

Mongolian Independence and the British: The Parallel Negotiation

Written by Matteo Miele

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MATTEO MIELE, AUG 19 2022

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On July 3, 1914, the British and Tibetans signed the Simla Convention.^[1] Much has been written about this document, which is so important for East and South Asia.^[2] The agreement recognized Chinese suzerainty over Outer Tibet, but also the full autonomy for internal matters – including the choice of the dalai lama – of the Tibetan government in Lhasa. Peking could not transform Outer Tibet into a province of the Republic and at the same time the British undertook not to annex the country to their dominions. The Chinese, as is known, refused to sign the Convention.

Previous pages have discussed the weight of Mongol independence on the British approach to the Tibetan question. At this point, Russian interventions in Mongolia had authorized the idea of a British action in Tibet. Furthermore, having secured a solid bond with Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan strengthened a very long stretch of the northern border of the Raj. Further west, Ladakh, another important Himalayan region, had lost its independence in 1842 and had come under the control of Golab Sīng who, in 1846, with the protection of the British, ascended the throne of Kashmir.^[3]

Alongside the talks in Simla, the Foreign Office was carrying out another negotiation. To reach any lasting solution on Tibet, it was even more important for the British to persuade Russia to modify what had been established seven years earlier in Saint Petersburg. This result, however, had to be achieved without losing the positions acquired in other areas of Asia. In the preceding pages, I have introduced the guideline for the political and diplomatic action of the Foreign Office in this parallel negotiation between Edward Grey, represented by Buchanan, and Sazonov. In essence, it was necessary to try to convince the Russian foreign minister of British legitimacy to ask for a revision of the pacts on the basis of the changed condition in Outer Mongolia after independence and the end of the Manchu dynasty. This chapter will therefore be divided into reconstructing and analyzing this negotiation.

The first months of 1914

At the beginning of 1914 it was now time to clarify the matter with the Russians. The definition of the status of Tibet in Simla was now taking shape – albeit without the Chinese signature at the end – and it was necessary for the British to expressly define the changes that occurred in High Asia after the Chinese Revolution. It was to be communicated to the Russians that the British, in Simla, were about to propose to their counterparts the creation of two regions: Outer Tibet and Inner Tibet.^[4]

Not being able to submit to the Russian government a definitive proposal on the Mongolian question yet – because he was engaged, as seen, in defining the topic first with the India Office – Edward Grey was, however, interested in anticipating the new structure of interests and balances to his counterpart Sazonov through Buchanan:

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the alteration in the status of Mongolia which has resulted from the recent action of the Russian Government has had an indirect but important effect on the position of Thibet.^[5]

In addition to this, Article 3 of the Sino-Russian Agreement of 1913, which guaranteed Mongolia self-government on internal matters, also by regulating commercial and industrial matters, directly touched British commercial interests.^[6]

As explained above, however, the British were in the most uncomfortable position in terms of negotiations with Russia regarding Tibet, since the 1907 Convention did not mention Mongolia. For the Russian foreign minister, Saint Petersburg's aid to Urga was not in violation of any agreement.^[7] Ambassador Buchanan wrote to Grey about his conversation with Sazonov on January 31, 1914:

'I spoke yesterday as instructed, and in course of friendly conversation Minister for Foreign Affairs virtually admitted our right to ask for open door, but contended that in helping Mongolians Russia had acted within her rights, and had done nothing to change situation as regards Thibet'.^[8]

Buchanan, in conversation with Sazonov, had explained to the minister that the Russian 'veiled protectorate' over Mongolia had changed the balance in Asia 'and, as above changes might react on Thibet, it was natural we should wish to safeguard our interests there'.^[9] For Sazonov, however, Russia did not have any protectorate over Mongolia, but he would still analyze Grey's proposal 'in friendly spirit', despite fearing the negative judgment of Russian public opinion 'were he gratuitously to renounce all rights' deriving from the 1907 agreement.^[10] The Russian minister was therefore willing to negotiate for a redefinition of the status of Tibet, but the changed condition in Mongolia could not be sufficient to undermine the decisions of seven years earlier:

[Sazonov] trusted that Mongolia would not be quoted as a reason for asking for concessions in Thibet, as the two questions had nothing to do with each other, and ought not to be mentioned in the same breath.^[11]

For the Russian minister, the situation in Mongolia was comparable to the extent of British influence in South Africa:

M. Sazonof interposed by protesting against my use of the term " protectorate " and by remarking that Russia might as well ask for compensation in the event of our extending our sphere of influence in South Africa.^[12]

It was obviously an ineffective example to defend the Russian position and the terms of the 1907 agreement. Buchanan rightly reminded Sazonov of the religious ties between the two High Asian countries and furthermore the Tibetan-Mongol treaty of 1913 was clear proof of a future collaboration:

I replied that such a contention was very far-fetched. The Thibetans and Mongols were connected by spiritual ties; and though the treaty signed by M. Dorjief might be of no political importance for the moment, it was symptomatic of a tendency towards closer relations in the future.^[13]

As for economic issues, according to Sazonov commercial interest in Mongolia was not an issue for the British: the country was too poor to establish serious trade.^[14] Buchanan replied 'that this did not tally with the information which we had received from one or two British firms, who were already doing a considerable business with the Mongols'.^[15] Faced with Sazonov's firmness, however, the British ambassador supported the position of the Foreign Office, which had to be pursued in order to obtain, through the Mongolian case, a revision of the Anglo-Russian agreement:

I said that I could not share this view, and reminded him that Russia herself had recognised special interests which we had for geographical reasons in Thibet.

It will be difficult to induce Minister for Foreign Affairs to admit connection between the two questions, but I propose to continue to argue that our recognition of Russia's privileged position in Mongolia entitles us to expect consideration in Thibet.^[16]

It is reasonable to think that commercial interests in Mongolia were just another pretext for the British. In this context,

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they did not have to appeal to the Tibetan-Mongol historical and religious ties and try to translate them not only in geopolitical terms, but also in legal and diplomatic language. Did the new status of Outer Mongolia change the British trade rights and privileges? Although extremely limited, the Mongolian market could be another card in British hands. For this reason, Sazonov tried to underestimate the economic potential of the country, while Buchanan evidently had to exalt it. Even not having a British consul in Urga certainly had a certain weight in the articulation of the primitive commercial relationship between British and Mongolian companies, as demonstrated by a letter from Urga written by Mamen, a Norwegian,^[17] head of British-American Tobacco Company in the Mongolian capital.^[18] In February 1913, he complained to the director of his company about the 10% tax on the sale price of wine and cigarettes, instead of the 5%, as for other goods.^[19] Russian goods coming from Russia – but not from China – were not subject to any tax by the Mongolian authorities: '[t]his is of course much better than it was formerly, when Russians could import all the goods they wanted from China without any kind of duty'.^[20] However, it was not easy for Mamen to negotiate alone without even the presence of a British or American consul:

Many times I have been asked if it was possible to get a British or American consul to Urga. They [*the Mongols*] have asked me if I would write to the British Legation and invite a consul ; they have promised that Britishers and Americans should get better conditions than anybody else if they sent their consuls or agents here ; they have even gone so far as to ask if a consul would come here when they brought me into trouble. To all this I hardly answer at all, and from me this news does not go further than this letter ; but personally I wish that somebody would come and talk over matters with the Mongols. I learn that a German consul is coming here soon and, so far as I know, there are no German firms in Mongolia, and I cannot see why nothing should be done for us after we have been here more than two years.^[21]

It was true – even the Germans were thinking of sending a career consul to Urga, but ignoring the autonomy of Outer Mongolia, which Berlin still considered part of China.^[22]

It was important to Grey to have formal recognition of Sazonov's acknowledgment of British commercial reasons before negotiating a trade deal directly with the Mongolian authorities.^[23] In the event that the Russian minister had again discussed the Tibetan issue with Buchanan, the ambassador should report that London was not demanding any compensation in Tibet for what Russia had obtained in Mongolia.^[24] At the same time, however, it was not possible to ignore the changes that had resulted from the new situation:

the changes which have recently taken place in regard to the status of Outer Mongolia have materially altered the general situation in those regions, and have affected, in a measure, the relations between Thibet and her neighbours.^[25]

The main commercial problem facing the British was that, to get to Mongolia, British goods had to pass through China – while the Russians could enter from the northern border – and therefore were already charged with a 7.5% tax from the Chinese authorities; in case of further taxes required by the Mongolian government, the final price of the British products would have lost any chance of competing with the Russian ones.^[26] To overcome this problem, the Board of Trade had proposed, in addition to the trade agreement with Mongolia to guarantee the British the status of most favored nation,^[27] another agreement with the Chinese authorities, already suggested by Alston, for the refund of taxes on the import of goods sent to Mongolia and which were transiting through China.^[28] On March 3, however, the Russian foreign minister explained to Buchanan that his country's goods enjoyed a 'prescriptive right to free entry into Mongolia' and therefore no taxes could be imposed on Russian products.^[29] They could enter Mongolia without customs duties, but this did not mean, however, according to the British ambassador, that they were exempt from taxes on foreign products within the country.^[30] Buchanan told Sazonov openly that Russia, in Mongolia, had broken 'the principle of Chinese integrity of which she had been a guaranteeing Power'.^[31] Sazonov replied, however, fully recognizing the founding principle of Mongol independence, namely the previous link with the dynasty and not with China itself:

M. Sazanof, in reply, argued that Mongolia had never been an integral part of China but a vassal State of the Manchu dynasty ; and the fall of that dynasty had released it from the ties that bound it to China.^[32]

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The tsar's foreign minister also reiterated the issue of Mongolian poverty and the resulting commercial inconsistency.^[33] So, Buchanan asked about the attempt to exclude the British from such a poor trade.^[34] The Foreign Office, through Buchanan, was linking the commercial issue to the political aspects of the affair. If the country was so poor, it was logical to think that Russia was interested in political control over the region and, therefore, in a change in the equilibrium in High Asia, although Sazonov continued to deny the connection between the Tibetan and the Mongolian questions, if not limited to the fact that both Lhasa and Urga had to defend themselves from China.^[35] In any case, Sazonov was ready to recognize British interests, but he necessarily had to ask, to avoid internal criticism, for compensation, which he was not yet able to define.^[36] In exchange, the British had to obtain two things from the Russians: first, the cancellation of Article 4 of the 1907 agreement, which prevented the possibility of asking for concessions in Tibet.^[37] So formally, according to the India Office, Russia could also benefit from the new arrangement.^[38] Then it was important for London to have the recognition of the right of the British trade agent in Rgyal-rtse to go to Lhasa.^[39] This was probably the hardest point for Sazonov to accept. Buchanan had proposed to Grey to raise the level of British requests, leaving more space to deal with the Russian minister.^[40] As a result, the India Office foreshadowed Grey the possibility of not simply asking for recognition of the agent's right in Rgyal-rtse to visit Lhasa, but even asking for a permanent British representative in the Tibetan capital.^[41] However, not yet able to predict the Russian counter-offer, according to the India Office there was a certain risk that the Russians would ask for exactly the same thing, namely their own permanent representative in Lhasa, and therefore

a somewhat delicate situation would arise, and it might be difficult to produce an alternative proposal, on the lines of the actual requirements of His Majesty's Government, without appearing unduly suspicious of Russian intentions.^[42]

For Crewe-Milnes, another option was to present to the Russians the draft of Article 5 of the agreement under discussion in Simla:

The Governments of China and Thibet engage that they will not enter into any negotiations or agreements regarding Thibet with one another, or with any other Power, excepting such negotiations and agreements between Great Britain and Thibet as are provided for by the convention of the 17th September, 1904, between Great Britain and Thibet and the Convention of the 27th April, 1906 between Great Britain and China.^[43]

The conversations between Buchanan and Sazonov in the spring of 1914: 'a matter of hard bargaining'

The negotiations in Simla were about to end and therefore it became necessary to reach an agreement with Russia as soon as possible. Before the end of April an agreement with the Tibetans and Chinese seemed to have been found and Henry McMahon,^[44] from Simla, suggested signing the text anyway and then waiting for the Russian consent in the space of time before ratification.^[45] Negotiations with the Chinese representative had been complex, but in the end McMahon was able to obtain his consent to sign the agreement:

The final stages of negotiation have been marked throughout by most vigorous resistance maintained by Chinese delegate to any final settlement : it was only with utmost difficulty that his consent to initial the convention was secured to-day.^[46]

Knowing the results today, the British representative must be recognized for particular political wisdom in proposing to anticipate the signature: '[t]herefore it may be well to advance the date of signature in order to avoid possible further obstruction by Chinese'.^[47] Moreover, the blon-chen Bshad-sgras, the Tibetan delegate, had no desire to wait for the Indian summer to cross the border and return to his country.^[48] Another issue to push McMahon to ask to get to the signing immediately was to maintain secrecy, which was put at risk by further delays.^[49] However, on April 29, the Government of India sent a communication to the India Office in London: in the text McMahon explained that the Chinese Government had no intention of authorizing its delegate to sign the agreement, disavowing the commitment that Chen had given the British and Tibetan representatives, while allowing the negotiations to continue.^[50] For the secretary of state for India, Crewe-Milnes, however, it was more important to reach an agreement with Russia before signing in Simla:

The Marquess of Crewe would suggest [*to the Foreign Office*] that steps should now be taken, with as little delay as

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possible, to obtain the assent of the Russian Government to the convention in its final form. Until that assent has been obtained, his Lordship understands that it is not considered desirable that the actual signature of the convention should take place.^[51]

On May 4, therefore, Grey asked Buchanan to deliver to Sazonov a copy of the draft of the tripartite convention,

together with its accompanying maps, and also copies of the Trade Regulations and of an Indo-Thibet Boundary Agreement which have been separately negotiated and initialled by the British and Thibetan plenipotentiaries.^[52]

According to Grey, the Simla Convention interfered 'as little as possible' with the other previous agreements 'and above all with the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907', but was 'a reasonable compromise between the extravagant claims put forward by the Chinese and Thibetan Governments, provide adequate guarantees of a permanent settlement'.^[53]

According to the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs, the problems with Russia were only those relating to financial and industrial concessions to Great Britain (guaranteed by the cancellation, in Article 6 of the Tripartite Agreement, of Article 3 of the Anglo-Chinese Convention 1906) and the visits to Lhasa by the British trade agent.^[54] At the same time, however, Grey decided to explain in detail the other points of the agreement to Buchanan in order to respond to any Russian criticism.^[55] Under the agreements of 1906 and 1907, only China possessed the monopoly of concessions in Tibet, 'a monopoly which has hitherto been little, if at all, exercised'.^[56] However, given the recent political developments, it was now necessary to break that monopoly, opening the economy of Tibet to other countries, while still guaranteeing the possibility for China to obtain concessions.^[57] If the Simla Convention had not been accompanied by the cancellation of Article 4 of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, only Great Britain and Russia would have been excluded, paradoxically, from the possibility of obtaining concessions from the Tibetan government.^[58] As for the British trade agent, Buchanan had to explain to Sazonov that visits to Lhasa would only occur

when absolutely necessary, and that permission for him to do so is only sought on grounds of convenience, as it has been found in practice that the right of direct communication on commercial matters with the Thibetan authorities given to His Majesty's Government by article 2 of the Anglo-Russian Convention can only be carried out successfully if matters are from time to time discussed in person with higher officials than those at Gyantse.^[59]

The difficulty in communicating with Tibetans, Grey recalled, was 'one of the principal causes of the events' that had led the British to organize the Younghusband Expedition ten years earlier.^[60] Furthermore, given the enormous divergences between Chinese and Tibetan claims, the only possible solution, according to Grey, was the division of Tibet, basically according to a scheme that followed the division of Mongolia: Outer Tibet, controlled by the Tibetans, and Inner Tibet, controlled by the Chinese.^[61]

Among other critical points was the recognition, in Article 10 of the draft Convention, of British mediation in the event of future differences between Chinese and Tibetans. Indeed, this took the form of a sort of British pre-eminence because Sino-Tibetan relations, from then on, would have to be established on the basis of the Simla Agreement.^[62] It was a difficult issue: on the one hand, the agreement recognized Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, but still placed the British above it, as guarantors and interpreters of the agreement. Understanding the risk of Russian opposition, Grey was ready to replace that privilege with a more acceptable recognition of the English version of the agreement as the authoritative source in case of disputes.^[63]

The Russians could also object to the definition of the border between India and Tibet.^[64] By 1914, in fact, the British, through the McMahon Line, assigned to the Raj a large region north of Assam and east of Bhutan which largely corresponds to the current Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh and which the Chinese still claim today as part of the Tibet Autonomous Region.^[65] The British, however, based the border line separating the area inhabited by Tibetans (to the north and therefore within Outer Tibet) from the region inhabited by various semi-independent tribal groups ('the Miris, Abors, Daphlas, and the other tribes') that fell within the sphere of influence of the United Kingdom.^[66] Buchanan had to explain, in the remote case of Russian requests for clarification, that the British had had to wait for a

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long 'survey work' that had only recently occurred.^[67]

Finally, the last point on which to prepare a possible answer concerned the new Trade Regulations between Tibet and Great Britain.^[68] For the British government, the new regulations did not affect Russia, but in case of objections, the British ambassador should explain to Sazonov that it was only 'a necessary adjustment' of the Trade Regulations of 1908 (authorized by Article 2 of the section relating to Tibet of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907) due to the changed conditions resulting from the new agreements.^[69] Furthermore, Grey wrote in his letter to Buchanan:

it is of the greatest importance that the assent of the Russian Government to these proposals should be received as soon as possible, as it will be necessary that the Chinese and Thibetan delegates should remain in India until signature can take place, and, apart from the injury to his health which is feared by the Thibetan plenipotentiary as a result of a prolonged sojourn in India during the hot weather, it is most desirable to avoid a long delay between initialling and signature which will enable the Chinese Government to raise objections and difficulties which may prove fatal to the successful conclusion of these lengthy negotiations.^[70]

However, in those days, Sazonov was in Crimea, in Livadiya, to meet the Ottoman representatives and he was not expected to return for several days.^[71] Meanwhile Buchanan had outlined the content of Grey's explanations in a note he had read to Anatoliy Neratov, assistant minister for foreign affairs, on May 8, also summarizing his previous meetings with the minister.^[72] Buchanan had explained to Neratov – who obviously had to wait for the minister to return to Saint Petersburg to give an answer to the ambassador – that the definition of the Indo-Tibetan border, the division of Tibet into two areas and the new Trade Regulations had no effect on Russia and furthermore that the British had reduced their demands to a minimum, and consequently the demand for Russian counter-concessions was not necessary, trusting 'that the Imperial Government would give an unconditional consent to our proposals, which in no way affected any Russian interest'.^[73] Then, Buchanan told Neratov that his government needed a British agent in Lhasa precisely to avoid a new expedition.^[74] 'Chinese intrigues' had to be prevented and also the Japanese were showing some interest on the Land of Snows.^[75]

Back in the capital on May 16, Sazonov met with Buchanan the same day.^[76] According to the Russian minister, Article 8 of the agreement – concerning the British agent in Lhasa – and in particular the formulation of Article 10 – which, as we have seen, had to place the British as mediators between Chinese and Tibetans in the event of disputes over the agreement – essentially meant the abolition of what was established on Tibet in 1907 and the establishment of the British protectorate over Lhasa.^[77] Sazonov reiterated what he had already explained to Buchanan previously, thus not changing the position: the tsar's minister was not interested in Tibet ('He said that he personally did not care what we did with Thibet'), but at the same time he could not renounce a compensation for Russia, 'a *quid pro quo* that would satisfy public opinion'.^[78] Otherwise Sazonov feared being accused by the Nationalists 'of being the dupe of England, just as he had been accused of having been duped by Germany at Potsdam',^[79] where, in 1910, an agreement was reached between the Russians and the Germans about their respective interests in Persia.^[80]

According to Sazonov, Article 10 of the Simla Convention made the British 'the arbiter of Thibet's destinies' and also Russia could have asked for the same right provided for the British agent in Article 8 'though she would not use it'.^[81] In reply Buchanan explained that the British had always acted as mediators between Peking and Lhasa and that therefore 'the rôle of arbitrator naturally devolved on' London.^[82] After all, as we have seen, the Russians too had become mediators between the Chinese and the Mongols. Furthermore, according to Buchanan, unlike the United Kingdom, Russia had no special interests in Tibet to send an agent to Lhasa.^[83] Knowing that Grey had considered the option of changing the Article 10, Buchanan had opened up the possibility of looking for 'another formula', without, however, explaining immediately the alternative that had been envisioned by the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs.^[84]

Sazonov explained to Buchanan that Russia's economic interests in Afghanistan were greater than the British interests in Tibet and therefore, in order to obtain his consent, he requested the sending of Russian agents to the emirate, if not to Kabul:

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Minister for Foreign Affairs then said that Russia had economic interests of a far more important kind in Afghanistan than we had in Thibet, and that if he consented to our proposals we must allow her to send agents into Afghanistan, though not to Cabul, to discuss with the authorities questions which concerned her closely, such as irrigation, &c. He had repeatedly appealed to our good offices in the hope of getting these questions settled, but without success.^[85]

As mentioned above, a demand on Afghanistan was the Foreign Office's first fear that had slowed down the dialogue with Russia on the redefinition of the 1907 Agreement.^[86] As the Foreign Office had written to the India Office on March 17, 1913:

It must be remembered, however, that any proposal made to the Russian Government to alter the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 as regards any one of the subjects dealt with by it may precipitate a proposal from the Russian Government to revise the convention about Afghanistan, on the ground that the Ameer has never recognised it and that some of its provisions are not operating.^[87]

A year and two months later, Buchanan was confronted with Sazonov's claims on Afghanistan. Obviously the ambassador explained to the minister that such a request, would have involved a long negotiation, 'indefinitely' postponing the signing of the tripartite agreement in Simla.^[88] Sazonov replied that, having waited weeks for the details of the requests, the British could not expect to get an answer within a day.^[89] However, he was ready to receive suggestions about other counter-concessions.^[90] Buchanan therefore reiterated the basic line: British actions sprang from what had happened in Mongolia in the past years.^[91] According to Buchanan, it was Russia who had established a protectorate on Urga, not the British on Lhasa.^[92] In Mongolia, Russia

controlled the administration, and without her consent Mongolia could not conclude treaties with foreign countries nor even accord us commercial [? privilege]^[93] we were entitled to by our treaty with China.^[94]

According to the diplomat, the first consequence of the new political order of Mongolia was precisely the Tibetan-Mongol treaty: 'The closest relations had been established between them, and Russian rifles were being imported into Thibet through Mongolia'.^[95]

Sazonov, evidently concerned about the reaction of the Nationalists in the event of a blatant failure to deny British demands, was willing to accept all the proposals, but this was not to be made public and advised not to mention them in the convention.^[96] Russia would secretly assure the British while the latter should allow the occasional dispatch of a native agent to Herāt.^[97] Buchanan was 'greatly disappointed': he reminded Sazonov that he had repeatedly given his support to the Russian 'views when I considered them well founded'.^[98] Buchanan realized that Sazonov was turning the issue into 'a matter of hard bargaining'.^[99] At that point, the diplomat was forced to put on the table the case of Persia, the first pillar of the 1907 Agreement, denouncing the presence of twelve thousand Russian soldiers in the country and the buying of land in Āzerbāijān to transform the region 'into a Russian possession'.^[100] Sazonov replied that the soldiers were only half as many as the ambassador said and that Saint Petersburg was not intervening in the central administration of the country.^[101] For Buchanan, however, those soldiers in Persia meant 'indefinite military occupation'.^[102] In that way, the Russian Empire 'violated the principle of Persian integrity, which was the basis of our understanding', but for these 'slight modifications' to the 1907 agreement, the British had to face Russian 'counter-proposals that would cause us the greatest embarrassment'.^[103] The British ambassador, however, understood Sazonov's concerns and the latter's need to achieve something politically relevant.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is evidently so afraid of the criticisms of his colleagues that he wants to save his face by getting something which he can represent as a counter-concession. I am not aware whether there is anything which we can offer that will convey the impression desired without costing us too much.^[104]

At that point, according to Buchanan, asking about a permanent British representative to Lhasa, instead of simple occasional visits, was perhaps better: the Russian foreign minister 'seems to draw no distinction between our maximum and minimum demands'.^[105] According to Buchanan, '[w]e can get over his [Sazonov's] objections to article 10 by substituting proposed alternative article'.^[106] Furthermore, London would not veto Russian requests for concessions in Tibet.^[107] Regarding Article 8, according to the ambassador, the British government had to be

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committed not to let it enter into force before an agreement with Russia.^[108]

Two days later, on May 18, Buchanan met Sazonov again.^[109] The ambassador wrote to Grey that he had found the Russian minister 'in a more friendly spirit'.^[110] Sazonov had explained to him once more that he was in difficulty, asking once more for the secrecy of the agreement and again proposing the question of sending a Russian agent to Herāt, because contacts between the border authorities were not sufficient.^[111] Saint Petersburg wanted to deal directly with the Afghan authorities on issues related to economic interests, and water supplies, and also avoid the possibility of railways in the north of the country without the consent of Russia.^[112] Buchanan, however, reiterated the British refusal.^[113] Given the demonstrated lack of propensity of the Afghans to negotiate, the British feared the killing of the Russian agent, with a consequent punitive expedition.^[114] Buchanan had explained to Sazonov that Britain had tried to secure Russian interests in water supplies, but under the 1907 Agreement, peaceful diplomacy was the only way to exert influence over Afghanistan:

We had done all that we could to help Russia in the question of the water supply, but his Excellency must remember that, by the terms of the Anglo-Russian Agreement, we could only exercise our influence in Afghanistan in a pacific sense.^[115]

However, the ambassador knew very well the importance that that Central Asian country continued to play for Russia:

Though his Excellency dropped the question of Afghanistan for the moment, it is one which His Majesty's Government must be prepared to see reopened at any moment. Russia's standpoint with regard to it is very similar to that of the European Powers as regards the application of the Monroe doctrine. If they may not themselves take measures to safeguard their threatened interests, they expect the United States to do so for them ; and if we are not able to procure satisfaction for Russia with regard to the irrigation and other kindred questions, she will one day insist on taking the matter into her own hands.^[116]

As for the articles of the treaty, Sazonov again challenged Article 10, considering it as London's protectorate over Lhasa, which Buchanan again tried to deny.^[117] Moreover, Sazonov also demanded the definition, within the tripartite convention, of greater guarantees for Russia: he wanted the same rights that the British were obtaining with Articles 6 and 8, including a Russian representative to Lhasa, as well as concessions in Tibet.^[118] The ambassador, therefore, explained that the British were not willing to veto Russia and were also willing to prepare an exchange of notes on the matter, despite Russia being able, at that time, to legally exclude Britain's trade from Outer Mongolia.^[119] For Sazonov, on the contrary, Russia had no veto power to exclude the British from Mongolia, but the ambassador recalled that London had to appeal to Russia to ask for the recognition of the open door principle even in Outer Mongolia.^[120] In any case, having Sazonov denied any right of veto, that statement could be enough, for the British, to open a channel of communication with the Mongols.^[121] Furthermore, according to the Russian foreign minister, the British could get their products to Mongolia through the Russo-Mongolian border, as the Germans already did, and not necessarily from China, but Saint Petersburg could not prevent the Mongols from taxing the products from other countries.^[122]

Buchanan admitted the historical hostility towards the Russians of the officials of the Raj, but because of the 'intrigues of Russian agents in the past, which had been one of the direct causes of the troubles which led to our intervention in 1903'.^[123] If now Russia, with no interest in Tibet, had demanded an agent in Lhasa, 'her motives might be misinterpreted in India and suspicions which it was so important to allay might be revived'.^[124] At that point in the conversation, Buchanan was obviously forced to propose the modification of Article 10 as Grey had proposed, to save Articles 6 and 8, finding, at least, Sazonov's consent.

I then said that if he would consent to articles 6 and 8 I would suggest that article 10 should be replaced by an article declaring English text of convention authoritative. Minister for Foreign Affairs at once said that such a substitution would be very agreeable to him.^[125]

Another problem was obviously the absence of Tibetans and Chinese in those discussions. Sazonov promised that

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the right of the Russian agent was merely symbolic: 'he made suggestion that if Russia's right to send an agent to Lhasa were inserted in article 8 he would give us secret assurance that he would never send one there'.^[126] Buchanan, however, explained to him that it was not easy to get the Chinese and Tibetans to accept that possibility.^[127] Another option suggested by Sazonov was an exchange of notes on Article 8:

Finally, he said that he might consent to leave article 8 as it stood were we to undertake, by an exchange of notes which could be published, not to put this article into force without a previous agreement with Russia. He might then give us a secret assurance that he would not withhold his consent from visits of our agent to Lhasa when the time came for his giving it.^[128]

For the Russians, however, it was also necessary that the British agent be a mere trade agent, without a political role.^[129] As for concessions, even there, for Sazonov, the question could be resolved with an exchange of notes: Great Britain and Russia had to undertake not to ask for concessions for their subjects, except with mutual consent.^[130] According to Buchanan, Sazonov was also ready to guarantee, always secretly, that he would not support or otherwise encourage Russian requests for concessions and that he would not oppose the British ones.^[131]

The next day, May 18, Buchanan telegraphed Sazonov's requests to Grey about the new shape of Articles 10, 6 and 8.^[132] Furthermore, the Russian foreign minister also asked the British Government to write a note to the Russian Government in which London pledged not to support the requests of British subjects for irrigation works, railways or preferential rights for commercial or industrial enterprises in Northern Afghanistan:

His Majesty's Government engage not to support any demand on the part of British subjects for irrigation works, railways, or any preferential rights for commercial or industrial enterprises in Northern Afghanistan.^[133]

For Sazonov, the British were 'tearing up' the 1907 Agreement on Tibet, without any compensation for the Russians 'and the above proposals were his last word'.^[134] Buchanan confessed to Grey that he did not believe he could get anything better ('I fear that it is impossible for me to obtain better terms').^[135] If the Russian requests were not acceptable, then the British government should, according to Buchanan, find 'some counter-concession to offer to Russia outside Thibet', but it was necessary to hurry, because Sazonov had to leave the Russian capital for several weeks 'and he cannot telegraph proposed arrangement to the Emperor until he knows whether His Majesty's Government will accept it'.^[136] Buchanan knew that Neratov could sign the notes to be exchanged, but there was no point trying to discuss the issues with the assistant minister.^[137] Sazonov also said that he should have asked, with a note, 'to recognise more fully Russia's predominant interests' in northern Persia to avoid British protests over the activity of the Russian consuls in the country.^[138] Buchanan replied that the British had always recognized the Russian 'predominant interests' in the region, but London had to defend the principle of independence and integrity of Persia.^[139] However, Sazonov had no intention of including this point in the list of counter-concessions, but he would still prepare a note – which could, however, remain secret and did not require a response – to ask that the British agents in Persia conformed to the recognition of the predominance of Saint Petersburg's interests in the area of Russian influence.^[140] According to Sazonov, the British sometimes created problems for the Russians, as had happened recently over a concession for water plants near the city of Eşfahān.^[141]

Furthermore, on May 21, the Russian Foreign Ministry wrote an *aide-mémoire*, delivered to Buchanan, on the issue of the continuation of the open door policy in Mongolia.^[142] The text argued that the right of the Russians to import products, 'sans distinction de provenance, en franchise de droits' – a right that the British also claimed on the basis of the principle of the most favored nation – was actually derived from older Russo-Chinese treaties, and that, therefore, the Russo-Mongol protocol of October 21, 1912 had simply guaranteed the continuation of the previous situation.^[143] The text of the memorandum expressly mentions the treaties of 1862 and 1881

Or, les sujets russes jouissent du droit susmentionné depuis le commencement des relations commerciales russes avec la Mongolie par voie de terre. Des stipulations à cet effet ont été introduites dans les traités russo-chinois de 1862 et de 1881, et le protocole conclu à Urga avec le Gouvernement mongol n'avait pour but que de confirmer l'état de choses déjà existant.^[144]

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According to the memorandum, Britain already recognized a similar right along the border between British Burma and China.^[145]

Ces différents régimes établis pour le commerce des pays qui ont avec la Chine des frontières communes n'ont jamais été considérés contraires aux principes de la nation la plus favorisée qui régissent le commerce avec la Chine par voie de mer.^[146]

Products arriving by sea were taxed for both import and transit and had to pay local taxes to offices in the eighteen provinces of 'Chine intérieure'.^[147] The Chinese government, in 1911, before the proclamation of Mongolian independence (the text of the memorandum naturally talks about 'autonomie'), had also established an office in Urga, without any protest from the foreign powers and the new Mongolian government only adopted 'pour le commerce le régime pratiqué en Chine et introduit en Mongolie par le Gouvernement chinois' and also the Russians, for products imported by sea and not from the Russo-Mongolian border, had to comply with the same rules as for other countries.^[148] For Saint Petersburg, therefore, the British claims were not conceivable:

Par contre, le Gouvernement anglais semblerait prétendre à une situation sans précédent pour le commerce avec la Mongolie. Il réclame notamment une franchise de droits d'entrée, de transit et autres non pas pour les marchandises importées par ses sujets, mais pour toutes les marchandises de provenance anglaise, ce qui est absolument contraire aux principes qui ont fait jusqu'ici la base des traités de commerce de la Chine. Il réclame pour son commerce par voie de mer un régime de faveur dont aucune Puissance, sans excepter la Russie, ne jouit ni dans la Chine propre, ni dans les régions soumises à la suzeraineté chinoise.^[149]

However, the point on which the Russians and the British diverged was that, for the latter, the agreements – in particular Article 12 of the Russo-Chinese Treaty of 1881 – did not exempt Russian products, which entered Mongolia through the border with Russia, from internal taxes imposed by the Mongolian government on foreign goods.^[150]

The *aide-mémoire* was communicated by the Foreign Office to the India Office and the Board of Trade on June 18, 1914.^[151] According to Grey it had to be explained to the Russians that the British were not aiming for any privileged position, but only to maintain the same treatment for their products – on which customs and transit taxes were paid upon entry into China and therefore provided with transit permits – which were purchased by Chinese or other merchants in Chinese territory and then perhaps sent to Mongolia without any other tax to pay.^[152] In such a case, therefore, an agreement aimed at guaranteeing exemption from Mongolian taxes only for British subjects would be of no use.^[153] The only valid option for the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs was to extend the freedom of trade to this type of goods of British origin, 'as would be entitled to most-favoured-nation treatment in China proper'.^[154] Grey also suggested that the India Office and the Board of Trade support Buchanan's position on Article 12 of the Sino-Russian Treaty of 1881 which, according to the ambassador, did not guarantee Russian goods exemption from any internal taxes on foreign products in Mongolia.^[155] Given that for Saint Petersburg the privileges granted to Russian trade were due only to a border trade agreement – comparable to the Anglo-Chinese agreement on the trade across the border between British Burma and China – according to Sir Edward Grey it was necessary to remind the tsar's government that products crossing the Sino-Burmese border only got a thirty percent reduction in ordinary customs duties.^[156] Furthermore, not all products enjoyed this reduction, but only goods that crossed the Sino-Burmese border by two defined roads, while there was no such limit for products arriving in Mongolia from Russia.^[157] To be precise, on January 26, 1915, the India Office clarified to the Foreign Office that there were currently three roads and that on the basis of the Convention of Peking of February 4, 1897, it was possible for border commissioners to expand the number of roads.^[158]

The summer of 1914

A few days later, on June 23, 1914, the Foreign Office received a communication from Peking, dated June 5.^[159] The British ambassador had received a letter from the Mongolian government – written in April – which he was now forwarding to London.^[160] Urga claimed its independence from the Republic of China, in addition to communicating the position of the bogd haan, sovereign of Mongolia and head of Buddhism in the country:

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The Imperial Mongolian Government beg to notify your Excellency that Mongolia, having declared herself an independent State, is no longer under the Government of China.

The ruler of Mongolia is Djibson Dampa Llama, the Bogda or Hituktoo, residing in Urga, and being at the same time the head of the Buddhistic religion of this country.^[161]

In the letter, the Mongolian government asked Jordan to send an authorized consul or other representative in order to sign a treaty of trade and friendship, just as they had already reached a commercial treaty with Saint Petersburg.^[162] The Mongolian government would have liked to send its own delegates to foreign powers, but it did not have officials able to speak languages other than Mongolian and Chinese and for this reason it asked the British government to send representatives to the capital.^[163] The Mongols said they were ready to grant the British the same privileges accorded to the Russians:

According to the treaty between the Russian and Mongolian Governments, we still retain the power to give to your Excellency's Government the same terms as we have extended to Russia.^[164]

Twice already the government of the bogd haan had sent communications to the other world powers, without obtaining answers, therefore the Mongols were not able to know if the British had received their proposals or not.^[165] The letter had been delivered to Jordan by Frans August Larson, the Republic of China's adviser for Mongolian affairs.^[166] According to Jordan, the other powers to which the Mongols had sent the same letter were the United States, Germany and France.^[167] According to the Russian chargé d'affaires, Vladimir Grave,^[168] heard by Jordan, the basis of the attempt to sign treaties with other countries was the disappointment of the Mongols for their own situation; in fact, after the signing of the 1913 Agreement, China was trying to reassert its role at the expense of the Russians with counter-offers that were actually impracticable.^[169] The Mongolian government, on the other hand, had tried, without results, to obtain loans from Russian adventurers or from other European countries.^[170] Jordan wrote to Grey:

The result now is that the Mongols refuse to take part in the tripartite conference which was to have been held at Kiakta, and which was expected to regulate, amongst other things, the commercial situation in Mongolia.^[171]

The British ambassador recognized the weakness of British trade in Mongolia, 'but such as it is it has been placed at a distinct disadvantage by the Russian agreements'.^[172] British goods could arrive in Mongolia by paying a tax of 7 and a half percent to China, but then they were burdened with another tax, which ranged from 5 to 10%, to be paid to the Mongols, and the latter would hardly renounce it.^[173] New terms could not be negotiated with the Chinese – as the Board of Trade proposed to obtain reimbursement, as we have already seen above, of the import taxes on British goods sent to Mongolia but transiting through China^[174] – in the first place because Peking could not be brought to sign a treaty involving the idea of an Outer Mongolia outside of China, and then because technically and practically it was impossible:

The Chinese taxation is fixed by treaty, and though it might be argued that goods destined for Outer Mongolia are merely passing through China in transit, the Chinese Government are most unlikely to agree to any modification of the treaty which would affect the principle that Mongolia is Chinese territory. In practice, too, it would be quite impossible with the existing means of communication to devise any arrangement for sending goods in bond through China to Outer Mongolia.^[175]

So Jordan at this point – probably also considering the failure of the original line of the Foreign Office, that was to exchange Russian influence in Mongolia with the new British position in Tibet – realized the need, in case of failure of the negotiations with Saint Petersburg, of direct British action in Mongolia, sending a consul to the capital, as they had already done in Kashgar seven years earlier with George Macartney:

If our negotiations with Russia fail to produce a solution, the best course, in my opinion, would be to do as we did in 1907 at Kashgar. We should appoint a consul to reside in Urga and trust to his influence to work out a solution, as Sir George Macartney has done in the New Dominion [*English translation of the Chinese name of Hsin-chiang*], where

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our trade now enjoys in practice all the privileges accorded to Russia by treaty. Neither Russia nor China could offer any reasonable objection to such a step.^[176]

Indeed, according to Jordan, the British had the right to protect their interests in Outer Mongolia, which were put in difficulty by Russia.^[177] Moreover, China could favorably consider the presence of British and German consuls to Urga, to counterbalance Russian influence in the country.^[178] Furthermore, the British consul had to be subject to the British Embassy in Peking and this meant full recognition of the suzerainty of the Republic of China over Mongolia.^[179] On the contrary, the Russian consul was not under the authority of the Russian legation in the Chinese capital.^[180]

In theory, Jordan's views could have some effectiveness, but it was clear that sending a consul to Urga, following a formal request from the Mongolian government, could not fail to create a certain Chinese resentment. A few days later, in fact, on June 16, 1914, the Chinese minister in London communicated to the British a telegram from the Wai-chiao Pu,^[181] addressed to him, in which he was asked to inform the Foreign Office, reaffirming the suzerainty of Peking on Outer Mongolia and therefore the impossibility for Urga to deal directly with other countries:

FOREIGN legations in Peking have received a communication from Outer Mongolia styling herself as an independent country, and requesting them to send representatives to negotiate treaties with her. We hear that the Ministers in Peking have already communicated this Mongolian request to their respective Governments. You are hereby requested to draw the attention of the British Foreign Office to the various documents passed between the Chinese and Russian Governments declaring and acknowledging the suzerainty of China over Outer Mongolia. Outer Mongolia being a part of the dominion of China has certainly no right to receive and send representatives to negotiate treaties directly with foreign Governments.^[182]

Meanwhile, on July 17, 1914, the Foreign Office, by forwarding to the Board of Trade Jordan's letter on the consul in Mongolia and the telegram from the Wai-chiao Pu, opened the possibility of a consul to Urga with exclusively consular and commercial functions:

Sir E. Grey would propose, subject to the concurrence of the Board of Trade, to adopt the following course:-

1. To inform the Russian Government that His Majesty's Government have received a request from the Mongolian Government that they should send a consul to Urga to negotiate a commercial treaty, and that His Majesty's Government intend to comply with this request and to inform the Chinese accordingly.
2. On receipt of a reply from the Russian Government to inform the Chinese Government of the action contemplated assuring them at the same time that the duties of this official will be of a purely consular and commercial character.^[183]

Ten days earlier, on July 7, the Board of Trade had responded to Grey's previous communication of June 18, substantially agreeing with him on the reply to be made to the tsar's government regarding Russian commercial privileges and British disadvantages in Mongolia.^[184] The only difference concerned the reason for the British claims: the position proposed by His Majesty's government, according to which British trade enjoyed the same rights as it had had when Mongolia was within the Chinese Empire, allowed for a fiscal exemption on imports to Mongolia in all circumstances.^[185] The draft agreement prepared by the Board in November 1913, on the other hand, provided for the recognition of the status of most favored nation and, therefore, British goods were to benefit from the exemption, but only in coincidence with the exemption granted to Russian or other countries' products.^[186] According to the Board this distinction had to be highlighted in communications with the Russians.^[187] However, the Board of Trade had not given up on the idea of agreeing with the Chinese the reimbursement of import taxes paid on goods destined for Mongolia.^[188] For the Board, the question had to be presented to the Russians in this way: if Outer Mongolia was still part of Chinese territory, then Russia was entitled to enjoy the privileges previously granted on goods arriving in Mongolia through the formal Russo-Chinese border (i.e. Russo-Mongolian), but at the same time customs barriers could not be imposed between China and Mongolia.^[189] If, on the other hand, Outer Mongolia was considered as an autonomous state, no longer part of the Chinese territory, then the rights of Russian goods that arrived in Mongolia by

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land ceased.^[190] The privileges provided to goods crossing the border could not apply, because that agreement concerned the land border between China and Russia, but in the case of an autonomous Mongolian state, products directed to Mongolia only passed the Russo-Mongolian border and not the Russo-Chinese one.^[191] Finally, the Board agreed with Grey in supporting Buchanan's position regarding Article 12 of the Russo-Chinese Treaty of 1881, which did not guarantee Russian goods exemption from internal taxes levied in Mongolia on foreign goods.^[192]

The Foreign Office's reply to the Board of Trade came on July 17, underlining the problem of the mere status of most favoured nation:

If His Majesty's Government confine themselves to claiming most-favoured-nation [*sic*] treatment in autonomous Mongolia, freedom from dues will only be secured as is pointed out by the Russian note, for goods actually imported by British subjects, since by the Urga Protocol this privilege is only extended to Russian subjects and not to all goods of Russian origin. Consequently, any attempt based upon the right of His Majesty's Government to claim most-favoured-nation treatment in Mongolia alone will only benefit such British goods as are actually imported by British subjects, and will leave the larger class of goods which is imported by British subjects into China, and there purchased by Chinese merchants, for importation into Manchuria [*sic*, Mongolia *recte*] without redress.

Sir E. Grey would, therefore, be glad to have the opinion of the Board as to the necessity for claiming not merely most-favoured-nation treatment, but the right to negotiate with the Mongolian Government for the freedom from duty of all British goods which would have been entitled to most-favoured-nation treatment under the commercial treaties with China if the duties now imposed by the Mongolian Government had been imposed by the Chinese Government before the status of Mongolia was altered by the intervention of Russia.^[193]

Furthermore, a tax exemption on British products in Mongolia did not exclude Chinese customs duties and transit taxes and, therefore, an advantage still existed with respect to the competitiveness of the price that the Russians could offer for their products that entered in Mongolia directly.^[194] Any reduction in Chinese taxes would not give a 'privileged position' to British products:

Sir E. Grey desires to point out that, even if complete freedom from dues levied in Mongolia is obtained for British goods, they will still be subject to the Chinese customs and transit dues, and will, to this extent, be handicapped in competing with Russian goods which are imported directly from their country of origin, and any reduction of the Chinese duties which may eventually be obtained will only tend to place them more nearly on an equality with Russian goods and would not in any sense give them a privileged position.^[195]

For this reason, according to Grey, the Russian government should have no objection to British action aimed at reducing Chinese tariffs for British products in transit to Mongolia.^[196]

From Simla and from London

According to a letter dated May 21, 1914 from the Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, McMahon was less favorable to the change of Article 10 of the Simla Agreement; the British delegate feared that the modification of the document could offer the Chinese the possibility of reopening discussions, after Chen had already initialled the text, perhaps not even signing the agreement.^[197] On that point, however, according to Buchanan, it was really impossible to go back:

'Minister for Foreign Affairs' objections to article 10 are, I fear, insuperable, and we have now, by communication which I made to him yesterday respecting provisional arrangement, virtually agreed to delete it'.^[198]

The Government of India was in favor only of the other two conditions concerning Articles 6 and 8: the two articles were not modified, but their effects had to be regulated by exchanges of notes between London and Saint Petersburg.^[199] Furthermore, the British agent could also be officially appointed as a trade agent, but nevertheless, for Delhi, he needed the necessary powers to enforce Article 8.^[200] On this point, however, there was no opposition from Sazonov; for the minister – evidently always interested in safeguarding his position in the eyes of the Russian

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public opinion – officially the British agent was to be considered a trade agent, but not denying the real political role.^[201]

As for the note on northern Afghanistan that Sazonov had asked of the British government, the Government of India reported to the India Office that they had no particular problems in this regard, but it was preferable to keep it secret to avoid misunderstandings by the Afghan emir.^[202] If not, Delhi asked for the necessary time to notify the emir in advance ‘and to explain it to him in suitable manner’.^[203] Sazonov’s problem, however, was precisely the need to make that note public to demonstrate that he had obtained compensation from the British.^[204] Buchanan therefore suggested writing the text in such a way as to avoid misunderstandings on the part of the emir.^[205] The British ambassador proposed to Grey, hoping for Sazonov’s approval, to start with the recognition of Russian interests in ‘such questions as that of irrigation’ and with the fact that the 1907 Convention put Afghanistan out of Saint Petersburg’s influence, and only then specify the commitment made by the British government.^[206] The Government of India, on the other hand, considered the note on northern Persia – that Sazonov had said he wanted to prepare – ‘entirely unconnected’ with the agreement on Tibet.^[207] Delhi was also opposed to any Russian strengthening in northern Persia aimed at dividing the country, except in exchange for an equal strengthening of the British position in the south.^[208] Edward Grey, on the other hand, was not opposed to the modification of Article 10.^[209] As we have seen previously, the one who had considered that option was the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs himself.^[210]

The Foreign Office, however, could not give a definitive answer to the question before Sazonov’s departure, without having heard the position of the Government of India.^[211] At the same time, no more weeks could be waited for the final signing of the Simla Convention.^[212] Grey therefore proposed, to his Russian counterpart, the replacement of Article 10 with the simple recognition of the English text as authoritative, as well as the guarantee of an official note to the Russian Government to clarify that Articles 6 and 8 could not be implemented by the British without an agreement with Saint Petersburg.^[213] In case of publication of the Simla Convention, Grey was ready to make the note public as well.^[214] Furthermore, in the meantime, the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs did not ask for any secret commitment prior to the official note, as had instead been proposed by Sazonov, while the 1907 Convention continued to be considered in force.^[215] On the basis of these conditions, for Grey, the Simla Convention could therefore be signed:

‘The position, in fact, is this : His Majesty’s Government would, by the Tripartite Convention, obtain the consent of Thibet and China to seek concessions in Thibet and to send the British trade agent from Gyantse to Lhasa, but they recognise that, owing to the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907, the consent of Russia also is required for these things, and they would undertake not to do them till that consent has been obtained’.^[216]

Sazonov, actually, as explained by Buchanan to Grey in a letter dated May 24, preferred the signing of the Simla Convention only after the British definitive acceptance of the conditions he had set.^[217] However, in the face of Buchanan’s explanations, he lowered his demand: the signing did not have to be made public before a definitive agreement between London and Saint Petersburg and perhaps also secrecy should be imposed on the Chinese and Tibetans.^[218] In case of leaks, however, Sazonov would make the note public.^[219]

Time was undoubtedly now very short. On May 25 Sazonov had to leave the Russian capital, to return only on June 7, for just two nights.^[220] Then he would leave again for Constantza (Constanța), where the tsar was to meet with Charles I of Romania.^[221] According to the British ambassador, it was therefore ‘advisable’ to give Sazonov an answer by June 7.^[222] The foreign minister would then submit the matter to Nicholas II.^[223] Buchanan, however, explained to Sazonov that, according to him, if the British government accepted the conditions, ‘words “ without previous agreement with Imperial Government ” ought, in my opinion, to be added to the engagement which we were asked to give about Afghanistan’ on the note relating to Afghanistan.^[224] Sazonov replied that he was not against it, but Russia could never approve British concessions in the areas envisaged by the note, in northern Afghanistan.^[225] For Sazonov ‘it was matter of vital moment to Russia that no irrigation works should be undertaken in Afghanistan that might in any way prove prejudicial to her’.^[226]

Two days later, therefore, Grey wrote to Buchanan communicating the modification of Article 10 of the Simla Convention, which thus became:

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The English, Chinese, and Thibetan texts of the present convention have been carefully compared and found to correspond, but in the event of there being any difference of meaning between them the English text shall be authoritative.^[227]

In addition, the secretary asked the ambassador to Russia to show Sazonov a draft of a note recognizing the need for an agreement with Saint Petersburg before making effective Articles 6 and 8 which amended the terms on which, seven years earlier, the two countries had agreed:

His Majesty's Government have the honour to communicate to the Imperial Russian Government a copy of a convention which has been signed between Great Britain, China and Thibet. His Majesty's Government recognise that articles 6 and 8 of this convention confer certain powers on Great Britain, the exercise of which, in a measure, conflict with the provisions of the Anglo-Russian Convention regarding Thibet of 1907. His Majesty's Government therefore engage that they will not exercise the powers conferred by the above-mentioned articles until they have come to an understanding with the Imperial Russian Government on the subject.^[228]

The note had to be signed and officially presented as soon as the Simla Convention was signed.^[229] In this way, even if a definitive agreement on northern Afghanistan had not been reached, that note would still formally guarantee Russian interests from the changes defined by the two articles.^[230] Furthermore, in the event that the Chinese used the amendment to Article 10 as a pretext for making other changes to the Convention, they could also continue negotiations on concessions in northern Afghanistan.^[231]

Meanwhile, on May 31, from Peking, Jordan communicated to Grey that the Chinese were essentially opposed to the agreements concerning the border, asking for a redefinition in order to be able to sign the Convention.^[232] According to the Chinese government, Chen had initialled the agreement, clarifying, however, that he would not put his signature without Peking's authorization.^[233] Jordan was, however, confident in a Chinese signature at the end, 'but they will do so with a bad grace', weakening the Convention anyway and with negative consequences also on the negotiations regarding 'our railway and mining negotiations'.^[234] As for Article 10, according to Jordan the Chinese were probably already aware of its changes 'and will in any case know that it emanates from Russia'.^[235]

On June 5, 1914, the Foreign Office wrote a memorandum to the Chinese in which the latter were informed of the proposal to change Article 10 of the Convention, but that at the same time it was not possible to make other changes to the text or to the geographical maps.^[236] Furthermore, according to the memorandum:

Should China persist in her dissentient attitude and decline to sign a document concluding the conference, she will naturally be debarred from the privileges contemplated by the tripartite convention.^[237]

The agreement on Afghanistan

Regarding the agreement on Afghanistan, the borders of «Northern Afghanistan» had to be precisely defined. For the India Office, in fact, it was necessary to delimit that area, making it coincide with the territory north of the Hindū Kush chain that extends from the Sino-Afghan border up to the border with Persia, including the mountain massif of Band-e-Bābā.^[238] Crewe-Milnes also preferred to avoid including Harī Rūd, the ancient 'Αῖός / Arius (*rūd* in Persian means «river»), 'though he recognises that, if the point is insisted on by Russia, it may be necessary to extend the second part of the declaration so as to cover irrigation rights on that river'.^[239]

In that case, however, Crewe-Milnes had to ask the Government of India for another opinion.^[240] In the meantime, for Delhi and for the India Office, it was still necessary to ask Russia to officially recognize Afghanistan outside the sphere of influence of Saint Petersburg.^[241] With such an official statement, it was even easier to explain the situation to the emir.^[242] For the Government of India, however, defining the extent of Northern Afghanistan, as Crewe had proposed,^[243] would entail the idea of having transformed Afghanistan into another Persia.^[244] Furthermore, reference to the entire Harī Rūd and not to a particular point was 'somewhat vague'.^[245]

The Government of India continued to attach importance to having to inform the Afghan emir prior to the publication

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of the note on the country.^[246] Delhi was certainly the most dissatisfied with the agreement reached with the Russians. The changes in the situation in Mongolia prompted the British to re-discuss their role in Tibet and Sazonov's assurances to Buchanan about his assent to make Articles 6 and 8 effective did not reassure the viceroy of India, Charles Hardinge:

It is Russia's action in Mongolia and the consequential definite change to our disadvantage of the *status quo* in Thibet since the convention of 1907 was concluded, that has forced this new convention on us. Against that change we secure no other direct advantage for Great Britain than the concession which article 8 contemplates and the undertaking which Russia is to give us in a secret note [...]. We attach the highest importance to the securing of both these concessions.^[247]

Grey therefore asked Buchanan to communicate to the Russian government the willingness of the British government to sign a joint declaration in which Saint Petersburg had to recognize Afghanistan outside its sphere of influence, while London undertook not to support the requests of British subjects for irrigation works, railways and even for privileged rights for commercial or industrial activities in northern Afghanistan.^[248] As for the definition of the area, this was to include the territory north of a line that started from Eshkāshem, a few miles outside the Wakhan (*Vākhān*) Corridor, and continued westwards, up to Zū ol-Faqār, where the Harī Rūd entered the territories of the Russian Empire:

Ishkasham [*Eshkāshem*] on Abipanja [*Āb-e Panjah*] to Zebak [*Zībāk*], thence to Munjan Pass [*Monjān Kūtal*], thence to Nawak [*Nāvak*] Pass, thence to Murgh Pass [*Morgh Kūtal*], thence to Doshi [*Dūshī*], from there viā Sinjītak [*Senjetak*] and Badkak [*Bādqāq*] Passes to Doab-i-Shah Pasand [*Dūāb-e Shāh Pasand*], thence to Tarkuch [*Tarkūch*] on Bandiamir [*Band-e Amir*], thence to Daulat Yar [*Daūlat Yār*]. From this point line would follow crests of following ranges : Bandibaba [*Band-e Bābā*] and Siyah Bubak [*Sīyah Būbak*] and thence to point where Hari Rud enters Russian territory at Zulfikar [*Zū ol-Faqār*].^[249]

In this way, the Afghan side of the Harī Rūd was excluded, even if the British government was ready to bring back the exclusion of official support also for irrigation from the Harī Rūd 'whether within or without the area defined above'.^[250] But in that case, Grey explained to Buchanan,

[n]o mention, however, should be made of the willingness of His Majesty's Government to give this further concession unless the Russian Government are dissatisfied with the definition of Northern Afghanistan as given above or themselves raise the question of the Hari Rud.^[251]

More important, for His Majesty's Government, was not to include in the definition neither Herāt and its surroundings, nor the peaks of the Hindū Kush from Nawak to the west: '[I]t is undesirable that Russia should have even a shadowy claim in either case'.^[252]

Indeed, the Russian foreign minister himself informed Buchanan, in a meeting on June 10 – a few hours before leaving again for another ten days – that Saint Petersburg could not accept the exclusion of the Harī Rūd, since it was very important for the irrigation of the Transcaspian province.^[253] For Sazonov, the line had to pass south of the Harī Rūd:

Line of demarcation, he said, must follow mountain chain of Sefid and Kouh to the south of Hari Rud to point where that river commences to form frontier between Afghanistan and Persia.^[254]

This line would include not only the entire Afghan Harī Rūd, but also the city of Herāt, which is located a few miles north of Harī Rūd. Sazonov reiterated to Buchanan – who had not yet been authorized to extend the boundaries of the territory – that he wanted something in return for allowing the British to cancel the 1907 Agreement on Tibet.^[255] Buchanan then recalled that, according to what had been said up to then, Sazonov's goal was only to convince the Russian public opinion of his work and that the notes would not define the territory and therefore not even the question of Harī Rūd.^[256] When Sazonov told him 'that term "Northern Afghanistan" was too vague' and subject to different interpretations 'by the "Times" and "Novoe Vremya." ', Buchanan replied that it was 'his Excellency himself'

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who had chosen that definition.^[257] The British, while not wanting to divert the rivers of northern Afghanistan, could not define an agreement that risked being considered a renunciation of their interests in Herāt.^[258] The ambassador explained to the minister that one option that could be considered was to leave the definition of northern Afghanistan unchanged, and to add the British commitment not to support requests for irrigation works from the Harī Rūd.^[259] In this way, official support was guaranteed for concessions of another nature in the area, but at the same time the flow of water of the river was safeguarded. Sazonov was initially reluctant to accept that proposal, but '[s]ubsequently he said that if we [*the British*] gave such an undertaking it would have to be published'.^[260] Another central point in the discussion concerned the railway network: Sazonov in fact thought that not publishing the exact area of northern Afghanistan would create controversy in parliament in London and Saint Petersburg, as well as in the press.^[261] Sazonov again explained his position on northern Afghanistan in a letter that he delivered to Buchanan at the end of the meeting.^[262] The text also asked for a clause to be added to the agreement that guaranteed the Russian Buddhists the right to travel to Lhasa, as they had done several times, via India, given the difficulty in reaching the capital of Tibet from the north.^[263] In fact, in April 1914, there had been a Russian protest because the Government of India had prevented Russian pilgrims from entering Tibet.^[264]

Before leaving, Sazonov instructed Kimon Argiropulo and the head of the Eastern Department, to try to find a solution to the matter and Buchanan would continue to negotiate with them.^[265] However, as he wrote to Grey, the British ambassador was aware of the difficulty in keeping the definition of the area of northern Afghanistan secret.^[266] The next day, June 11, Buchanan again sent Grey two more communications on the matter,^[267] suggesting to separate the problem of irrigation works from the question of the railways.^[268] The British Government could propose to the Russian minister that it would undertake not to support the requests of British subjects for irrigation works with water from the Harī Rūd, the Morghāb^[269] or any other river indicated by Sazonov.^[270] Furthermore, the British Government would not support its subjects' 'applications for railways, &c.' in the area of northern Afghanistan, as defined by London.^[271] The ambassador also explained to Grey that the Russian foreign minister had no objection to continuing to recognize Afghanistan outside of Saint Petersburg's sphere of political influence, but still wanted to include Herāt and both sides of the Harī Rūd in the definition of northern Afghanistan.^[272] Furthermore:

From my conversation with his Excellency I carried away the impression that, whether or not we come to an arrangement with Russia with regard to Northern Afghanistan, the Russian Government will before long take the law into their own hands if the Afghans persist in diverting the waters of the Heri-Rud, and other rivers to the prejudice of Transcaspia.^[273]

Evidently, however, these terms of the negotiations were not so pleasing to the India Office, as demonstrated by a communication to the Foreign Office:

For reasons which it is unnecessary to elaborate, Lord Crewe has felt the utmost reluctance in assenting to the proposed declaration in regard to Afghanistan in any form, and he is strongly opposed to making further concessions on this point if it can by any means be avoided.^[274]

At this point Sazonov, for Crewe-Milnes, seemed to be the real winner of the negotiations and the Russian foreign minister's old concerns could vanish:

The new convention, as qualified by the notes to the Russian Government which are to be published simultaneously with it, will present anything but the appearance of a British diplomatic triumph at Russia's expense. On the contrary, the position acquired by Russia under the Agreement of 1907 will be found to have been jealously safeguarded.^[275]

It could be said that the question of political reputation was now being reversed, because what was to be published was clearly in favor of the Russians, who formally, in the eyes of public opinion, became the real holders of the power to implement or not the Simla Convention, being able to decide the fate of Articles 6 and 8.^[276] There was certainly Sazonov's assurance not to pose obstacles, and therefore to allow the British to ask for concessions in Tibet and to send their agent to Lhasa, however, Saint Petersburg was bound only by a secret note, while the notes that sanctioned the Russian diplomatic strength, the results obtained by Sazonov at the expense of the United Kingdom, would be public, therefore ready to be brought to the attention of Westminster and the country.^[277] Crewe-Milnes

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therefore asked Grey, in the event that Sazonov had continued to demand the publication of the definition of northern Afghanistan, to demand the same thing also for the Russian commitment not to oppose Articles 6 and 8.^[278] To make the matter easier, according to Crewe-Milnes, the public and secret notes could simply be replaced with a public acknowledgment of the convention by the Russian government.^[279] So,

[t]he published documents would then present to the world a fair diplomatic bargain, in which either party would have made concessions for a specified return, and which neither Government should find it difficult to defend against domestic criticism.^[280]

Crewe-Milnes did not want to widening the definition of the area of northern Afghanistan, but was prepared to accept Buchanan's proposal to include the British commitment not to support the demands for exploitation of the rivers chosen by Sazonov, as well as to separate the question of irrigation works from the railway one.^[281] He recalled, however, the need expressed by the Government of India to give explanations to the Afghan emir, before the publication of any agreement.^[282] There were no problems even regarding the possibility of Russian Buddhist pilgrims to continue to go to Lhasa via the Indian border, but knowing more details (for example the number of pilgrims), as well as the reason for such a long path.^[283] In fact, until April 1914, Lord Crewe was not even aware of the existence of Russian requests to reach Tibet via India.^[284]

Simla and Sarajevo

Meanwhile, on July 3, 1914, the Simla Convention had finally been signed, but not by the Chinese delegate, whose government, in the end, refused to accept the terms on the definitions of the line that was to divide Inner Tibet from Outer Tibet, demanding a different arrangement of the border and thus offering only a simple 'adhesion to the majority of articles of the convention'.^[285] Grey then wrote to Buchanan to communicate the result of the agreement to the Russian government, underlining, however, the British commitment in reaching a signature also with the Chinese and that the latter had indeed rejected the agreement only because of the border issue, however accepting the rest of the convention 'and that His Majesty's Government still hope that they may, after reflection, agree to signature'.^[286] Furthermore, Buchanan had to make it clear to the Russians that the British would not implement the provisions of the Convention contrary to the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 without consulting with Saint Petersburg.^[287] Confidently Grey had also revealed to the ambassador that McMahon and the blon-chen Bshad-sgras had recognized the validity and binding character of the agreement for London and Lhasa, while China would be excluded from the privileges provided by the document 'as long as she withheld signature'.^[288] Furthermore, the British government had guaranteed the Tibetan delegate British support, with weapons and ammunition from India, in the event of a Chinese invasion.^[289]

As for the Russian protests over the bans imposed on Russian Buddhist pilgrims who wanted to travel to Tibet from India, the Government of India had decided, given the situation, to also prevent British subjects from reaching Lhasa for any reason.^[290] But as soon as the conditions allowed it, there would be no objection on the part of the British government to allowing Russian pilgrims to travel there, naturally under the control of the Indian authorities and on the basis of the Frontier Crossing Regulations.^[291] However, Buchanan should point out to Sazonov that although London did not want to prevent Russian Buddhists from traveling to Tibet for religious reasons, the British Government was not bound by the Anglo-Russian Convention to open the Indo-Tibetan border to Russian pilgrims.^[292]

In the meantime, however, on the same day that Grey gave these further instructions to Buchanan, on July 28, 1914, exactly one month after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sofia under the fire of Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo, the Austro-Hungarian Empire opened the conflict with the Kingdom of Serbia. On August 1 Germany, an ally of Vienna, declared war on Russia and on August 3 on France. The next day British troops were preparing to leave for the front against German soldiers. It was the beginning of the First World War. It is not difficult to imagine that in the precipice where Europe was ending, with Russia and Great Britain placed on the same front, the rivalries and misunderstandings in High Asia took on a completely different color. In such a delicate moment in the history of the Empire, as will be seen, Grey could not allow the risk of relations with the allies cracking due to differences on Asian issues.

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[1] Full text of the treaty: TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 8 in No. 231, Convention between Great Britain, China, and Thibet, pp. 262-265.

[2] See, inter alia: BELL 1924, pp. 148-159; H. E. RICHARDSON, *Tibet and Its History*, Boulder – London 1984, pp. 107-120; MCKAY 1997, pp. 56-58. On the legitimacy of the agreement see N. C. SINHA, *The Simla Convention 1914: A Chinese Puzzle*, in: Bulletin of Tibetology, No. 1, 1977, pp. 35-39. For a comparison between the British sources and the Tibetan account of the conference see R. KOBAYASHI, *An Analytical Study of the Tibetan Record of the Simla Conference (1913-1914): Shing stag rgya gar 'phags pa'i yul du dbyin bod rgya gsum chings mol mdzad lugs kun gsal me long*, in: *Current Issues and Progress in Tibetan Studies, Proceedings of the Third International Seminar of Young Tibetologists, Kobe 2012*, edited by T. Takeuchi, K. Iwao, A. Nishida, S. Kumagai and M. Yamamoto, Kobe 2013, pp. 183-200.

[3] L. PETECH, *The Kingdom of Ladakh: C. 950-1842 A.D.*, Roma 1977, p. 151. In addition to Petech's text, on the history of Ladakh see also J. RIZVI, *Ladakh: Crossroads of High Asia*, Delhi 1996.

[4] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 11, Minutes by Sir W. Langley respecting the Tripartite Agreement, January 20, 1914, p. 12.

[5] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 15, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, January 24, 1914, p. 15.

[6] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 15, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, January 24, 1914, p. 15.

[7] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 21, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 1, 1914, p. 21.

[8] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 21, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 1, 1914, p. 21.

[9] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 21, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 1, 1914, p. 21.

[10] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 21, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 1, 1914, p. 21.

[11] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 21, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 1, 1914, p. 21.

[12] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 26, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 3, 1914, p. 24.

[13] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 26, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 3, 1914, p. 24.

[14] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 26, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 3, 1914, p. 24.

[15] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 26, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 3, 1914, p. 24.

[16] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 21, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, February 1, 1914, p. 21.

[17] B. BULSTRODE, *A Tour in Mongolia*, London 1920, p. 147. Mamen was Rustad's cousin (*The Correspondence of G. E. Morrison* 2013, n. 554, T. A. Rustad to G. E. Morrison, November 5, 1912, p. 53).

[18] Full text of the letter: TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 118, Mr. Mamen to Mr. Thomas (British American Tobacco Company), February 13, 1914, pp. 135-136.

[19] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 118, Mr. Mamen to Mr. Thomas (British American Tobacco Company), February 13, 1914, p. 135.

[20] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 118, Mr. Mamen to Mr. Thomas (British American Tobacco Company), February 13, 1914, p. 135.

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[21] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 118, Mr. Mamen to Mr. Thomas (British American Tobacco Company), February 13, 1914, p. 135.

[22] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 118, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, April 27, 1914, p. 134.

[23] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 38, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, February 27, 1914, p. 60.

[24] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 38, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, February 27, 1914, pp. 60-61.

[25] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 38, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, February 27, 1914, p. 61.

[26] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 4, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, January 7, 1914, p. 2; TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 67.

[27] TNA, FO 535/16, Enclosure in No. 444, Board of Trade's proposal for an agreement with Mongolia, p. 428.

[28] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 4, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, January 7, 1914, p. 2.

[29] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 67.

[30] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 67.

[31] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 67.

[32] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 67.

[33] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 67.

[34] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 67.

[35] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 68.

[36] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 68.

[37] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 60, India Office to Foreign Office, March 26, 1914, p. 77.

[38] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 60, India Office to Foreign Office, March 26, 1914, p. 77.

[39] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 60, India Office to Foreign Office, March 26, 1914, p. 77.

[40] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 45, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, March 4, 1914, p. 68.

[41] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 60, India Office to Foreign Office, March 26, 1914, p. 77.

[42] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 60, India Office to Foreign Office, March 26, 1914, p. 77.

[43] The complete text of the draft, updated to February 20, 1914, is in TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 35, Proposed Tripartite Convention, pp. 57-58.

[44] Sir Arthur Henry McMahon (1862-1949).

[45] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 1 in No. 102, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, April 27, 1914, p. 121.

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[46] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 1 in No. 102, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, April 27, 1914, p. 121.

[47] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 1 in No. 102, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, April 27, 1914, p. 121.

[48] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 1 in No. 102, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, April 27, 1914, p. 121.

[49] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 1 in No. 102, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, April 27, 1914, p. 121.

[50] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 104, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, April 29, 1914, p. 123.

[51] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 105, India Office to Foreign Office, April 30, 1914, p. 124.

[52] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 128.

[53] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 129.

[54] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 129.

[55] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 129.

[56] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 129.

[57] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 129.

[58] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 129.

[59] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, pp. 129-130.

[60] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[61] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[62] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[63] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[64] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[65] On the question and the history of Arunachal Pradesh see, inter alia: M. L. BOSE, *History of Arunachal Pradesh*, New Delhi 1997; L. TENPA, *An Early History of the Mon Region (India) and its Relationship with Tibet and Bhutan*, Dharamshala 2018. Lobsang Tenpa's text concerns the western area of the current state of Arunachal Pradesh and where Rta-dbang (Tawang), the birthplace of the sixth dalai lama, is located.

[66] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[67] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[68] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[69] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.

[70] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 131.

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[71] Buchanan communicated this to Grey on May 8, 1914, a Friday, explaining that Sazonov would not return until the end of the following week. In fact, Sazonov returned on May 16 (TNA, FO 535/17, No. 116, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 8, 1914, p. 132; TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138).

[72] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 116, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 8, 1914, p. 132; TNA, FO 535/17, No. 125, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 9, 1914, p. 141. Full text of the note (in French): TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 125, Sir G. Buchanan to M. Sazonof, le 25 avril (8 mai), 1914, pp. 142-144.

[73] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 116, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 8, 1914, p. 132.

[74] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 125, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 9, 1914, p. 141.

[75] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 125, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 9, 1914, p. 141.

[76] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[77] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[78] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[79] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[80] On this agreement see *The Potsdam Accord*, in: *Handbook for the Diplomatic History of Europe, Asia, and Africa, 1870-1914*, by F. M. Anderson – A. S. Hershey (with the assistance of 50 contributors), prepared for the National Board for Historical Service, Government Printing Office, Washington 1918, pp. 407-409.

[81] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[82] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[83] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[84] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[85] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[86] TNA, FO 535/16, No. 137, Foreign Office to India Office, March 17, 1913, p. 98.

[87] TNA, FO 535/16, No. 137, Foreign Office to India Office, March 17, 1913, p. 98.

[88] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[89] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[90] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[91] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[92] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.

[93] The text in square brackets, in this case, belongs to the person who transcribed the document for the Confidential Print.

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- [94] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.
- [95] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.
- [96] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.
- [97] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 138.
- [98] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [99] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [100] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [101] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [102] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [103] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [104] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [105] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [106] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [107] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [108] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 123, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 17, 1914, p. 139.
- [109] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.
- [110] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.
- [111] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.
- [112] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 151.
- [113] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.
- [114] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 150.
- [115] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 150.
- [116] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 150.
- [117] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.
- [118] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.
- [119] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146; TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 151.

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[120] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 151.

[121] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 151.

[122] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 132, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 151.

[123] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.

[124] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.

[125] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.

[126] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.

[127] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 146.

[128] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, pp. 146-147.

[129] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[130] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 147.

[131] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 127, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 18, 1914, p. 147.

[132] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[133] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[134] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[135] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[136] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[137] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[138] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[139] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[140] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[141] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 130, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 19, 1914, p. 148.

[142] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 136, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 22, 1914, p. 153; full text of the memorandum: TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, pp. 153-154.

[143] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, p. 153. The Chinese and Russian text of the Convention of Peking for the Land Trade between Russia and China of 1862 is published in *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States* 1917, pp. 127-143. The French, Chinese and Russian text of the 1881 Treaty of Saint Petersburg is in *Treaties, Conventions, etc., between China and Foreign States* 1917, pp. 168-207.

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- [144] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, p. 153.
- [145] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, pp. 153-154.
- [146] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, p. 154.
- [147] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, p. 154.
- [148] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, p. 154.
- [149] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 136, Memorandum communicated to Sir G. Buchanan, p. 154.
- [150] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 136, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 22, 1914, p. 153.
- [151] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 178, Foreign Office to India Office (Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*), June 18, 1914, p. 180.
- [152] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 178, Foreign Office to India Office (Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*), June 18, 1914, p. 181.
- [153] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 178, Foreign Office to India Office (Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*), June 18, 1914, p. 181.
- [154] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 178, Foreign Office to India Office (Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*), June 18, 1914, p. 181.
- [155] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 178, Foreign Office to India Office (Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*), June 18, 1914, p. 181.
- [156] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 178, Foreign Office to India Office (Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*), June 18, 1914, p. 181.
- [157] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 178, Foreign Office to India Office (Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*), June 18, 1914, p. 181.
- [158] TNA, FO 535/18, No. 4, India Office to Foreign Office, January 26, 1915, p. 2. For the text of the Convention see *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China, 1894-1919*, Vol. I: Manchu Period (1894-1911), compiled and edited by J. V. A. MacMurray, New York 1921, pp. 94-98.
- [159] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.
- [160] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 180*, Mongol Government to Sir J. Jordan, April 1914, p. 182 B.
- [161] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 180*, Mongol Government to Sir J. Jordan, April 1914, p. 182 B.
- [162] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 180*, Mongol Government to Sir J. Jordan, April 1914, p. 182 B.
- [163] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 180*, Mongol Government to Sir J. Jordan, April 1914, p. 182 B.
- [164] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 180*, Mongol Government to Sir J. Jordan, April 1914, p. 182 B.
- [165] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure in No. 180*, Mongol Government to Sir J. Jordan, April 1914, p. 182 B.

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[166] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[167] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[168] Vladimir Vladimirovich Grave (1880-1930), first secretary of the Russian embassy in Peking between 1912 and 1920 (НИКОЛАЕВИЧ КРЫЛОВ-ТОЛСТИКОВИЧ, А., *Придворный календарь на 1915 год. Комментарии*, Москва 2015, p. 209).

[169] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[170] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[171] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[172] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[173] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[174] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 4, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, January 7, 1914, p. 2.

[175] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[176] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A. On Macartney in Qeshqer see C. P. SKRINE – P. NIGHTINGALE, *Macartney at Kashgar: New Light on British, Chinese and Russian Activities in Sinkiang, 1890-1918*, London 1973.

[177] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[178] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[179] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[180] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 180*, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, June 5, 1914, p. 182 A.

[181] The new name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (外務部).

[182] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 175, Translation of Telegram from the Wai-chiao Pu, dated June 12.–(Communicated by the Chinese Minister, June 16, 1914), p. 179.

[183] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 217, Foreign Office to Board of Trade, July 17, 1914, pp. 217-218.

[184] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, pp. 199-200.

[185] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 199.

[186] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 199. The draft agreement drawn up by the Board is in TNA, FO 535/16, Enclosure in No. 444, Board of Trade's proposal for an agreement with Mongolia, p. 428. The draft was sent to the Foreign Office by the Board of Trade on November 27, 1913 (TNA, FO 535/16, No. 444, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, November 27, 1913, p. 427).

[187] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 199.

[188] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 199.

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- [189] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 200.
- [190] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 200.
- [191] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 200.
- [192] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 202, Board of Trade to Foreign Office, July 7, 1914, p. 200.
- [193] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 218, Foreign Office to Board of Trade, July 17, 1914, p. 218.
- [194] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 218, Foreign Office to Board of Trade, July 17, 1914, p. 218.
- [195] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 218, Foreign Office to Board of Trade, July 17, 1914, p. 218.
- [196] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 218, Foreign Office to Board of Trade, July 17, 1914, p. 218.
- [197] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 133, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 21, 1914, p. 151.
- [198] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 138, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 25, 1914, p. 155.
- [199] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 133, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 21, 1914, p. 151.
- [200] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 133, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 21, 1914, p. 151.
- [201] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 138, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 25, 1914, p. 155.
- [202] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 133, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 21, 1914, p. 151.
- [203] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 133, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 21, 1914, p. 151.
- [204] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 138, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 25, 1914, p. 155.
- [205] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 138, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 25, 1914, p. 155.
- [206] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 138, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 25, 1914, p. 155.
- [207] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 133, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 21, 1914, p. 151.
- [208] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 133, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 21, 1914, p. 151.
- [209] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 134, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 22, 1914, p. 152.
- [210] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 112, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 4, 1914, p. 130.
- [211] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 134, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 22, 1914, p. 152.
- [212] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 134, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 22, 1914, p. 152.
- [213] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 134, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 22, 1914, p. 152.
- [214] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 134, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 22, 1914, p. 152.
- [215] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 134, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 22, 1914, p. 152.

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[216] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 134, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 22, 1914, p. 152.

[217] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 152.

[218] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 152.

[219] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 152.

[220] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 152.

[221] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 152.

[222] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 153.

[223] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 153.

[224] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 153.

[225] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 153.

[226] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 135, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, May 24, 1914, p. 153.

[227] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 140, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 26, 1914, p. 156.

[228] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 140, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 26, 1914, p. 156.

[229] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 140, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 26, 1914, p. 156.

[230] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 140, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 26, 1914, p. 157.

[231] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 140, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, May 26, 1914, p. 157.

[232] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 146, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, May 31, 1914, p. 160.

[233] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 146, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, May 31, 1914, p. 160.

[234] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 146, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, May 31, 1914, p. 160.

[235] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 146, Sir J. Jordan to Sir Edward Grey, May 31, 1914, p. 160.

[236] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 156, Memorandum to the Chinese Minister, June 5, 1914, p. 166.

[237] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 156, Memorandum to the Chinese Minister, June 5, 1914, p. 167.

[238] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 148, India Office to Foreign Office, June 2, 1914, p. 161. The Band-e-Bābā, also known as Sīāh Būbak, corresponds to the ancient Παροπάμισος / Paropamisus (BL, IOR/L/MIL/17/14/4, *Military Report on Afghanistan*, 1906, compiled in the Division of the Chief of the Staff, Army Head Quarters, India, Simla 1906, p. 57; see also the entry «Band-i-Baba», in: L. W. ADAMEC, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, Lanham – Toronto – Plymouth 2012).

[239] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 148, India Office to Foreign Office, June 2, 1914, p. 161.

[240] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 148, India Office to Foreign Office, June 2, 1914, p. 161.

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[241] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 148, India Office to Foreign Office, June 2, 1914, p. 161.

[242] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 148, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 28, 1914, p. 162.

[243] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 1 in No. 148, The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India, May 26, 1914, p. 162.

[244] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 148, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 28, 1914, p. 162.

[245] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 148, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 28, 1914, p. 162.

[246] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 148, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 28, 1914, p. 162.

[247] TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 148, Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe, May 28, 1914, p. 162.

[248] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 160, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, June 6, 1914, p. 169.

[249] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 160, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, June 6, 1914, p. 169. In order to identify the locations, I relied on *Historical and Political Gazetteer of Afghanistan*, Vols 1-6, edited by L.W. Adamec, Graz 1972-1985 and on the maps of the Army Map Service (AMS): Series 1301 (GSGS 4646), edition 4-AMS, sheet NI 41, Herāt, scale: 1:1,000,000; Series 1301 (GSGS 2555), edition 5-AMS, sheet NI 42, Kābul, scale: 1:1,000,000.

[250] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 160, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, June 6, 1914, p. 169.

[251] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 160, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, June 6, 1914, p. 169.

[252] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 160, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, June 6, 1914, p. 169.

[253] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, pp. 170-171.

[254] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 170.

[255] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[256] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[257] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[258] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[259] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[260] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[261] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[262] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171; the French text of the letter is in TNA, FO 535/17, Enclosure 2 in No. 171, M. Sazanof to Sir G. Buchanan, le 28 mai (10 juin), 1914, pp. 175-176.

[263] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[264] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 224, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 28, 1914, p. 222.

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[265] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171; TNA, FO 535/17, No. 171, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, p. 174.

[266] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 164, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 10, 1914, p. 171.

[267] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 167, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, p. 172; TNA, FO 535/17, No. 171, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, pp. 173-174.

[268] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 167, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, p. 172.

[269] 'Murgab' in the document, the Margus in the ancient Margiana.

[270] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 167, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, p. 172.

[271] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 167, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, p. 172.

[272] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 171, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, p. 174.

[273] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 171, Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, June 11, 1914, p. 174.

[274] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 177.

[275] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 177.

[276] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, pp. 177-178.

[277] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, pp. 177-178.

[278] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 178.

[279] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 178.

[280] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 178.

[281] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 178.

[282] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 178.

[283] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 178.

[284] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 173, India Office to Foreign Office, June 16, 1914, p. 178.

[285] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 208, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 10, 1914, p. 203.

[286] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 208, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 10, 1914, p. 203.

[287] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 208, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 10, 1914, p. 203.

[288] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 208, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 10, 1914, p. 203.

[289] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 208, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 10, 1914, p. 203.

[290] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 224, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 28, 1914, p. 222.

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^[291] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 224, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 28, 1914, p. 222.

^[292] TNA, FO 535/17, No. 224, Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan, July 28, 1914, p. 222.

About the author:

Matteo Miele is an Affiliated Assistant Professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) of Kyoto University and a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. Between August 2011 and July 2012, he was a Lecturer at the Sherubtse College, Royal University of Bhutan. He received his Ph.D. (Dottorato di Ricerca) from the University of Pisa in 2014.