

# Contemporary History of Central Asia

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*Spring 2011*

**Hist 223; ID 2517**

**Tues/Fri 10:50; room 328/312**

**Instructor: Mary Bernadette Conde, Acting Associate Professor  
American Studies Department**

**Office: room 320**

**Consultation Hours: drop-in or by appointment**

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## **Course Description:**

The course is an interdisciplinary investigation of the history of Central Asia, its diverse ethno-linguistic groups, epic-cultures, religions, languages, historical dynamics of sedentary and pastoral societies, and early empires leading to the current ethno-cultural landscape. While this course focuses on the contemporary and early modern periods and their immediate historical antecedents, it will also emphasize historiographical discourse about the regional search for cultural identity. It will look at the colonial expansion in Central Asia by Russia and China and will examine the impact and transformations, which occurred in Central Asia in the 20th Century, culminating in the establishment of the new independent republics upon the dismantling of the USSR. Current affairs and topics that are important to the area (such as energy issues, cultural and gender issues, NGOs, the so-called 'color' revolutions, among others) will be highlighted in the readings, films, and discussions.

The goal of the course is to provide students with a broad base of knowledge, skills, and tools for historical analyses that will allow them to accurately interpret current events in the region and to critically analyze the historical and cultural dynamic transition and transformation of the region. The first half of the course will cover the history and the political culture of the region, with a special emphasis on the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The second half of the course will emphasize a historiographical approach to the discussion of contemporary topics or themes such as gender, religion, ethnicity, movements and revolutions, cultural representations, and politics, etc. The course employs an interdisciplinary approach combining historical, anthropological, cultural, political, economic, and ethnological aspects. Finally, it will revisit and rethink how pre-Soviet or post Soviet and the Soviet Central Asian historiography have shaped an evolving dynamic region.

## **Reading texts:**

In addition to secondary literature, at least one primary text and one visual source (addressing material culture) will be assigned each week. The books listed below will be held on reserve in the library for students to consult according to their interests. Additional readings are also listed (indicated in the course outline) in some weeks of the semester.

Barfield, Thomas, J. *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China*, Blackwell, 1989

Bregel, Yuri, *An historical Atlas of Central Asia*, Bloomington University Press, 2003

Christian, David, *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1998

*History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, UNESCO Publishing, 6 volumes, 1998

Krader, Lawrence, *The Peoples of Central Asia*, Curzon Press Ltd., 1997

Roy, Olivier, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, L & New York: Tauris, 2000

Saucek, Svat, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000

Eickelman, Dale F., *The Middle East and Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach*, Prentice Hall, 1998

Morgan, Gerald, *Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Central Asia: 1810-1895*, Frank Cass, 1981

Khalid, Adeb, *Islam after Communism*, University of California press, 2007

Hopkirk, Peter, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*, Kodansha International, 1992

### **Films:**

*White Mountains* by Melis Ubukeyev (Kyrgyzstan, 1964)

*The Land of Fathers* by Shaken Aimanov (Kazakhstan ,1966)

*You Are Not an Orphan* by Shukhrat Abbasov (Uzbekistan,1963)

*The Orator* by Yusup Razykov (Uzbekistan, 1998)

*Kosh ba Kosh* by Bakhtiyar Khudoinazarov (Tajikistan , 1993)

*Daughter in Law* by Hodzhakuli Narliev (Turmenistan, 1972)

## **Assignments/Assessment**

The course emphasizes interdisciplinary approach and in-class discussion of readings and visual texts to the study of the region. The course may not only feature guest scholars of the region but also presentation of films and other audio-visual materials, as these will enhance and complement the topics and discussion. You will be evaluated based on the following:

**Journal (25%).** (5 entries) The journal (at least 4 pages) is an important part of this class. You will turn in your at least a journal every three weeks during the semester. Your journal entries (4-6 double spaced -page per three weeks) should include a combination of the following: (1) Your reflections on class discussions, (2) Your thoughts on the weekly reading assignment (Is anything especially interesting or surprising? Has the reading challenged you to reconsider some of your views? Is any part of the reading confusing or unclear? etc.); (3) Your response to anything you see or hear about Central Asia in the news. The word “journal” intentionally suggests a certain degree of informality. Although this assignment must be typed, the entries can be organized any way you see fit and the writing style can be informal. A high grade will be given to journal entries that demonstrate a strong degree of analytical and critical thinking.

**Research Paper (25%).** You are to write a 10-page research paper on a topic of your choice in contemporary Central Asia. The paper must present an interpretation or an argument about one particular aspect of Central Asian history and culture – be it a person, political ideology or event, social or economic condition, or cultural trend.

Your selection of topic may be guided by the following types of questions:

What was its/his/her/their historical significance? What regional (Central Asian) or national trends or processes began or developed as a result of this topic? How do historians explain why a particular event occurred? Please consult me if you are having difficulty on a topic on your own. You are in no way bound by the themes and topics in the syllabus; you may propose to write on any related topic that interests you and for which you can find adequate sources. An additional handout on the research guidelines will be given.

Your paper must conform to either the APA, MLA or Chicago/Turabian style.

**Due: April 19**

**Revised Final Draft: April 29**

**Participation and Attendance (20%).** Attendance and participation are required. Class participation involves more than good attendance. You need to be prepared to discuss the course readings as listed on the schedule. You will also be assigned to lead a discussion of any reading article for the course to ensure your participation in class. The class also has an online class participation component augmented by the Moodle system.

**Moodle Participation (10%).** Besides class participation you will have to actively participate online as the course will be registered as an AUCA e-course. You may also submit your journals and research paper through our registered e-course. You will also have to engage in the forum where we can extend our in-class discussion to online.

**Class Presentation (15%).** All students will be expected to give an in-class presentation of their topic for their research paper or another. The schedule/sequence of presentations will be finalized a week before the fall break. Presentations will start after the spring break.

**Grading Scale:** 100-93 =A; 92-90=A-; 89-87=B+; 86-83=B; 82-80=B-; 79-77=C+; 76-73=C; 72-70=C-; 69-60=D; 59-0=F.

### ***Other Course Policies***

#### **Academic Dishonesty**

All cases of plagiarism and cheating will be handled according to AUCA policies. If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating, you will automatically receive a zero for the assignment (no make-ups or extra assignments will be given) and the worst-case scenario, you will receive an F for the class.

**Absences/Excuses.** Whenever possible, please make an advance notice or call to the department or instructors if you have a legitimate excuse for missing the class. You are expected to be responsible enough to keep your schedule.

**Late Papers.** Papers/assignments handed in beyond the deadline will not be accepted or graded. Only late papers (with valid or legitimate excuse) will be accepted but penalized and will affect the final grade for the assignment. Please observe dates of submission/deadlines.

**Mobile Phones.** Please TURN OFF your mobile phones before attending the class.

## Outline:

### General Introduction

To understand the current ethno-cultural landscape of the region is particularly significant when considering the history of nomadic and sedentary societies that emerged within Eurasia, in Central Asia, and west of the Urals. In this section, we will explore the legacy of the Mongols, the decline of pastoralist and foraging lifeways as they succumbed to the growing economic, demographic and military challenge of expansionist agrarian societies and then to the even more aggressive challenge of modern industrial societies.

### I. Historical Antecedents: Empires and Nations

#### Week 1. Introduction to the course

1. Text and Context of Studying Central Asian History
2. Overview of the Course
3. Requirements
4. Aspirations of students and the course

Readings:

Saucek, Svat, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000

Christian, David, *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1998

Roy, Olivier, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, L & New York: Tauris, 2000

#### Week 2. The Formation of an Inner-Eurasian Empire

1. Legacy of the Mongol Empire and the Successors of Chinghiz Khan: The Chaghatayids and Timurids
2. The last Timurids and the first Uzbeks

Readings: Saucek, Svat, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000

Roy, Olivier, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, L & New York: Tauris, 2000

#### Week 3. Last Empires and the Early Impact of Colonialism

1. The Fall of the Golden Horde and the Rise of Russia
2. 16th, 17th centuries' Djungars

Reading:

Saucek, Svat, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000

Christian, David, *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 1998

Roy, Olivier, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, L & New York: Tauris, 2000

Due: 1<sup>st</sup> Journal

## II. Towards the Contemporary Central Asia: The Legacy of the Great Game

By the middle and toward the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Central Asia was the focus of complex international rivalries that stretched across the whole Eurasia. And to assess its complex struggles, conflicts, and constant socio-cultural, geo-political dynamics and interactions of the region, this section will look into the socio-economic change and recent political transformations experienced by the peoples of this region under the colonial rules of the tsarist government and the Soviet Union.

### Week 4. The Great Game in Central Asia

1. Emergence of the Great Game
2. The First European Gamers
3. Russia and Great Britain: Rivalry for Central Asia

Readings: Saucek, Svat, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000

Roy, Olivier, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, L & New York: Tauris, 2000

### Week 5-6. Reform Movements: Ethno-nationalist or Religious?

1. Jadidism, Gaprinskiy, The New Method School, and Muslim Movements
2. The Basmachis
2. Cultural Reform and Socialist Revolution at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Readings: Saucek, Svat, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000

Roy, Olivier, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, L & New York: Tauris, 2000

**Film:** *White Mountains* by Melis Ubukeev (Kyrgyzstan, 1964)

**Due:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Journal

### Week 6-8. Russification and/or Sovietization?: The Soviet Central Asia

1. The Establishment of the USSR
2. State and Nation-Building: Creation of Borders and Soviet Domination
3. Communism and Russification: The Phenomenon of Cultural Korenizatsia
4. Language Policy and Panturkism

Readings: Saucek, Svat, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000

Roy, Olivier, *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, L & New York: Tauris, 2000

**Films:**

*The Land of Fathers* by Shaken Aimanov (Kazakhstan, 1966)

*You Are Not an Orphan* by Shukhrat Abbasov (Uzbekistan, 1963)

### Week 9. Spring Break

**Due:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Journal

### III. The Emergence of Independent Central Asia

This section looks at the contemporary period and assesses the major challenges to the region. These are assessed in economic, political, social, and cultural terms.

Some general introductory materials on this section include:

Adeeb Khalid: *Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia* (University of California Press, 2007)

Allison, R. and Jonson, L. *Central Asian Security*. (Brookings Institution and RIIA, 2001), full text available at: <http://brookings.nap.edu/books/0815701055/html/index.html>

Bohr, Annette 'Regionalism in Central Asia: new geopolitics, old regional order', *International Affairs*, 80(3), 2004, pp. 485-202.

Collins, Kathleen: *Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia* (CUP, 2007)

\_\_\_\_\_ 'Clans, Pacts and Politics in Central Asia' *Journal of Democracy*, July 2002, No 12(2), pp. 137-152.

Cummings, Sally N. (ed.), *Power and Change in Central Asia*, (Routledge, 2002)

Hill, Fiona *The Eurasian Security Environment* (2005), available at

<http://www.brookings.edu/views/testimony/hill/20050922.pdf>

Jones Luong, Pauline, ed., *The Transformation of Central Asia. From Soviet rule to independence* (Cornell UP, 2003)

Olcott, Martha Brill, *Central Asia's Second Chance*. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005)

Menon, Rajan 'The New Great Game in Central Asia,' *Survival*, Vol. 45, No. 2, 2003, pp. 187-204

#### **Week 9. Central Asian Republics: Independent or Sovereign?**

1. Glasnost and Perestroika in Central Asia

Readings: Michael Rywkin, *Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia* (1990)

2. 1991 and the Central Asian 'Catapult' to Independence

Martha Brill Olcott 'Central Asia's Catapult to Independence', *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1992.

**Due: 3<sup>rd</sup> Journal**

#### **Week 10. Post-Soviet Central Asia: Democratization and the End of the Transition Paradigm?**

1. Political Change in Central Asia since 1991: has Central Asia democratized?

Carothers, T., "The End of the Transition Paradigm", *Journal of Democracy*, 13, 1, 2002.

Anna Matveeva, 'Democracy, Legitimacy and Political Change in Central Asia', *International Affairs*, 75 (1), 1999, 23-44.

2. Case Study: The 'Tulip Revolution': what happened in March 2005?

Johan Engvall, 'Kyrgyzstan: Anatomy of a State', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 54, no. 4, July/August 2007, pp. 33-45.

#### **Week 11: Post-Soviet Central Asia: Nation and State-Building**

1. Nation- and State-Building since 1991

Anna Gryzmal-Busse and Pauline Jones Luong, 'Re-conceptualizing the state: lessons from post-communism', *Politics and Society* 30, 4, December 2002, pp. 529-554.

## 2. Case Study: Clan Politics in Central Asia

Kathleen Collins 'Clans, Pacts and Politics in Central Asia' *Journal of Democracy*, July 2002, No 12(2), pp. 137-152.

Film: *The Orator* by Yusup Razykov  
(Uzbekistan, 1998)

**Due: 4<sup>th</sup> Journal**

### **Week 12. Ethnicity versus Nationality: Violence and conflict in Central Asia**

1. The lessons of Osh and Uzgen conflicts in 1990; the Civil War in Tajikistan

*Tajikistan: An Uncertain Peace International Crisis Group (ICG), Asia Report N° 30 24 December 2001*

2. The Fergana Valley; Andijan

*ICG\_The Andijan Uprising, Asia Briefing 38, 25 May 2005*

3. Case Study: The 'Tulip Revolution': what happened in March 2005?

Johan Engvall, 'Kyrgyzstan: Anatomy of a State', *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 54, no. 4, July/August 2007, pp. 33-45.

Film: *Kosh ba Kosh* by Bakhtiyar Khudoinazarov (Tajikistan, 1993)

### **Week 13-14. Socio-Economic Change Since 1991**

1. Oil and gas politics in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

2. Impact of post-Soviet transition on Economic Change

Richard Pomfret, '[Economic Performance in Central Asia since 1991: Macro and Micro Evidence](#)' *Comparative Economic Studies*, 2003.

2. Impact of post-Soviet transition on women, rural and urban economies and societies

Shirin Akiner, '[Between tradition and modernity-the dilemma facing contemporary Central Asian women](#)', in Buckley, M, (ed.), *Post Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia*.

Film; *Daughter in Law* by Hodzhakuli Narliev (Turkmenistan, 1972)

**Due: 5<sup>th</sup> Journal**

### **Week 15. Central Asian Cultural Landscape: Convergence or Divergence? (Summary, Synthesis, and Conclusions)**

**Due: Research Paper – April 29**