

## [War and Diplomacy in China, 223 BCE--Reacting to the Past Online Faculty Workshop--December 14-15 \(7:00-8:30 PM, EST\)](#)

Discussion published by Mark Carnes on Monday, November 30, 2020

The Reacting Consortium, a not-for-profit organization that supervises the Reacting to the Past pedagogy, is pleased to announce a faculty training workshop for a new game, still in development, set at the end of the Warring States era. Reacting to the Past consists of complex games set in the past, in which students take on roles informed by classic texts. (The February, 2020 issue of the *American Historical Review* featured positive reviews of eight other Reacting games.)

This game, designed by Sandrine Catris and Andrew Goss, historians at Augusta University, is entitled **Game of Sages: War and Diplomacy in China, 223 BCE**. The workshop will be held online on December 14 and 15, from 7:00-8:30 PM EST. Participants will receive their roles and game materials in advance of the workshop. For more information: <https://reacting.barnard.edu/winter-reacting>

Historical context: In 223 BCE, there were only five states left, Qin, Chu, Qi, Zhao, and Yan. Qin was the strongest and westernmost state. The game takes place on the eve of the Qin's conquest of the state of Chu, the large southernmost state. The game is played from the perspective of the four states who fear that the state of Qin might annihilate their states as they did with states like Hann and Wei. The main characters in the game are the historical King of Chu, sages (traveling persuaders) who adhere to the different Chinese philosophical trends, and statesmen from the different states (some of them are historical characters). They have gathered at a (counterfactual) council hosted in the capital of the state of Chu. Some of the characters hope the states will develop a unified coordinated response to the Qin. They are seeking to create a vertical alliance, a historical effort to unify non-Qin states to stop the Qin's expansion eastward. The game has three factions, and each propose a different diplomatic alliance: attack the Qin collectively, defend against the Qin collectively, or negotiate a surrender collectively. The core conflict revolves around how to apply one or more of the philosophies to the real political problem of Qin expansion.