

TREATY OF NIBUCHU (1689)[†]

28th year of Kang Xi, 7th month, 24th day [7th September 1689; August 27, O.S.]

The Great Emperor of China, having appointed as Imperial Border-Defining Commissioners SUO-E-TU [Songgotu; Russ: Sag-mu-tu], Commander of the Imperial Body Guard, Grand Secretary, and Councillor of State; and TONG GUOGANG [Russ: Tum-ke-kam], Grand Secretary, Prince of the First Rank, Banner Corps Commander, and Uncle of the Emperor; [as well as] LANG TAN [Russ: Lam-tan], Banner Corps Commander; BANDA-ER-SHA, Banner Corps Commander; SA-BU-SU, Garrison Commander of Heilongjiang; MA-LA, Captain-General of the Guards; and WEN DA, Vice-President of the Li-fan Yuan:^{*}

And the Grand Dukes [Ch: Jun-zhu] JOANN ALEXEEVITCH and PETER ALEXEEVITCH, by the Grace of God rulers of all the Russias, Great, Small, and White; successors to their ancestors as autocrats of many lands on the frontiers, Eastern, Western, and Northern; having appointed as their Commissioners THEODORUS ALEXEEVITCH GOLOVIN, Minister of the Presence and Governor-General of Briansk [Chinese: Bo-ling-si-ke]; IVAN ASTAFFJEVITCH VLASOFF, Minister of the Household and Governor-General of Elatomsk [Ch: I-la-tuo-mu-si-ke]; and SEMËN KORNITSKY, of the Orthodox Church;

The envoys of the two countries having met near Nerchinsk to settle troublesome matters concerning the crossing of the frontiers by hunters of the two Empires in pursuit of game, mutual killings, and abductions; and to fix clearly the boundary between China and Russia, with a view to perpetuating peaceful relations between them; have, on the twenty-fourth day, seventh moon, 28th year of Kang Xi, agreed upon the following Articles: —

Article I.

The river Ge-er-bi-qi [Russ: Gorbitza], which joins the Hei-long [Russ: Schilka] from its left side near the river Chao-er-na — or Wu-lun-mu in the Tartar language [Russ: Tchernaya] — is to form the boundary between the two countries. The boundary from the

[†] The present treaty was completed in five languages—Latin, Manchu, Chinese, Mongolian and Russian—with the help of the Jesuit missionaries Gerbillon and Pereira. The versions vary considerably in both language and the number and ordering of the articles. The first version given here is from a Chinese translation from the Latin text found in the first volume of *Zhong-Wai Jiu Yuezhang Huibian* [Beijing, 1957]. Chinese-language translations of the Russian and Manchu texts may also be found there. The second version is translated from the Russian text by a member of the old Chinese Customs Service, and may be found in: Inspectorate General of Customs, China, *Treaties, Conventions, etc. Between China and Foreign States*. [Shanghai, 1917]

For accounts of the background and negotiating process, see the entry under Songgotu in Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, p. 665, and Ch. V, “The Treaty of Nerchinsk: An End and a Beginning,” in Mancall, *Russia and China: Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728* [Harvard, 1971].

^{*} Only three Qing representatives are named in the Russian/English text in the Maritime Customs collection: 1) Suo-e-tu, 2) Tong Guogang, and 3) Lang Tan.

source of that river to the sea will run along the top of the Da Xing-an-ling mountain chain: the land and all the rivers or streams flowing from the southern [slope] of these mountains to join the Hei-long [Russ: Amur] shall be under the administration of China, while the land and all the rivers flowing from the northern side of these mountains shall be under the jurisdiction of Russia. As to the rivers and lands which lie between the river Wu-di [Russ: Oud] and the aforesaid mountains, the question of how to divide them is to remain undecided for now. When the Ambassadors of both sides have returned to their respective countries, and after detailed investigation, the question will be decided either by the sending of Envoys or by written correspondence.

Also, the river E-er-gu-na [Russ: Argun], which flows into the Hei-long, will form the frontier along its whole length. All territory on the south bank belongs to China; all on the north bank to Russia. All habitations at the mouth of the Mo-li-le-ke river on the south side of the E-er-gu-na will be moved to the north side.

Article II.

The fortified town at Ya-ke-sa [Albazin], built by the Russians, is to be completely demolished, and the people residing there, with all military and other stores and equipment are to be moved, unhindered, into Russian territory.

Those from hunting households of the two Empires, no matter for what reason, are not allowed to cross the fixed boundary at will. If one or two worthless persons, for purposes of hunting or thievery, presumptuously cross the boundary, they are to be arrested and handed back to the domestic officials of their respective sides and, once their case has been clarified, immediately punished according to law. If ten or more [larger groups of] persons cross the boundary and assemble, whether armed for hunting or for killing people and plundering, this must be reported to the Emperors of the two countries and they must be punished with the death penalty for their crime. Crimes and excesses committed by a few [private] persons on the frontier must definitely not be permitted to become the cause for war, even less for bloodshed.

Article III.

All the issues which may have occurred prior to this Treaty will be forgotten. But, now that perpetual peace has been established between the two Empires, if in future there are fugitives, neither side will take them in, but must apprehend and return them.

Article IV.

Russians presently in China and Chinese presently in Russia, will be treated as in the past.

Article V.

From the date of this Peace Treaty, any subject of either nation carrying a passport may come and go across the frontier and may carry on commerce in both markets.

ARTICLE VI.

Now that peace has been established, the two countries will forever maintain friendly relations, and henceforward all frontier disagreements will be done away with, for if both sides seriously adhere to the treaty clauses, controversies cannot arise.

The Commissioners of the two countries have each signed and sealed the collated treaty texts, and each retains both an original and a copy.

This treaty will be engraved in the Chinese, Russian and Latin languages in stone[s?], to be set up on the boundary between the two countries, to serve forever as boundary marker[s].

Kang Xi 28th year, 7th moon, 24th day

August 27th, 1689 by the Russian calendar.

Done at Nibuchu.

TREATY OF NERCHINSK (1689).

(Signed 27th August 1689.)

Their Majesties the Grand Dukes JOANN ALEXEEVITCH and PETER ALEXEEVITCH, by the Grace of God [Joint] Emperors, Czars, and Autocrats of all the Russias, Great, Small, and White; Emperors and Lords over, and successors from immediate and remote ancestors to the Crowns of, many Kingdoms and Countries, Eastern, Western, and Northern; having appointed as their Envoys and Plenipotentiaries THEODORUS ALEXEEVITCH GOLOVIN, Minister of the Presence and Governor-General of Briansk; IVAN ASTAFFJEVITCH VLASOFF, Minister of the Household and Governor-General of Elatomsk; and SEMĚN KORNITSKY, Deacon [of the Orthodox Church];

And His Majesty the Bogdokhan (*i.e.*, Heavenly-appointed Ruler) of China, Supreme Ruler of Great Asiatic Countries, the Most Powerful Monarch, Wisest Ruler, Exponent of Heaven's Law, Most Enlightened Noble, entrusted by Heaven with the government of China for the welfare and glory of its people, having appointed as his Envoys SAG-MU-TU, Commander of the Imperial Body Guard, Grand Secretary, and Councillor of State; TUM-KE-KAM, Grand Secretary, Prince of the First Rank, Commander of Banner Corps, and Member of the Imperial Clan; and LAM-TAN, Commander of Banner Corps, etc.:

And the aforesaid Envoys having met near Nerchinsk, they have agreed upon the following Articles: —

ARTICLE I.

The river Gorbitza, which joins the Schilka from its left side near the river Tchernaya, is to form the boundary between the two Empires. The boundary from the source of that river to the sea will run along the top of the mountain chain [in which the river rises]. The jurisdiction of the two Empires will be divided in such a way that all the rivers or streams flowing from the southern slope of these mountains to join the Amur shall belong to the Empire of China [*lit.* of Han], while all the rivers flowing down from the other [or northern] side of these mountains shall be similarly under the rule of His Majesty the Czar of the Russian Empire. As to the the other rivers which lie between the Russian river Oud and the aforesaid mountains—running near the Amur and extending to the sea—which are now under Chinese rule, the question of the jurisdiction over them is to remain open. On this point the [Russian] Ambassadors are [at present] without explicit instructions from the Czar. Hereafter, when the Ambassadors on both sides shall have returned [? to their respective countries], the Czar and the Emperor of China [Han] will decide the question on terms of amity, either by sending Plenipotentiaries or by written correspondence.

ARTICLE II.

Similarly, the river Argun, which flows into the Amur, will form the frontier along its whole length. All territory on the left bank is to be under the rule of the Emperor of China [Khan of Han]; all on the right bank will be included in the Empire of the Czar. All habitations on the south side will be transferred to the other.

ARTICLE III.

The fortified town of Albazin, built by His Majesty the Czar, is to be completely demolished, and the people residing there, with all military and other stores and equipment, are to be moved into Russian territory. Those moved can take all their property with them, and they are not to be allowed to suffer loss [by detention of any of it].

ARTICLE IV.

Fugitives [*lit.* runaways] from either side who may have settled in the other's country previous to the date of this Treaty may remain. No claims for their rendition will be made on either side. But those who may take refuge in either country after the date of this Treaty of Amity are to be sent without delay to the frontier and at once handed over to the chief local officials.

ARTICLE V.

It is to be understood by both Governments that from the time when this Treaty of Amity is made, the subjects of either nation, being provided with proper passports, may come and go [across the frontier] on their private business and may carry on commerce [*lit.* buy and sell].

ARTICLE VI.

All the differences [*lit.* quarrels] which may have occurred between the subjects [of each nation] on the frontier up to the date of this Treaty will be forgotten and [claims arising

out of them will] not be entertained. But if hereafter any of the subjects [*lit.* traders or craftsmen] of either nationality pass the frontier [as if] for private [and legitimate] business, and [while in the foreign territory] commit crimes of violence to property and life, they are at once to be arrested and sent to the frontier of their own country and handed over to the chief local authority [military], who will inflict upon them the death penalty as a punishment for their crimes. Crimes and excesses committed by private people on the frontier must not be made the cause of war and bloodshed by either side. When cases of this kind arise, they are to be reported by [the officers of] the side on which they occur to the Sovereigns of both Powers, for settlement by diplomatic negotiation in an amicable manner.

If the Emperor of China desires to engrave [on stone] the Articles of the above Treaty agreed upon by the Envoys for the determination of the frontier, and to place the same [at certain positions] on the frontier as a record, he is at liberty to do so. Whether this is to be done or not is left entirely to the discretion of His Majesty the Emperor of China.