

WAR GAMES!

CENTRAL ASIA IN HISTORY

History 488A: Topics in Asian History
For 4 or 40 Players

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Professor Carla Nappi

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

ROOM 1109 * BUCHANAN TOWER * UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

MADE IN CANADA

RULES OF PLAY



INTRODUCTION

You are about to begin a most unusual course. During this Fall 2011 term, History 488A takes the form of an introduction to the history of Central Asia, from the Mongols through the Taliban. Central Asia has played a crucial and definitive role in world history. Over the course of the semester, we will explore this region from its early Silk Road years, to its midlife as the battleground for the Great Game, and finally to its modern fate as the seat of global struggles in Afghanistan and its environs. As we progress through the term, we will be exploring a wide range of primary and secondary sources in a quest to understand not only the major players and problems of Central Asia through history, but also the various texts and languages that have made that history

possible. We will meet on Wednesday evenings from 5-8 pm in Buchanan B318, with our time divided between discussing the week's reading material and enacting a three-part role-playing game meant to bring the historical actors and their struggles and joys alive for us.

Your game master for the Fall 2011 semester is Carla Nappi. Unless otherwise announced, she is available to meet with one and all during her office hours on Mondays from 10-12 (and by appointment!) in Buchanan Tower 1109. You can email her at carla.nappi@ubc.ca.

OBJECT

Each meeting of the class will have two components: 1) A class discussion of the week's reading material, with mini-lectures by the instructor as appropriate; and 2) The convening of a round of the game. The course and game have three stages:

- Pt. I From the Mongols to Early Modernity (A Mongolian *quriltai* in 1260 to determine who will rule the empire!)
- Pt. II The Great Game (Explorer Aurel Stein on trial!)
- Pt. III The New Great Game (Riches, religion, and revolution!)

The object of the game is to use your understanding of the course materials to put forth a convincing and successful argument that will help the players resolve the major crisis occurring in each unit. These materials include primary and secondary sources, with the addition of supplementary materials of your choosing according to the rules below.

The historical context of each unit of the course will be made clear in the readings and weekly guides. Though our course discussions will focus on specific historical texts and contexts, for the purposes of the game we are **embracing the counterfactual**: during game play, though our basis is historical fact and text, we will be proposing events that **have not necessarily happened**. (This includes

Tamerlane traveling back in time, for example.) This approach is based on the premise that we will all understand historical contexts on a deeper level if we engage experientially. Challenge yourself to think as a historian always, but always have fun with it! The more you engage with the material and find ways to connect with it, the more you will learn. Approach the course and the game with curiosity and joy, not fear and loathing. I will work with you to help you get the most out of the experience.

EQUIPMENT

A. TEXTS: The following required texts are available on reserve in Koerner Library and for purchase in the UBC Bookstore:

Chingiz Aimatov, *Jamilia*

Peter B. Golden, *Central Asia in World History*

Hamid Ismailov, *The Railway*

Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*

Gary Shteyngart, *Absurdistan*

The History 488A course reader

As you read through this material, you will notice that there are often several different spellings for the names of people, places, or concepts in Central Asian history. This is an unfortunate consequence of the fact that there are different conventions for transliterating Central Asian languages. Don't hesitate to ask if you're unsure about the identity of some of these names as we explore!

B. WEEKLY GUIDES: Each week, The Management will distribute a guide to the following week's material and game play. These will be posted to the Vista site.

C. OUR VISTA SITE: The course Vista site will effectively be our virtual classroom for the semester. It is where you will post your assignments and thoughts on the course material, and where The Management will post the weekly guides and other handouts. Although participation in the discussions on Vista is

not mandatory, in order to be eligible to receive an A participation grade for the term, you must post at least once per week on the course Vista site.

Log in with your CWL. Click on Tab for “HIST 488A - 101 - Special Topics in Asian History - 2011W - Nappi.” The “Course Tools” on the left side of the page lists all of the course components, including the discussion boards (in “Discussions”), Weekly Guides (in “Course Content,” in folders that correspond to each week of the course), Draft Arguments, Final Arguments/Papers, and other handouts.

To post to our Vista site:

1. Click “Discussions”
2. Click on the discussion board for the week (“Week 2 Open Forum,” etc.)
3. To post a new thread, click the bar for “Create Message” and follow the directions. You can also post attachments.

And so on, and so on. Lather, rinse, repeat. If you have trouble logging in with your CWL, ask the Vista Helpdesk using the online form or telephone number available here:

<http://www.elearning.ubc.ca/lms/student-resources/#getting-help>

PREPARATION

Before each class meeting, players are required to prepare by:

- A.** Reading the weekly guide, available on Vista
- B.** Doing the week’s reading assignment thoughtfully, keeping track along the way of questions and notes as you work through the material. Read closely enough to be able to discuss the material in class!
- C.** Compose or revise your character’s perspective and argument in the context of the week’s round of the game. Use your reading to inform the argument, and feel free to do whatever background research you’d like in order to get a fuller picture of your character. This may include a thoughtful use of

internet resources, keeping track of the URLs of the websites that you visit and the dates you accessed them so that you can include them in your character bibliography at the end of the unit.

After each class meeting, players are required to:

A. Continue developing their characters and keeping up with the required course reading!

B. At some point before the final week of the unit, post a draft version of your character's argument to the Vista site. This need not be more than 1-2 pages, but can be as long as you wish. Regardless of when or whether you have an opportunity to render your argument in person during the game, all draft arguments must be posted to the Vista site at least one week before the final version of the argument is due! This is intended to give your colleagues a chance to give you feedback, and the game leaders for the unit a chance to consider all of the arguments before rendering their decision. The game leaders for each unit (Mongol tribe leaders, jurors, etc.) do not render decisions until the end of the unit, and thus are not required to post draft arguments. They will post final decisions by the due date, instead.

C. Optional: consult the discussion board on the course Vista site and the "Draft Arguments" board to interact with your colleagues outside of class.

THE SET UP

As you will have gathered, this is not a typical lecture course. During the course discussions, we will function as a large seminar. During the game, our classroom will be transformed into a Mongolian tribal meeting, a courtroom in the early twentieth century, or a town in modern Uzbekistan. During the discussions, every student in the room is expected to participate. With such a large class, it's expected that we won't always have the time in class to hear what everyone has to say.

Each week, you can continue the discussion (or share things you didn't have time to say in class) on a discussion board set up on our Vista site. There, you can post your thoughts and reactions to the arguments presented and the moves made. You can also help your colleagues refine their arguments by commenting on the Draft Arguments board, where you will all post the first versions of your arguments before you revise and hand them in at the end of the unit. The goal of these posts is, as much as possible, to explicitly weave analysis of the readings for the week into your thoughts on the week's game play and the arguments and questions posed by the other players. Though posting in discussions and commenting on your peers' work is not mandatory, in order to receive an A for participation for each unit you must post online at least once per week!

Again, this is not your typical lecture course. The energy is not concentrated on exam times. (In fact, you'll note that there are no exams.) Participation, and staying engaged consistently throughout the term, is absolutely key to success in this course. If you are shy about speaking up in class, don't worry: please let me know ASAP and we'll talk about ways to work on it, and to make sure you'll use the Vista board to your fullest participation-grade-raising advantage.

THE CHARACTERS

In each unit, players will be randomly assigned or will choose a particular character to represent for the duration of the unit. There will be a combination of leaders (the Mongolian tribal leaders, the judge and jury, etc.) and supporting characters (Ibn Battuta, Khubilai Khan, etc.). The leaders will rotate over the course of the term.

THE BOARD

Before starting the actual play of the game, players should study the structure of each unit and the semester as a whole, available in the schedule at the end of this syllabus. There are three units of course discussion and game play, each composed of several weeks of readings and assignments. Our discussions in class will extend to our virtual game board, the course Vista website.

THE PLAY

GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS:

The requirements of this class are:

1. **PREPARATION:** Do the readings by the time indicated in the syllabus! Prepare your arguments and characters! Stay awake during discussions! Come to class having thought about the material, and ready to actively discuss it with your instructor and colleagues! Laugh at The Management's jokes!

2. **PARTICIPATION IN CLASS AND ONLINE:** Be an alert, attentive, and active member of our in-class discussions. Pay attention to your classmates' comments and arguments, and ask questions where appropriate. Make sure to post your draft arguments at least one week before the final argument papers are due. In order to be eligible to receive an A participation grade for the term, you must post at least once per week on the course Vista site.

3. **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:** At the end of each unit, you will have in TWO assignments: (1) A final short paper, and (2) An annotated character bibliography.

Paper and Annotated Character Bibliography I:

The first paper is a revised and polished version of the argument that your character presented during the game, paying special attention to citing and **critically** and thoughtfully using primary sources from the unit as evidence to

support the argument. This should be roughly 5 pages (typed, 12-pt font, double-spaced), but you can write more if you'd like. Think of this as a substantial revision of the first version of the argument that your character presents to the class, revised in light of questions and comments from your colleagues and the instructor. [The tribal leaders will post polished versions of their decisions, citing the characters and arguments that they found most compelling, and why.] The characters collectively deemed most compelling in the leaders' final decision will get a boost of one participation grade for this unit (a B becomes a B+, etc.).

Each student should also submit an annotated bibliography of the sources used to develop their characters. These should include at least **4 sources**, each with bibliographic information (or the URL, website name, and date accessed for websites) and a 2-3 sentence description of the nature and usefulness of the source. At least two of these sources must NOT be websites! At least one of these sources must NOT be one of the course materials assigned on the syllabus!

****Draft Argument Due Date:** Posted on the "Draft Arguments" board any time during the unit, but absolutely no later than 8 pm on Friday Sept 30

****Final Argument Due Date:** Posted as an attachment to Vista by 8 pm on Friday October 7

Paper and Annotated Character Bibliography II:

The second paper is also a revised and polished version of the argument that your character presented during the game, paying special attention to citing and **critically** and thoughtfully using the secondary sources and/or fiction pieces from the unit as evidence to support the argument. This should be roughly 8 pages (typed, 12-pt font, double-spaced), but you can write more if you'd like. Think of this as a substantial revision of the first version of the argument that your character presents to the class, revised in light of questions and comments from your colleagues and the instructor. [The jurors and judge will post polished versions of their decisions, citing the characters and arguments that they found most compelling, and why.] The characters collectively deemed most compelling

in the jurors' final decision will get a boost of one participation grade for this unit (a B becomes a B+, etc.).

Each student should also submit an annotated bibliography of the sources used to develop their characters. See above for guidelines.

**Draft Argument Due Date: Posted on the "Draft Arguments" board any time during the unit, but absolutely no later than 8 pm on Friday Oct 28

**Final Argument Due Date: Posted as an attachment to Vista by 8 pm on Friday November 4

Paper and Annotated Character Bibliography III:

The third paper is different in kind from the first two. While also related to the development of your character in the game, this paper takes the form of a current events assignment that will require you to follow a contemporary Central Asian news story of your choosing and compose a 12-15 pp final paper (typed, 12-pt font, double-spaced) on the topic. This paper will thus NOT be a revised version of your argument for Unit 3, but will be substantially informed by it. More details will follow later in the term.

Each student should also submit an annotated bibliography of the sources used to develop their characters. See above for guidelines. As in the first 2 units, the characters deemed most compelling in the leaders' gaming decision will receive a participation-grade boost.

**Draft Argument Due Date: Posted on the "Draft Arguments" board any time during the unit, but absolutely no later than 8 pm on Friday Nov 25

**Final Paper Due Date: Posted as an attachment to Vista by 8 pm on Friday December 9

The grading for the course will be assessed as follows:

Unit I paper and annotated character bibliography: 22%

Unit II paper and annotated character bibliography: 22%

Unit III paper and annotated character bibliography: 22%

Participation in class and online: 34%

Graduate students enrolled in the course should consult The Management ASAP to discuss the possibility of alternative requirements

SUMMARY OF PLAY

To facilitate play, the following is a brief summary of what each player does on every turn (week) throughout the semester's discussions and game. The steps should be followed in order.

1. Prepare for class! See above for a guide on how to do this. Come to class ready to discuss the course material and represent your character in the game. To make planning a bit easier for you, each weekly guide will also include a "To Do List" for the week.

2. Spend the first half of class discussing the week's reading material. Continue the discussion on our Vista website after class, if you'd like.

3. Spend the second half of class in the game. Each round will begin with a period in which the leaders can ask general questions of any of the characters, and will continue with the presentation of arguments. After each character has presented her argument, the floor is open for any of the other characters to ask questions. It is thus important to pay attention while the other players are presenting their arguments!

4. At some point during each unit, and absolutely by the due date indicated in this syllabus, post a **draft version** of your character's argument. Feel free to comment on any of the draft arguments of the other characters, as this will help your participation and help them refine their work before the final draft is due!

5. Post the **final written assignment** for each unit by the due date.

At the end of each unit, the Game leaders (Mongol tribal leaders, judge and jury, etc.) will render (in writing and orally) a decision on the problem of the unit. They will cite the arguments that they found most compelling, and the characters who made those arguments are considered the winners of that unit.

SUGGESTION

PLAGIARISM IS AGAINST THE RULES: All work in this class must be your own, and assignments found to be plagiarized will receive a failing grade. Do not cut-and-paste from websites, do not copy others' words or ideas without citing the source, and do not hand in work that you have also handed in (or will hand in) for another class. Familiarize yourself with UBC's definitions of and policies regarding plagiarism: <http://www.library.ubc.ca/clc/airc.html>, and come talk to The Management if you have any questions about this, at any time.

RESPECT EACH OTHER IN CLASS: When class is in session, please do not answer or talk on your cell phone, text your friends or lovers, post to Facebook, conduct dangerous chemical experiments involving salmon, surf the web on your laptop, hold spontaneous séances to communicate with your departed pet gerbil, or have private conversations amongst yourselves. Pay attention to the instructor and to each other! Conduct yourself with kindness and respect on the Vista board.

LATENESS AND ABSENCE: You are expected to attend all class sessions, and attendance will form a part of your participation grade. Please show up on time! The Management practices Random Acts of Attendance-Taking, so consider yourself forewarned. Two absences will start directly impacting your grade. Late assignments (including papers and required posts to the Vista board) will be docked 5 points per day late.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

UNIT 0

PRELUDE: SILK AND SAND AND CARAVANS

Wednesday, Sept. 07 INTRODUCTIONS

Major Topic: What is Central Asia? What is this course? What are you doing here?

***THE GAME, DAY 1:** Explanation of Pt. I of The Game, distribution of roles, selection of Mongol tribal leaders

UNIT I

FROM THE MONGOLS TO EARLY MODERNITY

Wednesday, Sept. 14 ENCOUNTERING CENTRAL ASIA

Major Topic: Travels, travelers, and travel accounts across medieval and early modern Central Asia

Secondary Reading: Golden (Introduction and Ch. 5-7; as supplementary reading, you can skim Ch 1-4 for more context), and make sure you have read the syllabus carefully!

Primary Reading: Choose **ONE** traveler from the list below. Read the primary source account. Think about the nature and reliability of these sources:

1. Marco Polo, *Travels* (read the preface and Book Second, Part 1 for a discussion of Khubilai Khan/Cublay Kaan; feel free to browse through other sections if you'd like!) http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Travels_of_Marco_Polo
 - a. For supplementary background, see: <http://www.silk-road.com/artl/marcopolo.shtml> or <http://www.metmuseum.org/explore/Marco/index.html>
2. "Ibn Battuta: Travels in Western Central Asia in the Fourteenth Century," Levi & Sela, 153-158

- a. For supplementary background, see:
<http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/200004/the.longest.hajj.the.journeys.of.ibn.battuta-editor.s.note.htm>
3. Rabban Sauma <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/sauma.html>
 - a. For supplementary background, see: Morris Rossabi, *Voyager from Xanadu: Rabban Sauma and the First Journey from China to the West*
4. Travels of Qiu Changchun (a.k.a. Qiu Chuji, a Daoist Monk) to Central Asia:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/changchun.html>
5. Travels of John of Plano Carpini:
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/carpini.html>
6. William of Rubruck's Account of the Mongols (browse):
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/rubruck.html>

***THE GAME, DAY 2:** Convening of a quriltai to decide the succession after the death of Möngke Khan. During the first half of game play the Mongol tribe leaders can ask questions of any of the characters. During the second half, characters will begin to present brief arguments to support their recommendation for succession. Students should know their roles and be prepared, based on their roles, to answer questions about their characters and present a brief argument.

Wednesday, Sept. 21 HELLO, MONGOLS!

Major Topic: The rise of Mongol leaders and the Mongol Empire

Secondary Reading: **Review** Golden Ch. 6-7

Primary Reading:

1. "Secret History of the Mongols: Temujin's Origins," Levi & Sela, 115-120.
2. "Hayton: Temujin and the Rise of the Mongol Empire," Levi & Sela, 120-125
3. "Ibn 'Arabshah: Timur and His Steppe Campaigns," Levi & Sela, 165-171
4. "Ibn Khaldun: Personal Narrative of a Meeting with Timur," Levi & Sela, 171-175
5. Ruy González de Clavijo: A Spanish Embassy to Timur's Capital
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/clavijo/cltxt1.html>

***THE GAME, DAY 3:** Continuation of the quriltai. All of the assignments, regardless of whether they were presented orally today, should be posted online as soon as possible after class: the Mongol tribe leaders need time to review them to prepare the ruling for next week!

Wednesday, Sept. 28 EMPIRE AND ETHNICITY

Major Topics: Buddhism, Khazaks, Uzbeks, Ivan the Terrible, Manchu-rama

Secondary Reading: Golden (Ch. 8)

Primary Reading:

1. Daniel C. Waugh, *Memoirs of Babur*
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/babur/babur1.html>
2. Daniel C. Waugh, selections from the *Tariq-i-Rashidi*
<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/rash1.html>
3. Johan Elverskog, *The Jewel Translucent Sutra: Altan Khan and the Mongols in the Sixteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 76-101, 129-159

Supplementary: If you're interested in exploring further, the entire *Tariq-i-Rashidi* is online here: <http://books.google.com/ebooks?id=eikPAAAAYAAJ>

***THE GAME, DAY 4:** The quriltai concludes. Ruling by the Mongol leaders and discussion of the ruling by the class. Part I of the Game concludes. Roles are distributed for Part II.

UNIT II

THE GREAT GAME!

Wednesday, Oct. 05 FOREIGN DEVILS AND THE GREAT GAME

Major Topic: The Explorer's Club: Hedin, Stein, Pelliot

Secondary Reading: Peter Hopkirk, *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road* (London: John Murray, 1980): 54-110, 177-189.

Primary Reading: Choose ONE:

1. Sven Hedin, *My Life as an Explorer* (New York: Boni & Liverlight, 1925): 15-23, 59-69, 109-179 [Accessed via Google Books here:

http://books.google.com/books?id=wEbG_tpO22kC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_atb#v=onepage&q&f=false; OR

2. Aurel Stein, *On Ancient Central Asian Tracks* (1933), choose three chapters from ch. 4-8 (available as an electronic text here:

<http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/toyobunko/VIII-5-B2-19/V-1/>

Ch. 4 (54-70) starts here: <http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/toyobunko/VIII-5-B2-19/V-1/page/0114.html.en>

Ch. 5 (71-95) starts here: <http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/toyobunko/VIII-5-B2-19/V-1/page/0141.html.en>

Ch. 6 (96- 108) starts here: <http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/toyobunko/VIII-5-B2-19/V-1/page/0176.html.en>

Ch. 7 (109-128) starts here: <http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/toyobunko/VIII-5-B2-19/V-1/page/0195.html.en>

Ch. 8 (129-144) starts here: <http://dsr.nii.ac.jp/toyobunko/VIII-5-B2-19/V-1/page/0229.html.en>

Supplementary: Translations of the documents discovered by Aurel Stein:

<http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/niyadocts.html>

***THE GAME, DAY 5:** Aurel Stein is on trial. The court convenes to interview witnesses, contemporary and historical, to decide (among other things) who has the right to keep the artifacts and texts that Stein discovered on his travels. Opening arguments take place today, and the early interviews. Students should know their roles and be prepared, based on their roles, to answer questions about their characters.

Wednesday, Oct. 12 ORIENTALISM

Major Topic: The 18th & 19th century struggle among empires, Pt. 1

Secondary Reading:

1. Golden (Ch. 9)

2. Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*: 57-68, 77-108, 165-87, 295-338, 430-64, 502-24 (This is also a kind of primary source)
3. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 31-49

***THE GAME, DAY 6:** The trial continues. Use this week's material on Orientalism to inform your arguments!

Wednesday, Oct. 19 STORYTELLING AND THE GREAT GAME

Major Topic: The 18th & 19th century struggle among empires, Pt. 2

Primary Reading: Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*

Supplementary: George Macdonald Fraser, *Flashman*

***THE GAME, DAY 7:** The trial continues. Kipling takes the stand, this week.

Wednesday, Oct. 26 20TH CENTURY CENTRAL ASIA

Major Topic: Ethnography; gender and modern Central Asia

Secondary Reading:

1. Douglas Northrop, "The Limits of Liberation: Gender, Revolution, and the Veil in Everyday Life in Soviet Uzbekistan," in Sahadeo and Zanca, 89-102.
2. Marianne Kamp, "*The Wedding Feast: Living the New Uzbek Life in the 1930s*," in Sahadeo and Zanca, 103-114.
3. Meltem Sancak and Peter Finke, "*Konstitutsiya buzildi! Gender Relations in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan*" in Sahadeo and Zanca, 160-177.

Primary Reading: Chingiz Aimatov, *Jamilia*

***THE GAME, DAY 8:** Closing arguments made to The Judge. Ruling and discussion of the ruling by the class. Part II of the Game concludes.

Wednesday, Nov. 02 NO CLASS, AS NAPPI IS AT THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE SOCIETY MEETING.

Assignment: USE THIS WEEK TO START READING *THE RAILWAY!!!* It is a long book. Also, start checking in with newspaper articles on Central Asia this week.

***THE GAME, DAY 9: NO CLASS!** Once you have read at least 1/3 of *The Railway*, choose a character on which you will base your participation for Part III of The Game. More details on this unit's game play will be announced later in the term.

UNIT III

THE NEW GREAT GAME

Wednesday, Nov. 09 ISLAM AND CENTRAL ASIA IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Major Topic: Introducing the New Great Game

Primary Reading: Hamid Ismailov, *The Railway*

***THE GAME, DAY 10:** Based on the characters you have chosen, we will enact the first day of Part III, sending some to prison and making others wealthy.

Wednesday, Nov. 16 OIL AND POPPIES

Major Topic: Islam and modern Central Asia

Reading:

1. Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000/2010), Part III (The New Great Game), accessible via ebook here
<http://webcat2.library.ubc.ca/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=465624&recCount=10&recPointer=0&bibId=4569236> **PLUS**
2. One scanned chapter of *Taliban* available in the coursepack

***THE GAME, DAY 11:** Part III continues, now informed by our reading and discussion of Islam and contemporary Central Asia...

Wednesday, Nov. 23 NATIONALISM AND CENTRAL ASIAN IDENTITIES

Major Topic: Tibet, Xinjiang, and the People's Republic of China

Reading: Newspaper article assignment (details TBA)

***THE GAME, DAY 12:** Part III continues, now informed by the newspaper assignment...

Wednesday, Nov. 30 CONCLUSIONS AND ABSURDITY

Major Topic: Concluding the course and the game!

Reading: Gary Shteyngart, *Absurdistan* (Random House, 2007)

***THE GAME, DAY 13:** Part III concludes. General wrap-up.