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978-0-521-47445-0 - Transition to Global Rivalry: Alliance Diplomacy and the Quadruple Entente, 1895–1907

John Albert White

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During the years before the First World War, the realignment of world powers resulted in agreements concluded in 1904 and 1907 between Britain, France, Russia, and Japan. John Albert White terms this a Quadruple Entente, a more accurate and complete description than the more commonly used Triple Entente, which omits Japan. His more inclusive view leaves undisturbed the conception of Europe as the center of political gravity, but at the same time calls proper attention to the enhanced role which Japan had won through her victories in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars and by careful management of her entry into the larger family of nations. This wider perspective on the crucial pre-war years shows how, in its political context as well as its geographical terrain and its general impact, the First World War was a world war in every sense.

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To
Joyce Tate White

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Preface

The focus of this narrative is the era which was ushered in by the rise to world stature of Germany, Japan, and the United States, by the victory of Japan in the war with Russia, and by the concurrent shift in the balance of power out of which there emerged a “diplomatic revolution.” This gave rise to the formation of a Quadruple Entente composed of Britain, France, Russia, and Japan. The immediate object of this coalition was to achieve general stability by creating a counterpoise to the Triple Alliance consisting of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and Italy. While Germany and Japan both had contributed to the deterioration of the existing order, Japan had ultimately found it advantageous to adhere to and support the new international system.

This account is both a parallel and a sequel to my *The Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War* published in 1964 by Princeton University Press. Both deal with aspects of the major political transformation of the era, the “diplomatic revolution.” The rivalry of the two coalitions became one of the primary factors leading to the first world war. Earlier accounts of this mutation have described the new coalition as a “Triple Entente,” i.e., an association of Britain, France, and Russia. This, however, did not adequately take account either of the character of the contemporary international order or of the role in its creation of either Russia or Japan. It is the object of this account to incorporate these aspects of the current conditions and to portray the shifting relationships of the principal participants and the nature of the political environment this created.

The characterization of these proceedings in a correct perspective requires taking into account some of the major world developments which influenced the international outlook during this period. One of these, the event which was central to the theme of this study, was the Anglo-Russian rivalry as it unfolded in the contested region of Central Asia and the Indian frontier, particularly as it was modified by the developments of the period which saw the shift in the balance of power. Closely related to this was the dynamic growth and expansion of German power and influence on the European continent, on the oceans of the world, and in the Middle

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and Far East. Also related to this change in the international balance of power, particularly with respect to Russia and her colonial interests, was the role of Japan, a newcomer to the company of world powers. After having first opposed the existing order in the Far East by upsetting the existing balance of power there, Japan had joined and supported the new order.

This intensifying struggle portended not only a further extension of the great power conflict into Asia but a reaction to it in those regions. It was an era in which western style nationalism came to play an increasingly more important part in the life of that area of the world and in which this reinforced indigenous tendencies toward ethnic and cultural self-assertion as well as political self-determination. Accordingly, an appropriate allotment of attention has been directed to those regions which, in addition to Europe and its eastern and southeastern margins, were claiming an increasing share of consideration from the makers of foreign policy in London, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere.

A factor which has made a reconsideration of this subject particularly appropriate is the circumstance that the last full treatment of it in English was in 1939 when Rogers Platt Churchill published *The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907*. This was before the archives of Britain, France, and Japan had been opened for these years. It was also before these nations as well as the Soviet Union had opened and published additional source materials which have made possible a much more comprehensive understanding of this period and its implications for subsequent events.

More recently several studies have been made in closely allied fields. One of these was by Ian Nish, *The Origin of the Russo-Japanese War*, London, 1985. Another was by Anatolii Venediktovich Ignat'ev, whose previous publications have also encompassed the decade following his present work. His *Vneshniaia politika Rossii v 1905–1907 gg.* [The Foreign Policy of Russia, 1905–1907], Moscow, 1986, deals with the Anglo-Russian agreement in the context of the major diplomatic events of these years.

A work dealing more specifically and extensively with the subject is that of Alevtina Fedorovna Ostal'tseva, who has also written several articles on the subject. Her *Anglo-russkoe soglasenie 1907 goda; vliianie russko-iaponskoi voiny i revoliutsii 1905–1907 godov na vneshniuiu politiku tsarizma i na peregruppirovku evropeiskikh derzhav* [The Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907: The Influence of the Russo-Japanese War and the Revolution of 1905–1907 on the Foreign Policy of Tsarism and on the Regrouping of the European Powers], was published in Saratov, 1977. Like Ignat'ev, the author has used a considerable number of Soviet

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sources and in this respect at least has supplemented all available non-Russian versions of the subject. She has also had access to both Russian and foreign published materials.

A further incentive for reexamining this subject has been provided by the recent course of events in the Middle East, one of the principal geographical centers of interest of this study. Developments culminating there in the late 1970s have given the present a discernible sense of continuity with the earlier period. The rise of a powerful Muslim religious movement and, following the departure of the Shah of Iran, the accession to power of Ayatolla Ruholla Khomeini and his successors emphasize the continuity of the struggle for national identity which was so prominent a factor in Iran in 1906.

An expression of special appreciation must be made to a number of persons and institutions which have helped in special ways to make available the materials used in this study. These include the University of Hawaii which has generously made it possible through its existing facilities as well as special purchases and inter-institutional loans to have access to a considerable portion of the necessary materials. Many of these were made accessible with the able assistance of Mrs. Patricia Polansky, the Russian Librarian, who also prepared the bibliography. In Britain the Public Record Office Library, the Foreign Office Library, and the India Office Library liberally permitted me the use of their extensive collections. In the United States the library resources of the University of California at Berkeley and of Columbia University were kindly made available to me.

Special mention must also be made of the contribution to this endeavor on the part of the Rockefeller Foundation which generously helped to make possible access both to the archival and library resources of Japan and to those of Britain. The British collections include those noted above as well as those at Cambridge University and the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle, the latter made available through the intermediary of my late colleague and friend, Professor Arthur J. Marder. The use of the ample and uniquely significant papers of Sir Arthur Nicolson, the First Lord Carnock, was made possible with the help of Miss Violet Conolly of the British Foreign Office and with the special permission of his son, Sir Harold Nicolson. These papers were then in the Foreign Office Library.

The valuable resources of the Japanese Foreign Office were used with the permission and help of Mr. Kurihara Ken and the kindly guidance of Mr. Oyama Azusa, the grandson of Marshal Oyama Iwao. My colleagues and friends, Professor Yong-ho Choe, who made possible my use of some of the materials relating to Korea, and Professor John J. Stephan and

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Professor Robert Valliant who kindly read the entire manuscript and made valuable suggestions, are responsible for many of the positive features of this study.

The simplest and most convenient practices have been adopted in the composition of the narrative. The standard systems of romanization and transliteration have been used. Also, since the Russian events had to be coordinated with those of other nations, all Russian dates, unless otherwise indicated, are given in the new style. Finally, the use of the name Persia rather than the currently more accurate Iran has been adopted in the narrative as a matter of convenience. Since all contemporary references and materials use Persia and since the subject matter deals with a period preceding the Iranian adoption of the present usage, this seemed to be a reasonable simplification.

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A brief chronology of the formation of the Quadruple Entente

1896

- Jan. 3 Kruger telegram (Emperor Wilhelm to President Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger of the South African Republic)
- June 3 Russo-Chinese alliance
- Sept. 8 Contract signed for construction and operation of Chinese Eastern Railway
- Sept. 9 Briner timber concession (N. Korea) signed

1897

- June 20 British Diamond Jubilee anniversary celebration
- Nov. 14 Germany occupied Tsingtao
- Dec. 19 Russia occupied Port Arthur

1898

- Jan. Salisbury sought accommodation with Russia
- Mar. Russo-Korean Bank opened
- Mar. 28 German naval law passed by Reichstag
- Apr. 4 American China Development Company concession for Hankow–Canton railway
- May 1 US defeated Spanish squadron at Manila Bay
- June 11 Central Asian Railway reached Tashkent
- July 1 China lease of Weihaiwei to Britain
- July 6 Sino-Russian supplementary agreements on leased territory and South Manchurian Railway
- Dec. 18 First Russian train reached Kushka Post on Afghan frontier
- Dec. 30 Lord Curzon reached Bombay to become viceroy of India

1899

- Jan. 23 British–Kuwait (Sheikh Mubarak) mutual guarantees
- Apr. 28 Anglo-Russian (Scott–Murav'ev) agreement on spheres in China
- July 12 Russia made Dalny a free port
- Sept. 6 First Hay “open door” notes

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- Nov. 27 German preliminary agreement for a Konia–Persian Gulf railway
- Dec. 26 Extension of prohibition on railway construction in Persia to 1910
- 1900
- Jan. 20 Russian loan to Persia
- Feb. 14 Sailing of merchant ship Kornilov from Odessa to Persian Gulf announced
- Mar. 31 Russian–Ottoman railway agreement on Black Sea region
- June 12 Second German naval law
- July 3 Second Hay “open door” notes
- Oct. 16 Anglo–German “Yangtze agreement”
- Nov. 12 Lansdowne succeeded Salisbury as minister of foreign affairs
- Nov. 22 Russian consulate opened in Bombay
- Dec. 14,16 Franco–Italian (Barrère–Venosta) correspondence on African interests
- 1901
- Feb. 8 Russian condition for withdrawal from Manchuria presented to China
- May 28 William Knox D’Arcy concession granted for oil exploitation in Persia
- Sept. 7 Boxer Protocol concluded
- Nov. 7 Li Hung-chang died
- 1902
- Jan. 30 Anglo–Japanese alliance concluded
- 1903
- Mar. 5 Bagdad Railway created in final concession
- Mar. 8 First passenger train reached Dalny
- Apr. 22 British cabinet decision against participation in Bagdad Railway
- July 28 Japanese government sounded out Russian government on opening negotiations
- Aug. 12 Viceroyalty of the (Russian) Far East established
- Aug. 28 Witte dismissed as minister of finance
- Oct. 8 United States and Japan concluded treaties with China for opening for commerce of towns in Manchuria (Mukden, Tatungkou, and Antung)
- Oct. 28–31 Lamsdorf in Paris (possibly discussed prospective Anglo–Russian and Russo–Japanese agreements)
- Nov. 16 Curzon departed Karachi for Persian Gulf tour (returned Dec. 7, 1903)

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Chronology

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1904

- Jan. 1 British proposals to Russia – last before war
 Feb. 10 Third Hay “open door” notes
 Apr. 14 King Edward discussed Anglo-Russian relations with Izvolsky in Copenhagen
 July 28 Russo-German commercial treaty revised and renewed
 Aug. 12 Birth of Aleksei Nikolaevich, heir to the Russian throne
 Oct. 13 Lamsdorf instructions for the new minister in Teheran, A. N. Speyer
 Oct. 21–22 North Sea incident (Dogger Bank)
 Nov. 25 Anglo-Russian agreement to submit the North Sea incident to an international committee which met Dec. 22, 1904–Feb. 25, 1905

1905

- Jan. 13 Fourth Hay “open door” notes
 July 24 Björkö agreement signed by German and Russian emperors
 Aug. 12 Anglo-Japanese alliance renewed
 Aug. 28 First All-Russian Muslim Congress at Nizhnii Novgorod (Gorky) during the fair
 Sept. 27 Anglo-Japanese alliance published
 Oct. 30 Imperial manifesto on Russian government reorganization
 Nov. 25 Loicq de Lobel proposal for a railway into northeastern Siberia to connect with North America

1906

- Jan. 1 Orenburg–Tashkent railway opened for regular traffic
 Jan. 12 British general election
 Jan. 15 Algeciras Conference begins (to Apr. 7)
 Feb. 10 First British dreadnought launched
 Apr. 6 Witte formally notified of German decision against granting a loan
 Apr. 16 Franco-Russian loan agreement signed
 Apr. 21 Revised Franco-Russian military convention signed in Paris
 May 12 Izvolsky became minister of foreign affairs
 May 28 Nicolson reached St. Petersburg as ambassador
 June 21 Stolypin became chairman of the Council of Ministries
 July 20 Wallace went to St. Petersburg (remained until late November)
 July 20, 25 Aehrenthal letters to Goluchowski proposing concert of the three eastern monarchies
 Oct. 7 Persian Majlis opened by Shah

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Nov. 16 Bülow, in Reichstag speech, accused powers of “encirclement”

1907

Feb. 18 Last phase of Russo-Japanese negotiations started

Feb. 20 Russian proposals regarding Persia to Britain and Germany

May 15 Anglo-Spanish and Franco-Spanish exchange of notes concerning status quo in western Mediterranean–Atlantic coastal area

June 10 Franco-Japanese agreement concluded at Paris

June 13 Russo-Japanese railway demarcation in Manchuria

June 22 New regulations for Persian Discount and Loan Bank approved by Russian Emperor

July 30 Russo-Japanese treaty concluded

Aug. 3–6 Russo-German conference at Swinemünde

Aug. 31 Anglo-Russian agreement concluded

Oct. 29 Russo-German protocol guaranteeing their territorial status quo in the Baltic

Nov. 2 Treaty of Christiania (Oslo) guaranteeing integrity of Norway

Dec. 13 Russian ministerial conference in which Izvolsky requested reaffirmation of the treaty of August 31 with Britain

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Abbreviations

<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<i>AHY</i>	<i>Austrian History Yearbook</i>
<i>AMRR</i>	<i>American Monthly Review of Reviews</i>
<i>APG</i>	<i>Archiv für Politik und Geschichte</i>
<i>BD</i>	Great Britain. Foreign Office. <i>British documents on the origins of the war, 1898–1914</i> , 11 vols., London, 1926–38
<i>BFSP</i>	<i>British and Foreign State Papers</i>
<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
<i>BM</i>	<i>Berliner Monatshefte für Internationale Aufklärung</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>CDS</i>	Alexander [Aleksandr Feliksovich] Meyendorff, <i>Correspondence de M. de Staal, 1884–1900</i> , 2 vols., Paris, 1929
<i>CHJ</i>	<i>Cambridge Historical Journal</i>
<i>CID</i>	Committee of Imperial Defence
<i>CJH</i>	<i>Canadian Journal of History</i>
<i>CMRS</i>	<i>Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Contemporary Review</i>
<i>CSPSR</i>	<i>Chinese Social and Political Science Review</i>
<i>DDAM</i>	France Ministère des Affaires Etrangères. <i>Documents diplomatiques, affaires du Maroc, 1901–1905</i> , Paris, 1905
<i>DDF</i>	France Ministère des Affaires Etrangères. <i>Documents diplomatiques, Français (1871–1914)</i> , 2nd series, 14 vols., Paris, 1930–55
<i>EHR</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>FO</i>	Foreign Office. Great Britain
<i>GJ</i>	<i>Geographical Journal</i>
<i>GP</i>	Germany Auswärtiges Amt. <i>Die grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871–1914</i> , 54 vols., Berlin, 1922–27
<i>H</i>	<i>History</i>
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
<i>HZ</i>	<i>Historische Zeitung</i>
<i>IG</i>	India Government

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IO	India Office
IOL	India Office Library
ISSR	<i>Istoriia SSR</i>
IZ	<i>Istoricheskie zapiski</i>
IZh	<i>Istoricheskii zhurnal</i>
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
JCEA	<i>Journal of Central European Affairs</i>
JCH	<i>Journal of Contemporary History</i>
JFO	Japan. Foreign Office
JMH	<i>Journal of Modern History</i>
JRCAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</i>
KA	<i>Krasnyi arkhiv</i>
LA	<i>Living Age</i>
LS	<i>Letopis severa</i>
M	<i>Mizan</i>
MAS	<i>Modern Asian Studies</i>
MES	<i>Middle Eastern Studies</i>
MM	<i>Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen</i>
MN	<i>Monumenta Nipponica</i>
MVHR	<i>Mississippi Valley Historical Review</i>
MZ	<i>Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn</i>
NAR	<i>North American Review</i>
NC	<i>Nineteenth Century and After (now Twentieth Century)</i>
NGB	Japan. Foreign Office <i>Nihon Gaiko Bunsho</i>
NV	<i>Novyi Vostok</i>
PC	Harvard University Committee on Regional Studies <i>Papers on China</i>
PCAS	<i>Proceedings of the Central Asian Society</i>
PHR	<i>Pacific Historical Review</i>
PP	<i>Past and Present</i>
PRGS	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society</i>
PRO	Public Record Office
<i>Protocols</i>	Japan. Foreign Office. <i>Protocols of the Peace conference between Japan and Russia</i>
PSQ	<i>Political Science Quarterly</i>
QR	<i>Quarterly Review</i>
RDM	<i>Revue des Deux Mondes</i>
RF	E.A. Preobrazhensky and B.A. Romanov (eds.), <i>Russkie finansy i evropeiskaia birzha v 1904–1906 gg.</i> , Moscow, 1926
RH	<i>Russian History</i>
RHD	<i>Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique</i>

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<i>R-IV</i>	USSR Central Archives. <i>Russko-Iaponskaia voina; iz dnevnikov A. N. Kuropatkina i N. P. Linevicha</i> , Leningrad, 1925
<i>SEER</i>	<i>Slavonic and East European Review</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Slavic Review</i> (formerly <i>American Slavic and East European Review</i>)
<i>SV</i>	<i>Sovetskoe vostokovedenie</i>
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>USFR</i>	United States. Dept. of State. <i>Papers relating to the foreign relations of the United States</i>
<i>VI</i>	<i>Voprosy istorii</i>
<i>VLU</i>	<i>Vestnik Leningradskogo universiteta Seriia istorii, iazyka i literatury</i>

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