to 5 million Rwandan francs (\$8,100). Statutes in the penal code forbid defamation of the head of state or other public officials, which can carry up to five years in prison and fines of up to 10,000 Rwandan francs (\$16). These laws are generally seen as vague and sweeping in breadth.”

The laws restricting the press are especially

tight when it comes to reporting on the Rwandan genocide. For example, “Huguka community radio presenter Epaphrodite Habarugira was detained on a charge of ‘minimizing’ the 1994 genocide and ‘spreading genocide ideology.’ He was arrested for mixing up the Kinyarwanda words for ‘victims’ and ‘survivors’ while reading a report about ceremonies marking the 18th anniversary of the genocide on a news broadcast” (Freedom House).

Perhaps these stringent media laws truly began due to the fear and memory of hate media during the country’s genocide. Lars Waldorf is correct that “Rwanda’s new government [after the

genocide] faced the task of ensuring that a resurrected press would not voice hate speech again” (“Censorship and Propaganda in Post-Genocide Rwanda,” *Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, 2007). Rwandan media laws have become obsessed with countering any semblance of “divisionism.” While these stricter laws were at first welcomed, journalists soon noticed that they were becoming too extreme. Meanwhile, “the private commercial stations have mostly shied away from news and commentary” (Waldorf). In short, the government controls the media, has strategically posited the memory of the Rwandan genocide to maintain control of the media, and will punish anyone who disagrees.

The government is abusing the memory of the Rwandan genocide to suppress opposition media. Peace is more important than freedom of the press, but disparaging the memory of such a horrifying atrocity is also problematic. Yet still, it is curious that more people today seem concerned with the lack of freedom of the press in Rwanda than they were with the systematic murder that took place there 25 years ago. Surely remembrance is not something that should be taken lightly.

## NBA Goes to Africa by Jack Glassie '20

On February 16, the National Basketball Association (NBA) announced plans to launch a professional basketball league in Africa in association with the International Basketball Federation (FIBA), the international governing body of basketball. The league will feature 12 programs across the continent and will begin to play in 2020. The BAL, as the league is known, is the merger of 12 pre-existing clubs whose teams will travel to play each other. This move comes as the NBA’s first venture outside of North America to create a professional basketball program, and is also the first of its kind in Africa (“NBA and FIBA

Announce Plan to Launch Professional Basketball League in Africa,” *NBA.com*, 16 February 2019).

The creation of the BAL was motivated by the NBA’s search for untapped talent on the African continent. Many high-level players in the NBA are the result of the game’s rapid growth, including Joel Embiid of the Philadelphia 76ers and Toronto Raptor Serge Ibaka. Ibaka became the first player from the Republic of Congo to be selected in the NBA draft. Though he was born into basketball — his parents played the sport locally — his path to stardom was unlike the standard NCAA path that most NBA

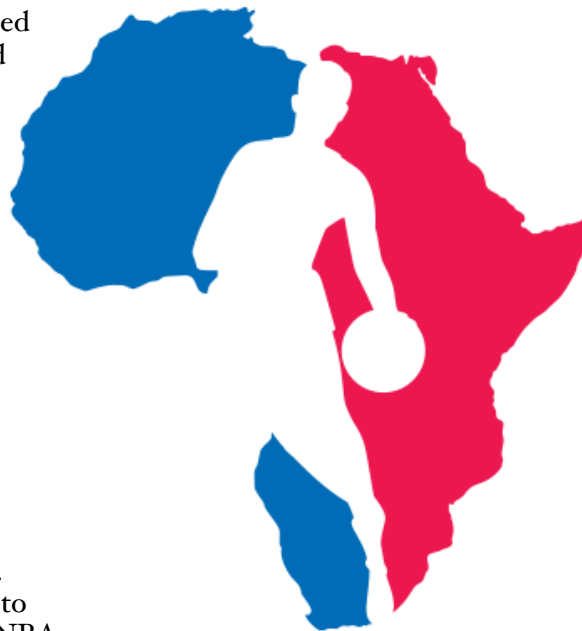


Serge Ibaka (left), of the Toronto Raptors, and Joel Embiid (right), of the Philadelphia 76ers

players follow. Serge’s mother died when he was 8, and he found that basketball was his way to navigate not only the civil unrest that forced his family to flee their home, but also the imprisonment of his father and the uncertainty of his future. When he earned an invitation to compete at the under-18 African Championships in 2006, he found his chance. After being named MVP in the tournament for having the most points and rebounds, Ibaka left to play in the French and Spanish basketball circuits. Eventually, he made his way to the sport’s biggest stage—the NBA (Darnell Mayberry, “Coming to America: How Serge Ibaka Went From the Congo to the NBA,” *Oklahoman*, 26 March 2010).

The new Basketball Africa League (BAL) would be used by the NBA to grow the game, to create talent, and ultimately to become a pipeline through which high-level players could come directly from their respective African programs to the United States. Moreover, this would create a consistent flow of talented players and streamline the process by which athletes enter the NBA. Players like Ibaka would have direct access to high-level facilities and training.

Even more so, the 12 chosen teams will make money and



create academies and programs across the African continent. Commissioner Adam Silver made clear the NBA’s plan to “dedicate financial support and resources toward the continued development” of basketball in Africa. They hope to “train players, coaches, and referees, and to create infrastructure investment” across multiple nations. Ultimately, the development of the BAL will “provide a platform for elite players to showcase their talent and inspire more young boys and girls to play the game,” said Amadou Gallo Fall, the NBA Managing Director for Africa (*NBA.com*).

Former U.S. President Barack Obama, who publicly commented on the creation of the league, hopes to work alongside FIBA and the NBA to advance the plan.

“I’ve always loved basketball because it’s about building a team that’s equal to more than the sum of its parts,” said Obama in a tweet. His statement continued, validating the choice to create such a program in Africa, a “rising continent” where basketball “can be about a lot more than what happens on the court” (Barack Obama, “On a Landmark Day for the NBA in Africa, a Powerful Video on How Sports Make a Difference,” *Twitter*, 16 February 2019).

As of now, the International Basketball Federation plan would see multiple nations represented. Angola, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, and Tunisia would be hosts for the 12 teams, and each singular nation would be restricted to only two qualifying teams.



The NBA and FIBA announced in February their plan to launch the Basketball Africa League (BAL), a new professional league featuring 12 club teams from across Africa. Scheduled to begin play in January 2020, the BAL will mark the NBA’s first collaboration to operate a league outside of North America. Amadou Gallo Fall (pictured), NBA Vice President and Managing Director for Africa, was named President of the BAL.

These nine countries have been identified by the NBA and the basketball community as important due to their potential for growing the league, and also for their history of being the most popular and relevant nations in Africa for the sport.

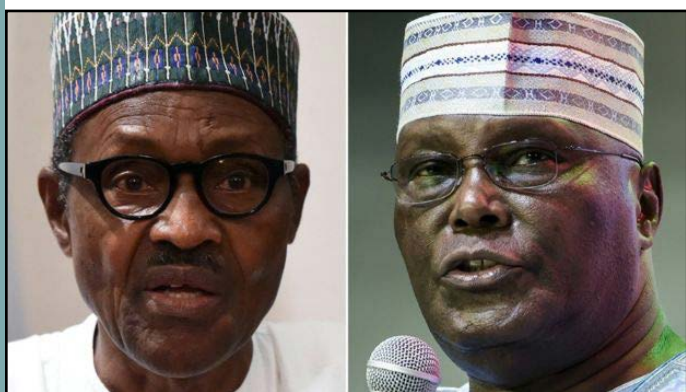
In their mini-documentary produced in September 2018, “Joel Embiid’s Rise and the Prince That Fueled It,” Vice Sports shines a light on both the continent’s “untapped potential,” which have been held back by a “shortage of resources and coaching,” and on NBA star player Embiid. Originally from Cameroon, Embiid began playing primarily due to the support of his local town’s prince-turned-NBA-player, Luc Mbah a Moute. For many of these players, the emergence of basketball in their local communities in West Africa provided a perfect opportunity to seek opportunity from their size, height, and athleticism. Embiid,

like many other former and current African players in the league, is the by-product of a fascination around basketball displayed by the wealthy and elite in Cameroon, one of the primary epicenters for the sport. He is also 7-foot-tall and considered physically ideal for the league (Shaun Powell, “Hoops Journey of Philadelphia 76ers Phenom Joel Embiid a Storybook-like ‘Process,’” *NBA.com*, 18 October 2017).

Embiid fits a class of new-age basketball players who use their physicality and on-court dominance as the center point of their game. This is the definition of the ideal player. For the NBA, the next step is to create an atmosphere on the African continent wherein basketball provides opportunity and possibility for athletic and fit individuals. Untapped talent is endless, but the means to find it must live up to the quality of play.

## As Nigerians Reelect President, Tribal Ties Are a Question

by Emma Devlin '21



Muhammadu Buhari, left, of the All Progressives Congress (APC) and Atiku Abubakar, right, of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP)

After Nigerian president Muhammadu Buhari was re-elected in February, his former vice president and most competitive opponent, Atiku Abubakar, publicly announced his intention to challenge Buhari in court, declaring the recent election a “sham” (Tomi Oladipo, “What We’ve Learnt From the Nigerian Election,” *BBC Africa*, 28 February 2019). While it’s been recorded that Buhari received 56 percent of overall votes in contrast to Abubakar’s 41 percent, the turbulent voting process has raised doubt about the accuracy of the polls (Felix Onuah and Paul Carsten, “Nigeria’s Buhari Wins Re-election, Rival Pursues Fraud Claim,” *Reuters*, 28 February 2019). Since the beginning of the campaign last October, 327 citizens have died in election-based fighting. Additionally, the Niger Delta militant group, which pushed Nigeria’s economy into its first recession in 2016, threatened to debilitate the economy once again.

Along with the recent violence, a few suspicious occurrences have further increased the controversial

election’s reliability. Such occurrences include the alarmingly small number of active voters, even though 73 million people have the right to vote (Oladipo). In fact, the amount of people who *do* vote has rapidly declined since 2003, and most come from the southern region of Nigeria. In comparison to the 44 percent of registered citizens who voted for Buhari during the 2015 election, the current election only had 35 percent (Iwa Salami, “Nigeria: What Muhammadu Buhari’s Re-election Means for Africa’s Biggest Economy,” *theconversation.com*, 5 March 2019). Nonetheless, in the northern region of the country, Buhari is considered “a principled man of the people,” receiving much backing from his loyal followers (Oladipo). Alternatively, Abubakar relies heavily on the southern



The ballot paper has to be extra long in order to fit on all 73 presidential candidates

region to give him support; however, he has highlighted the odd decline of votes in his most reliable regions; he saw a 50 percent decrease in voter participation in comparison to his 2015 election. He believes the

entire process of tallying votes was performed through corrupt actions and “premeditated malpractices” (Onuah and Carsten). Another one of Abubakar’s observations that has received much consideration is the large number of votes in the northern region, which came from areas occupied by Boko Haram, the Islamist militia group. The reason for suspicion is due to the group’s unwavering support for Buhari’s party, the All Progressives Congress (APC). The APC has worked on advancing Africa’s security, and by doing so, has caused the displacement of nearly two million people from states under Islamist-militia rule. This being said, Abubakar’s confusion towards Boko Haram’s support for Buhari seems reasonable with the provided proof. Furthermore, both the North and South have had attacks during the election, but *only* the affected areas in the *South* were unable to vote. The northern regions involved came out with a high percentage of votes despite violent interference by Boko Haram.

Nonetheless, the most problematic issue following Buhari’s re-election is the impact on the production of oil for members of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) (Holly Ellyatt, “The Risk of Further Bloodshed and Oil Disruption Remains High as Nigeria Re-elects Its President,” CNBC, 27 February 2019). RBC Capital Markets Global Head of



Nigerians lined up to vote in the country’s presidential elections on February 23, after a weeklong delay.

Commodity Strategy, Helima Croft, notes that since Abubakar’s party, the People’s Democratic Party, or PDP, is “refusing to accept the outcome, the risk of further unrest remains high... especially in the restive oil region,” (Ellyatt). It would be a major event in the oil market if the return of military occupation happens, especially since the oil region of Niger Delta has had a large amount of disorder and obstruction of its oil production in the past due to military violence. There is fear of a military resurgence largely because Nigeria is the main producer of gas and oil in Africa, making

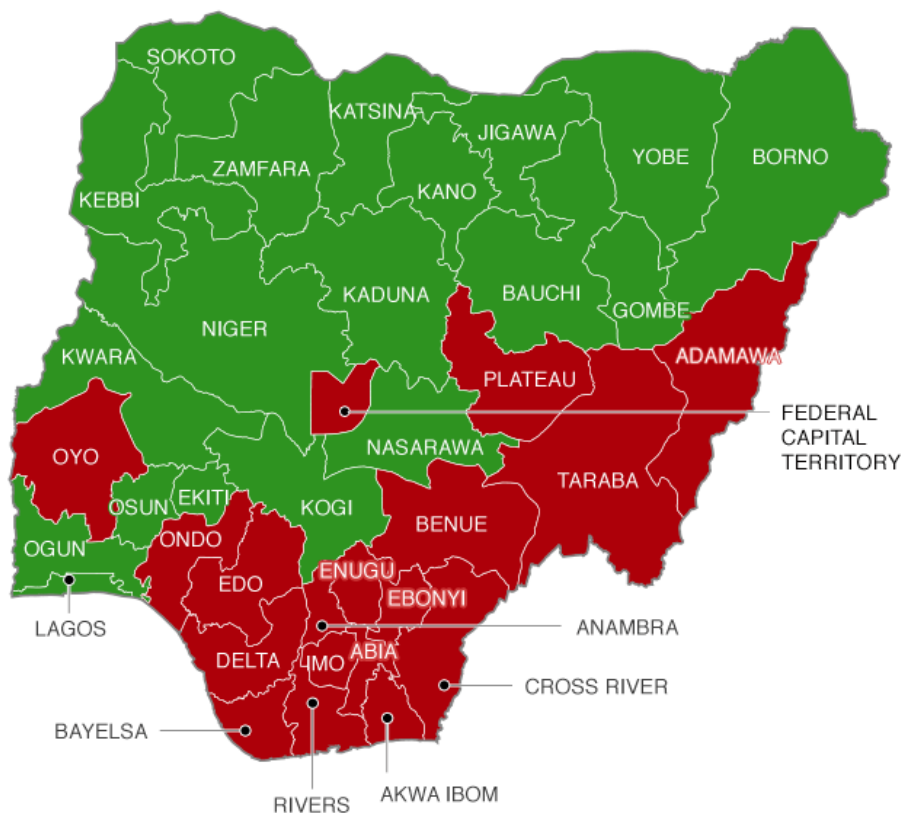
nearly 1.8 million barrels per day (Ellyatt). If any disturbances in Nigeria’s oil production occur, there could be negative or volatile responses from other countries in the region. Nonetheless, CNBC experts said that although it’s possible for further unrest to occur from the PDP’s discord with the APC, it is unlikely Nigeria will have another drawback in oil production.

While Abubakar and Buhari have publicly stated their opinions of the election, there are numerous citizens who want to be heard, too. According to DW News, the younger generation of Africans “want change – and are ready to vote Buhari out” (“Nigeria Election 2019: Explosions and Delays Don’t Deter Voters”). On the topic of bloodshed, one woman who was interviewed went as far to say the government isn’t “doing a lot about what is happening,” and then concluded by saying “let’s tell ourselves the truth” (DW News). Though Buhari has done a considerably effective job at bettering Nigeria’s corruption and

## Nigerian election results

Winning party in each state

■ APC ■ PDP



Source: INEC

BBC

security, citizens have denounced his efforts towards the economy (Salami). In contrast, loyal followers of Buhari believe he has honorably tried to reduce corruption and, more importantly, set Nigeria in the right direction.

Regardless of who people voted for, the people waiting at the polls encountered difficulties that largely questioned the validity of the election. One difficulty was the serial numbers that were posted outside the voting booths before entering; some citizens couldn't find their serial numbers and were denied access to voting (DW News). Another major issue was that the voting was delayed for a week since certain polling stations ran out of ballots. Observers from the United States believed this occurrence could have largely affected the number of people who voted (Onuah and Carsten). In the end, however, Buhari was named president for a second four-year term. He

will have to put a lot of time into solving Nigeria's six government challenges: "voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regularity quality, rule of law and control of corruption" (Salami). In addition to these challenges, tribal loyalties, which are at the heart of this election controversy, continue to plague much of Africa in the postcolonial age. If Buhari is able to resolve these challenges, Nigeria could be set on a path of stability and prosperity. Although the voters have pushed to continue Buhari's "moving train" to fight growing issues, detractors have highlighted how Buhari was sick in a hospital for half of 2017, questioning if he was healthy enough to lead Nigeria (Max Bearak, "Nigeria's Muhammadu Buhari Wins Second Presidential Term as Opposition Pledges Court Challenge Against 'Sham Election,'" *Washington Post*, 27 February 2019).

## Archaeology Digs the Spotlight by Ethan Levinbook '20

On January 24 of this year, Egypt announced the discovery of ancient tombs dating back to the Second Intermediate Period, 1782-1570 B.C.E., in the Nile Delta, as well as 20 predynastic-period burial sites in Kom al-Kholgan, 87 miles north of Cairo ("Egypt Announces Discovery of Ancient Tombs in Nile Delta," *Haaretz*, 24 January 2019). According to Mostafa Waziri,

This photo provided by the Egyptian Antiquities Authority shows a skeleton, at the Kom al-Kholgan archaeological site, about 87 miles north of Cairo. The Antiquities Ministry said in January that archaeologists uncovered ancient tombs dating back to the Second Intermediate Period, 1782-1570 B.C., in the Nile Delta.



Secretary General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, the tombs contain animal remains, shards of pottery, vessels, knives, amulets, and scarab beetles

carved from faience; the objects recovered were, unfortunately, not well-preserved ("3,500-Year-Old Tombs Unearthed in Egypt's Nile Delta," *Archaeology*, 24 January 2019).



A tomb containing 50 mummies, 12 of which were children, was unearthed by Egyptian archaeologists on February 2. The tomb was discovered at Tuna

In February, Egyptian archaeologists said they had uncovered a tomb containing 40 mummies dating back to the Ptolemaic era from 323 BCE to 30 BCE. The embalmed remains were discovered inside four 9m-deep burial chambers at the Tuna Al-Gabel archaeological site in Minya, 160 miles south of Cairo. The mummies included 12 children and six animals, while the rest were adult men and women, said archaeologist Rami Rasmi.





A ram-headed sphinx dating to the time of King Tut's grandfather—the pharaoh Amenhotep III, who ruled in the 14th century BCE—was discovered in an ancient quarry in Egypt.

el-Gebel, the necropolis of Hermopolis Magna (Khmun) (Encyclopædia Britannica, “Egyptian art and architecture,” *Britannica Academic*, 29 January 2019). This site is notable for its many archaeological finds, including the tomb of Petosiris, who was the high priest of Thoth in Hermopolis Magna in the late 4th century BCE, and a catacomb filled with embalmed ibises, falcons, and baboons. According to Khaled El-Enany, Egyptian minister of Antiquities, the newly discovered tomb was a burial chamber for an elite, upper-middle-class Egyptian family from the Ptolemaic Era (Laura M. Holson, “Egypt Unveils Dozens of Newly Discovered Mummies,” *New York Times*, 4 February 2019). “The grave that we are talking about here has a well that is almost 9 meters deep leading to four chambers underground holding a great number of mummies,” said Waziri.

A team of Minya University archaeologists, led by Dr. Wagdi Ramadan, carried out the excavation mission. Ramadan stated that the sarcophagi, as is common at Tuna el-Gebel, were tucked into alcoves in one massive room. Other mummies were not stowed in sarcophagi; instead, they were buried in sand or laid, wrapped in cloth, on the floor. Some of the many adult mummies had painted fragments of cartonnage - plastered layers of linen or papyrus - at the base of their feet. Some of the children were wrapped in linen adorned with ancient Egyptian script, which epigraphers are currently trying to decipher (Holson).

As announced on February 13, archaeologists in Egypt have discovered the remains of a 2,000-year-old shipyard at the Tel Abu Saifi archaeological site, located in the Ancient Roman town of Sila, 3 kilometers east of the Suez Canal in the northern region of the Sinai Peninsula (Khloud Hosny, “Roman

Shipyard Discovered in Egypt,” *Luxor Times*, 12 February 2019). The newly-discovered site contains the remnants of two dry docks and a rectangular building, believed to have served as a workshop for vessels (James Rogers, “2,000-year-old Shipyard Discovered in Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula,” *Fox News*, 18 February 2019).

The shipyard dates back to the Ptolemaic era, a period between 332 and 30 BCE. The site was once

connected via a lake to a branch of the Nile River; however, both bodies of water have since dried up. At the site, archaeologists discovered pieces of wood for repairing boats, as well as metal nails, local and imported pottery, and fish skeletons. Director of Lower Egypt Antiquities Dr. Nadia Khedr stated that after the lake and Nile tributary dried out, individuals dismantled the ancient vessel workshop and probably reused the structure’s large limestone rocks for other buildings (Hosny).

The discovery of a 3,000-year-old sandstone sphinx at an ancient quarry site in Gebel el-Silsila near Aswan, Egypt was also announced in February (Stephanie Pappas, “Ram-Headed Sphinx Abandoned by King Tut’s Grandfather Found in Egypt,” *Livescience*, 27 February 2019). The unearthed sphinx is termed a *criosphinx*, or a sphinx with a ram’s head; the criosphinx’s more famous counterpart, a human-headed sphinx such as that of Giza, is referred to as an *androsphinx*. A joint Swedish-Egyptian archaeological team led by Dr. Maria Nilsson and John Ward of Sweden’s Lund University unearthed the 11.5-foot-tall, 16.4-foot-long criosphinx from a pit of quarry debris deposited by the ancient Romans. Archaeological context suggests that the statue dates from the reign of pharaoh Amenhotep III, who ruled Egypt from around 1390 to around 1350 BCE and was the grandfather of King Tutankhamun (Rogers, “Amazing Ram-Headed Sphinx Linked to King Tut’s Grandfather Discovered in Egypt,” *Fox News*, 2 March 2019). The criosphinx is aesthetically similar to those found at the Khonsu Temple at Karnak, an ancient temple in Luxor, Egypt.

Ward noted that the top of the criosphinx’s head has protruded from the rubble that has engulfed it since antiquity. Since 2018, archaeologists have removed massive amounts of rubble in order to reveal the entire statue all the way to its plinth. Still, the

team has more work to do; a vast amount of rubble, nearly 12 feet thick (3.5 meters), still surrounds the criosphinx. “We’ve got an immense task ahead of us to clean all of this tonnage of quarry spoil to reveal all of this New Kingdom layer,” Ward said (Pappas).

The newly discovered criosphinx was lying in the site of an 18th-dynasty carving workshop, wherein the team of archaeologists has also found parts of an obelisk - including its pyramidion - and hundreds of sandstone fragments inscribed with hieroglyphs (“Ancient Egypt: 3400 Year-Old Sphinx Uncovered,” *Mr. Imbotep*, 26 February 2019). The team unearthed a carved *uraeus*, a cobra symbolizing royalty, which once topped the criosphinx. Archaeologists also found nearby a miniature version of the larger criosphinx, believed to be a study carved for practice by an apprentice. Left behind by artisans almost 4,000 years ago, iron shavings from chisels and sandstone chips surrounded the criosphinx. Near the excavation site, the team also found fragments of a *naos*, or shrine, dedicated to Amenhotep III (Pappas).

Both the larger criosphinx and its smaller counterpart were abandoned at Gebel el-Silsila incomplete. Since then, Roman quarry activity buried the sphinges in debris (“New Kingdom Workshop and Ram-Headed Sphinx Excavated in Gebel el-Silsila,” *Gebel el-Silsila Project*, 27 February 2019). Nilsson and her team are uncertain as to why the criosphinx was abandoned at the quarry site. A fracture on the large statue might have compelled the sculptor to abandon the criosphinx. The abandonment might also have been politically motivated; according to Nilsson, it is possible that when Amenhotep III died, the sculptures he commissioned—including the one unearthed—were discarded. “One of the aspects that we are considering is whether or not it was left because of the change in rulership,” Nilsson said (Pappas).

These archaeological finds are important not only for the global academic community but also for the citizens of Egypt, whose culture, economy and politics are heavily influenced by its ancient past. “Ancient Egypt is an integral part of modern Egypt’s identity,” stated Sharon Waxman, author of *Loot: The Battle Over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World*. Archaeology and ancient history are inextricably bound with modern Egyptian life in part due to their connection to the nation’s economy, reliant on tourism. “Tourism, in part, is what fuels the country,” Ms. Waxman said (Holson).

The Arab Spring revolution in 2011 ravaged the Egyptian tourist industry; travelers, especially Americans, have since been loath to travel to Egypt (Holson). A number of airline disasters and terrorist attacks since the failed 2011 uprising have made tourists even more reluctant to visit the nation; according to Al Jazeera News, tourists visiting Egypt dropped from approximately 15 million in 2010 to 5.7 million in 2016, costing the country billions and putting workers in the tourist industry out of work (Dorian Geiger, “The Lonely Pyramids of Giza: Egyptian Tourism’s Decline,” *Al Jazeera*, 8 June 2017).

In recent years, Egypt has heavily promoted new archaeological finds to international media and diplomats in the hope of attracting more visitors to the country. Finds like those aforementioned are important for this revivification of the Egyptian tourist industry; archaeological discoveries inspire travelers to visit Egypt. Recently, trends have indicated that Egyptian tourism could be on the upswing. Gradually, travelers have been returning to the nation in hopes of seeing firsthand the remnants of Ancient Egypt. World Tourism Organization’s 2018 report notes that Egypt, rebounding from previous years, led Middle Eastern tourism growth during that year.

## Protests in Sudan by Sophie Zhuang '21

Having recently faced genocide charges and anti-government protests, Sudan’s President Omar al-Bashir declared a yearlong state of emergency while signing a constitutional amendment extending his term of presidency. The purpose of the anti-government protests is simple: the Sudanese people want Bashir to resign, largely because he has not solved the economic crisis within the country; inflation continues to rack the Sudanese economy.

The protests started in December 2018 and quickly turned into a revolt. The Sudanese government reacted to the protesters with rubber bullets, tear gas, and live ammunition. Troops opened fire, resulting in more than 50 deaths (Naba Mohiedeen, “Sudan Graffiti Artist Honors Anti-Government Protest Victims,” *VOA News Africa*, 1 April 2019). Among the people who gathered to march to the palace demanding

freedom, peace, and justice, were doctors, teachers, and other professionals.

Sudan’s economy has struggled since the creation of South Sudan; foreign exchange revenues have fallen and the government has been struggling to make ends meet. As the economic situation continued to decline, President Bashir repeatedly reorganized his cabinet and implemented multiple measures to stimulate exports, reformed the foreign exchange management mechanism, controlled the liquidity of the local currency, cracked down corruption and smuggling, and sought foreign aid in an attempt to reverse the economic decline. The banknote shortage comes one month after authorities let the value of the pound slide from 29 pounds to the dollar to 47.5 pounds and announced measures to tighten spending (Khalid Abdelaziz, “Cash Runs Out in Khartoum as



Haifaa Abushaiba, right, with her friend at a Sudan solidarity march this spring in San Francisco

Sudan Tries to Halt Economic Crisis,” *U.S. News*, 12 November 2018). There was a severe shortage of gasoline and diesel. Industrial and agricultural production was greatly affected.

According to the State Statistical Agency, inflation rose to 68.93 percent in November from 68.44 percent in October, sparking social unrest (“Sudanese Economic Crisis,” *Africa News*, 19 December 2018). Spot checks with traders and market vendors showed that over the past month the cost of a kilo of flour has risen 20 percent, beef 30 percent, and potatoes 50 percent (Abdelaziz). Sudan’s inflation stood at more than 68 percent in September, one of world’s highest rates. Along with the Sudanese government’s attempts to avoid economic collapse through a sharp currency devaluation, ATM machines in Khartoum, along with other cities, have been unable to dispense cash.

Students and trade unionists, inspired by France’s “yellow vest” movement, used social media to call for protests against increasingly worsening economic pressures.

During the protests, the government responded with violence. Sudanese security officers, working alongside the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS), protected the government from the protestors under the commands of Bashir. NISS has been recognized for driving in white Toyota pickup trucks; some members wore military uniforms and carried guns, others wore plain clothes and carried

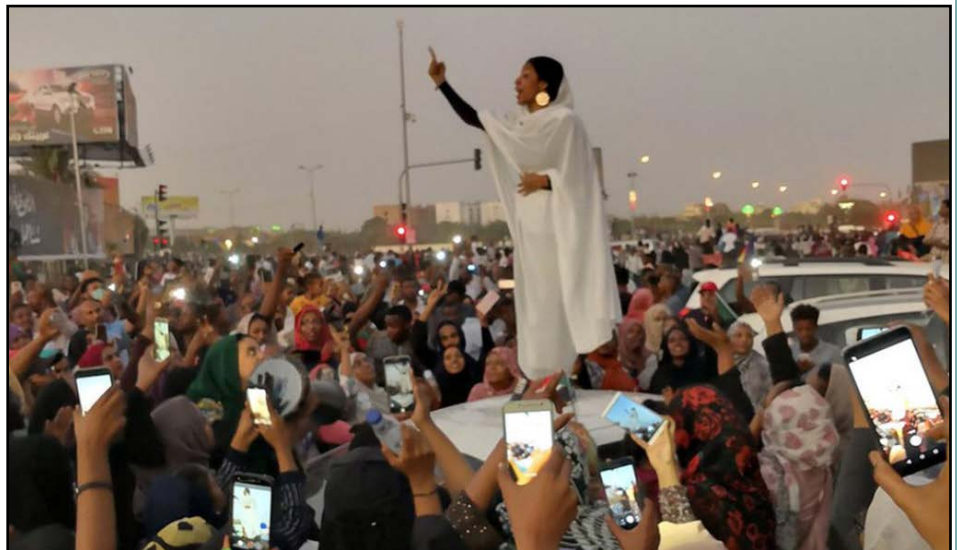


Former President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan, speaking at the presidential palace in Khartoum, the capital, in April.

sticks and batons. Video records illustrate anti-government activists being captured and beaten by members of NISS. The activists and victims are then dragged into the car and disappear within sight. They are brought to “the Ghost House,” a notoriously inhumane detention facility, which got its name from the detainees’ crying and screaming from torture behind the walls. A few blocks away from the Asia Hospital and the Ghost House is a building known as the Fridge. Inside, activists and victims are frozen to death. Some who were freed or escaped claimed that they were kept in the cold overnight (Benjamin Strick and Suzanne Vanhooymissen, *BBC News Africa*, 13 February 2019). To the public, such actions are clearly beyond crowd control.

Investigator Benjamin Strick from *BBC News Africa* reported that the government spokesperson not only denied the existence of these places, but also says that no one in the Sudanese security has ever heard about the Fridge. He expresses to the media that the Sudanese security prohibits the beating and shooting of people on the street, claiming that the protest is not approved by the Sudanese government and is, therefore, illegal. The use of fire by the security officers was an act of self-defense.

Since 2018, the government has made efforts to hold peace talks with the opposition, and the larger opposition parties have started to join the negotiation process.



This photograph of Alaa Salah’s appearance during a protest in April against President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan swept through social media, with some calling it “the image of the revolution.”

# THE AMERICAS

## Reflections on a Visit to Cuba by Stephanie Zhang '21

Although the flight from New York to Havana lasted only three hours, I found myself almost 70 years in the past as I disembarked the plane. Over spring break, I took part in Loomis Chaffee's Cuba International Education Program with 13 of my peers and two faculty members. The focus of the trip was Cuban history and international studies. While in Cuba, I had the chance to learn history not only by studying it, but also by experiencing the present-day effects. Through exploring local music, art, and food, as well as meeting native residents, I became well-acquainted with the beauty and individuality of Cuba.

During our drive from the airport to our homestays, I reveled in the tropical Cuban scenery while I snacked on crackers and guava juice. Nico and Gabi, our tour guides, explained that we shouldn't expect too much variation in our snack options in the days ahead due to the limited food resources in Cuba.

In contrast, the view from the bus windows was far from monotonous. From the infrastructure to the vegetation, everything in Cuba was colorful, vivid, and teeming with life. Palm trees as tall as the sky lined the streets, radiant cars from the 1950s cruised slowly along the roads. Though all the architecture was clearly historic, the liveliness of the Cuban citizens made the country feel anything but old.

During our trip, we stayed in Casas Particulares, essentially a Cuban equivalent of Airbnb. In my Casa Particular, I stayed with not only the host but also her extended family, allowing me to learn first-hand about the Cuban culture of young and old generations living together. Throughout the week, I got to know Xiomara, the grandma in the house, often sitting on the porch and chatting with her in Spanish.

One of our first destinations in Cuba was La



The Loomis Chaffee group in Old Havana

Habana Vieja, which translates to Old Havana. In La Habana Vieja, we visited the four main plazas, where we learned about both the colonial history of Cuba and its current government. One of the most interesting facts I discovered was that, despite our ability to travel to Cuba, the government has been communist since Fidel Castro's regime, following the revolution against dictator Fulgencio Batista.

My knowledge of Cuban history and the Cuban Revolution grew exponentially throughout the rest of the week. We visited El Museo de La Revolución (Museum of the Revolution), which is located in the old Presidential Palace in Havana, where past Cuban presidents once resided. The marble walls of the museum boasted numerous battle scars from the revolution; multiple bullet holes from the invasion that started the revolution decorated the structure. Seeing the destructive effects of the revolution helped me understand the reality of war; oftentimes, we see

war as something distant on the news in different countries; we frequently forget the causes that other people are desperately fighting for and the effects war has on those living on the front lines.

We visited another Museo de La Revolución while we were at La Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs). Unlike the museum in Havana, this one focused more on the soldiers who fought at the Bay of Pigs, and less on the bigger picture and general information of the revolution. Each museum offered new ways of looking at the same information, and I was interested in how museums in different geographical places displayed the same historical events. At both museums, we had the opportunity to see the unsettling models of



the airplanes, tanks, and boats that were used during the Cuban Revolution.

However, it was the cannon ceremony we attended at the end of our week that really brought Cuba's military history to life for me. During the minutes counting down to 9:00 p.m., we watched soldiers dressed in revolutionary uniforms parade around with torches while yelling Spanish phrases such as 'silencio' into the audience. Then, at precisely 9:00, the soldiers fired a cannon from the Fortress of San Carlos de la Cabaña into the Havana Bay. In the past, the cannon fire was used to announce the official end of the day and signal soldiers to close the city gates for the night, but it has since been fired every night at 9:00 p.m. sharp for hundreds of years.

While I learned Cuban history from the museums, it was from the local art that I received the most powerful messages and displays of culture. As a communist country, the Cuban government censors certain areas of information on the internet; due to this government surveillance, the local people are careful about revealing their political viewpoints in public and, for this reason, I was especially surprised that Cuban art is largely uncensored. As one of the only truly free forms of expression, art is present in every aspect of Cuban culture. In the art museum that we visited, all of the pieces displayed powerful ideas about the government, foreign relations, the revolution, and human life.

One piece of art that really struck me was a painting of a 2 CUC bill (Cuban convertible peso), but instead of a president's portrait, the images on the bill were working laborers. Since Cuba only has 1 CUC bills and 3 CUC bills, the symbolism behind the artwork was that, after a long day of work, the Cuban people still get nothing because 2 CUC bills don't exist.

Throughout the trip, we also had the opportunity to visit local galleries and work with the artists who owned them. One workshop we visited was part of

an ongoing project named Proyectongo; According to its Instagram profile, "PROYECTONGO is an artistic sociocultural project based in San Francisco, Havana, Cuba. Our goal is to make a difference in our community with art." (Instagram.com/proyectongo, 7 April 2019). The gallery uses recycled materials to create its art pieces and uses its profits to run a free community art program for kids and adults alike.

They offer a variety of classes and activities, from croqueting to collaging, music, and karate. Working with Proyectongo allowed me to understand how powerful art was. With limited physical resources but a great amount of heart and motivation, simple arts and crafts activities could improve the conditions of the community in Cuba. I realized that the willingness of a person is the strongest factor in creating change, which reminded me of Loomis' emphasis on the Common Good.

This occasion helped me realize that while Cuba is different from other countries, in many ways it is also similar. At one point in the week, we visited a local school and had the chance to converse with the students. I asked the group of 6th grade girls what their favorite band was. They promptly giggled and replied in unison, "BTS!!" It suddenly hit me. They were just like any other middle school girls in the world; Cuban children weren't as isolated and impoverished as I had previously imagined.

We also had the chance to meet elderly senior citizens in a church senior center. Using my broken Spanish, I listened as they shared their life stories with me; some of them had even been involved in the revolution. One of the veterans who I talked to had suffered eye and leg injuries as a result of the revolution; he shed a tear as he recalled the brutal memories of war. Another elderly lady with whom I spoke enjoyed the small things in life, such as singing; while I sat next to her, she joyfully belted out tune after tune as she remembered songs from her youth.

By the end of the week, I couldn't bear to part with the pure and joyful lifestyle I had experienced in Cuba. As the plane took off from the runway, I left Cuba with not only new knowledge of the country's complicated history, but also an appreciation, understanding, and empathy for its culture, people, and, most importantly, the differences that separate Cuba from the rest of the world. I hope I have been able to bring home the passion of the Proyectongo staff, the carefree happiness of the singing woman in the senior center, and the strength of the Cuban citizens during the revolution.



# Who's Running Venezuela?

by Ryan Jones '20

On January 23, cries of freedom flooded the streets of Caracas, Venezuela, as thousands gathered to protest the controversial reelection of President Nicolás Maduro. First elected in 2013 to succeed the widely popular Hugo Chavez, Maduro has faced backlash in recent months for allegedly rigging the election in his favor. His opposition, led by Juan Guaidó, President of the National Assembly, has cited Article 233 of the Venezuelan Constitution to declare Maduro's presidency invalid and has demanded the immediate instatement of Guaidó as interim president.

Outrage has been building in the past few years as



Nicolas Maduro (L), Juan Guaidó (R), and Hugo Chavez (below)

Maduro, who inherited one of the strongest economies in Latin America, now presides over a period of extreme economic turmoil. Suffering from widespread corruption and bureaucratic incompetence, the nation has endured an inflation rate of 720 percent (Max Fisher and Amanda Taub, "How Venezuela Stumbled to the Brink," 14 May 2017), leaving its currency practically worthless and reducing many to poverty and malnourishment. Additionally, Venezuela, heavily dependent on the sale of oil, which constitutes 98 percent of its export earnings, has experienced a drastic drop in the international price of oil in the past several years (Rocio Cara Labrador, "Venezuela: The Rise and Fall of a Petrostate," *Council on Foreign Relations*, 24 January 2019). As a result, nearly three million citizens have fled the country ("Venezuela Crisis: How the Political Situation Escalated," *BBC News*, 24 January 2019), with Maduro's approval rating consequently sinking to an abysmal 21 percent ("Venezuela Power Struggle Plunges Nation into Turmoil," *The Conversation*, 23 January 2019).

Despite growing opposition to his leadership, Maduro has managed to consolidate power by stripping legislative authority away from the opposition-

controlled National Assembly. In 2017, Maduro angered critics by holding a referendum to create a new constituent assembly with the power to rewrite the Venezuelan Constitution. Though Maduro's government insists the elections were entirely fair, as his party's overwhelming majority in the body was a result of nothing more than the will of the people, his detractors claim that the results were tampered with, and that "more than seven million Venezuelans voted against the constituent assembly" (Katy Watson, "Venezuela Opens Disputed New Constituent Assembly," *BBC News*, 5 August 2017). Many countries publicly condemned the move, including the United States, which recently levied sanctions against Maduro and announced their unequivocal support of Guaidó. Maduro, however, has gained the support of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who, in early March, sent a team of military personnel to Caracas to assist the beleaguered president.

Though Guaidó, who has been granted prosecutorial immunity as President of the National Assembly, shares the support of the U.S. government, the European Union and most Latin American countries are wary of any attempt at outside intervention. In the days after the Trump administration announced its support of Guaidó, the hashtag #HandsOffVenezuela was trending on Twitter, based on the name of a British advocacy group formed after the attempted overthrow of Hugo Chavez in 2002. Many are skeptical of the U.S.'s ability to de-escalate the situation without resorting to violence. "I am very fearful of the United States continuing to do what it has done in the past," claimed U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, continuing, "the United

States overthrew a democratically elected government in Chile, and in Brazil, and in Guatemala" (Gregory Krieg, "Sanders Warns Against Outside Intervention in Venezuela, Stops Short of Calling Maduro a 'Dictator,'" *CNN*, 25 February 2019). This apprehension has only been exacerbated by Trump's appointment of Elliott Abrams to serve as special envoy to the Venezuelan crisis.

Abrams, a former official in the presidential administrations of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, is perhaps most famous for his involvement in the Iran-Contra affair. Arguably the biggest political scandal of the Reagan presidency, the fiasco involved secretly funneling money from the sale of nuclear weapons to the Iranian government into Nicaraguan right-wing militias, or "contras," that sought to overthrow the socialist Sandinista government. Abrams, who in



1991 pled guilty to withholding intel about the scandal from Congress, has been embroiled in controversy this spring due to his past support of the Nicaraguan rebels, who regularly killed innocent bystanders in their many attempts to orchestrate a coup.

However, despite the protestations of many, U.S. military intervention in Venezuela still remains a serious possibility. When asked about the potential employment of the U.S. army, President Trump succinctly replied, "It's an option" (Michael Martin, "Against U.S. Intervention in Venezuela," *NPR*, 3 February 2019). Yet, the one thing most parties agree on is that the United States must be extremely cautious in addressing the South American nation's unrest, as the sanctions, despite Russia's assistance, already have the potential to cause "major collateral damage," according to Renaldo Quintero of the Venezuelan oil chamber (Anatoly Kurmanaev and Clifford Krauss, "U.S. Sanctions Are Aimed at Venezuela's Oil. Its

Citizens May Suffer First," *New York Times*, 8 February 2019).

On March 7, Venezuela experienced a nationwide power outage, leaving many without access to food, water, or money (banking services). While Guaidó blamed further governmental incompetence for the blackout, President Maduro accused outside forces of sabotage. With opposing forces inside and outside Venezuela remaining deadlocked, the Maduro administration facing constant threats of regime change, and his opposition unsure how to execute such a threat, the people of Venezuela may very well be running out of time; as food has become scarce, the average citizen has shed 24 pounds, and nearly "nine out of ten live in poverty" (Labrador). Tragically, as the situation seems to hurdle inevitably toward violence, it appears the Venezuelan people may well indeed become collateral damage.

## Ni Una Menos in Latin America by Kavya Kolli '20

Latin America's "Ni Una Menos" (not one less) movement has made strides in seeking the betterment of women's rights in the region. Beginning in 2015, the movement has targeted gender-based violence and femicide, or the murder of women or girls based on their gender. The catalyst of the revolution was the murder of Argentinian 14-year-old Chiara Paez, who was beaten to death by her boyfriend ("How One Pregnant Teen's Murder Sparked Protests Across Argentina Against 'Femicide,'" *Huffington Post*, 4 June 2015).



The murder of Chiara Paez, a 14-year old pregnant girl killed by her boyfriend in May 2015, helped motivate the founding of the grassroots activist group Ni Una Menos, or Not One Less.

*News*, 4 June 2015). Since these initial protests in 2015, the movement has grown through social media, with the corresponding hashtag #niunamenos spreading from Argentina to countries all over Latin America, with similar campaigns focusing on sexual harassment, the gender pay gap, and abortion rights arising in the region.

Personal stories have led the movement to success, with victims' loved ones sharing the brutal realities of femicide. The murder of women and girls demonstrates a growing problem within Latin

America, a region with some of the highest rates of femicide in the world ("Ni Una Menos' (Not One Less) – Fulfilling the Promise to End Femicide for Women and Girls," *UN Women*, 29 November 2017). Often, such killings arise from domestic violence and abusive relationships. Activists blame the prevalence of femicide on Latin America's 'macho' culture, which contributes to the tendency to blame female victims and disregard punishment for such violence (*Huffington Post*). Though Argentina and other countries have adopted laws against femicide into their penal codes, as early as 2012, supporters of the movement claim that these laws have failed to be enforced (*BBC News*).

The movement has found support from women's



One of the most famous icons of the movement is this 2015 illustration by Ricardo Siri, better known as Liniers, an Argentine cartoonist.

Public outrage from Paez's story and similar cases inspired more than 200,000 protestors to take to the streets in the nation's capital, with similar rallies taking place in the national capitals of nearby Uruguay and Chile ("Argentine Marches Condemn Domestic Violence," *BBC*



Women protest against gender violence in Buenos Aires on June 3

rights groups, unions, political parties, and the Catholic Church, as well as celebrities like Argentine world soccer star Lionel Messi (*BBC News*). Through such widespread support and online awareness, the movement has put significant pressure on Latin American governments to create new legislation to protect women and enforce those laws already in place.

Subsets of protests have arisen from the “Ni Una Menos” movement that target similar issues. In Argentina, support for abortion rights has increased through the assistance of comparable organizations, with similar tactics such as marches being used. Laws regarding abortion are already in place in Argentina, but activists look to expand and strengthen these laws to protect women (Valeria Perasso, “The Women Protesting in the Argentina Abortion Debate,” *BBC News*, 8 August 2018). Similarly, the movement has shined a light on current women’s issues in Peru. With instigation by the “Ni Una Menos” movement, citizens protested outside the Palace of Justice over Peruvian accounts of domestic abuse. On the opposing side, lack of support for the “Ni Una Menos” movement in Peru has come from more powerful figures in the Peruvian government and social atmosphere. However, the discussion and protests inspired by the “Ni Una Menos” movement are ongoing and continue to accrue support from not only within Latin America but across the globe.

## El Chapo...At Last!?

by Theo Hallal '20

In 2016, Mexican drug-and-crime lord Joaquín Guzmán Loera trudged to his New York holding facility, “The Gitmo,” both physically and legally bound. On February 12, 2019, Guzmán entered New York federal court, clad in a velvet blazer to match that of his wife, Emma Coronel Aispuro, who witnessed Guzmán’s lengthy, 12-week trial. The trial illuminated the nuances of his enormous cartel, culminating in a conviction at 12:31 p.m. Better known as “El Chapo,” Guzmán, at the reigns of the intricate, yet voluminous Sinaloa Cartel, has plagued the United States since 1993 with copious amounts of drugs while overseeing a cruel, violent, and duplicitous organization in his home country.

With his fateful conviction came the sunset of a notorious criminal career that included inventive drug transport, prison escapes, and evasion of authority. On multiple occasions, Guzmán eluded police and military pursuit forces, a testament to his ability to avoid retribution for his crimes. Furthermore, while

overseeing operations, Guzmán orchestrated the smuggling of billions of dollars in drugs, including marijuana, heroin, cocaine, and fentanyl, as well as numerous cases of organized violence, including torture, interrogation, and murder.

Despite his seemingly infallible nature, Guzmán displayed his human side in the courtroom by appearing nervous and shocked as a translator relayed the charges, which included “10 straight guilty verdicts on all 10 counts of the indictment” (Alan Feuer, “El Chapo Found Guilty of All Charges; Faces Life in Prison,” *New York Times*, 12 February 2019). Following Judge Cogan’s enumeration of his charges, Guzmán extended himself to his wife – his only source of reassurance – as she returned his glance through tears, offering a “thumbs up.” However, her sign of reassurance means little when compared to the testimonies of 56 witnesses and the substantial amount of evidence against Guzmán (Feuer).

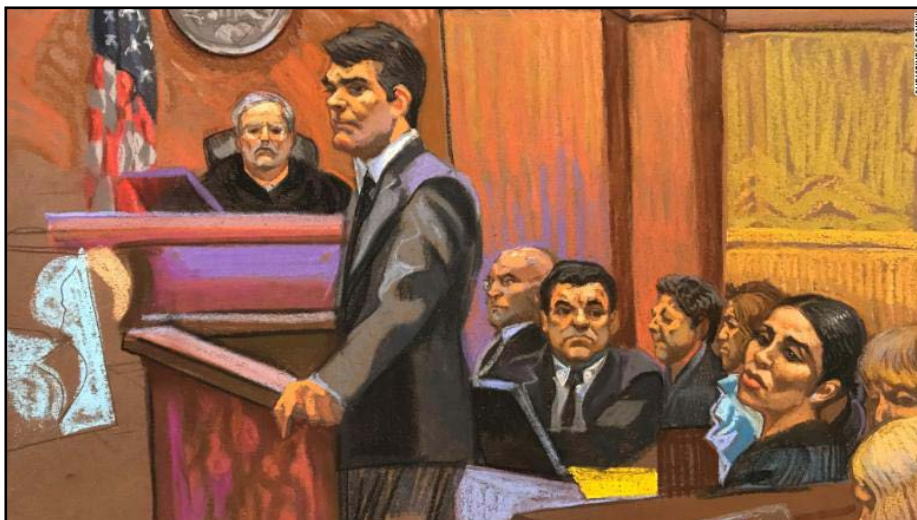


Joaquín Guzmán Loera, better known as El Chapo, was escorted off a plane at Long Island MacArthur Airport in Islip, New York, on January 19, 2017. The decision to extradite Mr. Guzmán was an about-face for the Mexican government, which once claimed that he would serve his long sentence in Mexico first.



The United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Richard Donoghue, elaborated on the broader significance of the trial: “It is a sentence from which there is no escape and no return...there are those who say the war on drugs is not worth fighting... those people are wrong” (Adam Gabbatt, “El Chapo Trial: Mexican Drug Cartel Boss Found Guilty,” *Guardian*, 12 February 2019).

Unsurprisingly, Mr. Guzmán and his legal team anticipated the guilty verdict. However, working in the drug lord’s defense, attorney Jeffrey Lichtman argued that those who testified against Chapo “lie, steal, cheat, deal drugs and kill people” in his plea to the jury. Such a strategy of attacking witnesses was not unexpected, as Lichtman told a reporter, “Do I think it was a fair trial? No... every witness and every question was a battle” (Kevin McCoy, “Federal Jury Finds Drug Lord Joaquín ‘El Chapo’ Guzmán Guilty of All Counts,” *USA Today*, 13 February 2019). Furthermore, Lichtman remarked that he had “never faced a case with so many cooperating witnesses and so much evidence” (Feuer). Eduardo Balarezo, another of Guzmán’s



Due to heightened security during the trial, television cameras and photographers were not permitted in the courtroom; sketch artists were allowed, however. Above is a drawing from the first week of the trial by Christine Cornell of CNN.

El Chapo Appeared Stunned After Verdict,” *New York Times*, 12 February 2019).

Furthermore, on the topic of perspective, Chapo’s drug cartel does not operate as seamlessly and romantically as the hit television show *Narcos* would lead one to believe. Although, interestingly enough, actor Alejandro Edda, who plays Guzmán in the hit Netflix series, did attend the trial, and even received a nod and a smile from the kingpin. Regardless, investigation and testimonies have revealed that Loera is accountable for the arrangement and participation in numerous murders, drug deals, and the drugging and raping of young girls, who, in some cases, were around age 13. In addition, the extent to which the drug business undermines national well-being cannot be understated. On top of the 100,000 estimated deaths tied to the violence of Guzmán’s cartel, many have fallen into what Donoghue dubbed the “black hole of addiction” (Feuer).

Additionally, Alex Cifuentes, a Colombian trafficker, gave the jury insight to the true power of Guzmán’s cartel by alluding to the fact that former Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto received a bribe worth \$100 million from a middleman who carried out Guzmán’s operation to influence the then-upcoming election (“Mexican Drug Lord ‘El Chapo’ Found Guilty in U.S. Trial Over Drug-Trafficking Charges,” *CNBC*, 12 February 2019). Nieto denies all allegations, but such evidence is not an uncommon narrative; various other stories of legal authorities being bribed have surfaced over the years.

In Guzmán’s case, as Ángel Meléndez, Head of Homeland Security, explains, “One of the important things about this conviction is that it sends a resounding message [to other criminals]...you’re not unreachable, you’re not untouchable and your day will come” (Feuer).



A picture released by the Mexican Interior Ministry on January 20, 2017, the day of President Donald Trump’s inauguration, shows “El Chapo” Guzman sitting in a chair in an unknown location just before his extradition to the United States.

lawyers, explained that “when he came here he was already presumed guilty by everyone, unfortunately. We weren’t just fighting evidence, we were fighting perception” (Feuer). These lawyers’ awareness of perception speaks to the importance of perspective in prosecutions of generally romanticized criminal figures. Thus, following testimonies, the jury deeply analyzed the evidence given to them, requesting incredible amounts of direct evidence, amounting to nearly one thousand pages, and six full testimonies (Alan Feuer and Emily Palmer, “Inside the Courtroom:

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