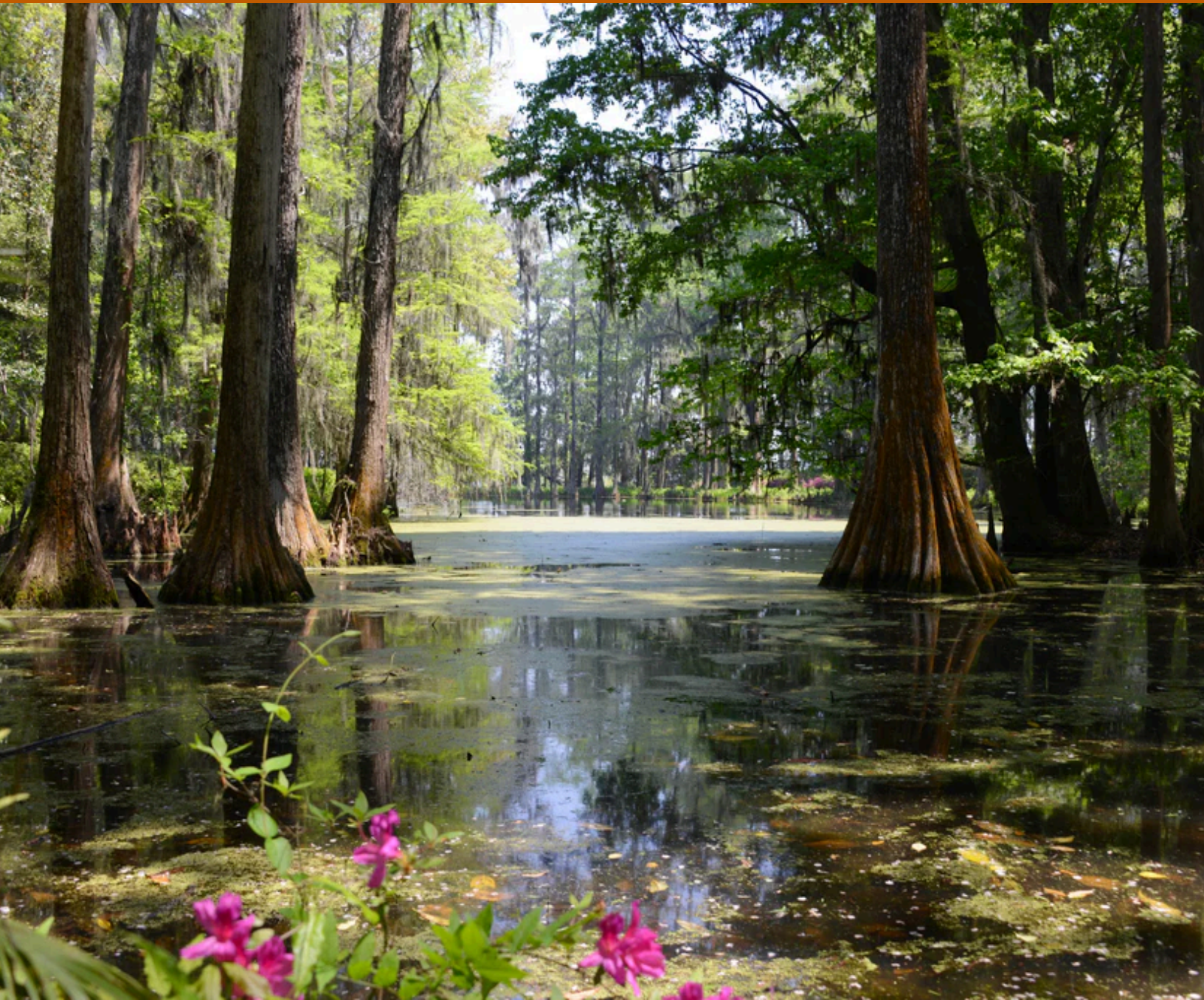




SWAMPMUN



**1954 Nation People's Congress of the
People's Republic of China**

Dear Representatives,

Welcome to NPCPRC! My name is Eric Han, and I will be serving as the Chair of the committee. I am a 3rd year at UF studying criminology and political science on the pre-law path. This committee will be my third serving as a chair! This year will also be my third doing Model UN, and I currently serve as the GA Director of Member Development for the UF team! Outside of MUN, I love art, karaoke, and getting food and yapping with friends. I'm a master (struggling) juggler of school obligations, MUN, and searching for fun things to do.

As a native born Chinese, I am honored to carry on as the chair for the committee. I lived my first 13 years of life in China, and this committee allows me to pay respect for that part of my heritage. I am very excited to chair a committee that accurately reflects history while giving liberty to unique twists in resolutions that may redirect the Chinese trajectory. Since as far back as the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, China has been in a constant state of chaos. 1954 is a unique year in that it follows the aftermath of the Korean War, putting the PRC in a peculiar international position: China takes a firm stance to defend communism, yet it also results in alienation from the highly industrialized West. 1954 follows the end of the Labor Reform Movement, which nationalized and redistributed land to the peasantry (the working class). It is in this significant historical context that the First National People's Congress was convened.

On the top of the priority list of the People's Congress are two topics necessary for the prosperity of the nation. Topic A discusses the future of education in China. How will the nation reestablish valuable legacy and tradition previously disrupted by war while uplifting the vast population of illiterates in the country? Should the country move past or continue the thousand-year-old Keju exam system? The People's Representatives must work to devise plans that modernizes the education system yet preserve the philosophy and wisdom ingrained in Chinese culture. Topic B discusses the future of the Chinese economy. As a country built on Communist ideals, 1954 saw the end of the Land Reform Movement and the beginning of collectivist agriculture. Will China continue to be a collectivist agrarian society or industrialize as a modern power? How will China interact with international trade, the majority player of which had a history of exploitation, whose recognitions are necessary to legitimize the People's Republic of China? The People's Representatives must navigate a balance between free market and communist systems to stimulate the economy while maintaining state control.

Although the committee will discuss ideals of communism as significant factor in policy-making, representatives **MUST** avoid topics of mass torture and killing of the bourgeoisie, or any form of oppression against any group. Despite brutal historical events, this 1954 NPC aims to be an idealized peaceful proceeding that dignifies humanity. Any violation of the above will result in disqualification from the competition.

Delegates of this committee will receive positions as Deputies of a Municipality, Province, or Autonomous Region. Delegates are advised to treat those positions as individual nations in a regular GA and research accordingly. Familiarizing yourself with your positions are necessary to

contextualize the historical background provided in the background guide and direct your unique arguments for future development.

NPCPRC will operate under standard UN General Assembly parliamentary procedures. You will choose to discuss one of the two topics during our sessions. In this committee, we will look beyond the second round of the authors' panel. Understanding the increased difficulty in research, we will look extra favorably at delegates' accuracy in representing their position on the subject matter, writing qualities and quantities, facilitation of unmod discussion, creativity during moderated caucuses, respectfulness, and many more qualities that define good diplomacy and a good speaker. Given the topics' broadness, uniqueness and creativity of solutions to the problem will be the primary evaluation. The chairs will do our best to evaluate the holistic performance of delegates throughout the duration of the committee.

Now delegates debate away! The future of the People's Republic of China is in your hands! I cannot wait to see you all at SwampMUN I! Please make this chairing experience a memorable one. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the committee, you can reach me by emailing ufswampmun@gmail.com with the email subject as the committee name to contact.

Best Regards,
Eric Han
Director

Rules of Procedure

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as “Present” or “Present and Voting.”

Motion to Open Debate

This opens the floor for debate, allowing other points or motions.

Motion to Set the Agenda

This motion determines the order in which the topics of a committee will be debated. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass.

Motion to Open the Speaker's List

Opening the Speaker's List requires a simple majority to pass. A delegate may only be present on the Speaker's List once, but may re-enter after he/she has spoken. If the Speaker's List expires, debate then closes.

Motion to Set Speaking Time

Speaking Time must be indicated by this motion from the floor before any members of the body may speak on the Speaker's List. This motion must also accompany any motion for a Moderated Caucus. In a Motion to Set Speaking Time for the formal Speaker's List, a delegate may also specify a number of questions or comments to automatically affix to the Speaking Time. These designated questions or comments may also have Speaking Time or Response Time (in the case of a question) limits, but these are not required. The Director may rule any Motion to Set Speaking Time dilatory. This motion requires a simple majority. Any delegate may make this motion between formal speakers in an effort to change the Speaking Time.

Motion to Close the Speaker's List

The Speaker's List may be closed upon a motion from the floor. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass. Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications:

- a. Length of the Caucus
- b. Speaking time, and
- c. Reason for the Caucus.

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus should never exceed twenty minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Motion to Table the Topic

If a delegate believes that the flow of debate has become stagnant, he/she may make this motion. To Table the Topic is to halt debate on the present Topic, save the speakers' list and all draft resolutions, and move on to the next Topic on the Agenda. The delegate making this motion may also choose to specify a previously tabled Topic. This motion requires a two-thirds vote to pass. The Topic may be returned to at any time by tabling the present Topic and adding the phrase "for the purpose of returning to Tabled Topic _____," to this motion. If no Topics have been previously tabled, debate must follow the established Agenda. This motion is to be used sparingly.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- a) To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure,
- b) To question relevance of debate to the current Topic or
- c) To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time. The question must conform to the following format:

Delegate from Country A raises placard to be recognized by the Committee Director.

Committee Director: "To what point do you rise?"

Country A: "Point of Inquiry."

Committee Director: "State your Point."

Country A: "Will the delegate from Country B (who must have just spoke) yield to a question?"

Committee Director: "Will the Delegate Yield?"

Country B: “I will” or “I will not” (if not, return to the next business item)

Country A asks their question (it must not be a rhetorical question.)

Country B may choose to respond or to decline.

If the Delegate from Country B does not yield to or chooses not to answer a question from Country A, then he/she yields all remaining questioning time to the Committee Director.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director’s discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the **ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY** to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision **IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL**. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Working Papers and Draft Resolutions

Once a Working Paper has been submitted, approved, distributed, and formally introduced to the body, it can and will be referred to as a “Draft Resolution.” In order for a Working Paper to be submitted to the Committee Director, it must be in correct format and bear the names of a combination of a number of Sponsors and Signatories necessary to introduce, as determined by the Committee Director. Sponsors are the writers of the Working Paper, and agree with it in its entirety. They should be able to vote ‘yes’ for the paper during voting procedure. Signatories are those delegates interested in bringing the Working Paper to the floor for debate, but do not necessarily agree with its contents. A delegate can motion to discuss the working paper during a moderated caucus or unmoderated caucus. A delegate can also motion for an author’s panel, which is essentially a moderated caucus moderated by the authors. It is the chair’s discretion on the maximum amount of authors allowed on the author’s panel.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that all Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor’s agreement both verbally and in writing.

Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must have the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories.

The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and nonsubstantive Unfriendly amendment proposals. Plagiarism SwampMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the SwampMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Motion to Close Debate and Voting Procedures

A motion to close debate may only pass with a two-thirds majority. Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

Once moving into voting procedures chair can only accept these motions:

- A point of order to correct an error in procedure
- An appeal of the decision of the chair
- A motion for division
- A motion for roll call vote
- A motion for adoption by acclamation

No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures. Each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Draft Resolution as a whole is put to a vote. The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures. Unless otherwise specified by the Secretariat, each Committee may pass as many resolutions as it agrees are necessary to efficiently address the Topic. Delegates who requested to be noted as “Present and Voting” are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.

Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: “For,” “Against,” “Abstain,” or “Pass.” During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, “Pass,” reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to “Passing” Delegates, they must vote: “For” or “Against.”

Voting with Rights

During a Roll Call vote delegates may vote “For with Rights” or “Against with Rights.” Delegates will be granted 30 seconds to explain their reasons for voting for or against a draft resolution. This time will come after the tabulation of votes. Delegates should use this option sparingly. It is meant for delegates who feel that their vote may seem off policy, despite it being correct. The acceptance of rights is up to the director’s discretion. If a speaker goes off topic during their allotted time the director will rule their speech dilatory and move to the next motion in order.

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

About the Committee

Welcome to the First National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China! On the top of the priority list of the People's Congress are two topics necessary for the prosperity of the nation. Topic A discusses the future of **education** in China. How will the nation reestablish valuable legacy and tradition previously disrupted by war while uplifting the vast population of illiterates in the country? Should the country move past or continue the thousand-year-old Keju exam system? The People's Representatives must work to devise plans that modernizes the education system yet preserve the philosophy and wisdom ingrained in Chinese culture. Topic B discusses the future of the Chinese **economy**. As a country built on Communist ideals, 1954 saw the end of the Land Reform Movement and the beginning of collectivist agriculture. Will China continue to be a collectivist agrarian society or industrialize as a modern power? How will China interact with international trade, the majority player of which had a history of exploitation, whose recognitions are necessary to legitimize the People's Republic of China? The People's Representatives must navigate a balance between free market and communist systems to stimulate the economy while maintaining state control.

Topic I: Education

History

The Chinese education system, similar to the Chinese culture, is the oldest continuous education system in the world. Before the creation of written characters, knowledge was passed down orally through myths and legends from the elders to the young. It is believed that formal education in China began after the development of Chinese characters in the late Xia Dynasty (2070 BCE – 1046 BCE).¹ The purpose of Chinese schooling back then, and until near the end of the dynastic period, was to prepare bureaucrats for the Civil Service exams to then serve in the Imperial Court of the Emperor. From the Zhou Dynasty (1046 BCE – 771 BCE) forward, education was separated into a tier system composed of state schools and village schools. State schools were reserved for children of nobility who were going to serve in the Imperial Court. The village School, or local school, was reserved for peasants and divided into four levels: Shu, Xiang, Xu, Xiao. Students in the village schools who advanced through these four levels had a chance at then attending college and becoming a local official. However it was rare and nearly impossible for village school students to be appointed to the Imperial Court.

During the Warring States Period (475 BCE – 221 BCE), the state of Qi created the Jixia Academy, which sought to give regular lectures on various topics, leading to the 100 schools of thought that contended with each other during this period.² During the Qin Dynasty, Legalism was the prevailing school of thought and many Confucian/Daoist texts were burned. During this time period, Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi streamlined the dynasty's writing system, burning thousands of books to ensure its longevity.

Since the Qin dynasty, Confucianism took over as the dominant school of thought, shaping both family relations and imperial order. Confucianism stresses the family as the most basic unit, using a series of five human relationships to govern all interactions. Those hierarchies are: 1) ruler to ruled, 2) father to son, 3) husband to wife, 4) elder brother to younger brother, and 5) friend to friend.³ By adhering to this relationship hierarchy and following the seven moral principles (li propriety, yi righteousness, xiao filial piety, ji moral wisdom, junzi ideal man, de moral principle),⁴ the universe would remain in order and the Middle Kingdom would prosper.

Confucianism became the dominant school of thought in the Han dynasty (206BCE-220CE) and has stayed the dominant school of thought since then. In the Tang Dynasty (618CE-907CE), the civil service exam was formally established, and passing it became the main goal of education in China. While the examination system did change over the course of a few thousand years, with more reading materials and required skills added to reflect the progression of dynasties, in general those taking the civil service exams were required to master the Four Books and Five Classics,⁵ many poetic forms, and calligraphy. The literature required for the civil service exam was written in wenyan, or classic

1 "History of Education in China - China Education Center."

2 "China Ancient Education, History of Education in China."

3 "Asian Topics on Asia for Educators || Confucian Teaching."

4 "The Main Concepts of Confucianism."

5 http://media.leidenuniv.nl/legacy/2Historic_and_cultural_background.pdf

idiom, and differed so greatly from vernacular speech that it was very difficult for all but the wealthy to learn.⁶ In the dynastic period, schools were tailored specifically toward passing this exam, not toward general or practical topics. The majority of those who attended school were the male children of wealthy aristocratic families. Female children of aristocrats were privately tutored in reading, calligraphy, and dance – skills that would make them suitable matches for future marriage. Poor families rarely had the disposable income required to send their sons to school, nor could they afford to exempt their sons from farming or artisan work that provided their livelihood. Education was reserved for the wealthy, and advanced education was reserved for the male.

The Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) controlled the most territory in Chinese history by the time it dissolved.⁷ Starting after the first Opium War of 1840-1842, the education system became much more westernized, with topics such as foreign language, science, and technology added to the curriculum.⁸ Near the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1905, the imperial examination system and civil service exams were abolished completely, paving the way for a new education system modeled after European, American, and Japanese styles⁹ that would take over when the Qing Dynasty (and the dynastic period) ended in 1911.



Starting with the founding of the Republic of China (ROC) in 1912, wenyan was no longer taught. Instead, there was a pivot to the vernacular when teaching literature and writing educational texts. In this time period, education was heavily emphasized to bring about a new period of Nationalism within the Middle Kingdom, as thousands of years of dynastic rule had just been abolished, and many Chinese citizens were searching for a new national identity. Shortly after taking control of the Chinese government in 1928, the Kuomintang (KMT) implemented a compulsory education program with centralized educational administration and standardized curricula in elementary and secondary school. By creating an educated citizenry, the government could instill the ideals of democracy and morality to its people. The curriculum was heavily westernized, with emphasis on technical knowledge as well as studying abroad with the purpose of bringing knowledge back to serve China.¹⁰

6 http://media.leidenuniv.nl/legacy/2Historic_and_cultural_background.pdf

7 Theobald, "The Qing Dynasty 清 (Www.chinaknowledge.de).

8 "History of Education in China - China Education Center."

9 "History of Education in China - China Education Center."

10 http://media.leidenuniv.nl/legacy/2Historic_and_cultural_background.pdf

Despite both a compulsory education system and a few attempts to create a national identity, China was incredibly disunited during this period. Chinese warlords and foreign imperialists, especially the Japanese, occupied and vied for significant chunks of Chinese territory, making a centralized education system difficult to implement. The failure of China to create a new Chinese identity led to the New Culture Movement of 1919, where prominent scholars called for the creation of a new Chinese culture based on global and western standards, especially democracy and science. It was during this period that a call for the abolishment of Confucianism as a national philosophy came forward on the grounds that it encouraged female suppression and barred their access to proper education.

Even with lofty goals of universal education, the Kuomintang of the ROC was unsuccessful with providing educational opportunities to workers, peasants, and most females. Literacy rates were still extremely low in rural areas, especially among women and minorities. This was partially due to the difficulty of learning written Chinese, with its complex character system and lack of an alphabet. Sending educated teachers to rural areas proved extremely difficult as well.

The Republic of China now encompasses a territory the size of the continent of Europe, and is just as linguistically diverse. There are seven major groups of Chinese dialects present on the continent comprising over twenty three total dialects, with each dialect at most 50% mutually intelligible with another.¹¹ Despite a common written language, spoken language barriers pose an extreme difficulty in increasing the overall literacy rate of the People's Republic of China. Now that the People's Republic of China has complete control of Chinese territory, it is imperative to address education issues to create a functioning, prosperous society.

General Positions

Urban

The urban regions of each province contain the most educated, wealthy citizens in China. Most Chinese universities and elite institutions are located in provincial capitals and the special administrative regions. It is in these cities that most western concepts of educational rights have taken hold. Cities will have the highest concentration of women's education and the highest literacy rates. However, even in cities, those rates are disproportionately skewed towards wealthiest of the population. However, there are still a large number of peasants present in each city performing hard labor and barely able to get by. These peasants most likely are migrants from rural areas, unable to speak the language of the city and unable to read.

Rural

Rural areas have the most linguistic diversity and also the lowest literacy rates in the country. Most peasants are poor subsistence farmers and artisans who cannot afford to send their children to school. Especially in the southern regions, rural populations have the highest percentage of minority citizens, many of whom speak a diverse range of mutually-unintelligible dialects. The centralized education system of the Republic of China has had great difficulty reaching these areas, leading to a cycle of

¹¹ "Dialects in China."

poverty that has been incredibly difficult to break. Many of the citizens in these areas have lived in their small towns for hundreds of years, unable to leave because of language barriers, and perhaps a lack of desire to as well. Rural communities are those least affected by the ROC's westernized philosophy, and most still cling to Confucian ideals of education and gender.

Northeastern

Mobility in the Northeast region of China is fairly easy, as the majority of this region speaks one of two dialects: Mongolian or Mandarin. As the home of the new capital of the People's Republic of China and the old capital of the Qing Dynasty (Beijing), it is fairly easy for the wealthy in each area to send their children to Beijing for schooling, and for educated teachers to travel to rural regions to educate the population.

Southeastern

The southeast of the People's Republic of China is the most ethnically and linguistically diverse region, with over thirteen linguistic subgroups present. Mobility is very difficult in these areas with no lingua franca to communicate with, and it is very difficult to send educated teachers there. The people of this region are very proud of their long history and ethnic diversity, despite the educational difficulties it may entail.

Western

The Western regions are made up almost solely of distinct minorities, many of whom do not consider themselves Chinese at all and do not wish to be Sinocized. Many of these minorities cannot read written Chinese and have their own forms of writing and spoken languages. It is very difficult for these regions to communicate with each other and the rest of the People's Republic, especially with such large physical barriers.

Questions to Consider

How will the nation reestablish valuable legacy and tradition previously disrupted by war?

How can the country uplift the vast population of illiterates in the country?

Should the country move past or continue the thousand-year-old Keju exam system?

Should the country unify the variety of drastically different dialects? If so, how?

Does the country value western scientific education? How can it be implemented?

Topic II: Economy

History

China, unlike the rest of the world, has a long, uninterrupted history that dates back thousands of years. Its culture and way of life has been constantly refined and perfected over the course of these millennia and, as such, so has its main source of wealth: the economy. As part of the newly formed People's Republic of China, the National People's Congress is charged with deciding how it would like to improve the economy over the course of the People's Republic's future existence, planning the implementation of such policies, and ensuring the success of those plans over the course of the near future.

In order to adequately plan the future economy of the People's Republic of China, it is important to understand the complex economic history of the great Middle Kingdom. The economic history of China is heavily connected to its foreign relations. Throughout its history, China has gone through periods of expansion, contraction, and isolation, depending on the political climate and the success of each dynasty after the establishment of the Qin. As such, the chief source of the economy's wealth changed depending on the goals and aspirations of the Almighty Emperor. For much of the world's history, China had maintained the world's largest and advanced economy. Chinese economic history can be divided into three eras: pre-imperial (before the Qin dynasty), early imperial (Qin to the rise of the Song), and late imperial (Song to the end of the Qing dynasty).

Pre-imperial China developed agriculture as late as 8000 B.C.E., focusing on millet in the north and rice in the south, a distinction that still exists today. Some textile industries did exist as early as 5000 B.C.E., and silk appeared as early as 3000 BCE. During the Shang dynasty at the height of the Bronze Age, the Chinese labor force became formally organized, establishing a strict hierarchy of servitude that some liken to slavery, and creating ever-more intricate handicraft industries. The economy of the Shang was able to accommodate over 5 million people and raise considerable armies. The advent of the Spring and Autumn period and Warring States period (771-221 BCE) brought an era of technical advancement as the former servitude system fell apart. Iron tools were fashioned, animal husbandry became the main profession of the masses, and taxes were levied on the newly freed common people to create a complex system of interconnected kingdoms traversed by successful merchants.¹²

The establishment of the first dynasty, the Qin (221BCE-206BCE), marked the beginning of the early imperial era and initially brought vast improvements on free trade. A single code of laws and the elimination of boundaries made trading much easier, and a universal tax system ensured that the government benefitted from all trade conducted within its borders. These strict taxes were not easily accepted by newly acquired parts of the empire. The Qin's legalist structure allowed them to monopolize many key industries, such as salt, iron, and forests, while also exiling merchants.

¹² Twitchett et al., The Cambridge History of China / General Editors, Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank.

The Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) saw the creation of the now famous Silk Road and a booming economy, capable of sustaining a population of 58 million at its peak. Technological breakthroughs such as the wheelbarrow, paper, and the seismograph were invented during this time period. A national monetary system was established during the Western Han and agriculture remained the main source of wealth within the Han.¹³

Throughout the next few hundred years, the Chinese economy fluctuated greatly without a strong, authoritative government. Pocked by wars and internal strife, the Middle Kingdom economies suffered. It wasn't until the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE) that another economic golden age occurred in China. The Tang population surpassed the Han dynasty, with about 80 million people at its peak. The Tang continued an equal field system that was established in previous dynasties, where the government would own all of the land and lease a specified amount to each citizen for use over the course of their lifetime and take back the land upon their death. This did not allow large land transactions, which kept estates small, and allowed the Tang to manage the economy through the bureaucratic regulation of markets. Households were taxed based on overall output for the year, at about 25% of the farmer's income. Commercial taxes were about 3.3% of income. After the An Shi Rebellion, the Tang was unable to maintain such heavy management of the economy, which coincidentally stimulated trade and commerce. Instead of taxing based on income, the Tang began to tax based on property value. The Tang did maintain control over the salt industry, however. Woodblock printing began to emerge as a major industry, spurred by the invention of paper back in the Han dynasty.¹⁴

During the Song dynasty, three of the four so-called Four Great Inventions: gunpowder, woodblock printing, and the compass, were invented or perfected. China also had an agricultural boom during this time period, allowing even rural farmers to afford more than basic necessities. The water wheel was invented, which helped improve crop production. Song deregulation of industry greatly improved the economy and a strong merchant class emerged. Corruption was plentiful, however, and the merchants worked with the government to decrease competition and artificially inflate prices. Most enterprises were small, selling products made in-house. The Song government instituted a taxation system on agriculture based on property value income, at a rate of about 10% of income. Commercial taxes were 2%. Coin production increased greatly during this time as well.

Following the Song dynasty was the Yuan dynasty, the first dynasty controlled by a minority to take over all of China. Despite the increase in land territory, millions of people died during the Mongol conquest (the population shrank from 120 million in 1215 to 65 million in 1290). Coupled with the halving of the work force was a series of strict taxation policies, effectively crippling the former booming economy. After Kublai Khan took over, the Mongol dynasty began printing paper money instead of the previous coin currency, guaranteeing the notes by the government and

¹³ Han Dynasty.

¹⁴ Twitchett et al., *The Cambridge History of China* / General Editors, Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank.

not by private banks. This reliable currency did provide a boost to the economy, but lavish spending and expensive military campaigns by the Khanate resulted in high taxes, the nationalization of many industries, and hyperinflation from overproducing notes. The cash strapped Yuan eventually fell to dissatisfied Chinese citizens, making way for the Ming dynasty.

Though the Ming began as a despotic dynasty that favored agriculture at the expense of other industries, the Ming dynasty eventually grew to foster a flourishing and diverse economy with relatively low taxation rates. Civilian merchants and farmers successfully lobbied the government for lower taxes and quotas and most of the time the taxes collected by the Ming officials were lower than those reported. The average tax rate was 3-4% which included land taxes, service levies, customs duty, and other smaller fees. The Ming dynasty originally pioneered seafaring for economic purposes, but once the dynasty was established most ports were closed and seafaring was limited to tributary expeditions. This resulted in an intense increase in piracy that the Ming dynasty was never able to fully control. The Ming dynasty issued a variety of paper currency and silver coins, although it encountered the same hyperinflation and counterfeiting problem as the Yuan. The coal and iron industry boomed, increasing industrial output and led to the development of new inventions. Agriculture during this period was fairly limited to cash crops to make a profit, although output increased dramatically as overall prosperity increased. Three types of market emerged in this period: rural bartering markets, urban-rural markets where rural goods were sold to urban dwellers, and national markets where rural farmers produced goods for direct sale to the market instead of subsistence farming.

The Qing Dynasty became the last imperial dynasty in Chinese history. After consolidating power, the Qing severely limited foreign trade and became heavily involved in the economy, reinstituting a salt monopoly. Foreign trade was limited to four areas – Guangzho, Ningbo, Xiamen, and Songjiang. In response to a flux of emigration to these areas and the increased influence of the East India Company on foreign trade, the Kangxi emperor limited all foreign trade to Guangzho (Canton, to westerners), effectively establishing the Canton system. Under the Canton system, a board of merchants monopolized China's foreign trade. Many items were sold to foreign countries during this period, but the only form of payment accepted was silver bullion, which the Chinese relied on to make their monetary coins. Great Britain, which relied upon China for its tea supply, became increasingly frustrated with the Chinese-favored trade balance and eventually introduced the illegal opium trade as a way to pay for Chinese tea. The inability of the Chinese to halt the illegal sale of opium led to the First Opium War and the eventual collapse of the Qing under the reparations to the West after the Opium War defeats and other causes.

The Republic of China was founded after the Qing Dynasty collapsed in 1911, and led to over thirty years of economic turmoil before the People's Republic of China was established to relieve the country of the ROC's corruption. From 1913 to 1927, China disintegrated into regional warlords who fought for authority and disrupted economic growth. Many provinces "seceded" during this time period, and the economy crumbled until Chiang Kai-Shek barely managed to reunify the country in 1927. Despite political turmoil, the domestic economy did improve, with exports increasing while maintaining a low import rate. Chinese industries continued to develop throughout the 1930s, though hindered by the Great Depression from 1931-1937. The Great Depression severely

severely affected Chinese rural economy, which focused on cash crops and was subject almost completely to the fluctuations in foreign demand. Key exports included glue, tea, silk, sugar cane, tobacco, cotton, corn, and peanuts. Overproduction coupled with a decrease in foreign consumption worsened the Depression for rural farmers. By 1934, rural incomes were only 57% of what they were in 1931. Currency was originally silver-backed, but after the national government seized control of the banks, it created a flat-backed currency that hyperinflated and collapsed by the end of the Sino-Japanese war in 1945. By 1949, the currency in circulation was about 120 billion times more than it was in 1936.



The devastating defeat of the Republic of China by Japan in the second Sino-Japanese War killed an astounding 20-25 million Chinese. Output was reduced to 20% capacity and had 25% of the output of pre-war China. In an attempt to save the failing economy, the ROC gained control of 70% of the country's businesses. It is no surprise that the population was incredibly unhappy with their government at the end of the Second Sino-Japanese war, and as a result of the Chinese Civil War, the People's Republic of China was established. The new economy will be by the people, for the people, and increase the livelihood of every citizen in our great People's Republic.

Positions

Rural

Over the course of Chinese history, rural farmers have constituted the backbone of the Chinese economy. Without their tireless work in the fields over the past few thousand years, the Middle Kingdom would not have been able to survive. Most rural inhabitants of China make their living either on subsistence or commercial farming and fishing. Citizens in rural areas would appreciate low land taxes and government investment in the agricultural sector and rural development in general. They are more protectionist than urban dwellers, afraid that increased foreign trade will lead to a decimation of rural economies.

Urban

Urban dwellers have become a larger portion of the population over the course of the past fifty years, and have been the driving force behind making China into a more industrialized country. Many of China's urban centers are in key trading locations near coasts, although special administrative regions, like Beijing and Chongqing, are more inland. Urban centers would like to see more direct investment in import/export businesses, and more investment manufacturing

infrastructure. They want private investors to receive tax breaks for investing in infrastructure and want to foster an environment where the People's Republic can become an industrialized economy.

Northeast

China's northeast has abundant coal reserves, which it is currently leveraging to become a large industrial sector. In the southern part of the northeast the weather is warm enough for a variety of agricultural products, but the far north is too cold for agriculture, and instead focuses on fishing.

Southeastern

Historically, Southeastern China has been the outlet to the outside world. In the time of Zheng He, many southern ports were bustling with activity, handling a large amount of tribute from faraway lands. It was southern China that handled the burden of foreign trade during the 1800s and Republican period, with ports at Hong Kong, Macao, Guangdong and Guizhou booming. The southeast would like to keep its ports open to allow for more foreign trade.

Western

Many of the provinces and special autonomous regions to the west are minority-heavy, with economies based on bartering and making/selling handicrafts. Many of the inhabitants of the Western region live nomadic, hunter/gatherer lifestyles and are isolated from the overall Chinese economy. Most of the region is steppe or mountain, with little arable soil. While this might pose an issue for the rest of the country, which may feel it is carrying the West economically, it does not necessarily upset the population of this region, who holds dearly to their traditional ways. They may, however, seek aid from the government, for this region tends to be the poorest in the country.

Questions to Consider

Will China continue to be a collectivist agrarian society or industrialize as a modern power?

Should China implement a planned economy or a market economy?

How will China interact with international trade, of which the majority players had a history of exploitation?

How can China integrate communities with different lifestyles to actively participate in the economy?

Most importantly, how can the country increase productivity and return to the world stage?

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