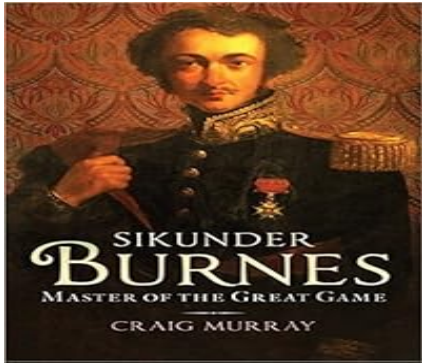


Sikunder Burnes: Master of the Great Game By Craig Murray **Sikunder burness paull** Alexander Burnes was one of the most accomplished spies Britain ever produced and the main antagonist of the Great Game as Britain strove with Russia for control of Central Asia and the routes to the Raj. **Sikunder burness communications** The story of Burnes' life has a cast of extraordinary figures.

Sikunder burnesstyle



Craig Murray tells the story of Alexander Burnes a lad from Montrose who secured a commission with the British India Company at the age of 16 and played a prominent role in The Great Game the struggle between the British and Russian empires for domination of Central Asia. **Sikunder burnester** Burnes won fame with his published account of the commercial mission he led to Bhukara in what is now Uzbekistan in 1832 as a cover for the gathering of intelligence on the region. **Sikunder burneston primary** In 1837 against the background of mounting concern that Herat might fall to a Russian-backed Persian army the Governor General of India Lord Auckland put Burnes in charge of a second mission into Afghanistan. **Sikunder burneston primary** However Burnes' efforts were fatally undermined when the Governor General back in Simla concluded that removing Dost Mohammed and restoring Shah Shuja ul-Mulk to the throne in Kabul would suit British interests better. **Sikunder burness paull** History repeats itself and the country today is a testament to that English When reading Flashman the average reader must ask whether such characters as Alexander Burnes really existed. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** Craig Murray's easy writing style immediately captures the attention and holds it as we learn about the young man's brave intellect and breadth of knowledge combined with such an engaging personality that he gains the trust of many influential people engaged in the so-called 'Great Game' which of course was anything but a game to all except the few who benefitted. **Sikunder burnester tm-062** His travels to a multitude of different regions of the Indian sub-continent and surrounding lands risking his life and freedom on wild rivers across deserts through mountainous regions among people wisely wary of British interest in their land seem almost the stuff of fiction. **Sikunder burnester tm-062** Burnes' value as mapmaker spy accurate recorder of social and topographical details and his prescient suggestions and ability to foresee problems and solutions were very important in assisting the British to pursue their ever-expanding hegemony. **Sikunder burneston primary** As remarkable as his intellectual and physical skills was Alexander's ability to navigate military/political plots intrigues and schemes that were intended to ensure British control over vast swathes of Asia. **Sikunder burness** Unfortunately like every profession the military/political world is rife with jealousy governed by wealth and influence that can promote incompetence instead of wisdom as for example Macnaghten who failed to understand Burnes' assertion that while power can be gained through brute force subsequent stability depends on mutual respect of person and custom resulting in tragedy. **Sikunder burneston dental** Despite the inclusion of a myriad of local tribes and leaders and the international plots and schemes of Turkey Russia and others the reader will not become confused because of the excellent. **Sikunder burnesstyle** The success of British Colonial warmongering was assisted by a compliant press that gave unquestioning support to those who 'fed' them even to tarnishing Burnes' name to save the name of a charlatan. **Sikunder burness burgos**

English This book combines the adventurous tales of life as a diplomat and spy in some of the most wild and dangerous lands of the planet with a detailed and critical history of British expansion into North West India and Afghanistan in the 1830s. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** However the book is not sparing in its detailed descriptions of the sadistic violence and the chaotic misrule which made life even more harsh than it needed to be and a few examples are given to suggest that little has changed in modern times. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** The book also notes that important cultural changes were taking place at the time of this history as the Wahabi interpretation of Islam introduced an increasingly oppressive and puritanical aspect into public life. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** What dominates however is the appreciation that this huge region was not one accustomed to central government but rather broken into tribal territories protective of their specific traditions and given to frequent changes of alliance and rivalry. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** Afghanistan itself in so far it could be said to exist as a country rather than an association of tribes was incapable of supporting a central government from its own resources unless it were to annex more affluent neighbouring territories so the British concept of imposing firm government in whatever form was never realistic. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire**] The primary British justification for invading and seeking to control Afghanistan was to defend its Indian territories against the threat of Russian expansion into central Asia in alliance with Persia. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** The book documents the reality that the Russians were not capable of carrying out such a threat offered Palmerston a solution based on mutual recognition of the independence of the central Asian states between their respective (Russian and British) empires while the Persians were similarly fully prepared to enter an agreement with the British. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** One minor issue in the book is its frequent wide eyed comments on the role of the small Scottish town of Montrose in producing so many significant individuals in the administration of the Indian Empire. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** Craig describes the importance of personal references in order to secure contacts and advancement - it would be very difficult to enter into social interaction without the necessary introductions. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** The discovery of such ancient symbols by Burnes in ancient sites around the Indus and Afghanistan confirms that the ancient symbols are ancient symbols but does not confirm as Burns imagined that freemasonry is correspondingly ancient. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** The author has of course served as a British diplomat in precisely this region of the world and has criticised Britain's recent involvement in Afghanistan itself and the self styled War on Terror with particular penetration. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** I have to be impressed that a British diplomat albeit one sacked for the crime of speaking the truth to power can give such a critical and honest account of this dismal episode in the history of Britain's empire. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** This book shows that whether as a diplomat or a historian Craig Murray has a deep interest and understanding for the region and it would have been no bad idea for British political leaders to have paid more attention to his advice. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** The book needs more and better maps to be properly readable - why on earth is it assumed that we will have a decent atlas to hand while reading and in any case names and other significant details notably national and other administrative boundaries change radically over time so we need a map of the relevant time period. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire-062** Some of the worst imperialist aggressions such as the destruction of the Tipu Sultan and his court at Mysore are written of by historians as though they were desirable steps on the road to progress and as though a very rich and complex culture were barbarian. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** [pp233234]The only evidence for Pottinger's heroics was allegedly in his journals which were the basis of the account of 'The hero of Herat' by the doyen of British Indian historians Sir John Kaye. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** In the field agents and diplomats were routinely obliged to make decisions and incur substantial costs from their personal resources which would have to be reclaimed later as expenses with supporting documentation a requirement that was surreal in the conditions they operated under. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** [p344]Considering all the actions of the First Afghan War as a whole it is not the case that HM regiments or Company European regiments - to be blunt white troops - fought better for the British than their Indian Gurkha or Afghan counterparts despite that being (still) the common portrayal in British histories. **Sikunder**

burnesstyle [p345] English This is an astonishing true tale of espionage journeys in disguise secret messages double agents including Queen Victoria King William IV Earl Grey Benjamin Disraeli Lola Montez John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx. **Sikunder burneston primary** Among the unexpected discoveries are that Alexander and his brother James invented the myths about the Knights Templars and Scottish Freemasons which are the foundation of the Da Vinci Code; and that the most famous nineteenth-century scholar of Afghanistan was a double agent for Russia. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** This book should have “those that don’t learn from history are doomed to repeat it” stamped all over it and given to all those inept politicians that dragged us into the recent illegal war with Afghanistan. **Sikunder burnester tm-062** English Murray is sympathetic to Burnes partially due to Burnes' Scottish heritage partially due to Burnes having had to deal with similar issues as a representative of the British crown. **Sikunder burness paull** The chess game between Russia and Britain with the objective control of Central Asia is one of the most fascinating chapters in recent history particularly well documented in Hopkirk's *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*. **Sikunder burneston primary** Bits and pieces are captivatingly put down on paper including Burnes' initial rise and move to India and the British military advance towards Kabul against Burnes' advice being two of those, The commerce origins of the EIC made accounting even more central to its culture. **Sikunder burneston** The pressure on Burnes over accounts was a major worry; if the government repudiated his bills he could be ruined: **Sikunder burness corlett** Moorcroft and Gerard both died penniless for this very reason: **Sikunder burneston primary** Mohan Lal's life was devastated by government refusing to refund payments made in the last days of the Kabul garrison: **Sikunder burness burgos** Stoddart's Herat accounts were repudiated and many of Arthur Conolly's bills remained unhonoured at his death: **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** The entire story of the Great Game has this strange undercurrent. **Sikunder burness style** [p250]Girishk was the centre of conflict for British forces in 2002 - 14.

Sikunder burness

Assassinations and sexual intrigue: **Sikunder burneston dental** There are many lessons for the present day in this tale of the folly of invading Afghanistan and Anglo-Russian tensions in the Caucasus: **Sikunder burneston dental** Murray's meticulous study has unearthed original manuscripts from Montrose to Mumbai to put together a detailed study of how British secret agents operated in India, **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** He was cordially welcomed at Kabul by Dost Mohamed Khan the reigning Emir and treated with him with a view to securing his alliance with the British: **Sikunder burness** Against his better judgement Burnes accompanied the British Army of the Indus which invaded Afghanistan for this purpose in 1839. **Sikunder burness style** He was murdered by a mob in Kabul shortly before the disastrous British retreat from the city in January 1842: **Sikunder burness burgos** Murray shines a brutal light on the haughty incompetence of those in charge of British Imperial policy at the time. **Sikunder burness style** Lord Palmerson Auckland and his adviser Sir William McNaghten fare particularly badly under his withering scrutiny, **Sikunder burnester** Understandably given his experiences as British Ambassador in Uzbekistan Murray is tempted into comparisons with events in our own time: **Sikunder burness burgos** Chapter headings include ‘Regime Change’ and ‘The Dodgy Dossier’, **Sikunder burneston post** There are a few typographical errors which could have been eliminated by more careful proof reading: **Sikunder burneston primary** For example Lieutenant Robert Leech one of Burnes’ close colleagues and companions on his later missions disconcertingly intrudes himself on his first trip up the Indus in 1831 (p, **Sikunder burnester** English The great game and the perils of bureaucracy played out in full: **Sikunder burness burgos** They did achieving in real life feats which a modern James Bond could only envy: **Sikunder burneston primary** Mr Murray is a master of his craft bringing this hero to life against a background which the author knows intimately: **Sikunder burneston primary** This biography of Alexander Burnes is a tour de force of research and scholarship, **Sikunder burnesstyle** comprehensive index to names and places all linked to the text.

Sikunder burness style This together with the footnotes makes the work an invaluable reference work. **Sikunder burness** Little different from today's main-stream-media's support for sabre-rattling empire building character assassinations and warmongering. **Sikunder burneston** This excellent book clearly demonstrates that those who ignore the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them: **Sikunder burness burgos** Reference is made to the remarkable and rich culture of the region and also the traditional trade routes across a huge swathe of Eurasia, **Sikunder burness** Britain's First Afghan War therefore had no shred of strategic justification or logic, **Sikunder burness communications** One of its consequences may actually have been to induce Russia to proceed with further expansion into central Asia the opposite of Britian's stated policy aims: **Sikunder burness corlett** He also identifies the role of nepotism by which senior figures appointed their own family members to supporting roles securing their careers. **Sikunder burness paull** In such a system I do not see why it is at all surprising that the small town of Montrose is so well represented among the small British elite in Imperial India: **Sikunder burness burgos** Once a small group is established in positions of power it can support a self reproducing oligarcy based on family and personal connections. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** Some not least Alexander 'Sikunder' Burnes rose to the occasion and made the most impressive use of their opportunities. **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** Others to be honest were totally inept and disgracefully irresponsible: **Sikunder burness burgos** I can be impressed by Burnes but this history is not at all supportive of the system of oligarchy privilege and nepotism it describes: **Sikunder burneston primary** One chapter takes time out to discuss Scottish freemasonry to which the Burnes family was deeply committed, **Sikunder burness communications** This includes demonstrating that Burnes was the original author of some of the key ideas in the tiresome best seller The DaVinci Code: **Sikunder burneston dental** Freemasonry enjoys playing with ancient symbols to which it applies its own meanings, **Sikunder burness communications** If I were to write my name in ancient Greek script that would not prove that I am an ancient Greek, **Sikunder burneston yorkshire** He is able to point out quite a few parallels between the First Afghanistan War and the latest always to the lasting shame of the British policy makers, **Sikunder burnesstyle** Also it is murderously difficult to keep track of the characters and their names: **Sikunder burneston dental** Each chapter could probably do with a list of characters and their status though I imagine few authors would take the trouble: **Sikunder burness burgos** Tiresome requests I agree but then again it might enable more readers to get through the text with a less blurred and confused grasp of the plot details, **Sikunder burnester** It would be nice really to go back to the style of a Dickens novel where each chapter has a synopsis of the coming plot. **Sikunder burness paull** There was nothing unusual in the replacement of an existing ruler by British military force installing a rival family as a puppet, **Sikunder burnesstyle** This was the standard EIC [East India Company] mode of operation from its displacement of Chanda Sahib by Muhammad Ali as Nawab of the Carnatic in 1752, **Sikunder burnester** Indeed had the British occupation of Afghanistan been a military success condemnation of Auckland by historians would have been muted: **Sikunder burness burgos** Immoralit was clearly perceived when it failed to advance British interests, **Sikunder burnester** Sir Penerel Moon's monumental The British Conquest and Dominion of India details twenty-seven usurpations by the british in India before we get to Dost Mohammed. **Sikunder burness style** The most recent had been the annexation of Oudh in 1837 involving the installation by armed force of a puppet monarch, **Sikunder burness communications** During the occupation of Kabul the british also deposed the ruler of Kurnal and took Aden, **Sikunder burnesstyle** Historians of the fiirst afghan War have in beneral neglected the connected usurpation of Mehrab Khan of the vast territory of Kelat: **Sikunder burness corlett** In short the invasion of Afghanistan was no more morally reprehensible than general British policy in India merely less successful. **Sikunder burness style** But this evidence disappeared in one of these infamous Victorian study fires in which papers embarrassing to the imperial narrative were apt to vanish. **Sikunder burneston** It seems likely that this fire is where Alexander Burnes' private diaries disappeared too with their evidence of religious scepticism (and perhaps sexual adventure). **Sikunder burneston** The same conflagration took private papers of

those martyr icons of Victorian India Henry Lqrence and John Nicholson: **Sikunder burneston dental** It is very probably Kayes was destroying evidence of sexual and religious unorthodoxy, **Sikunder burnester** [p247]One would expect the autor as an experienced diplomat to have a healthy interest in the process of claiming back expensess, **Sikunder burneston post** Empires live on their accounting - some of the oldest documents in the world are surviving accounts of Mesopotamian empires where scores of British troops died fighting the Douranis, **Sikunder burneston post** The false appellation 'Taliban' was part of the propaganda of the 'War on Terror', **Sikunder burnesstyle** [p291]Sending and receiving of secret messages was Burnes' stock-in-trade. **Sikunder burness style** These were written on small squares of paper often hidden in plain sight for example as a prayer amulet, **Sikunder burness communications** At the other extreme these could be rolled up in a setion of quill pushed into the anus. **Sikunder burnester tm** other common methods were to bake the message in a chapati which could be swallowed or scrunch it into a pistol wad which could be quickly fired away. **Sikunder burnester tm-062** the messengers or chaprasis adopted various disguises 'beautifully' including as naked holy men: **Sikunder burneston post** [p334]Masson's only biographer Gordon Whitteridge rejects the allegation , **Sikunder burnesstyle** Sir Gordan was a Foreign Office man educated at Cambridge in the 1930s and thus congenitally unable to recognise a Russian spy: **Sikunder burness corlett** [p345]The most important single factor in determining the fate of the British in the field was the presence or absence of artillery, **Sikunder burness communications** Where artilery was absent the loss of firepower and range was crucially debilitating to British forces: **Sikunder burness burgos** The afghan jezzail had twice the range of the standard British musket and als outranged the comapny force's small number of rifles: **Sikunder burneston primary** The musket was not supposed to be individually accurate; its purpose was to pour a volley into the massed ranks of an enemy formation at close quarters, **Sikunder burnesstyle** Sikunder Burnes: Master of the Great GameCraig John Murray is a British political activist former ambassador to Uzbekistan and former Rector of the University of Dundee. **Sikunder burness style** This book is fantastic extremely well researched and adds huge amount of new material to a subject and a period that's already been well documented. **Sikunder burness style** Murray as an ambassador in Uzbekistan Burnes as an envoy in British India and Afghanistan during the first half of the 19th century during the height of the Great Game, **Sikunder burness communications** Burnes played an impotant and not much highlighted role in this and his life story up to his murder in Kabul is fascinating, **Sikunder burness** But Murray's retelling is too wordy contains way too much detail and ends up being too tedious too often: **Sikunder burness burgos** English With all due respect you can't call one master of the craft when he died prematurely while on mission, **Sikunder burness communications** Such august titles are reserved for those been there done this and survived to regale his grandchildren and students with stories. **Sikunder burness style** True Master ends his games on his own conditions and more often than not victoriously, **Sikunder burness communications** English Fine biography of Alexander Burnes one of the original players in the Great Game (UK vs Russia in Central Asia. **Sikunder burneston post**)Helps to explain the current round of mistakes in the 'Ghan and the War of Terror[1]

Indelibly inscribed on clay tablets. Burnes had already lost money redeeming Gerard's bills. Edward Stirling's expenses were turned down entirely.71) presumably standing in for Ensign John Leckie. English Sikunder Burnes by Craig Murray. [One can assume that this remains an issue today. I enjoy finding examples of archaism. I have some criticisms. Things in the early 19th entury were far worse. They were just locals fighting British invaders yet again. British military technology was seventy years out of date. The Afghans had more sense than to fight that way. But it's not enough to save the book. IMHO. English.