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Introduction

The Great Game was a period of intense conflict and rivalry between two of the greatest empires of the 19th century, the Russians and the British. A conflict that had spread across a century had a prize that was worth the wait. The territories of Central Asia, primarily Afghanistan, Persia and Tibet were well sought after for numerous reasons. This made the territories the perfect bait for a series of events that would change the trajectory of history. The Great Game is infamous for its military interventions and diplomatic negotiations that redefined the lines that divided the empires. The empires set out to redraw the very boundaries of Central Asia in a game that involved not just both the empires but the entire world. It had lasting effects on all parties, including the non-playing characters. Distrust and secrecy triumphed during the Great Game and all the countries involved had to think before making the smallest move. With the slightest misstep, they found themselves in an impossible predicament. Regional wars have plagued the century and wrecked havoc upon all those who played and those who didn't, ended up as collateral damage. Now it's your turn to be the player's delegate, it's up to you to decide if you want to play or spectate. With the empires head to head, choose wisely as every choice you make opens a multitude of outcomes. One of these empires will fall, but your best bet is to make sure it isn't yours.

Welcome to the Great Game delegates, level 1 starts now.

Letter from the EB

To the east, the vast steppes and arid deserts stretch under the weight of ambition. To the west, the opulent courts and bustling ports of an empire extend their reach. In the middle, a fire of rivalry blazes, igniting every interaction with the fervour of competition. A golden bird hovers tantalisingly above, its wings casting long shadows over the land. Behold, the curtain unfolds. Look closely, it's unlike any game you've ever played. For this is the game of lives. The game of trysts and destinies. The Great Game.

In this grand theatre of strategy and subterfuge, where empires vie for supremacy across the sprawling expanse of Central Asia, every move is laden with consequence. The Great Game is not merely a contest of power; it is an intricate dance of diplomacy, a relentless pursuit of influence, and a high-stakes struggle for control over territories that shape the very fate of nations.

As you step into the roles of key figures in this historical drama, you will find yourself entangled in the machinations of the British Empire, the Russian Empire, and Persia. Your challenge will be to navigate the treacherous waters of international intrigue, manage military campaigns with precision, and wield diplomacy with finesse. Each decision you make, each alliance you forge, and each battle you engage in will steer the course of this grand contest.

We set our stage in the 1830s, a period when tensions are at a fever pitch, and every action can tilt the balance of power. The Siege of Herat in 1837 serves as our focal point—a dramatic and decisive event that encapsulates the intensity and stakes of the Great Game. This siege, where Persian forces, with Russian support, attempt to seize a pivotal Afghan city from British influence, is a perfect embodiment of the era's strategic complexities.

Prepare for a journey where historical facts and strategic thinking intertwine. The Great Game is not a mere historical curiosity; it is a living, breathing contest where your decisions will echo through time. Will you secure your nation's dominance and achieve glory, or will you falter and see your rivals ascend?

Welcome to the Great Game Crisis Committee. Here, history's grand stage awaits your command. The game has begun, and the outcome hinges on your skill and vision. Engage wisely, for the stakes are nothing less than the legacy of empires.

Yours in annihilation,

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Rules of Procedure

Flow of Committee -

- 1) Motion to begin committee session
- 2) Motion to set the agenda
- 3) Motion to begin roll call (P/PV/A)
- 4) Motion to open the PSL
- 5) Motion to move into a moderated caucus
- 6) Motion to move into a unmoderated caucus
- 7) Motion to adjourn committee
- 8) Motion to resume committee
- 9) Motion to present any form of documentation

Debate at a MUN is divided into -

- 1) Formal Debate - This includes the PSL
- 2) Informal Debate - This includes moderated caucus and the unmoderated caucus

General MUN Jargon used in committee session -

- **Motions** – It is a call to take a decision by a delegate that will affect the entire committee.
- **Points** – Used to bring something of non-substantive importance to notice in committee and ask questions.
- **Yields** – Utilising extra speech time left after a GSL speech.
- **Executive Board** – They will facilitate debate within the Committee and are usually seated at the very front.
- **Blocs** - Different groups that have similar ideas and opinions about the topics. In the real UN, there are regional blocs, but delegates can choose to build their own blocs in the Model UN. These blocs will typically work together to create a draft resolution.
- **Lobbying** – Informal discussion with fellow delegates before and after the MUN sessions regarding the agenda, bloc positions, etc.

Provisional Speaker's List (PSL) -

Default Time per speaker – **90 seconds** (this can be amended to 60 seconds)

Usually an introductory speech, but as Committee proceedings flow, shape your speech such that it matches the current events and topics being discussed in the Committee.

Non-exhaustive List (if it is exhausted, that means Committee has concluded)

Points of Information (POIs) can be brought up on PSL speeches

‘**The Delegate of XYZ would like to raise a motion to open the Provisional Speakers List.**’

YIELDS -

Ways to yield time if there is extra time after a PSL has concluded -

-**Yield to the Executive Board** - The extra time is yielded to the EB, they can either ask questions or choose to move on to the next delegate.

-**Yield to the Floor** - The extra time is absorbed and is not used by anyone

-**Yield to Questions** - The extra time is yielded to questions from the committee based on the PSL

-**Yield to Comments** - The extra time is yielded to comments from the committee based on the PSL

-**Yield to another Delegate** - The extra time is yielded to another delegate to add on to their PSL duration

MODERATED CAUCUS -

-A more specific line of speeches are followed, usually focusing on a subtopic or sub-agenda.

-Time-sensitive, which means that they will lapse.

-Points of Information will **NOT** be entertained on these speeches, but Points of Orders **WILL** be.

-No yielding of remaining time will be permitted.

-Moderated Caucus speeches contain a higher weightage than any other speech made in committee.

-‘The Delegate of XYZ would like to suspend formal debate and motion for a -Moderated Caucus on the topic _____ for a total time period of _____ minutes, with each speaker time being _____ minutes.’ (not more than 2 minutes for Individual Speakers’ Time and 20 for total)

-Can be extended by half the time of the previous Moderated Caucus.

UNMODERATED CAUCUS -

- Delegates interact with each other.
- Usually used for discussion regarding the Draft Resolution, Resolution, Working Paper or to come up with a road-map for the Committee.
- Time sensitive, which implies that it also lapses.
- ‘The Delegate of XYZ would like to suspend formal debate and motions to move into an Unmoderated Caucus for a total time period of _____ minutes. (not more than 20 minutes)
- Absolute Chaos (but it shouldn’t be).
- Can be extended by half the time of the previous Unmoderated Caucus.

POINTS -

- Point of Information** – Used to ask questions on the speech that just ended. Follow-ups MAY be granted according to the discretion of the Executive Board.
- Points of Order** – Used to point out a flaw in a delegate’s speech. It will either be a **Factual Inaccuracy** or a **Logical Fallacy**.
- Point of Personal Privilege** – Anything regarding yourself and the environment. (Going to the bathroom, Switching off the fans, etc.) This is the only point that can trump anything else in committee, i.e. you can interrupt speeches, etc. if you are raising this point.
- Point of Parliamentary Enquiry** – Questions regarding the flow of committee and rules of procedure.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF MOTION -

- Motion to Raise a Right to Reply** - This motion can be raised when a delegate feels that his or her personal or national integrity has been impugned by another delegate may request the chair for a right to reply after the other delegate’s remark. This request must be submitted in writing.
- Motion to Entertain**
- Motion to Divide the Question/House**
- Motion to End Committee Session**
- Motion for Censure**
- Motion to Appeal the Chair’s Decision**
- Motion to Approach the Bench**
- Motion of No-Confidence**

PORTFOLIO MATRIX

Portfolios	Origin	Post
Queen Victoria	United Kingdom	Queen of United Kingdom and Great Britain and Ireland
Lord Ellenborough	United Kingdom	British Army Officer
Charles Metcalfe	United Kingdom	Acting Governor-General of India
George Eden	United Kingdom	Governor-General of India
Henry Pottinger	United Kingdom	Lieutenant-General of the British Army
Tsar Nicholas I	Russia	Emperor of Russia
Karl Nesselrode	Russia	Foreign Minister of Russia
Alexander Chernyshyov	Russia	Minister of War
Alexander von Benckendorff	Russia	Chief of the Third Section of Secret Police
Mikhail Lazavev	Russia	Commander of Black Sea Fleet
Ranjith Singh	Sikh Empire	Maharaja of Sikh Empire
Bahadur Shah Zafar	Mughal Dynasty	Mughal Emperor
Mohammad Shah	Persia	Shah of Qajar
Daoguang	China	Emperor of China
Nasrullah Khan	Central Asia	Emir of Bukhara
Mahmud II	Ottoman Empire	Sultan of Ottoman Empire
Dost Muhammad Khan	Afghanistan	Emir of Afghanistan
Shah Shuja Durrani	Afghanistan	Deposed Emir of Afghanistan
Lord William Lamb Melbourne	United Kingdom	Prime Minister of Britain
Henry Hardinge	United Kingdom	Ex-Chief Secretary of Ireland
Robert Peel	United Kingdom	Ex-Prime Minister of British
Napoleon III	France	Swiss Army Officer
Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg	United Kingdom	Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld
Alexander II of Russia	Russia	Heir of the Russian Empire
Gregor Von Rosen	Russia	Viceroy of Caucasus
Vasily Perovsky	Russia	Governor General of Orenburg
Grigory Orlov	Russia	Head of Special Chancellery for Settling of the Caucasus

Portfolios	Origin	Post
Alexander Baryatinsky	Russia	Governor General of East Siberia
Ivan Fyodorovich	Russia	Military Leader
Maharaja Karam Singh	Sikh Empire	Maharaja of Patiala State
Noor Muhammad Khan Talpur	Sikh Empire	Mir of Sind
Kharak Singh	Sikh Empire	Prince of Sikh Empire
Ranjodh Singh	Sikh Empire	Governor of Hazara Province
Lin Zexu	China	Governor General of Huguang
Keying	China	Governor General of Lianguang
Liu Yungfu	China	Viceroy of Liangjiand
Asef Al-Dowleh	Persia	Prime Minister of Qajar
Makhambet Otemisuly	Central Asia	Kazakh Folk Hero
Kenesary Kasymov	Central Asia	Last Kazakh Khan
Muhammad Ali Khan	Central Asia	Khan of Kokand
Allah Quli Khan	Central Asia	Khan of Khiva
Kamran Shah Durrani	Afghanistan	Deposed Ruler of Herat
Yar Muhammad Khan Alakozai	Afghanistan	Vizier of Herat
Wazir Akbar Khan-	Afghanistan	Son of Dost Muhammad Khan
Fitzroy Somerset	United Kingdom	Military Secretary of the British Army
Hugh Gough	United Kingdom	General Officer Commander of the British Army
Richmond Shakespear	United Kingdom	British Army Officer
Alexander Burnes	United Kingdom	British Army Officer
J.L. de Saint-Arnaud	France	French Army Officer
Robert Henry Dick	United Kingdom	British Army Officer
Nikolay Muravyov	Russia	Explorer
Jan Prosper Witkiewicz	Russia	Envoy to Afghanistan
Mikhail Vorontsov	Russia	Governor General of New Russia and Bessarabia
Grand Duke Konstantin	Russia	Grand Duke of Russia
Isatay Taymanuly	Central Asia	Kazakh War Hero
Mir Masjidi Khan	Afghanistan	Afghan Resistance Leader
Zou Zongtang	China	Military Leader
Qishan	China	Assistant Grand Secretary

Timeline

Early 19th Century: Beginnings

1801

- Treaty of Bassein: Established British dominance in India, solidifying British control over the Maratha Empire.

1807

- Treaty of Tilsit: Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I agree to divide spheres of influence, indirectly affecting British-Russian relations in Asia.

1808-1809

- British Mission to Persia: Sir Harford Jones negotiates an alliance against French influence.
- Fraser-Troup Mission: John Malcolm and Harford Jones lead separate British missions to Persia, resulting in diplomatic confusion but eventually solidifying the British-Persian alliance.

1810

- Fraser Mission to Afghanistan: Mountstuart Elphinstone is sent to establish relations with Shah Shuja Durrani.

1812

- Russo-Persian Treaty of Gulistan: Persia cedes territory in the Caucasus to Russia, marking the end of the Russo-Persian War (1804-1813).

1813

- Treaty of Gulistan: Ends the Russo-Persian War. Russia gains control over much of the Caucasus from Persia, setting the stage for further expansion southward.

1826-1828

- Russo-Persian War: Russia defeats Persia, leading to the Treaty of Turkmenchay, which grants Russia more territory and economic concessions.
- Battle of Ganja (1826): Russian victory over Persian forces, marking a significant turning point in the war.
- Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828): Persia grants Russia significant territorial gains and commercial privileges.

1830s: Intensification

1834

- Death of Dost Mohammad Khan's Father: Dost Mohammad Khan takes power in Kabul, seeking to unify Afghanistan.
- British Withdrawal from Herat: After a failed attempt to support Herat against Persian influence, the British retreated, highlighting the vulnerability of the city.

1837-1838

- Siege of Herat: Persia, with implicit Russian support, besieges Herat. British support helps Herat resist, and Persia withdraws under British pressure. Eldred Pottinger plays a crucial role in organising the defence of Herat.
- Mission of Vitkevich (1837): Russian envoy Jan Prosper Witkiewicz (Vitkevich) is sent to Kabul to counter British influence, sparking further tensions.

1840s: Major Conflicts

1839-1842

- First Anglo-Afghan War: Britain invades Afghanistan to install a puppet regime under Shah Shuja Durrani. The British suffered a disastrous retreat from Kabul in 1842, with almost all of their troops killed or captured.
- Battle of Ghazni (1839): British forces capture the fortress of Ghazni, a key victory in the early phase of the war.
- Battle of Bamiyan (1840): British forces defeat Afghan resistance in Bamiyan.
- Massacre of the British Army (1842): The British Army retreats from Kabul, suffering near-total destruction during the march to Jalalabad.
- Battle of Kabul (1842): British forces re-enter Kabul in retribution, briefly occupying the city before withdrawing.
- Retreat from Kabul (1842): British forces are ambushed during their retreat from Kabul, leading to a devastating defeat.

1842

- Treaty of Bogue: The British secured additional trading rights in China following the First Opium War.
- Capture of Jalalabad (1842): British forces secure Jalalabad, one of the few successes during the retreat from Kabul.

1845-1849

- Second Anglo-Sikh War: Britain annexes the Punjab, extending its influence in northern India.
- Battle of Sobraon (1846): Decisive British victory, leading to the end of the First Anglo-Sikh War and the annexation of parts of Punjab.

- Battle of Ferozeshah (1845): Bloody battle between the British and Sikh forces, with heavy casualties on both sides.
- Battle of Chillianwala (1849): Fierce battle during the Second Anglo-Sikh War, showcasing the resilience of Sikh forces despite eventual British victory.
- Battle of Gujrat (1849): Final defeat of the Sikh forces, leading to the annexation of the entire Punjab region.

1850s: Shifting Alliances

1853-1856

- Crimean War: Russia battles an alliance of the Ottoman Empire, Britain, and France, weakening its influence and distracting it from Central Asia.
- Siege of Sevastopol (1854-1855): Key conflict of the Crimean War, leading to a significant defeat for Russia.

1857-1858

- Indian Rebellion: Major uprising against British rule in India, leading to the dissolution of the East India Company and the establishment of direct British rule.
- Siege of Delhi (1857): British recapture Delhi from rebel forces.
- Relief of Lucknow (1857): British forces break the siege of Lucknow, a key turning point in the rebellion.
- Battle of Cawnpore (1857): Massacre of British civilians and soldiers by rebel forces, leading to brutal reprisals.
- Fall of Gwalior (1858): The British defeat the last major rebel forces, ending the rebellion.

1860s: Russian Expansion

1864-1885

- Russian Conquest of Central Asia: Russia gradually annexes regions including Tashkent, Samarkand, and Khiva, establishing dominance over Central Asia.
- Capture of Tashkent (1865): Russia defeats the Kokand Khanate, taking Tashkent as a major strategic and commercial hub.
- Battle of Idzhar (1864): Russian forces defeat the Kazakh tribes, consolidating their control over the steppe.
- Capture of Samarkand (1868): Russian forces take Samarkand from the Emirate of Bukhara.
- Battle of Ura-Tube (1866): Russian forces defeat the Emirate of Bukhara near Ura-Tube.
- Battle of Khiva (1873): Russian forces capture Khiva, leading to the establishment of a Russian protectorate.
- Battle of Geok Tepe (1881): Russian forces capture the fortress of Geok Tepe, leading to the annexation of Turkmenistan.

- Annexation of the Emirate of Bukhara (1868): Russia establishes a protectorate over Bukhara after defeating the Emir's forces.

1873

- Anglo-Russian Agreement: Establishes the northern boundary of Afghanistan, reducing immediate tensions.

1870s: Heightened Tensions

1878-1880

- Second Anglo-Afghan War: Britain invades Afghanistan again, leading to the Treaty of Gandamak, which gives Britain control over Afghan foreign policy.

- Battle of Ali Masjid (1878): British forces capture the Khyber Pass.

- Battle of Peiwar Kotal (1878): British forces defeat Afghan troops, securing a strategic mountain pass.

- Siege of the Sherpur Cantonment (1879): Afghan forces besiege British troops in Kabul, leading to a British counter-attack.

- Battle of Kandahar (1880): British forces defeat Ayub Khan, solidifying their control over Afghanistan.

1879

- Treaty of Gandamak: After the British victory, Afghanistan cedes control of its foreign policy to Britain, increasing British influence in the region.

1880s: Climax of Rivalry

1884-1885

- Panjdeh Incident: Russian forces clash with Afghan troops at Panjdeh, nearly sparking war with Britain. Diplomatic negotiations prevent escalation.

- Skobelev's Campaign (1881): Russian General Mikhail Skobelev's campaign against the Turkmen culminates in the capture of Geok Tepe.

- Russian Annexation of Merv (1884): Russia secures further control in Central Asia, alarming the British.

1885

- Afghan Boundary Commission Joint British-Russian commission to delineate the northern boundary of Afghanistan.

1890s: Diplomatic Manoeuvring

1890

- Moscow Protocol: Russia and Britain agree to avoid interference in each other's Central Asian spheres of influence.

1895

- Pamirs Agreement: Russia and Britain delineate their spheres of influence in the Pamir Mountains, reducing direct confrontation.

- Annexation of the Pamirs: Russian forces secure control over the Pamir region, extending their influence into the high mountains of Central Asia.

Early 20th Century: Resolution

1901

- Death of Abdur Rahman Khan: Emir of Afghanistan who maintained a balance between British and Russian interests.

1907

- Anglo-Russian Convention: Formally ends the Great Game by recognizing British and Russian spheres of influence in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet.

- Division of Persia:

Persia is divided into three zones: a Russian sphere in the north, a British sphere in the southeast, and a neutral zone in the centre.

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

The Durrani Empire

In the lands of Afghanistan, the Durrani Empire, founded by Ahmad Shah Abdali, was in charge. The conqueror king of Persia, Nader Shah, upon capturing key provinces in Afghanistan, such as Herat, incorporated Abdalis into his powerful army, among them, the son of the former governor of Herat, Ahmad Shah Durrani. Ahmad, a tactful commander, established dominance over Afghanistan after the death of Nader Shah and the collapse of his domains. He proved to be an extremely successful ruler- making Afghanistan a powerful player and participating in the process of making it prosperous and vast.

The Reign of Zaman Shah Durrani

After the death of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Durrani Empire fell into a lacklustre state of existence, until the ascension of his grandson, Zaman Shah Durrani. Zaman Shah, in the early days of his rule, faced strong opposition from his half-brothers- the older Humayun and Mahmud Shah Durrani. Zaman, with the support of powerful tribes, including the influential Barakzai based in the prominent city of Kandahar, defeated Humayun and cemented control. He viewed the policies of his father, Timur, to be weak, and embarked on a policy of expansion and defence-restoring control over the provinces of Sindh conquered by his grandfather, while protecting border regions from continuous Persian incursions and also attempting to cut through the Punjab, ruled by the Sikh Empire.

Challenges and Revolts

Despite his relatively successful expansion policy, Zaman was constantly held from achieving more due to repeated revolts undertaken by Mahmud Shah. Moreover, Zaman's rigour also proved to be detrimental, as he antagonised many of the tribes that supported him in an effort to curb the influence, including the Barakzais, by murdering prominent members and curtailing them of their rights. Zaman Shah was, eventually yet briefly, able to enjoy the fruits of his effort-he finally defeated and sent Mahmud to exile in Persia, while being responsible and hailed for Afghanistan's prosperity.

Conspiracy and Deposition

However, the Barakzais, in an attempt to restore their influence, conspired to depose Zaman, a plan that was uncovered by Zaman's prime minister, Wafadar Khan. Wafadar embarked on a campaign of brutally repressing and massacring the Barakzais and other tribes, causing the tribes, in desperation, to back another half brother, Shah Shuja, and install him in power. The tribal leaders recalled Mahmud from exile, who enthusiastically engaged in rallies and displays

to sway support from Zaman by convincing the masses of his tyranny. This worked successfully, and, ultimately, the combined forces of Shah Shuja, the Barakzais and tribes, and Mahmud were able to depose Zaman, who took refuge in the Sikh Empire and remained there for the rest of his life.

Power Struggle and the Barakzai Dynasty

After Zaman's deposition, a severe power struggle ensued between Mahmud and Shah Shuja, which eventually resulted in Shah Shuja blinding and exile to the Sikh Empire. Although Mahmud emerged victorious, his killing of a Barakzai minister and the brother of a powerful Barakzai leader, Dost Mohammad Khan, resulted in the Barakzais toppling Mahmud in a revolt. Shah Shuja, a ruthless tyrant while in exile as a guest of the Sikhs and Ranjith Singh, attempted to take advantage of the situation by besieging Kandahar, but was defeated and repelled by the new Barakzai dynasty, presided over by Dost Mohammad Khan, in 1834. Ranjit Singh, a quiet spectator, played strategy with the various contenders for the Afghan throne, skillfully pitting one against the other.

Russian Expansion and the Great Game

In Asia, particularly Central Asia, Russia remained a major player since the 1500s, earmarked by the defeat of the Khanate of Sibir in Siberia by Imperial Russia. In the Khanates of Bukhara, Kazakh and Khiva, Russian merchants facilitated trade and commerce, while Russia engaged in cultural exchange with the local rulers. In the 1800s, matters intensified when Russia entered into a treaty with the Persians in 1828, and their mortal enemy, the Turks, in 1829, while rapidly seizing control over domains of the Kazakh Khanate. The British, who were otherwise careless about the Middle East, sensed Russia's ambitions in the region and jumped at the opportunity, resulting in what would be the Great Game.

The First Herat War

The first major confrontation which served as a result of the Great Game was the First Herat War. While the Ottoman Empire was largely concerned with internal matters, a reinvigorated Persia, led by the youthful and vibrant Qajar dynasty, sought to regain ownership of the possessions of Iran under Nader Shah, including Afghanistan. They began this conquest with an attack on Herat, reinforced by the support of their new allies, the Russians. Britain, fearing the loss of her most prized possession, India, to a rival European power, scrambled to back the rulers of Herat-Kamran Shah and his Vizier, Yar Mohammad Khan Alakozai.

CHINESE PERSPECTIVE

Central Asia and the Great Game

The majority of conflicts that occurred during the Great Game took place in Central Asia, often referred to as “China’s Backyard” back in those days. Although China was playing a peripheral role in this conflict, it was focused more on itself by trying to resolve its internal conflicts such as the Taiping Rebellion and the decline of the Qing Dynasty.

China's Geopolitical Stance

The Chinese geopolitical stance was shaped by its position as the “Middle Kingdom” in Central Asia and its tradition to focus on their internal stability rather than external expansion. While China did not engage in rivalry with the British and Russians, not only was it well aware of the expanding influence of the Russians in Central Asia and the potential interest of the Europeans in Chinese territories, especially in Xinjiang, but also was deeply concerned about its own standings as a superpower in the Asian playground in terms of regional influence and territorial integrity. The Qing Dynasty implemented many cautious defensive geopolitical strategies, aiming to preserve its influence and territory and avoid direct confrontation with the European powers, safeguarding its own sovereignty.

Internal Challenges and Administrative Focus

Administratively, China had its hands tied with the internal challenges like the Taiping Rebellion and the declining Qing Dynasty which diverted the government’s attention and resources towards these issues, away from external affairs. Qing began struggling in the administration of its vast territories, especially the western provinces where the Chinese grip was loosening due to growing European influence. This internal turmoil weakened the government's ability to respond to the Great Game effectively. Because of all that was happening, the Qing Dynasty chose to focus on preserving its authority in its own borders while also curbing the growing influence of external forces. This led to limited confrontations and the prioritisation of internal stability over external interactions.

Economic Constraints

A major factor that affected the ability of China to react in the Great Game was the weakening of its economy due to various factors. These factors were mainly concerned with the potential disruption of trade routes through Central Asia due to geopolitical tensions. China understood the importance of the trade routes but its economic priorities changed significantly due to the internal challenges, pressure of Western imperialism and the following Opium Wars, resulting in

further weakening of the Chinese economy. China thought it was best to protect its economic interests by maintaining stability in its border regions and avoiding any action which could further deteriorate its already declining economy.

Military Limitations and Strategy

Back in that period, the Chinese were of no match to the European giants it was going up against. Their military strengths were almost incomparable. Moreover, the Qing Dynasty diverted the majority of its army to curb the internal rebellions to maintain order in the Qing Empire. The dynasty's military strategy was defensive like in all other aspects, which aimed to protect its border frontiers and avoid pursuing territorial expansion. The growing Russian Empire from the North paired with the presence of the British army in South Asia put China in a very vulnerable spot, and forced China to rely mainly on diplomacy and alliances for its survival in the period.

Defensive Strategy and Long-term Focus

To sum it all up, China played the long game by implementing defensive strategies to get their empire in order first, before aiming towards wars with the European supergiants. To the best of its abilities, China prepared itself to withstand the evident rampage that was about to take place in Central Asia.

Chinese Timeline

Early 19th Century: Background and Context

- **1800s:** During this period, the Qing Dynasty is dealing with internal challenges, including economic difficulties, corruption, and uprisings. The Jiaqing Emperor (1796–1820) and then the Daoguang Emperor (1820–1850) oversee a period marked by significant internal and external pressures.

1810s: Rising External Pressures

- **1812-1814:** The Russo-Persian Wars lead to the signing of the Treaty of Gulistan (1813) and Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828). These treaties significantly increase Russian influence in Persia and the Caucasus. While China is not directly involved, the Qing government monitors these developments closely due to their potential impact on trade routes and regional stability.
- **1814:** The Qing Dynasty begins to be aware of shifting power dynamics in Central Asia. Although China's direct involvement is minimal, the potential for increased Russian influence in Persia and its implications for the Silk Road and trade routes become areas of concern.

1820s: Increased Geopolitical Interest

- **1821:** The Daoguang Emperor begins his reign. The Qing Dynasty is heavily focused on internal stability due to widespread unrest and the early stages of the First Opium War (1839-1842). External geopolitical concerns, including the rivalry between Britain and Russia, are secondary but monitored.
- **1824:** The British East India Company's consolidation in India and its influence in regions bordering Central Asia, such as Afghanistan, start to draw attention from the Qing government. The increasing British presence in Asia is noted, though China's response is largely reactive.
- **1828:** The Treaty of Turkmenchay, which ends the Russo-Turkish War, gives Russia significant territorial gains and consolidates its influence in Persia. The Qing Dynasty recognizes that these changes could affect regional stability and trade routes connected to China.
- **1829:** The Qing government begins to increase its awareness of British and Russian competition in Central Asia. However, internal challenges, including the rise of the White Lotus Rebellion, limit China's ability to actively engage in these geopolitical manoeuvres.

1830s: Direct Impacts and Strategic Concerns

- **1831:** The Qing Dynasty is engaged in various internal issues, including the spread of the Opium Wars and unrest in several provinces. The dynasty's limited capacity to engage directly in Central Asian politics means it is primarily focused on maintaining internal stability.
- **1834:** The British government becomes increasingly concerned about Russian expansion into Central Asia and Afghanistan. The British East India Company's policies and actions are noted by the Qing Dynasty, which recognizes the potential impact on regional stability and trade.
- **1835:** The Qing Dynasty is deeply embroiled in internal strife, including the early stages of the White Lotus Rebellion and other social disturbances. The focus on internal security restricts China's ability to respond proactively to external geopolitical changes.
- **1837:** The Siege of Herat becomes a significant event in the Great Game. Although China is not directly involved, the situation in Herat attracts attention due to its implications for regional stability and potential impacts on trade routes.
 - **Early 1837:** The Qing Dynasty observes the siege with concern. The possibility of increased Russian influence in Central Asia, which could impact trade routes through Afghanistan and Persia, is noted. However, China's ability to intervene or influence events is limited due to ongoing internal issues.
 - **June 1837:** The British government's decision to intervene in Herat reflects broader geopolitical concerns. The Qing Dynasty remains informed but remains

focused on domestic issues. The implications for regional trade and stability are considered, but direct involvement is not feasible.

- **September 1837:** As British forces prepare to intervene in the siege, the Qing government continues to monitor the situation. The indirect impact of the Great Game on China's regional trade and stability remains a point of concern, though the Qing Dynasty's direct involvement remains minimal.

RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE

Nicholas I and Russian Ambitions

Nicholas I, who ascended to the Russian throne in 1825, was a ruler shaped by his military ambition and unwavering commitment to discipline and pursuit of glory, both being principles which highly resonated within the Russian army. Under his leadership, Russia embarked on the ambitious campaign to conquer the Central Asian playground. This expansionist agenda had its roots in the early modern period, but it was Nicholas I who gained unprecedented momentum. The Great Game, which was a race between the British and the Russians to assert their dominance over Central Asia, was one of the major tests that Russia had to go through in order to grow and become the superpower it is today.

Political Motivations and Strategies

Politically, Russia's engagement in the Great Game was greatly driven by their desire to become a dominant power in Eurasia and counterbalance the growing influence in Central Asia. The Russians viewed the Khanates of Central Asia, particularly Khiva, both as threats and opportunities to grow their ambitions. These Khanates frequently raided Russian territories, plundering them and capturing slaves which undermined Russian regional authority. The deplorable treatment of Russian captives, by explorers like Captain Nikolai Muraviev, was a moral justification to the aggressive policies adopted by the Russians. However, beyond these immediate concerns, Russia's political strategy was deeply rooted in a broader vision to expand its influence southward towards Afghanistan and the Indian sub-continent. The strategic significance of India and Afghanistan became the key targets of Russian expansionist policies. The Siege of Herat was a very calculated effort for weakening the British influence in Afghanistan and also created a buffer zone of allied/subdued states along Russian borders.

Administrative Challenges

Administratively, the Russians faced a lot of challenges reintegrating their newly acquired Asian territories into their already huge empire with a diverse imperial structure. The expansionist ambitions demanded the establishment of effective governing bodies over the population, often resistant to Russian rule. The siege of Herat was not only a military operation aimed at crippling British power in Afghanistan but also a prelude to the administrative challenges Russia was bound to face in the region. The approach that Russia followed for the governance of the new territories involved the implementation of a bureaucratic structure to maintain order, manage locals and ensure stability in the territories. After Russia solidified its administration over Herat, it opened a gateway for the Russians which empowered them to increase Russian influence in

Afghanistan and make sure that the newly acquired territories played a role in strengthening the empire.

Economic Interests

From an economic standpoint, the Russian Empire was well aware of the wealth that was in store for them through the control of Central Asia and the potential access to the Indian markets. Afghanistan and its neighbouring regions were seen as passes for economic opportunities. By seeking control over Central Asia and the other territories, Russia not only aimed to secure robust trade routes into major markets, but also to disrupt the economic interests of the British in the region. The capture of Herat was more than just a simple military manoeuvre, but rather a strategic effort to facilitate Russian economic interests. It enhanced their ability to exert influence over trade and resource flows, making it an economic superpower.

Military Strategy and Expansion

The Russian expansion under Nicholas I was characterised by a strategy of aggressive expansion southward to extend its borders and influence into the Asian continent. The Russian army remained at the forefront of this expansion, motivated by their discipline and pursuit of glory. The Siege of Herat in 1837 was one of the many key military operations that Russia implemented as Herat was seen as a very important location in terms of acting as a major base for further Russian expansionist operations in Central Asia and potentially India. Capture of Herat solidified Russia's presence in the Asian playground and provided a launchpad for future campaigns in Asia and advancing Russian ambitions in the Great Game.

Strategic Vision and Legacy

The Russian Empire, being the main player in this game, was very strategic about its moves. Nicholas I understood the consequences of each move and was prepared thoroughly. The Russian desire to make Asia their land was the most crucial step for Russia to become the global goliath it wished to be. This dream fueled the Russians to an extent unimaginable, making the Great Game one of the best examples of the Russian potential and a reminder to the “superpowers” of the time who they were really up against.

Russian Timeline

1830s: Early Developments and Rising Tensions

- **1830**
 - **August 1830:** The Polish November Uprising against Russian rule begins. While not directly related to Central Asia, it diverts Russian attention and resources. The

suppression of this uprising is crucial for Russian domestic stability and affects its capacity to focus on Central Asian affairs.

- **1831**
 - **February 1831:** The Russian Empire crushes the Polish November Uprising. The suppression solidifies Russian control over Poland and enables Russia to redirect focus to expanding influence in Central Asia.
- **1833**
 - **15 January 1833:** The Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi is signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. The treaty allows Russia to control the straits of the Black Sea, affecting British strategic interests and the broader balance of power in the region.
- **1834**
 - **1 January 1834:** Tsar Nicholas I instructed Russian diplomats and military leaders to increase their focus on Central Asia, particularly in response to perceived British threats.
- **1836**
 - **1 March 1836:** Russia begins to actively explore opportunities for expanding its influence in Central Asia. This involves increasing diplomatic engagement and military presence in the region.
- **1837**
 - **April 1837:** The Siege of Herat begins. The British, led by Sir John Keane, are involved in a military campaign in Afghanistan, aiming to control Herat and influence the region. Russia, under Tsar Nicholas I, views this as a significant threat to its interests in Central Asia and begins to actively respond.
 - **May 1837:** Russian diplomats and military strategists start to address the implications of the British actions in Afghanistan, focusing on countering British influence and reinforcing Russian interests in the region.
- **1838**
 - **April 1838:** Russian diplomats issue formal protests against British military actions in Herat, demanding a reconsideration of British policies in the region.
 - **October 1838:** The British launch a full-scale invasion of Afghanistan, intensifying the geopolitical contest between Britain and Russia in Central Asia.

BRITISH PERSPECTIVE

British Concerns and Protective Measures

The British empire was one of the main players in the Great Game. They feared Russia's southward expansion would threaten India, their main source of trades and wealth. The growing Russian curiosity towards the territories surrounding India led to the British growing dangerously protective of India. It was now their high priority to ensure that their Indian territories remained in their inventory. The rivalry escalated due to the planned Indian March of Paul and the Russian invasions of Iran in 1804-1831. This now rang the alarm bells for the British empire. Their most prized territory at the risk of Russian invasion was their biggest fear. The atmosphere had slowly begun thickening as now both the empires were on a tightrope of distrust and a constant threat of war was now looming over them.

Initiation of the Great Game

It is believed that the Game started when the Governor-General of India, Lord William Bentick was tasked to establish a new route to Bukhara in 1830. The British empire's anxiety was further worsened as they knew that following the Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828) and Treaty of Adrianople (1829), Persia and the Ottoman empires would be forced to become procreates of Russia.

Buffer Zones and Strategic Alliances

The British aimed to create buffer zones in Central Asia, specifically including Turkey, Khanate of Khiva and Khanate of Bukhara. This was done in order to prevent the Russians from reaching their crown jewel, India. They attempted to create this in Afghanistan and Persia to serve as their first line of defence against the Russians.

Treaties and Alliances

Treaties and Alliances are the main opening gambit for both the empires. They entered into strategic treaties with the Afghans, Persians and several regional kings in Central Asia. It was pertinent for them to gain their loyalty and to have them as allies as they marched towards the impending threat.

Espionage Tactics

Espionage was also a common tactic utilised by the British Empires. In a game as crucial as this, it gave them the information required to control local politics and to strategise ahead of their Russian counterparts in an attempt to save their territories.

Importance of India

India was home to several extremely important trade routes that connected the British to the entire world. Losing control of India meant the beginning of the fall of the British empire. The British economy's foundations were laid in India's rich and wealthy soil and losing India would prove to be disastrous for the British.

Diplomatic and Military Strategies

To the British the Great Game had put India up for a gamble, it was at an extremely vulnerable state and the Russians could march in and seize control at any given moment. In order to combat this, they implemented a series of diplomatic manoeuvres, military campaigns and espionage activities which we now know and call as the Great Game.

Economic Considerations

Economic Interests in Asia

Prior to the Great Game, both the Russians and the British had vested economic interests in Asia. Both imperial powers viewed themselves as paragons of civilization and progress, attempting to civilise the barbaric horsemen of the Middle East and Central Asia. The British, since the advent of the Industrial Revolution, were in the race to acquire as much raw materials as possible to fuel their vast and developing industries.

Russian Approach

In enforcing this view, Russia employed a more direct vision, undertaking an aggressive campaign of conquest and negotiation in Central Asia against the Turkmen tribes—and the means often involved developing deep-rooted trade relationships. In the early 1800s, an important reason for sudden Russian involvement in Central Asia could be attributed to the systematic mistreatment of settled Russian merchants and businessmen and the use of slaves of Russian origin by the Khanates. The pressure of growing British influence in the region prompted Russia to refocus on the importance of the Russian economy in the Khanates managed by the merchants, who were, over time, being oppressed and excessively taxed by the authorities. Additionally, the Khanates, particularly the Khiva Khanate, also occasionally served as a hindrance to trade by delimiting the passage of Russian merchant caravans. Most importantly, however, Russian expansion in Central Asia created a market for Russian exports, while also serving as a key producer of cotton and other goods for the Russian markets. The Russians had,

for centuries, been accustomed to areas in Asia through trade routes of the Silk Road, going as far as Xinjiang in China.

British Tactics

The British, on the contrary, were more underhanded with their tactics. The East India Company, which lurked in Asia from the early modern century, performed various exploratory and trade missions, scouting for potential prospects, and in this, they found their crown jewel of the Indian Subcontinent and the bordering Afghanistan. Britain and her companies had grand aims for commerce in Asia, seeking to not only widen sea and land trade routes, but to also prop up a new economic system based on the British free-market model. Additionally, the unearthing of petroleum reserves in Central Asia and Siberia, traditionally under Russian dominance, was too great of an economic opportunity to go unnoticed by England. However, aggressive Russian expansion in various parts of Asia and its backing of regional hostile dynasties such as the Qajars in Persia threatened British aims. Moreover, the looming threat of fiercely independent Pashtun tribes and the Persian Empire served to endanger the Crown's economic interests in the Indian Subcontinent.

British Timeline

Early 19th Century: Background and Context

- **1801:** The Act of Union merges Great Britain and Ireland into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. This new political entity aims to consolidate British power and influence globally, particularly in Asia.
- **1806:** The British East India Company, which has substantial control over the Indian subcontinent, begins to expand its political and military influence in the region.

1809-1815: The Anglo-Russian Rivalry Begins

- **1809:** The British and Russian Empires begin to vie for influence in Central Asia. British interest in the region is driven by the desire to secure trade routes and prevent Russian encroachment into areas that could threaten British interests in India.
- **1813-1814:** The Russian Empire's advance into Persia causes concern in Britain. The Treaty of Gulistan (1813) and the Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828) end the Russo-Persian Wars and significantly increased Russian control over Persia's northern territories. Britain, alarmed by the expanding Russian influence, starts to reassess its strategy in the region.

1820s: Expansion and Influence

- **1821:** The British establish their presence in the Persian Gulf, reinforcing their influence in the region and countering Russian expansionism.
- **1823:** The British and Persian governments sign the Treaty of Tehran, where Britain acknowledges Persian sovereignty over Herat in return for Persian assurance not to align with Russia against British interests.
- **1828:** The Treaty of Turkmenchay marks the end of the Russo-Turkish War. This treaty gives Russia significant concessions and further solidifies its influence in Persia. The British are concerned about the potential Russian threat to their Indian territories and start intensifying their efforts to counterbalance Russian moves.

1830s: Tensions Escalate

- **1830:** The British East India Company, led by Lord William Bentinck, consolidates British control over the Indian subcontinent. This consolidation involves both political and military manoeuvres, strengthening the British position in South Asia.
- **1833:** The British government becomes increasingly concerned about the growing Russian presence in Central Asia and its potential impact on British interests in India. The British began to explore ways to exert influence over Afghanistan and Persia to counteract Russian expansion.
- **1834:** The British dispatched Sir John Macdonald as an envoy to the Afghan court. Macdonald's mission is to negotiate and secure British interests in Afghanistan, reflecting the strategic importance Britain places on the region.

Political Considerations

There were a series of political games being played at home and in regions under the control of the British and Russian Empires.

Since the Napoleonic Wars, the British kept a watchful eye on Asia, prompting their quick response during the Great Game. The French and the Russians began making moves in the continent, the latter particularly in the Caucasus. However, this functioned merely as a ruse to target their other rival, the Ottomans, but nevertheless served to activate the British.

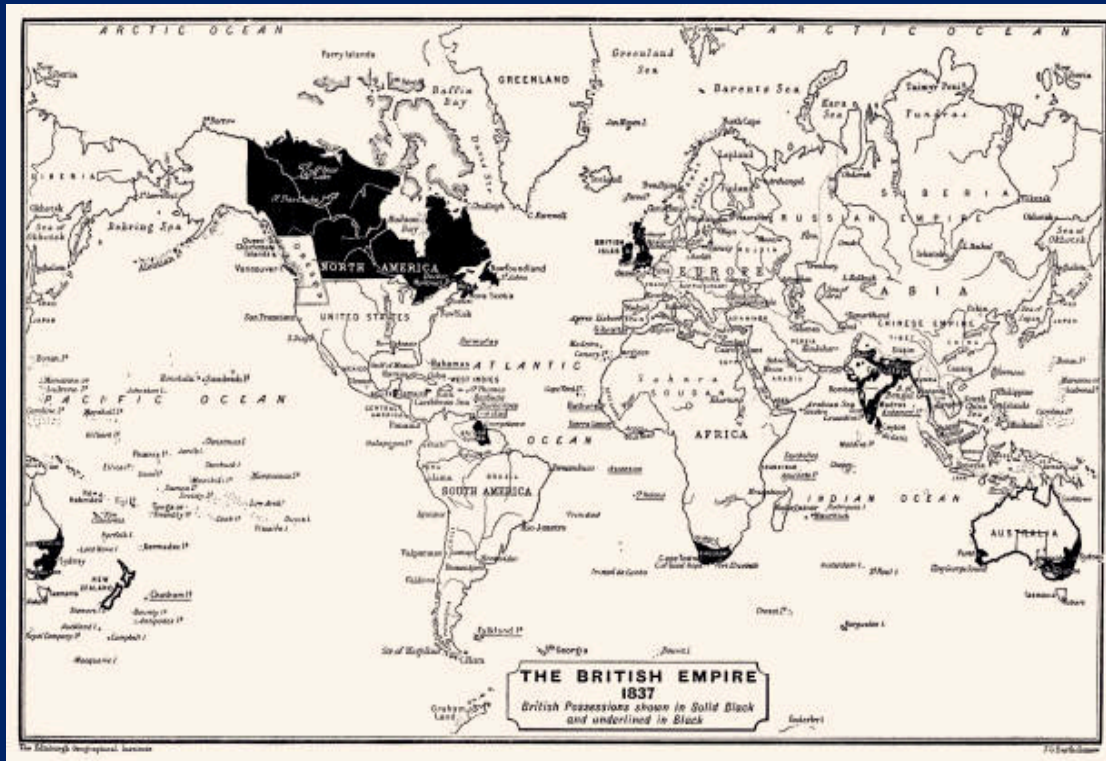
After the disastrous performance of the Qajars in the Russo-Persian War of 1826-1828, the Tsardom exploited the situation and forced Persia to secede territories to the Russians as part of the Treaty of Turkmenchay, 1828. Essentially, Russia established itself as a dominant partner in the relationship. This Russian foothold would be a thorn on Britain's feet, as it would once again

endanger the traditional Persian stronghold in Afghanistan-Herat-a province that had only been freed in the recent historical past. The British viewed Herat as a key buffer state, fundamental to protecting its interests in India. Another political manoeuvre carried out by the Russians was the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829, post the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829, which ended in Russian victory. The Treaty not only granted Russia control over areas near the Black Sea and the Danube, but also cost the Ottomans severely in regions such as the Balkans and the Caucasus-the latter having been part of Russia's agenda for a long time. Moreover, the British also possessed plans to reduce the Persians and the Ottomans themselves to buffer states in order to prevent the Russians from establishing ports along the Indian Ocean such that they lacked the ability to compete with the British navally.

The British parliament, divided on the matter (between those who favoured an aggressive approach, belonging to the forward bloc, and those who favoured a defensive approach), scrambled for ideas, while corporations such as the East India Company made inroads into regions of dispute between the two imperialist powers.

The tussle between the two would manifest in the form of political confrontations and proxy conflicts, not just between the British and Russian governments, but also between regional and military governors of the two sides in the provinces, who were more eager to prove their loyalty to the nation.

Geographical Considerations



British Empire in 1837- the Indian Subcontinent, their crown jewel, their stronghold in Asia

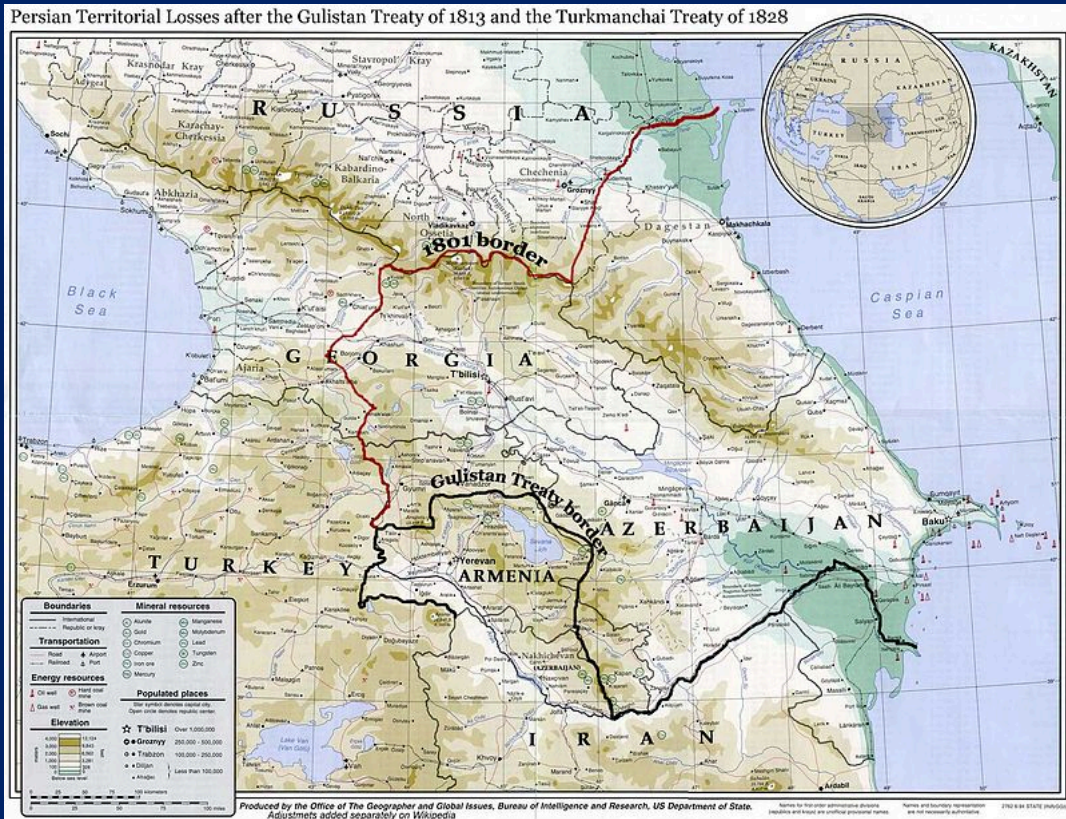


Map of the Russian Empire in 1830, signified by the colour green

There were four major empires of note in the conflict involved in Asia at the time- The Russian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the British Empire and the Persian Empire.

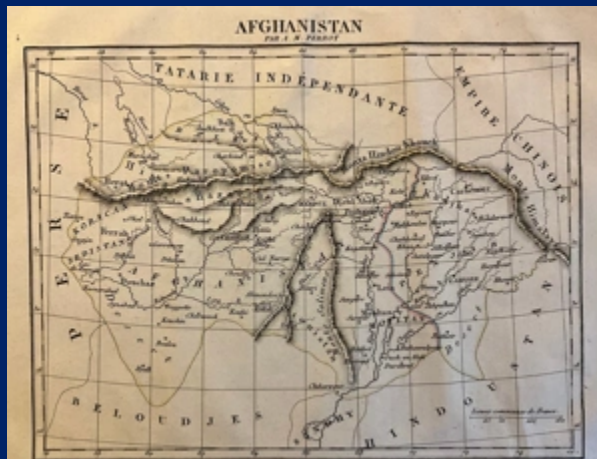
The British Empire only had complete and direct control over the Indian Subcontinent, but continued to operate as an important presence through the East India Company, while also beginning the struggle for Burma.

The Qajars were in a particularly poor state, as their losses in the Russo-Persian Wars of 1804-1813 and 1828-1829, culminating in the Treaties of Gulistan and Turkmenchay, resulted in the former ceding vast tracts of territory. The territories in question include- Dagestan, Georgia, a majority of the South Caucasus, Armenia, and most of Azerbaijan.



Territorial losses of the Persians over 1813-1829

These losses in territory contributed to Persia's added vigour while attempting to re-assert dominance over the fiercely independent Afghanistan.



The Ottoman Empire, also faced a fate similar to that of the Persians. While they initially had tight control over a vast portion of the Balkans, the Middle East (including the Arabian

Peninsula), the Caucasus and the ports along the Black Sea and the Danube, this would not be the case anymore.

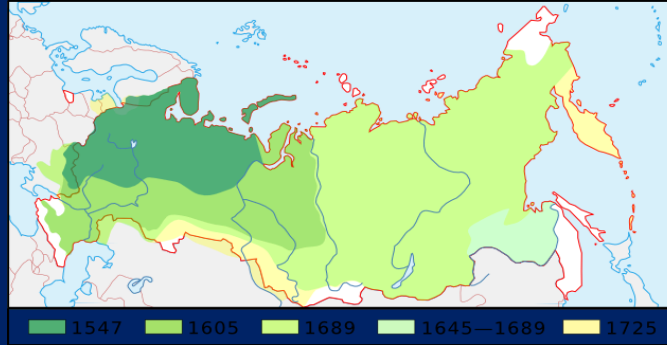


The Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 thinned out Ottoman presence along the shores of the Black Sea and the Danube River, while losing control over territories that comprise modern day Georgia, Armenia, and Romania.



A map of Asia in 1825, as can be observed, Central Asia is largely independent

Central Asia, ruled over by the various feuding Khanates would, from 1825 onwards, face a significant reduction in territory held due to Russian intervention. The Russians, hugely successful from the 1500s onwards, gaining at the cost of a variety of major empires, seek to increase their influence over Asia.



Russian Expansion, 1725 onwards

Significance of Freeze Date

Freeze Date - 12th November 1837

In November 1837, the Siege of Herat took a pivotal turn with several key developments. On the 12th, Shah Shuja, the deposed Afghan ruler who had allied with the British, arrived in Herat. His arrival was meant to strengthen British claims and reinforce their influence in the region by positioning him as a key player in Afghanistan's future. This move not only heightened the strategic importance of the siege but also intensified the ongoing rivalry between the British and Russian empires. The British were determined to capture Herat and reinstall Shah Shuja to secure their foothold in Afghanistan and block Russian ambitions. As tensions rose, the events of November 1837 underscored the high-stakes geopolitical manoeuvring of the Great Game, marking a crucial moment in the contest for control over Central Asia.

Freeze Date and Current Status of Committee

Freeze Date - 12th November 1837

Current Status of the World in the Great Game on 12th November 1837:

As of 12th November 1837, the world is on the brink of significant conflict as tensions in Central Asia reach a fever pitch. The Siege of Herat is underway, with Persian forces, bolstered by Russian support, attempting to seize control of the strategically vital Afghan city from British influence. The British

Empire, concerned about Russian expansionism and its impact on their interests in India, is covertly supporting Herat's defence. This period marks a critical juncture in the Great Game, with both empires engaging in intense diplomatic manoeuvring and military posturing. The region is fraught with instability, and the actions of key players in the coming days could determine the balance of power in Central Asia for years to come.

Points to Note

- For the purposes of this committee, we will consider that all portfolios are alive and in possession of their respective position powers throughout the timeline of the committee and irrespective of their original birth or death dates.
- The submission of a position paper has not been made mandatory however if you wish to submit one for brownie points, feel free to send it in to this email id : ccc.dmun24@gmail.com
- All directives, communiqués, press releases and other forms of documentation made during committee will also have to be sent to ccc.dmun24@gmail.com .
- Chits will not be allowed to be sent via email and must be written on pieces of paper.
- Please do keep in mind your portfolio powers as you plan to send in documentation that influences the crisis arc.
- Use of inappropriate language and being disrespectful in committee will not be tolerated and strict action will be taken against anyone who does not follow this norm.

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