

Negotiating the Problems of Diversity: A Post-Civil War Legislative Simulation

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In this paper I reflect on student experiences in my course “Politics and Diversity.” I have taught this course six times over the last decade. This course is designed to meet one of my university’s goals for diversity as this course provides essentials studies (general education) credit for “analyzing worldview.” This goal is explained to students as:

This course is an Essential Studies Special Emphasis course about Analyzing Worldview, which means it has a primary focus of helping you develop a set of transferrable academic skills you can use to productively interact with people of diverse backgrounds. You will be asked to recognize social and cultural difference while understanding how our worldviews are shaped by our identities and cultures. You will be encouraged to think about the real-world consequences of people’s different worldviews.

As an Analyzing Worldview course, at least 1/2 of this course’s focus and graded assignments will help you analyze how worldviews are shaped, how privilege and oppression are part of larger social institutions and systems, how ideologies are the fundamental means through which systems of privilege and oppression are organized, and help you practice the reflective thinking necessary to understand yourself as existing within ideological systems which involve oppression and privilege.¹

As I note in the syllabus:

Politics can be defined as the process through which collective, binding decisions are taken, and the consequences of those decisions. Politics always operate within a context of diversity. With changing demographic patterns and increased mobility, the world is increasingly diverse.

We will examine how countries create constitutional and political structures that recognize diversity in its many forms. We will consider how societies that are divided in many ways try (sometimes successfully, sometimes not) to create laws and institutions that reflect and respect diversity.

We will debate issues such as state ownership vs. privatization, religious liberty, tax policy, environmental policy and justice, and other questions to understand how power, privilege, and oppression function within diverse societies. We will consider how to overcome the problems of political stability and justice that are inevitable in a multi-cultural society.

Students will take part in a simulation experience that will require them to negotiate the political problems posed by diversity. These negotiations will result in the creation of laws and a constitution for a diverse society.

Students in the course take part in a semester long simulation of a country “Marashia” that has just come out of a decade long civil war. This course is a “long-form” simulation playing out over the course of a semester. The course begins with classic readings in the field of diversity and politics and with recent examples “ripped from the headlines” of the problems raised by the politics of diversity in both the US and around the world. Students then move into the simulation with a shared vocabulary and knowledge foundation. This course and its design

¹ <https://und.edu/academics/essential-studies/essential-studies-syllabus-language.html#d64e89--3>

tries to produce active learning through “illustrative games, historical roleplaying, and authentic replications of real-life scenarios” (Cohen, Alden and Ring, 104).

This course is informed by research on active learning. Its goals can be summarized as “(1) giving students a deeper level of insight into the political process; (2) encouraging students to be more attentive and more active in the learning process; (3) helping students retain information for longer periods of time; (4) developing critical thinking and analytical skills through collaborative efforts; and (5) enabling students to develop speaking and presentation skills (Sears, 224). This course is an effort to give students “a more applied experience” where “active learning aids in the retention of material, improvement of critical thinking, and overall student satisfaction” (Blackstone and Oldmixon, 526).

While the value of simulations as learning tools is well attested in the literature, designing simulations that achieve clearly defined learning goals is much more problematic. Because “simulations... require instructors to surrender some control over both the content and outcome of the interactions” (Kirschner, 431) and because they also are materially affected by a certain randomness in students taking such courses (among other variables), measuring the impact of games and simulations in political science courses can seem like a Sisyphean exercise. How do we know that “simulations also develop skills grounded in collaborative teamwork, negotiation, and problem-solving?” (Kirschner, 431). Can we overcome the inherent problems of a “simulation” which will always lack “consequential stakes and decision making under conditions of genuine uncertainty?” (Parrish and Schwartz, 538). In these cases the idea that “learning is an emergent, ongoing process where learners adapt their knowledge based on experience” (Cohen, Alden and Ring, 104), applies equally to students and teachers.

As Nathan Sears notes explanations of simulations often focus on the “how to” of the game while failing to address theoretical issues or how apply larger theories to problems (225). This is a question I often consider in my course. How much theory is necessary for students to fully appreciate the issues they will be working on? Perhaps even more importantly, how can theory, introduced before the simulation begins, provide a foundation shared by all students? Can that foundation overcome ingrained ideas and prejudices?

To attempt to address these problems, I require my students to read texts that lay out some theoretical groundwork to diversity, particularly as put forward to Wil Kymlicka. I find that more engaged students will refer back to the categories and concepts in the readings to support their arguments both oral and written. I am uncertain if students are doing this merely to assert an authority in support of their views or have really taken the theoretical concepts to heart.²

To break up the intensity of the simulation and to drive home points on diversity in action, the course also features “issue days” where contemporary problems in diverse communities and countries are discussed. Several students have commented that these provide an opportunity for students to participate who might find the simulation intimidating.

Course Goals and Problems³

My specific course goals can be summarized as follows:

1: Get students to reflect on and gain a deeper understanding of contemporary issues of diversity in the United States and internationally. Earlier in the semester, game play alternates with discussions of classic readings in the field and contemporary reporting on issues of diversity.

² I would welcome suggestions on how to answer this question.

³ I should note the design of this course was influenced by the “Reacting to the Past” teaching methodology. I team-taught courses in 2012 and 2013 that employed the RTTP games on Athenian Democracy and the French Revolutionary Assembly.

2: Encourage student understanding of the problems faced by diverse societies. To begin, students are provided with a background history of our “country” and some basic information about its revenues and expenditures. I have found that students always demand more information. I suggest to them that can creatively “make up” information that is plausible within the context of the simulation. More engaged students use this opening to advance their goals and positions.

We begin our Assembly debates by facing a key question for any country coming out of a period of strife. We consider the questions: should war crimes and human rights violations committed during the Civil War not be prosecuted? Should a “Truth and Reconciliation Commission” (like that of post-Apartheid South Africa) be created?⁴ This provides a pivotal moment in the simulation. Students must consider the extent of an amnesty and the effect of various types of amnesty on the rest of the simulation. Questions of language and language rights are also addressed early in the simulation. We also debate who can be a citizen, since the country in the simulation has many “guest workers” and immigrants whose status is uncertain.

3: Require students to take on and advocate for positions they may not agree with. Research has shown that “assigning students to take positions they disagree with tends to increase students’ open-mindedness, while allowing them to select their positions tends to increase biased assimilation” (Abernathy and Forestal, 344). “Stepping into roles that may be uncomfortable helps students think critically about their own perspectives and develop empathy, improving understanding of why actors behave differently under similar constraints” (Kirschner, 432). Students are continually reminded that they are not “legislating as themselves” (Blackstone and Oldmixon, 530), but are playing a role. Some students take advantage of this opportunity to expand on their character’s biography in entertaining ways. I have found reminders very important to overcome the ingrained cultural reticence of many of our students.

However, getting students to discuss highly controversial issues has proven difficult. Blackstone and Oldmixon are correct to advise against preemptively limiting what issues students may debate to avoid confrontations and possible abuse. They wisely note that “if students are restricted in the issues they can consider and debate, they lose the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions about contentious issues with their peers” (534). However, I have found that students engage in self-censorship and try to move debates toward technical questions or to noncontroversial legislation on symbolic issues such as the design of the national flag or whether the capital city should be moved to a more central location. Finding students willing to defend, in character, practices such as female genital mutilation has proven quite difficult.

4: Develop skills useful to democratic citizenship such as writing legislation, persuasive speech, debate and compromise. Recognize and understand the need to work within the limits of a constitutional and legal order. (i.e.: force is not recognized as legitimate.) This is a critical feature of the experiential learning part of the course. The goal is to get students to employ “some combination of experience, reflection, and [connect] the experience to abstract concepts and to practical applications” (Kitchen, 120). In my experience, students are quite willing to write legislation. The hard part is getting them to clearly explain it in speeches and during debates.

5: Encourage student creativity as they mold and shape the roles they are playing. Some students leap at the chance to “play” a character. Others resist. A telling example comes at the start of the semester when I require students to pick a “game name.” The more engaged students pick a name that reflects their character’s background, life experience, or aspirations. The less engaged try to get by with some variant of their own real-world name.

⁴This is inspired both by real events in South Africa and Eastern Europe in the 1990s and by the debate over amnesty in ancient Athens in 403BCE.

In early iterations of this simulation I employed a “gateway game”⁵ called the “Vampire simulation” to get students used to role playing and group work. In this game, students portray leaders of interest groups and high-ranking federal bureaucrats tasked with coming up with policy responses to the “coming out” of vampires.⁶ Students in this class also have widely varying levels of political knowledge (there are no prerequisites). Asking students to take part in a short simulation as member of various interest groups or employees of various federal bureaucracies was often beyond their existing skill set.⁷ I have dropped this introductory simulation as students want to move right to the game.

6: Encourage cooperative work within and across groups, represented in the game by political parties, regional groups, religious, language and ethnic groups.

Since Marashia is a quasi-federal state, the Assembly members often find it expedient to pass contentious issues down the provincial level. I have seen this repeated in areas such as property ownership, drugs and alcohol and citizenship questions. It becomes a way of avoiding forcing decisions on minorities, but also encourages demands for separatism.

Getting the parties and various regional interests to mobilize can be challenging. I have added more time for party and regional caucuses and have found that helps overcome some of the problem. Too often, players see themselves as free agents, focused more on their individual goals.

7: Encourage quick thinking and action in response to unexpected events. To also make students understand that they will never operate in a situation a perfect information and must make decisions based on limited information. So as gamemaster, I introduce various crises. In 2020 we faced decisions about COVID. Over the years, I have required students to deal with unrest in refugee camps, border disputes, food riots, earthquakes, and other natural disasters. I regularly post news “digests” from around the country showing public opinion and demands.

Working in their parties or regional groups, students attempt to come up with solutions to these crises. I have noticed over the years that some student default to doing nothing in such situations to avoid take responsibility for actions and outcomes. I stress, as game referee, that deciding do nothing in response to a crisis is also a decision with consequences.⁸

Course Design

The country in the simulation “Marashia” was as colony of an unnamed European power and has spent much of the last 60 years under a military dictatorship.⁹ After the fall of that regime, a civil war broke out that lasted almost ten years. Efforts to establish a stable parliamentary state followed the end of the civil war. Students portray the first meeting of a new national assembly under a new ratified constitution.¹⁰ The country is divided

⁵ Term coined by Cohen, Alden and Ring, 2021.

⁶ This simulation was developed by Robert Farley a professor of international politics at the University of Kentucky and was used and modified with his permission. And yes, it is modeled on “True Blood.”

⁷ I am considering reviving this simulation in my American government class after we discuss bureaucracy and interest groups.

⁸ This was particularly true in a “Reacting to the Past” simulation I co-taught in the fall of 2012. Playing the French National Assembly in 1792, students effectively “went on strike” as assembly members and refused to do anything about a prospective foreign invasion. The reasons were complex, mainly revolving around the evolution of three distinct groups in the assembly who opposed anything proposed by the other groups and became an effective blocking majority.

⁹ Some students try very hard to figure out the location of “Marashia.” They often assume Africa, but I make it very clear that to assume an identification with any existing country would be incorrect.

¹⁰ See the appendices for simulation information for the players about the country, the new Constitution, personal game information and general rules for debates.

into regions that differ in language, religion, economic status, connections to various foreign powers and so forth.

Students are given a unique biography and individual goals within the simulation. Some of this biographical information and goals are public knowledge shared with all players. Players portray local leaders, returned exiles, sports heroes, business and labor leaders, former militia fighters and so on. The goal is to produce conflict within the assembly that must be resolved.

Since our university encourages course to be offered online as well as in person, I face the problem of how to integrate synchronous online students. I have tried to create solidarity among them by placing all online students in one group called the “League of the Dispossessed.” These students represent refugees from the civil war now living in camps both inside and outside the country. This group has a number of unique and potentially divisive demands.

Within the context of the simulation, individual players are assigned to political parties, none of which commands a majority in the Assembly. They also have attachments to their local regions. Each player has individual, party and regional goals they must try to attain. Obviously, they cannot expect to attain all their goals so they must decide, based on the evaluation of the simulation, which goals are attainable and how strongly to push for their goals. They must build coalitions across party and regional lines to get things done.

Assembly Debates

Debates in the Assembly provide key interactions in the simulation. Players meet in party and regional caucuses prior to these debates to set goals and devise legislation. The rules or, more correctly, the lack thereof are inspired by the French National Assembly in 1792.¹¹ A fair percentage of students want a very rigid and clear set of rules for debate. Why don’t I use some recognized set of rules, such as Robert’s Rule of Order? First students who know those rules, such as those with experience in student government would be at an immediate advantage. Second, some students have, in the past, taken advantage of the rules to gum up the works and prevent any legislative action at all. Third, I expect students to work out how to work with each other productively, without reliance on some imposed system. I must admit sometimes this works, and sometimes it doesn’t.

The goal of such debates is to require persuasive speech through clear demonstrations of critical thinking and intelligent argumentation. As Abernathy and Forestal argue these are skills that “hold enormous value to democratic citizens” (343). Students are required to make one or two (depending on class size) formal speeches of about ten minutes to the Assembly. Here students propose legislation and answer questions from the Assembly.

These debates are moderated in two senses. One by an elected student “Speaker” whose role is to make sure a few individuals don’t take over the debate, to make sure that the debate stays focused on the topic at hand and to make sure that decorum is maintained. The Speaker also may cut off debate and move to voting. The instructor intervenes only when the debate becomes personal or when asked about a point in the rules of the simulation. Occasionally students request that the instructor take on the role of Speaker during a particular contentious or controversial debate.

I have noted that debates in class tend to have greater participation when simple prices of legislation that allow for easy yes or no answers are proposed. These types of debates appeal to students who are not comfortable with ambiguity, who like to use statistics to support their positions or who tend to believe that there are simple solutions to problems.¹² Students are less willing to take part in debates about “moral” issues. These debates require more intervention by the instructor because many students cannot or will not advocate for their character’s positions, if the student finds them unappealing or wrong. Debates become less structured when

¹¹ I hope and expect the students will develop “stable rules of cooperation” while working as an Assembly.

¹² I have discovered students in the simulation have an almost insatiable desire for more statistical information about out hypothetical country. I try to encourage them to “make up” plausible data to use in debates and legislation. Sometimes I provide additional information such as reports from international agencies or local news items.

students present complex pieces of legislation or issues that are ambiguous and for which policy actions have uncertain outcomes.

Assessments

Patricia Stapleton notes the challenging nature of developing assessment instruments for simulation based courses. She warns against reliance on “anecdotal or subjective impressions” (415). She recommends knowledge surveys at the beginning and end of a course (416).

In my course, I have employed a simple quiz on the Constitution of Marashia as a means of establishing a student knowledge base at the start of the course. I have also employed mid-term assessments. This particularly came in handy in the Spring of 2020 when the University shut down at mid-term due to COVID. I was able to use ask students how best to proceed when we returned to class via remote education 3 weeks later. Mid-term surveys were also employed, in more normal semesters, to “tweak” the course. In general students request more class time be devoted to smaller group meetings of political parties and province representatives. They generally suggest less class time be devoted to course readings and lecture. I must admit I am not always sure how to interpret this. I suspect (thus creating a subjective judgement), that good students want more interactive and collaborative action in class and poorer students think the group meeting are less demanding than discussions of the course readings.

Other assessment mechanisms include final evaluations by students (which have become less useful once the university started doing on-line evals and participation collapsed), a final examination in the form of a reflective paper on issues of diversity.

All these mechanisms point to some inherent problems with the course. Student learning is directly affected by the size of the class. Optimally, the course works best with about 25 students. However, I have taught the course with as few as 22 and as many as 59 (Spring 2024). In effect, I have to redesign key parts of the course such as formal speeches and the organization of the Assembly based on numbers. This has made it difficult to apply assessments from one iteration of the class to another. Another problem lies with enforcing participation. Some students “take over” the debates. I have discovered elected student speakers have a hard time enforcing discipline and totally refuse to call on people who are not volunteering.

In all student responses to mid-term and final evaluations suggest they find the course a worthwhile experience and assessment of final reflective papers shows students do learn to apply categories and concepts from the readings. But as noted above, these are subjective judgments in which I am a judge in my case. I welcome any advice on how to overcome the problems noted in this paper.

Appendices:

Final Exam/Reflective Paper

Constitution of Marashia

Information about Marashia and the Simulation Guidelines and Rules

Sample Character bios

Sample News Update

Bibliography

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Kirschner, Shanna. "Simulating Negotiation in Protracted Conflicts." *Journal of Political Science Education* 16.4, 430-440.

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Sears, Nathan Alexander. "War and Peace in International Relations Theory: A Classroom Simulation." *Journal of Political Science Education* 14.2, 222-239.

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Appendices:

Instructions for Second Reflective Paper/Final POLS 215 Spring 2024

Prof. Jendrysik

1: NOTE: Paper/Test is due May 10th by 11:59pm, posted on blackboard.

2: Papers/Test should be 2 pages in length (double spaced). That is, they should not be less than 2 full pages. Use normal size fonts and margins. (12 point Times Roman font is best. This page is Times Roman 11 point.)

3: A: Use the assigned readings and course notes as primary sources of material. (Also see the articles posted on the Facebook site for the course.)

B: Be sure to address the topic fully. **Have a clearly stated thesis and argument in your paper or answers.**

C: Support your conclusions with quotations from the texts. Be sure to cite page numbers for quotes.

D: Feel free to use other sources if you believe this contributes to your argument. However, you are not required to do so. If you do so, please add a bibliography or list of references.

4: IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ARE CONFUSED, CONTACT ME! PLEASE!

5: I will be glad to look over any outlines or drafts you produce.

6: I do not generally take off points for misspelling or unusual grammatical construction. However, I reserve the right to do so if such errors materially affect the quality of the paper.

7: There is no time limit for this assignment, except the due date.

Answer two of the following questions (one page minimum each for answers, 500 words total)

For each topic, be sure to reference our course readings and outside sources, where applicable.

1: Kymlicka notes that “some conflicts are intractable.” (page 1) What should we do in those cases? Find an example of an intractable conflict in our society and consider how we have dealt with it.

2: Define the term “diversity.” (Do so as if your definition was to be part of a mission statement for an organization or government agency.) Be sure to consider the practical effects of applying your definition in the context of an organization.

3: In writing a constitution for a diverse country (diverse in religion, language, ethnicity, etc.), what are the key considerations? How should a government for a diverse country be organized? What rights should be explicitly stated in such a constitution?

4: Should countries allow dual citizenship? Consider this in terms of the issues raised in our course readings.

5: Consider the issue of the “Fighting Sioux” logo and name in light of the issues raised in our readings. How do issues of recognition and cultural appropriation enter into this question? You may discuss more recent name and logo issues across the US at the high school and college level, if you wish.

6: Consider the diversity/multi-culturalism policies of the University of North Dakota. (Look at the UND website to start.) Do they reflect “essentialism” or “cultural relativism?” What other criticisms might be made of UND’s policies?

7: Find a major corporation's statement on diversity. (For example here is one of General Motors statements: <https://www.gmfinancial.com/en-us/company/careers/diversity-inclusion.html>, and here is US Bank's <https://www.usbank.com/about-us-bank/diversity.html>). How do these statements reflect some of the ideas discussed in the readings? Why might corporations have such statements? Note: you can't just say because they are forced to do so by the forces of "wokeness."

8: What does the future hold for Marashia? Will the people of the country find a way to accommodate their differences peacefully? Why or why not? Use supporting materials from the texts we have read.

9: Read the attached story on resurgent Quebec nationalism. Consider: What concessions can Canada make to Quebec? Can Quebec's nationalists be compromised with? Consider Quebec's demands in light of the course readings. Ie: What does Kymlika say about this issue?

Quebec separation re-enters political debate thanks to TikTok-friendly leader
Parti Québécois leader Paul St-Pierre Plamondon speaking loudly and often after party win over Coalition Avenir Québec

[Martin Patriquin](#) in Montreal

Wed 10 Apr 2024 08.30 EDT

The Guardian

Quebec separation is back among the living.

Years after many considered it dead, the prospect of removing Canada's second-most populous province from the federation has re-entered the political debate. And though Quebecers aren't exactly marching in the streets in its support as they once did, they are certainly taking another look at the Parti Québécois.

The PQ, formed in 1968 expressly to make a country out of the province, is by far the most popular political party in the land, with a bevy of polls suggesting it could form a majority government were an election held today.

In October, the party won a byelection in the Quebec City-area riding of Jean-Talon, long a stronghold of [the governing Coalition Avenir Québec, or CAQ](#). More recently, the PQ released its "year one" budget, essentially an advertisement for the alleged economic benefits of a sovereign Quebec.

[Read More](#)

Yet the PQ's resurgence has less to do with a revival of separatist spirits than its leader, Paul St-Pierre Plamondon. Elected party leader in the doldrums of 2020, the gen X St-Pierre Plamondon is a contrast to the PQ's boomer-dominated constituency.

St-Pierre Plamondon is novel for other reasons. He speaks often and loudly about the act of separation itself, even musing about creating a standing army and printing a Québécois currency. It's a marked difference from many PQ leaders before him, who often avoided speaking about the issue for fear of alienating voters. Nor is St-Pierre Plamondon above [often-cringeworthy TikTok meme attempts](#) extolling the delights of a separate Quebec.

Yet if the PQ is the *choix du jour* for an increasing number of Quebecers, it's also due to the political collapse of the current CAQ government. Elected in 2018, the *caquistes*, as they're known, promised to bring an end to the decades-long obsession with Quebec separation. Led by the longtime separatist (and former PQ cabinet minister) François Legault, the party bills itself as an economy-first coalition of federalists and *souverainistes* – the preferred term for those who want to make Quebec a country – disillusioned by a half-century of debates over Quebec's place in Canada.

It worked, in that the CAQ has formed two majority governments since 2018. As recently as 2022, Legault was among the country's most popular premiers for his handling of the Covid-19 crisis. Yet a series of missteps and scandals have caused his party to plummet back to earth, particularly in its centre of support in the Quebec City region.

Legault reneged on a campaign promise to build an underground tunnel connecting Quebec City with its car-obsessed suburbs to the south. The party was caught peddling access to several CAQ ministers in exchange for donations. And the government paid as much as \$7m to bring the Los Angeles Kings to Quebec City to play a game, thinking city dwellers would be chuffed to watch two pre-season NHL games some 30 years after the city's cherished Quebec Nordiques moved away. Instead, they were outraged at the price tag.

The PQ's byelection win last October confirmed a trend illustrated by 11 polls over the last year, said analyst Philippe Fournier. "It's very linear," said Fournier, founder of the poll aggregator 338canada.com. "The PQ is directly benefiting from the collapse in CAQ support."

It isn't all good news for the party, however. Quebecers have endured two referendums on Quebec sovereignty, in 1980 and 1995, voting to stay in Canada both times. Most Quebecers do not want a third – though St-Pierre Plamondon has promised one in his first mandate, should he win an election.

Unfortunately for the PQ leader, Fournier said, most Quebecers see him as the best leader of a Canadian province, not a separate country. "The PQ has asked me a bunch of questions about this, and they don't like what I tell them, which is they haven't created new sovereigntists yet – they've only brought the old ones back into the fold."

Next year, the federalist Quebec Liberals will pick a new leader after more than two years without a permanent one – in large part because no one seems to want the job. The right choice could energize the moribund party, and potentially cause a similar federalist exodus from the CAQ. Should this happen, Quebecers can expect a further collapse of the CAQ – and the return of a certain existential debate of yore.

Constitution of the Cooperative State of Marashia

Ratified by the Constituent Assembly May 2023

Approved by referendum July 2023

Preamble

The peoples of Marashia, with confidence in the future, in each other and in divine guidance, hereby establish this Constitution. May ourselves and our posterity enjoy peace, order and prosperity. We pledge to uphold the principles of liberty, mutual assistance and friendship, with ourselves and with the world.

Article 1 The State

Marashia is a federal state. The relations between the national government and the regions and local governments shall be fixed by law. This Constitution shall be the supreme law of the land.

Article 2 Territorial Integrity

The borders of the state are those established by treaty in 1960. No part of the national territory may be sold, ceded to a foreign state or otherwise alienated.

Article 3 Perpetual Neutrality

Marashia is a neutral state that seeks peace and friendship with all nations. The government shall, under no circumstances, enter into a military alliance with any nation or combination of nations.

Article 4 Minerals and Natural Resources

All natural resources and mineral wealth within the legal physical and economic boundaries of the state are the property of people and the nation and shall be regulated for the benefit of the people and the nation. All agreements regarding such resources entered into by any previous government are hereby repudiated.

Article 5 National Government

A: The people are sovereign. Their sovereignty is expressed through their representatives in the National Assembly.

B: One half of the members of the National Assembly shall be elected from party lists and the other half by legislative districts. All representation shall be based on population.

C: Representation in the National Assembly shall be based on the existing census until such time as a new census shall be conducted.

D: The National Assembly shall consist of 250 members. No person less than 25 years of age shall serve in the National Assembly.

E: The National Assembly shall elect a Speaker who whose duties will be fixed by legislation.

F: All laws shall be passed by a majority vote of members present.

G: Constitutional amendments may be passed by a 2/3 majority of members present, except in the case of regional initiatives or popular referenda (**see Article 9**).

H: The interpretation of this Constitution and the determination of the constitutionality of legislation shall be a power of the national assembly.

I: The National Assembly shall be the court of final appeal in cases of treason and sedition.

J: The National Assembly shall, as soon as practical, create a new legal code for the nation. Until such time, the legal code of 1960 is in effect, so long as its provisions do not conflict with provisions of this Constitution or with laws passed or to be passed by the National Assembly.

Article 6 Citizenship

All individuals legally residing in the country at the time of the ratification of this Constitution are citizens, with all rights and obligations of such.

All children born to legal residents of this country are citizens at birth.

Children born to citizens residing in foreign states are citizens at birth.

The above provisions shall not apply to the children of diplomats or other foreign nationals temporarily residing in the country.

The National Assembly shall make such laws to determine legal residence and for naturalization of aliens as deemed necessary for public order and the common good.

Article 7 Organization of Regional Governments

Regions shall establish assemblies to pass such laws as needed for public order and the common good. Regional assemblies shall be elected and organized under the same electoral and organizational rules as the National Assembly.

Article 8 Powers of Regional and Local Governments

The following powers are reserved to the regional governments, so long as those laws do not conflict with other constitutional provisions or national laws:

- A: Police powers within their geographic jurisdiction.
- B: Taxation and regulation of alcohol, tobacco and traditional medicines.
- C: Rules, regulations and laws for land tenure and ownership.
- D: Taxation of land and real property.
- E: Establishment of schools for the education of children and adults.

F: Regional governments may recognize the rights of traditional rulers and leaders in their regions, so long as such rights and powers do not impair the sovereignty, rights and liberty of the people. However, in no case shall an assumed title of nobility confer any special privileges.

- G: Courts to enforce laws made by the regional government.

The following powers are reserved to local governments, so long as those laws do not conflict with other constitutional provisions or national laws:

- A: Police powers within their geographic jurisdiction.
- B: Regulation of business and commerce in matters of public health and safety.
- C: Courts to enforce laws made by the local government.

All other powers are reversed to the national government.

Article 9 Regional Initiatives and Popular Referenda

The right of the people and the regional governments to petition the National Assembly for constitutional amendments, amendment of existing legislation, or for new legislation shall not be questioned.

Should 5 of 8 regional assemblies request, the National Assembly shall vote on such constitutional amendments, amendment of existing legislation, or new legislation recommended by those assemblies. The provisions for passage shall conform to those noted in Article 5. Should 10% of the eligible voting citizens request, by petition, the National Assembly shall submit constitutional amendments, changes to existing legislation, or new legislation recommended by said petition to a national popular vote. For passage of constitutional provisions, at least 60% of eligible voters must vote and 55% of voters approve. For laws at least 50% of eligible voters must vote 55% of those voters approve.

Article 10 Courts and Police

The National Assembly shall establish such courts as are necessary for the enforcement of national laws.

The National Assembly may establish such national police organizations as are necessary for the enforcement of national laws.

Article 11 Treaties and Foreign Relations

All relations with foreign states and international organizations are under the jurisdiction of the National Assembly. No regional or local government may enter into any agreement with a foreign state or agent of a foreign state.

Article 12 Armed Forces

Land, sea and air forces may be established and maintained by the state. The National Assembly may create such forces by legislation. Legislation funding such forces must be approved each year by the National Assembly.

The National Assembly must approve all commissions and promotions in the land, sea and air forces.

A military draft may be established by law.

Under no circumstances may military forces be employed for law enforcement, except in such cases as are required for public order. In such cases approval of the National Assembly is required.

Article 13 Definition of Treason and Sedition

A: All Treason and Sedition convictions prior to the ratification of this constitution are hereby rendered null and void.

B: Treason shall consist of adhering to a foreign state, waging war on behalf of a foreign state or conspiring with agents of a foreign state to overturn or alter the form of this government by any means.

C: Sedition shall consist of attempting through violent means to overturn or alter the form of government. Sedition shall also consist of conspiring to overturn or alter this form of government by illegal means. Sedition shall also consist of establishing or joining an unauthorized armed force or militia.

Article 14 Rights and Obligations of Citizens

A: All citizens have the right to free speech, freedom of religion and freedom of assembly as long as such rights do not undermine public order and the safety of citizens or the laws of the state. The right of the people to petition the government for the redress of grievances shall not be questioned.

B: Freedom of the press shall not be abridged.

C: Property rights shall not be abridged, except in such cases where the public good requires. In such cases fair value shall be paid for any property taken for public use.

D: The death penalty is hereby abolished and all death sentences rendered null and void.

E: In all criminal and civil cases citizens shall have the right to legal representation and to appeal. All accused individuals shall be considered innocent until proven guilty in open court. The principle of *habeus corpus* shall be respected. No ex post facto laws shall be passed.

F: Citizens shall be secure in their homes, effects and other places from unauthorized searches.

G: All citizens, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin or religious belief have equal rights and duties.

H: Citizens have the right to use their native language in dealings with all governments.

I: Citizens may bear arms in self-defense and for such purposes as hunting. However, no person or persons may bear arms forbidden by legislation and no person or persons may organize any form of private militia or armed force.

J: All citizens are required to perform such national service as deemed necessary by legislation.

K: Citizens are required to pay such taxes, imposts and duties as established by law.

L: The marriage of children under the age of 16 years is forbidden.

Article 15: Pardons and Impeachments

The Assembly may grant pardons to those convicted of crimes under national law. A 2/3 vote of the Assembly is necessary to grant any pardon. Any person accepting a pardon shall not hold any public office, elected or appointed for a period of 10 years.

The Assembly may impeach any person holding elected or appointed public office by a 2/3 vote. An impeached person is removed from office and may not hold any office, elected or appointed, for a period of 10 years.

For the purposes of this article a 2/3 vote of the Assembly means 2/3 of all members, not just those present.

Article 16 Act of Oblivion and Amnesty and Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The National Assembly may pass an act of Oblivion and Amnesty for all crimes committed prior to the ratification of this Constitution.

The National Assembly may establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission or other such organizations designed to secure public peace.

Information about “Marashia” and Simulation Guidelines and Rules

1: Historical background

A colony of a major international power for over a century. Independent for over 60 years (1960), most of that time under a military regime controlled by an ethnic group making up about 10% of the national population. Civil war/revolt overthrows government, international peacekeeping forces in place during constitutional negotiations.

Timeline:

1940-1947: Political unrest in the colony as political parties, labor organizations and other groups demand movement toward independence.
 1941: Founding of the two main political movements in the country, the Marash National Congress (MNC) and the Marash Popular Front for Liberation (generally called the MPF).
 1946: Founding of Illawli Popular Movement (IPM) to protect the interests of the people of Mardash province.
 1947: Agreement with colonial power on “self-governance” by 1960.
 1955-60: Unrest and violence as all parties and other civic groups demand stronger action toward full independence.
 1960: Independence granted. A parliamentary republic is established.
 1967: Military coup overthrows government.
 1972: Elected government reestablished.
 1975: General Maska (from Fallash province) overthrows government and establishes military regime with himself as “President-General for Life”
 2003: Maska assassinated. Provisional government established.
 2005: Negotiations fail on new constitution and civil war breaks out.
 2005-2015: Civil war between various parties and ethnic groups.
 2015: Peace agreement and UN intervention.
 2016: Provisional Government established, regional governments organized.
 2016: Founding of the “League of the Dispossessed” to protect the interests of refugees and displaced persons.
 Summer 2023: New Constitution ratified and new elections for National Assembly and regional assemblies.
 January 2024: National Assembly meets.

2: Present situation/national divisions

In the wake of the civil war, all parties/ethnic groups are exhausted. All agreed to a constitutional convention. The convention delegates were chosen by local elections in each region. (Note: the regions generally correspond to the areas occupied by each ethnic group.)

The Constitution was written and ratified by a national vote in 2023.

The new National Assembly will meet for the first time in January 2024.

International peace keeping forces have disarmed the remnants of the national army and local militias. The United Nations and foreign powers are paying for reconstruction, but continued support is contingent on the creation of a national government agreeable to all parties and parties.

Note: The current national capital has a more mixed population from all over the country.

Note: The language of the former colonial power spoken as second language by most of the political and economic elite. Three main local languages.

3: Resources

The country has moderate sized oil resources, estimated to last about 35 years at current production. Growing natural gas sector, limited by lack of investment.

Exports meat, fish, leather and other food products. Generally self-sufficient in food production.

Port is a regional hub for shipping and banking. Some light industry in port city and capital, mainly food processing and light manufacturing textile work.

Growing trade in illegal drugs, human trafficking and cyber-crime.

4: Foreign powers

All major foreign powers agreed to support the peace process. They are providing interim financing for reconstruction.

One major power is strongly supportive of the “Great Dam” project, another strongly supports the “Unity Bridge.”

All major powers want their national or nationally based energy companies to benefit from oil and gas development.

5: Population and budget

About 15 million people live in the country. As the last national census was in 1990, this number is subject to revision. *Note that a census will a contentious issue.*

The national budget for FY 2020-1 (September 2020-October 2021) was around 100 billion dollars (US). The budget deficit was around .5% of GDP. Oil and gas revenue accounted for 30% of the state revenue, the rest came from sales taxes and tariffs with foreign assistance accounting for about 10% of the national budget.

Government spending was divided mainly into:

Government operations 10%

Food and fuel subsidies 10%

Interest on debt 10%

Health and Education 25%

Direct payments to local and provincial governments 30%

Law enforcement 5%

Infrastructure: 5%

Other: 5%

6: Amnesty:

One of the most important issues for each party is the question of a general amnesty for crimes committed by the previous regime and during the civil war by the various parties.

For more information see how South Africa dealt with the question of amnesty in the 1990's with its Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

You might also examine how various countries in South America and in Eastern Europe have dealt with the question.

For a more ancient example see how Athens created an amnesty law in 403 BCE to deal with crimes committed during a period of dictatorship.

7: Guest Workers and immigrants:

The previous governments and the colonial regime allowed a large number of foreign immigrants into the country over the last 50 years. They work mostly in seasonal agriculture and in the port area. Many have lived in the country for decades and have children born in the country. (They are not easily distinguished from local inhabitants.) A key question facing the Assembly is the status of these people.

Some parties have clear policy on this. Others do not, so you will have to develop one. All parties are concerned about the position of international powers on the question.

Be sure to consider what guidance the constitution might provide on this question.

8: Other key issues (in no particular order)

Language (single official, many)?

Organization of the state.

Move the capital?

Organization of courts and their relationship to traditional leaders.

Citizenship.

State ownership of transport, communication etc.

Military and police force organization.

Land ownership (should foreign nationals and businesses be allowed to own land?)

Women's rights.

Religious liberty/authority.

Great Dam and Unity Bridge projects – economic development vs. environmental justice/property rights

Rights of exiles and refugees

Powers of traditional local leaders.

Alcohol, Marijuana and traditional drugs, legal status.

Trade/tariffs/free trade zones.

Government role in national development/infrastructure i.e.: Unity Bridge or Great Dam.

The above list is not exhaustive of all potential issues.

Minor but potentially divisive or uniting issues (in no particular order)

Flag/Anthem (consider: Why are there no words in the national anthem of Spain?)

Design of money

Game Play in the Simulation

Each student will receive a biography of their character. Central to the simulation are the “victory conditions” (VC) for each character. All players should strive to attain their VCs. However, it might not be possible or even wise to try to attain all your character's goals given the changing conditions of the game. Students may have to compromise some of the VCs to attain some of the others. Also remember that you must work with members of your party to attain its goals. You can, as an individual and as a member of a party, form alliances with other parties or other individuals to advance your individual and party VCs.

Keep in mind that your grade for the simulation will be based on your effective participation in debate and discussion and on your formal speeches to the Convention. “Effective participation” means making meaningful and useful contributions to the debate and working with others to attain your character's goals.

Since force cannot be used in the simulation, students must cooperate to attain a generally satisfactory resolution of issues for a country divided by ethnicity, religion, wealth and other factors.

Information at hand about the parties and players:

- 1: General information about the country's history, party make up and general goals.
- 2: members of parties know their goals.
- 3: each individual player knows party goals and their personal goals.

Over time, the other players will come to know you and your goals.

Important note: You should strive to attain your party's goals. However, it is possible that your personal goals are not exactly the same as your party. **Also note that the people of the province you come from may have goals that you need to consider.** You will have to make some decisions about what goals to pursue, since time is not infinite.

Also keep in mind that certain goals are shared across parties and across players, so your party should decide which goals to pursue and individual players should interact across parties to find mutual goals.

Note on grading: Some players have more personal goals than others. Some goals are easier to reach than others. The instructor is aware of this and will take that into consideration. Also, even if a goal cannot be reached, advocating for it and trying to get others to support it, getting it debated, and bringing it to vote all will be considered in terms of participation.

1: The Referee

The instructor will act as a referee. He will answer questions about procedure, facilitate debate by calling on people who are not speaking, and will answer questions (within limits).

2: Parties

If possible, prior to each meeting of the Assembly, parties will meet to discuss their positions on the issues of the day.

Note players who are "independent" that is not members of a party, may choose to work with a party or individual player on specific issues.

3: Rules for debate

Each party must have a member speak on each issue that is debated. More than one may speak. (In debate you may speak for no more than 2 minutes at a time.)

Independents should try to speak on issues that concern them and their character's goals.

The Assembly will elect a speaker to direct debate.

REMEMBER: EACH STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO MAKE A FORMAL SPEECH, IN CHARACTER, TO THE ASSEMBLY (ABOUT 7-10 MINUTES, THESE SPEECHES WILL TRY TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE TO SUPPORT YOUR GOALS AND THOSE OF YOUR PARTY.) See the syllabus posted on Blackboard for more information about requirements.

Contact the instructor to reserve a date or an issue you wish to speak on.

4: Laws and Constitutional Provisions

Parties and individuals may propose laws and constitutional provisions. Parties and individuals should come to the meeting of the Assembly with their proposals in writing (**send to the instructor prior to class for distribution**). Debate will include adding or removing provisions to the proposals.

5: Voting – secret or open?

You will have to decide this question. You can decide that some issues might have open voting while others require secret ballot. Or you might have all secret or all open.

FINALLY, WHILE THE SYLLABUS PROVIDES DATES FOR SPECIFIC DEBATES, THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO RAISE NEW POINTS OR CONTINUE DEBATE ON PARTICULAR ISSUES.

6: Events

As in actual life, events will occur from time to time that will require the action of the Assembly.

Party goals, political and policy positions and “victory conditions”

Remember, new issues may arise during the simulation. Or other party may have issues of great concern to them that aren't as important to your party. **This allows room for negotiation.** You should consult with members of your party to determine your group's position on new issues.

Also keep in mind that your individual character's goals might not exactly match the goals of your party. Consider how you will deal with that.

Please remember that this Assembly is a legislature.

Note: People in other parties may share your “personal victory goals.” You can work across parties at attain shared goals. (Just be careful your party doesn't consider you untrustworthy because of it.)

Note: the foreign peacekeeping/admiration forces have banned a large number of former military and government officials from the previous government from serving the assembly. But there are still individuals serving who are accused of war crimes.

Note: These Party goals, political and policy positions and “victory conditions” are in no particular order. It is up to you to determine your priorities.

Ethnic and regional groups in the simulation:

Political Parties and independent members in the Simulation:

All parties support a mixed capitalist economy with some safety net protections. Of course, there is plenty of room for debate within those parameters.

Marash National Congress (MNC) (19 members)

Members elected across whole country.

Party positions:

Support federalism, want provinces to have wide autonomy in law and taxation and spending matters.

Strongly oppose foreign land ownership and leasing. Want an absolute ban.

Oppose joining international conventions on illegal drugs.

Strongly support “Great Dam” project.

Oppose alcohol ban.

Support the creation of national army.

Support joining regional free trade agreement.

Support amnesty for crimes committed in the Civil War.

Support national distribution of oil and other resource revenue.

Want “Tallash” to be the national language, since it is the language of much of the population.

Party is generally flexible on such issues as public ownerships of utilities.

Party is divided on the “citizenship question.”

Marash Popular Front for Liberation (MPF) (16 members)

Members elected across whole country.

Party positions:

Support federalism, but prefer a stronger national government than the MNC.

Are not opposed to foreign land ownership for economic development purposes.

Want “Tallash” to be the national language, since it is the language of much of the population, but also are willing to allow minority languages equal status. (Even the party isn’t quite sure what this means.)

Oppose creation of national army. Would allow a national police force.

Oppose amnesty from crimes committed during the Civil War.

Divided on Great Dam project.

Support national distribution of oil and other resource revenue.

Divided on joining regional free trade agreement.

Illawli Popular Movement (IPM) (5 members)

4 elected from Mardash Province and one from the Port City.

Member's views will reflect those of the people of Mardash (both in the province and those people from Mardash living around the country.) However, individual members may have goals/positions beyond those noted for Mardash.

Party positions:

Support amnesty for crimes committed in the Civil War.

Support larger role for traditional leaders.

Oppose citizenship for guest workers and immigrants (want to revise constitution to end birthright citizenship).

Seek to keep more oil revenue in the province.

Strongly support keeping the disputed territory.

This party is indifferent to the "Great Dam" project. (So you can use support/opposition to it as a bargaining chip.)

League of the Dispossessed (LD) (15 members)

Elected from the refugee camps in Transbolatria and Gaskania and from the shanty towns outside the capitol and port cities.

Party positions:

Oppose amnesty from crimes committed during the Civil War.

Property restitution and right of return to previous homes and jobs.

Strongly support "Great Dam" project.

Independent members (4)

Independent members will consider the views of the people who elected them, that is the goals of the people in their province. They are also free to take independent positions.

Ethnic and regional groups in the simulation:

1: North Zor

11% of national population, rural, farmers and herders. Market towns along the river.

Religion prescribes vegetarianism and mild form of FGM. Local religion/no international presence.

Women provide most religious leadership roles.

Private land holdings (getting smaller due to division by customary inheritance law)

Land hunger has led to movement of farmers into Talkar and Emgar provinces.

Produces cash crops for export.

Key concerns seen in public opinion surveys:

Oppose foreign ownership of land and possible restrictions on traditional plants which are seen internationally as dangerous drug precursors.

Support federalism.

Support "Great Dam" project since it will allow for more crop irrigation and open up new arable land.

Oppose banning alcohol since a large proportion of crop production is converted to alcoholic beverages.

Strong support for improve road and rail links to cities and ports.

Mixed opinion on joining regional free trade agreement.

2: South Zor

12% of national population, rural with some smaller towns on the coast.

Patriarchal religion with strong international connections.

Strong support from co-religious from a major international power.

Large number of people employed in cattle and sheep production. Fishing an important industry along coast.

Key concerns seen in public opinion surveys:

Oppose foreign ownership of land.

Want a navy/coast guard established to protect fishing rights.

Strong support for maintenance of traditional laws on grazing rights.

General support for joining regional free trade agreement.

3: Emgar

11% rural, pastoralists (cattle), growing resort towns on the Great Lake.

Religion – Local animist/no international presence. Polygamist/practice animal sacrifice. Extreme forms of FGM common.

Religion opposes alcohol consumption

Communal land holdings/individual ownership of cattle.

Resort areas on Great Lake provides jobs.

Key concerns seen in public opinion surveys:

Oppose foreign ownership of land.

Want to maintain traditional religious practices.

Support ban on alcohol consumption.

Want to maintain traditional land tenure policies.

Support federalism.

Support proposed new airport to serve resort areas.

Strongly oppose “Great Dam” project as it would flood dozens of towns along the Great River.

Support a larger role for traditional leaders in governance.

Want squatters from other provinces removed.

Support joining regional free trade agreement.

1, 2 and 3 all speak same language “Tallash” (with dialect differences).

There is some demand to make that the national language.

4: Fallash

15% urban, national capital (Central transportation hub.)

Strong tradition of small family-owned farms along the rivers.

Wealthiest region of the country.

Favored by colonial power

Provides most of the trained officials

Dominated former national military forces and police

Mixed religions, none dominate in this group.

Key concerns:

Want to maintain control of state and its key institutions.

Members elected from Fallash will face strong pressure to weaken federalism.
 Resent tax revenue raised in Fallash being spent in poorer provinces.
 Oppose moving the national capital.
 Strongly support Great Dam.
 Support investment in roads and rail links.
 Mixed opinion on joining regional free trade agreement.
 Strongly support the building of an oil refinery in current capital city by China National Oil Corporation.

No dominant language (language of former colonial power often used).

5:Talkar

11% All national oil production exported through this province.

Patriarchal religion with strong international connections. (Church controls only university in the region.)

Strong support from co-religious from a major international power.

Key concerns:

Want greater local control over revenues. Want no national army or police force.

Maintain foreign investment in industry and banking.

Want a ban on polygamy.

Support joining regional free trade agreement.

Oppose federalism, seen as leading to succession and division. Members elected from Talkar will face strong pressure to weaken federalism.

Support joining regional free trade agreement.

Strongly support the building of an oil refinery in the main city of this province by Royal Dutch Shell.

Want the local language recognized as one of the national languages. (Consider what having multiple national languages might mean in practice.)

The local language is a world language spoken by millions of people in other countries in the region.

6: Mardash

6% Isolated mountain people

Large scale oil production in this region accounts for 70% of the national budget.

Persecuted by colonial and military governments.

Strong support from co-religious from a major international power.

Key concerns:

Support federalism and division of oil revenue by province.

Want ability to retain local militia forces.

Want a national ban on alcohol, or at least a ban in the province.

Support maintenance of polygamy.

Support a larger role for traditional leaders in governance.

Strong support for keeping the disputed territory.

The local language is unique and bears no relationship to other languages spoken in the country.

7: Callash

6% Inhabitants of a large island off the coast.

Historically mixed population with no dominant religion or language group. Most people on island are fluent in language of former colonial power.

Strong independence movement but limited by lack of resources and poverty (compare economic situation to that of Canadian Maritime Provinces).

Key concerns:

- Support federalism.

- Want maximal autonomy, especially control of fishing and mineral rights off the coast.

- Support the building of a bridge from island to mainland. "The Unity Bridge" (compare to proposed bridge linking Sicily with mainland Italy).

- Strong support for the creation of a navy/coast guard to protect fishing and potential offshore mineral rights.

- Generally indifferent to cultural issues, but willing to bargain.

- Ambivalent about the growing tourist industry on the island, it is seen as bringing jobs, but is also seen as a danger to property rights, the environment and fishing industry.

- Support a national airline and national ownership of transportation to assure links to the mainland.

The local language is a world language spoken by millions of people in other countries in the region.

8: Maritime

13%

Main port city (largest city in country)

Highly mixed population in the port city. People from all over the country live there as well as large numbers of guest workers and immigrants.

Mostly work in industries developed by colonial power, mostly food processing, light manufacturing and shipbreaking.

- Large scale illegal drug trade moves through port.

- A movie production center has opened there in the last decade. It's films are popular across the region ("Pollywood").

- International banking now growing.

- Strong support for moving capitol city.

Port city has large immigrant and guest worker population. Resolving their citizenship issues will be important to any member from this province.

Refugees and Diaspora (Called “The Dispossessed”)

15% very mixed group from all ethnic and regional groups.

Located in a series of camps and shanty-towns across the border in neighboring states and in the capital and port city, others have settled in nations around the world.

Over the years of exile a rough unity of purpose has been created among this group organized around demands for return of land and property seized by the military government or abandoned during the civil war. (Many people in this group still have the keys to their “stolen” homes and soil from their farms.)

Strong support for the “League of the Dispossessed”

Key concern: property restitution and right of return to previous homes and jobs.

As the languages spoken by the “Dispossessed” are many and varied, members of this group oppose a single national language.

Regional and Party representation in simulation:

Province	Number of Reps	Party Strength
North Zor	5	2 MNC 3 MPF
South Zor	5	3 MNC 1 MPF
Mardash	4	4 IPM
Fallash	11	5 MNC 5 MPF 1 Independent
Callash	4	2 MNC 2 MPF
Emgar	5	1 MNC 3 MPF 1 Independent
Talkar	5	1 MNC 1 MPF 1 IPM 1 LD 1 Independent
Maritime	8	7 MNC 1 MPF
Refugees/DPs	15	14 LD 1 Independent

Sample Character Bios:

Party MPF

Province: North Zor

Member 5: _____ (game name here)

Name:

A member of the family that ruled this area before the colonial era, you spent much of your life in exile. (Several members of your family were executed by the previous government.) You are seen by some as out of touch with needs of the area, but your family name and its history lead to your election to the assembly. As such you strongly support your party's goals. But you also keep a clear eye on public opinion in the province and are willing to be guided by it.

Personal victory goals:

Support the creation of a national agricultural college in your province.

Prevent the passage of the amnesty.

Receive compensation for your family's property that was seized by the previous government.

Pass a constitutional provision limiting foreign land ownership.

Want to restore the power of "traditional leaders" in various regions. (See the position of the King of Buganda in present day Uganda.)

Pass a bill providing "marriage bounties" and "child bounties" to encourage "increased population and economic growth"

Party MNC

Province: South Zor

Member 6: _____ (game name here)

Name:

Educated at a leading agricultural university in the United States, you returned the country just before the civil war. The previous government appointed you to direct the province's agricultural ministry. During the civil war you joined the local militia. You are suspected of war crimes and are under investigation by the International Criminal Court. You strongly support an amnesty.

Personal victory goals:

- Get the amnesty passed.

- Support the creation of a national army.

- Get a provision added to the constitution rejecting the authority of the International Criminal Court and forbidding citizens of your country from being extradited to face charges in other countries.

- Get support for land reform allowing former militia fighters to have their own farms. (Or get support for educational funding for former militia fighters.)

- Support the creation of a national agricultural college in your province.

Party MNC

Province: South Zor

Member 7: _____ **(game name here)**

Name:

You are the leader of the “Herders League” and represent the interests of ranchers and stockmen. During the civil war you worked to maintain the trade in meat, dairy products and hides across the country and internationally. You strongly support free trade and your party’s goals.

Personal victory goals:

Get support for land reform allowing former militia fighters to have their own farms/grazing rights. (Or get support for educational funding for former militia fighters.)

Pass a constitutional provision allowing provinces to ban alcohol.

Pass a ban on FGM.

Pass a law or constitutional provision recognizing the right of each province to determine residency. (This would allow you to remove/disenfranchise migrant farmers/squatters from South Zor.)

Pass a bill providing “marriage bounties” and “child bounties” to encourage “increased population and economic growth”

Party MNC**Province: South Zor****Member 8:** _____ (game name here)

Name:

You own the largest meat and hide processing operation in the country. During the civil war it was destroyed by government forces. With assistance from foreign investors you have rebuild the plant and are actively seeking to control the marketing of meat and hides from your province. This has gained you a lot of enemies. You are accused by some of being a “foreign lackey.” In an effort to avoid unpopularity and potential government action against your interests, you are strongly supportive of your party goals, except the national language goal. You support the use of English across the country. As you have four wives, you strongly support the maintenance of polygamy.

Personal victory goals:

- Pass the regional free trade agreement.

- Pass a law to require English as a second language education in all state schools.

- Receive compensation for your property that was destroyed by the previous government.

- Pass a constitutional provision limiting foreign land ownership.

- Support private ownership of transportation/communications.

- Oppose any law or constitutional provision recognizing unionization or collective bargaining.

- Pass a bill for a new census and requiring all current residents of the country to prove their citizenship in order to hold public office, vote or hold a government job **Party IPM**

Party IPM**Province: Mardash****Member 10:** _____ (game name here)

Name:

You are a petroleum engineer and the local representative for Saudi Aramco. Your contacts with the Saudi government are a major asset. (Your son has recently married a member of the House of Saud.) You and the rest of your party members are the most united party. You fear that the oil wealth of your long oppressed province will be “stolen” by the national government as it has been in the past.

Personal victory goals:

- Get support for educational funding for former militia fighters.

- Pass a constitutional provision defining a citizen as a having two citizen parents. (This is directed a recent immigrants and “guest workers” who have entered the province in large numbers after the civil war.)

- Pass a law or constitutional provision recognizing the right of each province to determine residency.

- Prevent a national ban on “traditional religious practices” (Note this is code for allowing FGM).

- Pass a law allowing the building of an oil refinery in the main city of this province by Saudi Aramco. **(You are a paid agent of Aramco, this is a secret, for the moment.)**

- Gain a favorable division of oil revenue. (That is, get your province the bulk of the money!)

- Oppose any efforts to ban “traditional religious practices”. (Consider what that might mean.)

Party MNC

Province: Fallash

Member 16: _____ (game name here)

Name:

A government worker, you are president of the “Union of Clerks and Civil Servants.” During the civil war you served in a government sponsored militia unit. As a consequence, you are banned from entering any country in the EU and the United States and Canada. The ICC is considering an indictment. You support all your party’s goals. Your party’s success is yours.

Personal victory goals:

- Pass the amnesty bill.

- Get support for educational funding for former militia fighters.

- Get a provision added to the constitution rejecting the authority of the International Criminal Court and forbidding citizens of your country from being extradited to face charges in other countries.

- Pass a constitutional provision guaranteeing the right of unionization and collective bargaining.

- Get a law or constitutional provision passed banning foreign ownership of transportation and communication infrastructure such as airline, railroads and phones/wireless communication.

- Pass a bill for a new census and requiring all current residents of the country to prove their citizenship in order to hold public office, vote or hold a government job.

Party: Independent (no party affiliation)

Province: Fallash

Member 16: _____ (game name here)

Name:

You are the former head of the national police force (NATPOL). You resigned from that position and fled the country when the Civil War broke out. You are deeply distrusted by the political parties since you took part in the repressive policies of the military regime. However, you retain great popularity in the province for your strong support of national unity. You retain connections to former members of the national police across the country. You strongly support the amnesty, both for yourself and for former members of the national police. Your enemies, and they are many, think you see yourself as a future strongman leader of the state. **You are among the most controversial and distrusted members of the assembly and you enjoy that!**

Despite your involvement in the former military regime and its repression, you are personally honest and not corrupt. (Such things do happen!)

Personal victory goals:

Pass the amnesty bill.

Defeat any attempts at creating a “Truth and Reconciliation Commission.”

Pass a law providing that former government employees retain their pensions and have first call on new government positions.

Get a provision added to the constitution rejecting the authority of the International Criminal Court and forbidding citizens of your country from being extradited to face charges in other countries.

Pass a bill or constitutional provision for a new census and requiring all current residents of the country to prove their citizenship in order to hold public office, vote or hold a government job.

You are flexible on most other issues.

You strongly support any and all infrastructure efforts.

Support a ban on FGM.

Note: you have at your disposal in the capital and around the country a large number of former NATPOL men who are not currently employed.

Party MPF**Province: Talkar****Member 22: _____ (game name here)**

You are a former schoolteacher and guerrilla fighter from the far eastern part of the region. Called “the Fighting Professor” you took up arms after your school was destroyed by government forces during the Civil War. You wrote a book about your experiences that became an international bestseller and the basis for an award-winning hit film starring Johnny Depp. You are seen by many (*exactly who, though*) as more concerned with your new international fame than the good of the country and your region. You are currently dating a famous young English actor (*note actor is used here in a non-gender specific fashion*). Many are jealous that you are seen as the “face” of the country. You support your party’s goals, but are willing to compromise.

Personal victory goals:

Revise the Constitution to allow the creation of a President. You would be willing to accept a purely ceremonial presidency.

You support a national education system and seek to have a right to a publicly funded education placed in the constitution.

You want the right to grow, trade and consume any and all “traditional” drugs placed into law or the constitution.

You oppose any effort to disenfranchise “guest workers.”

Get government support for the local movie industry.

Note: you continually drop the names of your famous friends, much to the annoyance of your fellow Assembly members.

You are also deeply involved in “Pollywood” the local movie industry.

Party MNC

Province: Callash

Member 32: _____ (game name here)

Name:

You are the great-grandchild of the last King of Callash who was deposed by the colonial power in 1930. Long held in mistrust by the colonial and military governments you have lived in exile for most of your life. You were regional governor of Callash under the most recent short lived civilian government (over 20 years ago). You strongly support you're the views of the people of the province. You quietly support independence, since you think that would restore you to power. You are not trusted by the other members of the MNC or the other members from Callash.

Personal victory goals:

Want to restore the power of "traditional leaders" in various regions. (See the position of the King of Buganda in present day Uganda.)

You support the restoration of the property of exiles and refugees.

Defeat efforts at disenfranchising "guest workers."

Defeat efforts to hold a national census. (You fear this will reduce Callash's influence and representation.)

Help pass amnesty bill.

Pass a bill to retain half of all oil and natural gas revenue in the province in which it was produced.

Support the declaration of an "exclusive economic zone" of 400 miles from the coast to protect spawning grounds of local fish. <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/eez.html>

Pass a bill requiring the building of a bridge from island to mainland. "The Unity Bridge" (compare to proposed bridge linking Sicily with mainland Italy).

Pass a bill creating of navy/coast guard to protect fishing and potential offshore mineral rights

Party MNC

Province: Maritime

Member 43: _____ (game name here)

Name:

A well-known musician in the Port City known as “The Mighty Flea,” you are the longtime rival of fellow musician “The Iron Butterfly.”¹³ You support the traditions of “Bazooko” style.

You own the largest music studio and music publishing enterprise in the country. As such you have a strong desire to pass laws to protect copyrights.

You strongly support amnesty.

Another key goal for you to create a national food program for children. (Something like free school lunches.)

You strongly oppose any legislation granting tax breaks to churches. And you want to pass a bill banning FGM and imposing life sentences for human traffickers. Otherwise, you have conservative views on social issues.

Personal victory goals:

Pass the amnesty bill.

Support the goal of your party.

Pass a bill banning FGM and imposing life sentences for human traffickers.

Defeat any bill for public financing for a “National Music Education College.”

Support bans on pornography and pornographic websites.

Pass a bill providing “marriage bounties” and “child bounties” to encourage “increased population and economic growth”

¹³ Based on the famous rivalry between “The Might Sparrow” and “Black Stalin” calypso artists in Trinidad and Tobago.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Stalin

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mighty_Sparrow

Sample News Update

A digest of news from around Marashia. February 17, 2022

(I send these to the students on an irregular basis to push certain issues forward.)

From a report by the Ministry of Culture (10 February)

A UNESCO¹⁴ grant for the support of traditional “Bazooko” music in Fallash has been approved! The Ministry is organizing a Bazooko Festival this summer.

Statement by the People’s Entertainment Committee (6 February)

We welcome the UN’s support for traditional art forms in Marashia! We condemn those who ape the fashions of other nations! Down with K-Pop!

From the People’s Uprising Podcast (15 February)

We note that the capitalist vulture Angelina Jolie is coming to visit. Is she planning to steal more children to add to her human zoo?

From a radio broadcast on Refugee Radio (15 February)

While the restoration of the lost children to their families is an admirable goal, let us never forget that thousands of the Dispossessed still demand the return of their homes, farms and businesses!

From the *Great Lake Beacon* (8 February)

A law requiring universal free education of children must be passed! A whole generation has missed out on basic education!

Statement by the Religious Purity Council of South Zor (16 February)

The refusal of the Assembly to ban the pollution that is Pornhub shows a lack of moral character. We demand that the people be protected from such filth!

Statement by the Mardash Conference of the Faithful (14 February)

A day devoted to the celebration of wholesome love, love that unites souls, is a good thing. A decadent holiday devoted to eating chocolate and celebrating vice is not. We caution the faithful to avoid temptation on this of day, as on all days.

From a news report on Radio One Emgar (14 February)

While some oldsters still don’t like it, Valentine’s Day has become our new national holiday! What did you sweetheart get you? Send us your stories!

From the *National Times* (published in the Port City February 16)

The reunion of the lost children is an imperative. We fully support the bill! We also demand harsh punishments for those who are exploited these children whether they be foreign or domestic.

From the *People’s Voice*¹⁵ (published in the capital city, 15 February)

We demand a full investigation of the allegations that “sex tourism” is rampant in the resorts on the Great Lake! How dare degenerate foreigners and their local lackeys profit from such evil! We demand that the resort manager who sits in the Assembly answer these charges!

From the *National Post* (published in the capitol city, 16 February)

The Unity Bridge must be a priority! It means years of jobs and increase economic activity. It will end the threat of Callashian separatism once and for all, putting at stop to the plots of people like the so-called “Crown Princess of Callash.”

A “Hands off Ukraine” rally in front of the Russian Embassy drew an estimated crowd of 5,000 on Monday.

A march in support of the Great Dam project drew a raucous crowd of several thousand last week. The marchers deployed giant puppets and water pistols full of wine, much to the joy of onlookers. Opponents alleged the marchers were paid by Chinese interests.

¹⁴ <https://en.unesco.org/>

¹⁵ Official publication of the “National Union of Students.”

From an editorial on Channel One Marashia (2 February)

When have the people of Saudi Arabia not been friends of the people of Marashia? We will always remember their support of our struggle for independence and the generous aid during the civil war! So let us all welcome His Majesty King Salam's wonderful gift! Let's build the King Salam Unity Bridge!

From a news report on Blue Sky Radio (Callash Island, 8 February)

The former royal family of Callash denies any role in the recent rise in pro-independence posts on Instagram and Tik-Toc.

From a news report on the Voice of Mardash Radio (16 February)

Rumors that a march into the disputed border regions by "student" activists is planned have swept the province. UN Peacekeeping forcers are reported to be on alert.

From a news report on Youth Radio Marashia (16 February)

A national contest to design a new flag has been announced by the National Arts Council. Young people all over the country are asked to submit their designs!

Statement from the Council of Traditional Leaders of the Marashian Lands (15 February)

Congratulations to the Azande people of South Sudan on the restoration of their king to his rightful place. Marashia would do well to consider this example.