

**The Russo-Japanese Dispute over the  
Ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands**

by

Robert A. Collins

Webster University, Bangkok

INTL 6000 Fall 2013

Supervised by Dr. Manoug Somakian

**ABSTRACT**

More than six decades have passed since the cessation of hostilities of World War II and yet Japan and Russia have failed to conclude a peace treaty. Dispute over ownership of four islands--Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and Habomai--known as the Southern Kurils by the Russians and the northern territories by the Japanese, is the primary reason for lack of closure to WWII. Moscow refers to the 1951 Treaty of San Francisco as justification for their ownership while the Japanese refer to the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda as justification for its ownership of the disputed islands. Japan claims that although the Soviet Union attended the 1951 San Francisco Conference, it failed to sign and ratify the treaty, leaving the Kuril Islands provision null and void. The inability of both Moscow and Tokyo to reach a mutual agreement leaves WWII unresolved for Russia and Japan. Political and economic considerations continue to hinder settlement to the question of rightful ownership of the four islands, forestalling the signing of a Russian-Japanese peace accord.

This paper provides a review of the historical background of Russian-Japanese relations, their previous wars, territorial disputes, treaties regarding territorial claims in Northern Pacific Asia and points of international law regarding territorial disputes between nations. It analyzes current political, economic, and military importance of the Southern Kuril Islands and attempts to provide a clear analysis of both past and present negotiations, focusing on a way to settle the Southern Kuril Island dispute.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	4-8
Objectives	6
Research question	7
Research statement	7
Research Methodology	7
Limitations	8
<b>DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS</b>	9-12
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	13-16
<b>NARRATIVE</b>	17-42
Where and what are the disputed islands?	17-19
Competing Empires: China, Russia, and Japan	19-24
Treaties, Wars, and Territorial Disputes	24-27
The Last War, No Treaty, No Resolution	28-42
<b>FINDINGS and ANALYSIS</b>	43-45
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	46-48
<b>REFERENCES</b>	49-53

# **THE RUSSO-JAPANESE DISPUTE OVER THE OWNERSHIP OF THE SOUTHERN KURIL ISLANDS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, Japan and Russia/Soviet Union have contested one another over Chinese territory once belonging to the Chinese Qing Dynasty. During the first half of the twentieth century, they clashed on four occasions: the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, the Russian Civil War, Soviet-Japanese border clashes in Manchuria during the 1930s and during the final week of WWII when the Soviets terminated the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact and declared war on Japan.

World War II--1 September 1939 to 7 May 1945 in Europe; 7 July 1937 to 2 September 1945 in Asia--officially concluded in September 1951 with the signing of the Treaty of San Francisco. Fifty-two nations were invited to attend a peace conference in San Francisco to enact a treaty to end WWII. Fifty-one nations attended. India, feeling the convention should not be held while Japan was still an occupied country, refused to attend. The convention concluded with a treaty signed by 48 nations, while three nations abstained. The Soviet Union refused to sign the treaty because it believed China should have been invited to participate in the treaty, being that China had suffered the most--20.6 million fatalities--directly from the conflict with Japan.

In 1937, Japan initiated the Second Sino-Japanese War, at a time when China was embroiled in a civil war. The Nationalist and Communist forces initiated and maintained a limited cease fire, while they jointly fought the Japanese. With the defeat of Japan, the Chinese civil war resumed. By 1950, the Nationalist Chinese were driven from mainland taking refuge on the island of Taiwan leaving the Communist Chinese control of mainland China. As a result of

Cold War politics, neither China nor Taiwan was invited to attend the San Francisco peace conference.

During the February 1945 Yalta Conference, where the Allies met to discuss and plan for the end of WWII, Stalin was promised the Kuril Islands and southern Sakhalin Island as an incentive to join the Allies in fighting Japan,. The Treaty of San Francisco, however, stipulated that Japan would relinquish control of the Kuril Islands, but it did not specify which country would receive them. The Soviets began occupying the Kuril Islands, on 18 August 1945 and shortly thereafter annexed the islands by amending the Soviet constitution to include them as part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Japan refers to the Soviet failure to sign the Treaty of San Francisco as justification for the return of the disputed islands. This paper will point out the fallacy of Japan's claim. Because of the Soviet refusal to sign the 1951 peace treaty, more than 68 years has passed, and yet Japan and Russia have failed to conclude a peace accord. The primary reason for this bi-lateral relations failure is dispute over ownership of four islands.

Small in size, with an inhospitable environment, the ownership of the southern Kuril Islands remains a stumbling block. To understand the nature of this dispute, one must begin with defining which islands constitute the Kuril Islands, and which islands are parts of Hokkaido, Japan. The complete island chain, known as the Kuril Islands, stretches across the northern Pacific Ocean from the Japanese island of Hokkaido to the southern tip of Russia's Kamchakatka Peninsula. The four islands in question--Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and Habomai--are claimed by Russia as the Southern Kuril Islands, while Japan claims the same four islands as its northern territories.

Russia points to the Treaty of San Francisco as justification for its ownership of the four disputed islands, while the Japanese contend the treaty only gave the Soviets the right of occupation not annexation, the same as in the case of the Allies occupation of Germany at the conclusion of hostilities in Europe. The Japanese claim that the Treaty of San Francisco stipulated Japan would relinquish ownership of the Kuril Islands, but it did not specify a recipient. Japan insists the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda, which defines the border between Russia and Japan as a line running through the Vries Strait; known more commonly as the Miyabe Line, should be the document to determine ownership of the four disputed islands.

This paper examines the location, the geology, and ecology of the four disputed islands-- Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and Habomai--to determine which of the islands are territories of Hokkaido and which islands are in fact part of Kuril Island chain. After reviewing the historical background of Russian-Japanese wars, territorial disputes, treaties, and international law governing the rightful ownership of the disputed islands, the paper further examines past Soviet/Russo negotiations. The paper will provide a careful analysis as to the status of current negotiations and attempt to provide a possible solution to the Kuril Islands dispute. It will identify other obstacles preventing the signing of a Russo-Japanese peace treaty formally ending WWII.

### **Objective**

The objective of this paper is to explore and analyze the dispute over the ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands by reviewing geological, historical, economic, political, and strategic claims of ownership by both Japan and Russia. It will carefully examine negotiations identifying shifts in stances by the two negotiating parties with the intent of providing an insight into

achieving a possible solution to the Russo-Japanese dispute over the ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands.

### **Research Question**

According to international laws encompassing decisions based on rules of discovery, treaty negotiations, and conquest, which nation is the rightful owner of the Southern Kuril Islands--Russia or Japan?

### **Research Statement**

The unresolved issue of ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands effects not only Russia and Japan, but as such, it restricts the development of the islands' natural resources, fisheries, and minerals sought by other nation-partners, along with the quality of life of the islands' inhabitants. The lack of resolution to the island dispute hinders the signing of a Russian-Japanese peace treaty, which not only brings closure to WWII, but it would increase commercial intercourse between the two nations with positive benefits to both.

### **Research Methodology**

This paper confines its research exclusively to an analysis of peer-reviewed academic journals, annual reports, books by subject matter experts (SMEs), and other pertinent resources on the subject which support the research statement. Due to the nature of the attitudes and steadfast resolve of both the Russians and the Japanese in their approach to achieving resolution to the Kuril Islands dispute, one can only deduce that of the various International Relations (IR) theories, realism (Waltz, 1959) is most applicable to this argument.

Non-governmental organizations, with varying agendas, have offered liberal and neoliberal solutions, which do not support the views of either Russia or Japan. Due to limitations imposed on the scope of this paper, non-Russian and non-Japanese proposals to bring closure to this residual grievance of WWII will not be entertained. One might look at Russia's proposal for shared economic ventures in the islands as neo-liberalism on account of economic implications, but neo-liberalism, after thirty plus years of IR experimentation, has proven to be a failure. Neo-realists envisioned that by applying a neo-realistic base IR theory approach to economic solutions, the gap between rich and poor would narrow, but the contrary has happened. After thirty years of neo-liberalism experimentation, the gap between rich and poor has widened. The poor are getting poorer and the rich have gotten richer (Bello, 2010). After a careful analysis of the past histories of the Russo-Japanese hostile and non-hostile interactions and the steadfast resolve of both parties, one is lead to conclude that a realistic approach to finding resolution is the correct IR theory to use in this scenario.

### **Limitations**

It is inescapable, given the compact schedule in which this paper has been written and the specific ongoing nature of the topic, that several limitations remain. First, the resource material for this paper is limited to peer-review articles from English-language journals, and scholarly English translations of treaties pertinent to the study of the paper's topic. The second limitation results from political shifts in both the Japanese and the Russian stances which are caused by the periodic changes of leadership and public opinion within each country. Lastly, due to time restraints, this paper will be confined to matters relating to Russo-Japanese interactions and omit activities of external organizations with their own self-serving solutions to the Kuril Island dispute. All material reviewed and analyzed for this paper is current as of 31 December 2013.

## DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Due to varied language sources--Russian, Japanese, and English--which use different names for the four disputed islands in their writings, to avoid confusion this paper will use the following names for the islands--**Kuril, Kunashir, Shikotan, Iturup, and Habomai.**

**Treaty of Shimoda (1855)**, officially **The Treaty of Commerce and Navigation**, was the beginning of official relations between Japan and Russia. The treaty defined the border between Russia and Japan as the strait between the islands of Iturup and Urup with Russia and Japan sharing interests in Sakhalin.

**Meiji Restoration (1868)** shogun rule in Japan terminated and imperial rule was reinstated moving Japan from feudalism into a modern industrial state with an aim of creating an Asian empire equal to the European empires.

**Treaty of St. Petersburg (1875)**, ratified 22 August 1875, stipulated that Japan would relinquish all claims to Sakhalin in exchange for sovereignty over the Kuril Islands up to the Kamchatka Peninsula.

**Berlin Conference 1884-1885** was initiated by Portugal and hosted by Otto von Bismarck the first chancellor of the German Empire. The European colonial powers met in Berlin to carve the African continent into European colonies with the intent of expanding their empires.

**First Sino-Japanese War (1 August 1894--17 April 1895)**, newly industrialized Japanese Empire looked to China for natural resources and territorial gains. Japan's defeat of Qing Dynasty China was an unpredicted event that surprised the European powers. Imperial Japan

demonstrated its desire to expand its empire and mirror the European gains on the Asian mainland.

**Treaty of Shimonoseki (17 April 1895)** concluded the First Sino-Japanese War granting independence to Korea and ceded to Japan the islands of Taiwan (Formosa) and Penghu (Pescadores), and the Liaodong Peninsula.

**Triple Intervention (23 April 1895)** involved Russia as the principal participant whose ambition was to expand the Trans-Siberian railway through Manchuria to Port Arthur giving it a long-sought-after warm water port. As such, Russia was unhappy that the Treaty of Shimonoseki gave the Liaodong Peninsula to Japan, which included the terminus of its railway at Port Arthur. Russia, with the political support of France and Germany, was able to force Japan to withdraw from the Liaodong Peninsula. Japan had anticipated support from the Americans and the British failed to materialize.

**Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905)** was fought between the Russian Empire, possessing one of the largest armies in the world, and a recently industrialized Japan emerging from nearly two and a half centuries of isolation. In 1895, when the Triple Intervention forced Japan to give the Liaodong Peninsula to the Russians, Japan was not strong enough to take on the Russian military. In 1904, the leaders of Imperial Japan, determining the Japanese Army and Navy were of sufficient strength to challenge a diminished Russia, attacked Port Arthur driving the Russians from the Liaodong Peninsula.

**Treaty of Portsmouth (1905)** ended the Russo-Japanese War. The treaty was brokered by President Theodore Roosevelt of the United States. Besides ending the war, the treaty bolstered the status of the United States on the world diplomatic stage and validated Japan's emergence as

a global power. The treaty gave Japan control the Korean Peninsula, the Liaodong Peninsula, the Kuril Islands, and the southern portion of Sakhalin Island.

**Second Sino-Japanese War (7 July 1937 to 9 September 1945)** After Japan had occupied the Liaodong Peninsula, 1905, annexed Korea in 1910, and set up the puppet regime of Manchukuo in Manchuria, 1932, the Japanese, using an incident in which Japanese and Chinese troops exchange fire on 7 July 1937 at the Marco Polo Bridge in Beijing, initiated total war with China in anticipation of conquering the entire country.

**Soviet-Japanese Border Clashes (1932-1939)** numerous clashes along the Siberian-Manchurian border were fought between the Soviet Union and Japan until August 1939 when Joseph Stalin shifted his attention to a joint Soviet-German invasion of Poland.

**Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact (13 April 1941)** was formalized between the Soviet Union and Japan two years after the Soviet-Japanese border clashes on the Manchurian and Mongolian borders had diminished. The accord called for the two nations to observe neutrality in-the-event one of the two signing nations was invaded by a third nation.

**Cairo Declaration (1 December 1943)** attended by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Chiang Kai-shek discussed the fate of Japan at the termination of WWII hostilities in the Pacific..

**Yalta Agreement (11 February 1945)** attended by Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, to finalize the Allies' partition of occupied Germany and Eastern Europe at the end of WWII. During the conference, Stalin promised the United States and Britain, that he would declare war on Japan ninety days following the defeat of Germany in exchange for sovereignty over Sakhalin Island and the Kuril Islands.

**Potsdam Conference (17 July-2 August 1945)**, also referred to as the **Berlin Conference**, was held in Potsdam, Germany and attended by heads of government of the USSR, USA, and UK. They negotiated the terms for the termination of WWII.

**Potsdam Decollation (26 July 1945)**, was the results of a separate meeting conducted at Potsdam between Truman, Churchill, and Chiang Kai-shek dictating the terms for the Japanese surrender.

**Treaty of San Francisco (8 September 1951)** finalized the end of WWII between the majority of the nations of the world and Japan. The Soviet Union refused to sign the treaty because it opposed issues in the treaty dealing with China, which was not invited to participate in the conference and had suffered the most from the Japanese invasion of its nation. The Soviet refusal to sign the peace treaty leaves Japan and Russia technically in a state of war today.

**Soviet–Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956** technically ended the state of war between the two countries by establishing diplomatic relations; however it did not constitute a formal peace treaty. The failure to produce a peace treaty was due to the unresolved dispute over ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands.

**Vienna Convention on Laws and Treaties (23 May 1969)** was a United Nations sponsored conference designed to establish universally accepted guidelines for laws effecting international treaties.

**Military Occupation** is effective provisional control of a certain power over a territory which is not under the formal sovereignty of that entity, without the violation of the actual sovereign.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Kuril Island dispute is a product of empire building and the clash of competing interests of the declining Chinese and Russian empires in tandem with the ascent of the Japanese Empire. Bergreen, (2008; 2004), provides background information pertaining to Chinese and European ventures to develop sea routes to China in order to establish direct trade relations. Bickers (2011) documents the period of 1832-1914 when European powers, greedy for increased revenues from Chinese trade, began carving up China into separate spheres of influence.

Kerr's history of Okinawa, (1956), provides insight into the lack of direct contact between China and Japan during and after the Mongol Empire. Data shows Okinawan sailors plied the South China Sea trading between China, Japan, and as far west as India where goods were transferred to European markets. Kerr describes the industrialization and military modernization which took place in Japan in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Kerr concludes with an analysis of the extensive US military buildup on Okinawa which provided America with secure bases to operate from during the Cold War and the Korean War.

The competition between the empires of Japan and Russia over territorial gains in China, as well as the ascent of Meiji Japan and the decline of Czarist Russia is the crux of Warner's tome on the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War. Tyler (1905) began writing the history of the Russo-Japanese War during the war and published it shortly after the Treaty of Portsmouth concluded the conflict. Hosking (1997) provides an in-depth history of the Russian Empire from 1552 to 1917, while White (2011) carries the story of the Soviet/Russian people forward from the Communist Revolution, through the Soviet period, and into modern Russia today.

In *Man, the State, and War*, Waltz (1959) discusses the realistic approach to international relations which, in light of the Russian and the Japanese mindset to the Kuril Island dispute, enhances researching this paper from a realistic point of view.

Manchester (1978) provides insight into the American Pacific campaign during and after WWII. While Manchester focuses on General Douglas MacArthur's involvement in WWII, Spector (1985) emphasizes the Naval and Marine aspects of the fighting in the Pacific, however, both historians provide a balanced overview of the politics of the war. Glantz (2003) uses extensive primary resource material, recently made available by Soviet archives, on the Soviet's last minute entry into war with Japan at the conclusion of WWII, to illuminate the Soviet invasions of both Manchuria and the Kuril Islands.

Price, (2001), argues that the Treaty of San Francisco was inconclusive in ending WWII because all nations involved did not sign the treaty. India refused to participate in the conference citing Japan was still occupied by the United States and not free to negotiate on its own terms. On the other hand, the Soviet Union did attend the conference, but refused to sign the treaty. The Soviets were of the opinion that the People's Republic of China, which were not invited to attend, should have been in attendance, being that China had suffered the most at the hands of the Japanese.

Numerous writers, fascinated by the lack of resolution of WWII due to the failure of Russia and Japan to sign a peace treaty, have written books, journal articles and research paper on the subject of the Kuril Island dispute. Distinguished Japanese writers provide excellent impartial assessments of the island dispute. Okuyama (2003) provides an in-depth analysis of Japan's attempt to negotiate a settlement to the Kuril Island dispute during the 1990s when Boris

Yeltsin was President of the Russian Federation. He provides insight into the Soviet negotiator's frustrations when dealing with the unreasonable Japanese immovable stance of, 'if you do not return the islands, no treaty'. Obe (2012) discusses relations between Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and Russian President Vladimir Putin in regard to resolving the Kuril Islands dispute. Obe points out Noda's lack of sincerity in dealing with Putin. Once Putin realized the Japanese were not bringing anything new to the table, Putin discontinued negotiations with the Japanese. Takayama (1991) details Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's efforts to improve Soviet-Japanese relations and resolve the Kuril Island dispute. He argues that a Soviet-Japanese Peace treaty would manifest financial benefits to both parties.

Russian writer Tregubova (2000) analyses of Russian President Putin's 2000 efforts to secure a peace treaty with Japan, provides excellent insight into the frustrations the Russian experience with Japan's lack of flexibility in negotiations which caused President Putin to put the Russo-Japanese Peace Treaty on the back burner. British historian Newnham (2001) reviews Japan's efforts to use financial incentives to bring Russia to the bargaining table during the 1990s in hopes of enticing the Russians to settle the Kuril Island dispute in a manor favorable to the Japanese. With the use of extensive Russian and Japanese economic data, Newnham presents an argument demonstrating the economic benefits to both parties if a peace treaty was to be concluded.

The German journalist Edgar Franz (2008) using unpublished German and Dutch documents found in the Siebold family archives and newly released French and Russian documents from the Russian state archives in St. Petersburg, explores the background of events leading up to the creation of the 1855 Treaty of Shimoda, officially The Treaty of Commerce and Navigation. Franz demonstrates that not only the actions of US Admiral Perry, but initiatives

pushed forward by Prussian, Dutch, and Russian negotiators, resulted in the opening up of Japan to foreign commerce.

The writings of Chang (1997), Harris (1994), and Kim-Gibson (1999) provide powerful insight into reasons why Japan continually denies the horrors they inflicted on the peoples of Asia during WWII. Japan has institutionally hidden its murky colonial past from its people while the eight tenants of the bushido code remain present in everyday Japanese life--business, sports, family, religion, and philosophy. The three authors independently emphasize the bushido code tenant of filial piety, honoring one's ancestors, contributes to the Japanese belief that confronting the Japanese horrors of WWII would be dishonoring their ancestors. Weir (2013), is more emphatic when he enumerates the Japanese leadership's belief that by signing a peace accord and relinquishing ownership of the northern territories to Russia, they would be admitting to the Japanese wrongs of WWII and disgrace the memory of their ancestors.

## NARRATIVE

Possession of the Southern Kuril Islands has passed back and forth between Russia and Japan for nearly two centuries. The question of rightful ownership of the four islands--Iturup, Kunashir, Shikotan, and Habomai--forestalls the signing of a Russian-Japanese peace treaty to conclude WWII (Okuyama, 2003).

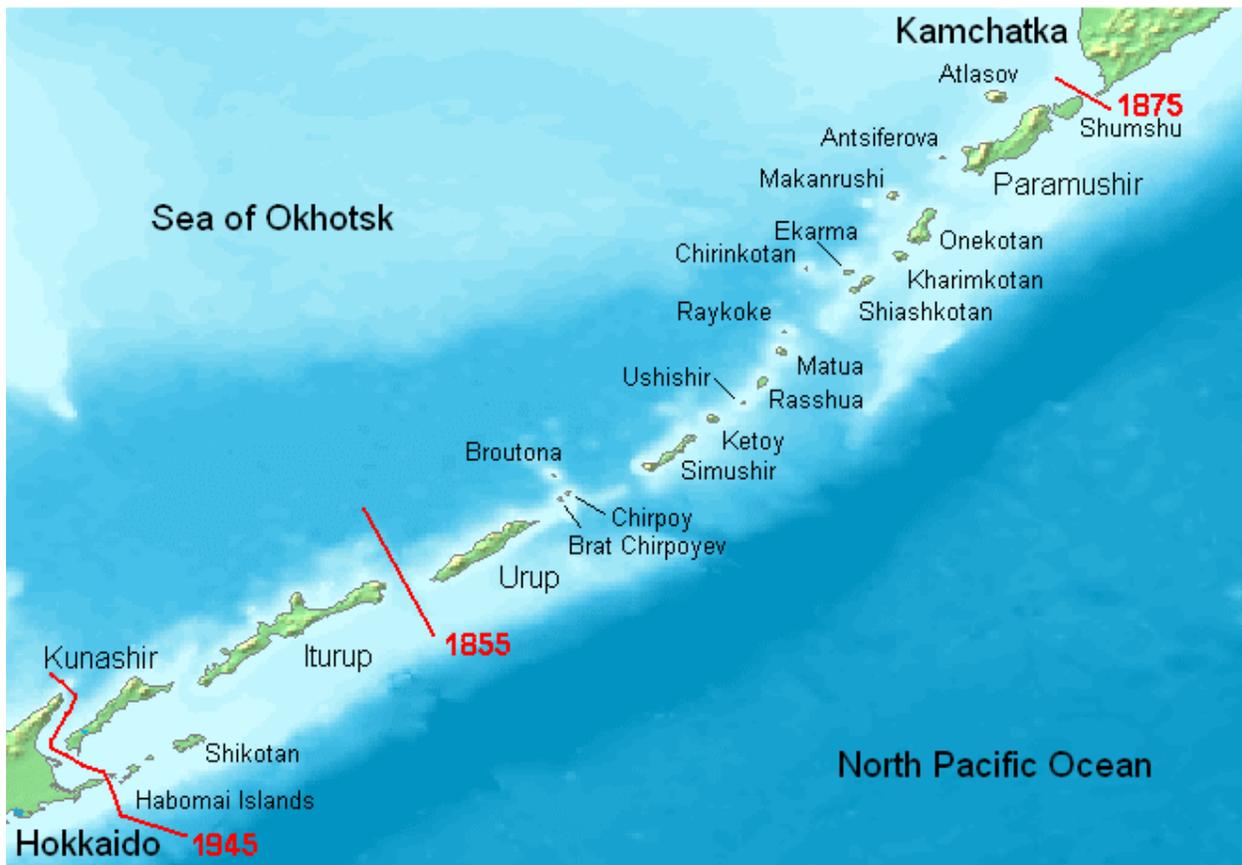
Located in the northwest Pacific Ocean off the coast of northeast Asia, the Kuril Islands are a chain of more than thirty volcanic islands stretching northeast from the Japanese island of Hokkaido to the southern tip of the Kamchatka Peninsula. Approximately 1200 kilometers in length, the islands divide the Sea of Okhotsk from the Pacific Ocean (Call, 1992).



The dispute stems from dual claims of ownership of the four most southern islands in the Kuril Island chain, which are currently administrated by Russia (BBC, 2013). The Japanese refer to the islands as its northern territories, while Russia identifies them as the Southern Kuril

## The Russo-Japanese Dispute over the ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands

Islands. The islands cover an area of approximately 5000 square kilometers. The end of the Cold War and the dismantling of the Soviet Union forced Russia to reduce its military presence in the islands, but recent actions of China, increasing Chinese sea power and China's expansion of its air and sea territorial limits, has rekindled Russian concerns as the importance of the Vries Straits to Russia's security architecture.



Now that the location of the four disputed islands is established, it is incumbent to determine which islands, if any, are part of Hokkaido as Japan claims, or are part of the Kuril Island chain, as Russia claims. Sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the International Kuril Island Project (IKIP), composed of teams of earth science professionals--the University of Washington Burke Museum, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Far East Branch,

and Hokkaido University--was tasked with conducting in-depth studies of the geological and biological composition of the Kuril Islands including the four disputed islands.

In 1996 the IKIP released a study which concluded the Habomai Islands and Shikotan Island have strong geological and ecological similarities to those of Hokkaido, while Iturup and Kunashir are dissimilar geologically and ecologically from Hokkaido, but similar to the other islands in the Kuril Island chain. Abundant in fishing resources can be found in the waters of all four of the islands, while deposits of oil, natural gas, and rhenium--one of the rarest elements in the earth's crust that is used in the manufacture of rocket motors--are found below the waters surrounding the islands of Iturup and Kunashir (CIA, 2013; Craft, 1999).

The Russian Federation's limited revenues have impacted its ability to provide financial resources for the protection of the island's fragile ecosystems and the development of the natural resources the islands possess. Russian Federation leaders--**Yeltsin** (Newnham, 2001), **Medvedev** (Weir, 2011), and **Putin** (Kirk, 2001; Tisdall, 2011; Obe, 2012)--made attempts aimed at creating a peace treaty with Japan. They offered to return the Habomai island group and Shikotan Island, combined with plan for Russo-Japanese joint business ventures to extract the oil, natural gas, and rhenium from beneath the ocean floor surrounding Iturup and Kunashir. The Japanese have consistently refused every offer believing that by accepting the return of the Habomai island group and Shikotan Island, only seven percent of the disputed territory, they would be endorsing Russia's claim of ownership of the other two islands (Aquino, 2013).

### **COMPETING EMPIRES: CHINA, JAPAN, AND RUSSIA**

In order to understanding the complexities surrounding the Kuril Islands dispute, it is indispensable that one should first understand the past history of Russo-Japanese relations. The

key actors in this historical drama are the Chinese Qing Dynasty, the Russian Empire, and the Japanese Meiji Empire. During the nineteenth century, the ever-expanding Russian Empire (Hosking, 1997, P. 172-197) and Japan's newly modernized Meiji Empire (Warner, 1974, P. 47-59) clashed as they both tried to extract territorial gains from the declining Qing Dynasty (Bickers, 2011, P. 93-97). As such, the competitive history of the two nations in East Asia has clouded the dispute over the southern Kuril Islands. Japan confronted the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, both overtly and covertly, between 1868 and 1945, (Warner, 1974, P. 47-59), implanting a deep sense of distrust between the two nations which continues today (BBC, 2010).

## CHINA

From the Mongol Empire in the thirteenth century and continuing through the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, China was the world's largest economy (Bickers, 2011, P. 47). For centuries camel caravans traveled the Silk Road carrying Chinese goods across central Asia to markets in Europe (Bergreen 2008, P. 123-136). Ryukyuan seamen plied the seas of Asia carrying goods between China and Japan and on to the Spice Islands and India where Persian and Arab sailors transported the goods to the Middle East and to Mediterranean ports servicing European markets (Kerr, 1958, P. 124-130). The decline of the Mongol Empire and the rise of Islam in Central Asia caused the Silk Road to become less dependable and more expensive. The escalating cost of Chinese imports and the hunger for the spices and other goods from East Asia drove the Europeans to seek their own sea routes to the Far East. In 1419, Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal began sending seaborne expeditions to explore the African coast searching for sea routes to Asia circumventing Levantine Moslem merchants. Spain soon began explorations of her own while other European nations followed suit, once the 100 Years War was concluded in the late sixteenth century (Bergreen 2004, P. 57-63).

By 1683, a prosperous China was under the rule of the Manchu Qing Dynasty. In 1689 the expanding Russian Empire, ruled jointly by Czars Peter I and Ivan V, negotiated the Treaty of Nerchinsk with Qing China. Essentially the treaty gave Russia all of the Siberian lands north of the Amur River and China everything south of it. This was the first treaty between Russia and China and it lasted until the Amur Annexation in 1860 (Hosking, 1997, P. 87-96).

By the end of the nineteenth century, European colonialism had moved to the Far East. China was geographically large, heavily populated, and possessed a strong military. The Europeans knew they could not dismember China as they did with Africa at the Berlin Conference, 1884-1885. After fighting two Opium Wars with the British Empire, 1839 and 1856, and the Sino-French War, 1884-1885, the Qing Dynasty was in decline. The British gained control of Hong Kong and trading rights in other Chinese port cities, while the French seized control of Tonkin, later called North Vietnam. The British led the way in forcing the Chinese to grant trading rights, with port access, docks, and warehouses to British trading companies, and were soon followed by the Germans, the French, the Italians, the Americans, the Russian, and the Japanese in the scramble for Chinese trade and land concessions (Bickers, 2011, P. 327-329). Unfortunately, Russia and Japan had designs for the same pieces of the Chinese pie, Manchuria, the Liaodong Peninsula, and the Korean Peninsula (Warner, 1974, P. 97).

## **JAPAN**

Japan, during the period of 1477 to 1603, was a wild and chaotic land of warring states. Three top military leaders would immerge and united all of Japan. Oda Nobunaga began by conquering central Japan until he was assassinated June 21, 1582. Oda's momentum was picked up and carried forward by one of his top generals, Toyotomi Hideyoshi who upon taking Oda's

place, continued to unify Japan. March 26, 1537, Hideyoshi died before he could complete Japan's unification. Tokugawa Ieyasu, January 31, 1543 – June 1, 1616, picked up Hideyoshi's sword and completed the unification of Japan. Ieyasu's family would rule Japan for more than 200 years until the Meiji restoration (Kerr 1958, P.s 241-248).

Portuguese explorers first arrived in Japan in 1570 and established the trading port city of Nagasaki, later to be taken over by the Dutch (Warner, 1974, P. 29). Japan was governed by feudal aristocratic daimyos that employed faithful samurai warriors to wage war on one another. Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi were interested in the military potential of the foreigner's firearms, while Tokugawa Ieyasu saw the evils the Europeans brought to Japan--inflation caused by the foreigners doing business in the port cities; guns that challenged the power of the sword wearing samurai; diseases such as syphilis, small pox and other pathogens unknown in Japan prior to the advent of the Europeans; and Christianity which he feared the most because it challenged the authority of the ruling class. Ieyasu, in the first decade of the seventeenth century, restricted the Dutch to Nagasaki and closed the island nation to all other foreigners (Bergreen 2008, P. 367; Kerr 1958, P. 253). Japan remained in isolation for some two hundred-fifty years until in 1854, United States Navy Admiral Matthew Perry, with a display of his superior naval power, compelled Japan to open its doors to foreign trade (Kerr, 1958, P. 386-391). Perry's naval capability, inspired Japanese leaders to contemplate abandoning feudal isolation and join the industrial world.

Fourteen years after the arrival of Perry, progressive thinkers in Japan removed Shogunate rule, and replaced it with what is referred to by historians as the Meiji restoration (Warner, 1974, P. 47-51). Unlike the European monarchs who were considered to be anointed by God to rule their empires, the emperor of Japan was considered to be god. Foremost among the

progressive thinkers was Ito Hirobumi, creator of the modern god-emperor myth and seven times prime minister. After studying the constitutions of Austria and Germany, Ito teamed up with Inoue Kaoru, another key player in the modernization of Japan, and wrote the Japanese constitution. In an effort to change Japan from a feudalist society to an industrial state, Japan sent delegations and students around the world to learn and assimilate western science and technology with the aspirations of making Japan equal to western powers both economically and militarily. To the chagrin of the samurai, Japan's leadership expanded the tenants of the bushido code to include the everyday lives of the entire nation with the empowerment a fanatical reverence to the emperor. The adoption of universal conscription filled the ranks of Japan's newly modernized army and navy with commoners. The military was no longer the exclusive domain of the samurai class, (Warner, 1974, P. 47-53).

## **RUSSIA**

The Russian Empire began expanding in 1552, when Czar Ivan IV conquered Russia's first non-European territory--an expansionist policy which continued with starts and stops until the 1917 Russian Revolution toppled the last Romanov Czar. The Russian Empire, at one point, extended from Prussia in Eastern Europe across all northern Asia, to the Bearing Straits and down the west coast of North American to a point just north of San Francisco Bay. In spite of its extensive territory, Russia was severely handicapped by the lack of a year-round warm water port (Hosking, 1997, P. 327). For nearly two centuries the Russian Empire gradually expanded southerly in search of warm water ports on the Black Sea and the Pacific Ocean. During the mid-nineteenth century, Russia's expansion into the Ottoman controlled Crimean Peninsula set in motion events that would lead to the disastrous Crimean War, 1853 to 1856. Compensating for this military defeat, Russia developed the Trans-Siberian rail system into Manchuria with the

intent of establishing a warm water port at Port Arthur on China's Liaodong Peninsula (Warner, 1974, P. 86-93).

In conjunction with Perry's lead in opening Japan to American trade, Russian Admiral Evfimil Putiatin sailed to Shimoda, Japan, and negotiated the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, 7 February 1855, more commonly referred to as the Treaty of Shimoda (Franz, 2008). The treaty defined the Russo-Japanese territorial border as a line running through the Vries Strait, referred to as the Miyabe Line by the Japanese. The Vries Straits lay between the Kuril Islands of Iturup and Urup, a navigable channel important to both Japan and Russia. The treaty also gave the two countries a co-shared interest in Sakhalin Island (Warner, 1974, P. 519-521).

### **TREATIES, WARS, AND TERRITORIAL DISPUTES**

**The Treaty of Commerce and Navigation**, 7 February 1855, was commonly referred to as the Treaty of Shimoda after the city where it was signed. The treaty was negotiated between Japan and Russia, beginning Russo-Japanese government to government interactions. Not only did the treaty define the Russo-Japanese border, but it gave Russia and Japan shared interests in Sakhalin Island. The treaty between the two nations was concluded while Russia was engaged in the Crimean War and Japan was preparing to move from feudalism to industrialism. This treaty is a keystone in Japan's claim of ownership of the four disputed islands which Russia now controls and Japan wants returned (Call, 1992).

The **Treaty of Shimoda** stipulated that Japan and Russia would share Sakhalin Island, but incidents between Japanese and Russian settlers became common and demonstrated that the concept of shared sovereignty was flawed. With the mission of finding a solution to the

inadequacies of the 1855 treaty, Japanese emissary Enomoto Takeaki travelled to St. Petersburg Russia, in 1874 (Franz, 2008). After a year of protracted negotiations, a new and more workable document, the Treaty of Saint Petersburg, was signed on 7 May 1875. This treaty gave Japan sovereignty over the entire Kuril Island chain in exchange for relinquishing its claim to Sakhalin Island. The accord would be the last peacefully negotiated treaty between Japan and Russia. Relations between the Empire of Japan and the Russian Empire soured in the early 1890s following Japan's victory over China in the First Sino-Japanese War (Call, 1992; Warner 1974, P. 26-37).

The **First Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895** took place when Japan, with less than three decades of modernization, felt militarily strong enough to challenge China, which had been weakened by the two Opium Wars with Britain in 1839 and 1856, and the Sino-French War of 1884-1885. Japan feared the weakened Qing Dynasty China was no longer capable of providing Korea with an umbrella of protection from foreign intervention. Japan perceived that foreign colonization of the Korean Peninsula, especially by Russia, would be "a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan" (Call, 1992). The fighting was confined mostly to the Korean peninsula with minor sea battles. Lasting for less than six months, the conflict terminated on 17 April 1895 with the Treaty of Shimonoseki by which China ceded to Japan the islands of Taiwan (Formosa), Penghu (Pescadores), and the Liaodong Peninsula, while giving Korea independence.

Czarist Russia, having plans for Korea, the Liaodong Peninsula, and Manchuria, was not enthusiastic with Japan's success. Russia, like other European powers, was surprised by Japan's easy victory over China. St. Petersburg did not intend to allow Japan to penetrate into the heart of China. As such, they sought the backing of France and Germany, the Triple Intervention 23 April 1895, to force Japan into relinquishing its claim to the Liaodong Peninsula and withdraw

its forces from Korea. Not possessing the military strength to take on the Russian military, one of the world's largest armies, Japan rescinded its claim to the Liaodong Peninsula and withdrew most, but, not all, of its troops from Korea (Warner, 1974, P. 111-114).

This was not only a setback to Japan's plans for colonial expansion, but a serious loss of face as well. Japan, nevertheless, continued to modernize its industrial sectors and strengthen its military, while embarking on a venture to weaken Czarist Russia by covertly providing more than US\$ one million in arms and ammunition to Finnish and Polish separatist organizations as well as to anti-Czarist revolutionaries within Russia itself (Warner, 1974, P. 121-146).

Speculating that they had reached a point where they were militarily strong enough to take on a weaker Russia, which was experiencing internal political instability, in February 1904, Japan executed a surprise naval attack on Russian forces at Port Arthur, Liaodong Peninsula while landing its army on the Korean peninsula, initiating the 1904-1905, Russo-Japanese War (Tyler, 1905, P. 113-159). The war terminated with the Treaty of Portsmouth, which was brokered by President Theodore Roosevelt of the United States. The treaty gave Japan hegemony over the Korean Peninsula, and the Liaodong Peninsula, reaffirmed Japanese control of the Kuril Islands, and consigned the southern half of Sakhalin Island to Japan (Warner, 1974, P. 528-546).

With the collapse of Czarist Russia in 1918, Japan was free of interference in its expansion and colonization of Chinese territory. Once the Bolsheviks had completed the destruction of the Czarist regime and the consolidation of territories formally controlled by the White Russians, the Soviet Union restarted expanding southerly into with the intent of reaching warm water access to the sea. In the 1930s, while attempting to push deeper into China, the

Soviet Union and Japan engaged in numerous border confrontations along the Soviet-Manchurian border. The Japanese-Soviet border conflicts were a series of clashes in varying intensity between Soviet and Japanese army and border guard units. Records show that during the time period of 1932-1934, 152 minor engagements took place with an average of 150 per year between 1935 and 1937. In 1937 the small unit skirmishes escalated into a large scale battle at Lake Khasan involving 22,950 Soviet, 236 fatal, and 7300 Japanese, 526 fatal (Glantz, 2003, P. 205-224).

Between 11 May and 16 September 1939, Japan and the Soviet Union fought their last major engagement on the Manchurian border until the Soviet invitation of China in August 1945. A confrontation referred to as the Battle of Khalkhin involved more than 57,000 Soviet and 75,000 Japanese soldiers, with 7,974 Soviet and 8,440 Japanese fatalities (Glantz 2003, P. 205-224). Neither side wanted to continue fighting. Japan was engaged in the Second Sino-Japanese War, and the Soviet Union was preparing to join Germany in a joint invasion of Poland. The two nations declared a cease fire and tried to maintain peace along the Manchurian border.

In June 1940, Nazi Germany had conquered France. Fearing the Germans would turn eastward; Stalin saw a need to secure his eastern borders. Japan's war in China was proving to be more difficult than anticipated and diplomatic relations with the US were deteriorating. Signing a neutrality agreement with the Soviet Union seemed to be a reasonable option. On 13 April 1941, Japan and the Soviet Union signed the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact, with a promise of nonaggression by either party for the next five years. The pact was to terminate 12 April 1946, but it contained a five year automatic renewal clause. The Soviets voided the pact on 9 August 1945 when they invaded Manchuria, a point which would become an issue in Japan's argument for ownership of the Kuril Islands.

## **THE LAST WAR**

After occupying the Liaodong Peninsula in 1905, annexing Korea in 1910, and setting up the puppet government of Manchukuo in Manchuria in 1932, Japan instigated the Second Sino-Japanese War. The Japanese, using an incident in which Chinese and Japanese troops exchanged fire on 7 July 1937 at the Marco Polo Bridge in Beijing, initiated total warfare with China, intending to conquer all of China.

World War II began in Europe on 1 September 1939 when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. At this time the Second Sino-Japanese War was a local conflict involving only China and Japan. On 7 December 1941, Japan attacked the US Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; resulting in the entrance of the US into WWII against Japan. On 11 December 1941, Adolf Hitler declared war on the United States, facilitating the US's participation in the European theater of WWII, fighting the Axis powers. Japan, a signature of the Tripartite Pact--Japan, Nazi Germany, and Italy--was a member of Axis powers. Although the Soviet Union was a member of the Alliance fighting Germany and the other nations affiliated with the European Axis powers, it maintained its neutrality with Japan until August 1945 (Manchester, 1978, P. 527-531).

During the course of WWII, the Allied leaders met in a series of conferences to establish mutual strategies for fighting the war and issued various declarations. The Cairo Declaration 27 November 1943 was issued upon conclusion of a conference held in Cairo, Egypt and attended by President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Many of the provisions of the Cairo Declaration were incorporated into the Potsdam Declaration of 26 July 1945 and the Japanese instrument of surrender of 2 September 1945. Pertinent points of the document were:

## The Russo-Japanese Dispute over the ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands

- The Allies are not fighting Japan for their own territorial expansion.
- The Allies are resolved to bring unrelenting military pressure against Japan until it agrees to unconditional surrender.
- Japan shall be stripped of all islands it had seized or occupied in the Pacific since the beginning of WWI in 1914.
- All the territories Japan has taken from China, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China.
- The Allies are determined that Korea shall become free and independent.
- Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed.

The Yalta Conference, 4-11 February 1945, a meeting of the Big Three--Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin--pertained more to the war in Europe than the war in the Pacific. During the conference, however, Churchill and Roosevelt urged Stalin to immediately declare war on Japan, but Stalin refused to fight a two front war, stating he would declare war on Japan within ninety days of the termination of the hostilities in Europe, in exchange for Mongolia's independence from China, a shared interest in the Manchurian railroads, and possession of southern Sakhalin Island and the Kuril Islands (US Department of State, 1945).

The Potsdam Conference, also referred to as the Berlin Conference, 17 July-2 August 1945, was held in occupied Germany two months after Germany surrender. Harry S Truman, now president of the United States, attended the entirety of the conference; however, due to an election in Britain, Churchill was replaced by Clement Attlee during the second half of the conference. Stalin remained as the leader of the Soviet Union. The conference resulted in the

Potsdam Agreement, a document which dictated the terms of Germany's occupation. On 26 July 1945, Truman, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek met and issued a declaration, the Potsdam Declaration, to outline the terms of the Japanese surrender. The Soviet Union was not at war with Japan at the time, so Stalin was excluded from the actual conference; the Potsdam Declaration did reiterate the promise made by Roosevelt and Churchill to Stalin at Yalta, that the Soviet Union would receive **all** of the Kuril Islands and **all** of Sakhalin in exchange for declaring war on Japan (Price, 2001).

During the Potsdam Conference, Truman informed Stalin that the United States had developed a "powerful new weapon," information of which Stalin already had been informed of by communist spies in America. Troubling to Stalin was the question as to whether Truman would use this new weapon (Manchester, 1978, P. 521-597). On 6 August 1945, the US dropped the first atomic bomb in wartime on Hiroshima, Japan. On 9 August 1945, three days after the US bombed Hiroshima, the Soviets invaded Manchuria. On 15 August 1945, the Japanese agreed to unconditional surrender; three days later, 18 August 1945, the Soviets invaded the Kuril Islands. The Soviet's attempt at a hostile amphibious landing was repelled by the Japanese at a cost of 1567 Soviet and 1081 Japanese casualties. After verifying the war had indeed ended, the Japanese allowed the Soviets ashore (Glantz, 2003, P. 205-224). On 2 September 1945, on board the USS Missouri, anchored in Tokyo Bay, the Japanese formally surrendered to the Allies (Manchester, 1978, P.s 521-597; Spector 1985, P.s 493-555).

The Moscow reclaimed Sakhalin Island, the Kuril Islands, and began their occupation of the four currently disputed islands (Glantz, 2003, P. 205-224). The Soviets took over the entire Kuril Island chain and began to forcibly expel all Japanese, both civilian and military along with

any foreign nationals found on the islands. By 1947, the Soviets had cleared the islands of all non-Russians and began moving Russians to the islands. Currently, there are approximately 30,000 Russians living on the islands (Call, 1992).

### **NO TREATY**

In September 1951, fifty-two nations were invited to attend a conference in San Francisco to discuss the substance of a formal peace treaty with Japan which would conclude WWII. India, feeling the convention should not be held while Japan was still an occupied country, refused to attend. Of the fifty-one nations in attendance, forty-eight signed the treaty. The treaty is referred to as the Treaty of San Francisco. The Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia attended the conference but refused to sign the peace treaty. The Soviet Union, citing ambiguities in the treaty, refused to sign the accord. The conference was brokered by the US under a United Nations umbrella while the US, the UN, and South Korea were fighting a war on the Korean peninsula against North Korea and the Peoples Republic of China, who were both recipients of aid from the Soviet Union. As the Iron Curtain descended over Eastern Europe, on 29 August 1949, the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb, making the Cold War, a reality (Price, 2001).

The Chinese Civil War ended with 3.5 million nationalist Chinese fleeing the Chinese mainland to take refuge on the island of Formosa (Taiwan) while leaving 555 million behind. China which had suffered the most--20.6 million fatalities--at the hands of the Japanese, was not invited to attend the conference (Chi, 2002). The Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia held back from signing the treaty because they objected to the treaty's promise to support the Republic of China while not recognizing the People's Republic of China (Price, 2001).

The treaty was worded ambiguously in regard to the settlement of Taiwan and the Kuril Islands even though explicit promises were made to Stalin by Roosevelt and Churchill at the Yalta Conference. It was agreed upon by the Big Three during wartime conferences, that Japan would surrender to China all Chinese territory taken in previous wars between Japan and China, but the San Francisco Peace Treaty was worded to say that Japan would surrender all territory taken from China in previous wars to the Republic of China and not to the Peoples Republic of China. The promise that the Soviet Union would gain the Kuril Islands in exchange for entering the war against Japan was ignored and the wording of the treaty simply stated Japan was to surrender the Kuril Islands but it did not specify to whom they were to surrender them. Territorial disputes exist today between Japan, China, Russia, South Korea, and Taiwan due to the ambiguous wording of the treaty of San Francisco. The Soviet Union's refusal to sign the peace treaty leaves Japan and Russia technically in a state of war today (Price, 2001).

### **NO RESOLUTION**

In a Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration signed on 19 October 1956, the Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, tried to negotiate a peace treaty with Japan with the expectation of bringing closure to WWII. Khrushchev offered to return to Japan the Habomai islands and Shikotan Island, while the Soviet Union would retain all of the Kuril Islands including the two disputed islands of Kunashir and Iturup. Japan was concerned that by agreeing to surrender the Kuril Islands to the Soviets, it would set a precedent which could hinder their negotiations with the United States for the return of Okinawa and the remainder of the Ryukyuan islands (Elleman, 1998; Weir 20013; Newnham, 2001). Okinawa was a part of the US Pacific Cold War strategy. The US had long-range missile sites, three airfields, a WMD storage facility, two seaports, and a

total 406 camps, bases, and stations on the island of Okinawa alone (Kerr, 1958, P. 468-471). Moscow and Tokyo realized they could not conclude a peace treaty without resolving the Kuril Island dispute; be that as it may, neither side was willing to compromise.

As a compromise to a peace treaty that neither would agree to, Japan and the Soviet Union decided to sign a joint declaration terminating the state of war, while at the same time, normalizing diplomatic relations between the two nations. The Soviet Union promised to support Japan's bid to join the UN. The declaration did not settle the Kuril Island dispute and fell short of being a formal peace treaty. Nikita Khrushchev, desiring a formal peace treaty, promised, as stated in Article 9 of the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration, "that upon conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan, the Soviet Union would return to Japan the island of Shikotan and the Habomai Islands" (Hill, 1995). Future Soviet and Russian leaders would repeat the same offer to Japan, only to have it fall on deaf ears

After Khrushchev's 1956 failed attempt at generating a peace treaty with Japan and bring WWII to closure, no further high level attempts were initiated until May 1989. These talks also proved to be futile. In 1991, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev initiated a five day, high-level conference in Moscow. Gorbachev's aim was to search for opportunities to improve relations with Japan and explore Japan's attitude toward the Soviet Union's idea of Asian collective security (Takayama, 1991). Both nations had intensions of strengthening Soviet-Japanese economic and technological ties. Economically crippled, the Soviet Union was willing to return the Habomai Islands and Shikotan Island immediately, while Kunashir and Iturup would be returned at a later date in exchange for \$28 billion in promised Japanese aid. It was envisioned

that the conference would produce a formal peace treaty between the two nations, but the conference became bogged down over the issue of the Kuril Islands (Takayama, 1991).

The Soviets claim the Kuril Islands are legally theirs as concessions of their victory over Japan in WWII, while Tokyo claims they cannot abandon the fight for ownership of the islands because it is an issue of national dignity. To Moscow, ownership of the Kuril Islands was their legal right and they found it difficult to comprehend the Japanese point of view. The Vries Strait is Russia's primary navigation channel through which its surface and subsurface vessels travel from the Pacific Ocean to the Sea of Okhotsk. Both Soviet and post-Soviet governments consider the ownership of Kunashir and Iturup strategically important to their Pacific naval strategy and will not consider sharing the control of the Vries Strait with Japan (Hamilton, 1989). Upset with Tokyo's failure to conclude a peace treaty, which would have been highly beneficial to both parties, Gorbachev cancelled his intended visit to Tokyo. The trip would have made him the first Soviet leader to visit Tokyo (Takayama 1991).

Boris Yeltsin, the first president of the Russian Federation, inherited innumerable difficulties when confronting the challenge of piecing together the remaining fragments of the Soviet Union into the new Russian Federation. One of his main concerns was to get the economy up and running. In need of the financial assets to develop Russia's vast natural resources in Siberia and its Pacific Northeastern maritime territories, Russia turned to Japan. Yeltsin soon found that the lack of resolution to the Kuril Island dispute and a peace accord with Japan would hinder his requests for financial assistance. He was open to any reasonable solution Tokyo might put on the table. The discussions relating to the peace treaty became more economic-based than territorial. Throughout his tenure as Russia's president, 1990-1999, Yeltsin continually tried to obtain a peace treaty with Japan. During his time in office, Boris Yeltsin met with Japanese

Prime Ministers Kiichi Miyazawa (1991-1993), Morimichi Hosokawa (1993-1994), and Ryutaro Hashimoto (1996-1998) with the intent of negotiating a peace treaty. All attempts were unsuccessful. At one point, in total frustration, Yeltsin indicated he was willing to give all four of the disputed island to the Japanese in exchange for the financial aid Russia desperately needed. Moscow hardliners, still distressed over the collapse of the Soviet Union, convinced Yeltsin not to cede anymore Russian territory. Yeltsin had set a goal of gaining a Russo-Japanese peace treaty before his term as president ended in 2000, however, in December 1999, five months short of his full term, due to health issues, Yeltsin left office without having signed a peace accord with Japan (Okuyama, 2003).

Vladimir Putin followed Yeltsin as president of the Russian Federation in December 1999 and held that office until May 2008 (White, 2011, P. 304-308). Upon taking office, Putin had to face many challenges; the paramount obstacle was that the Russian government was bankrupt while the oligarchs were amassing enormous wealth selling off Russia's natural resources without paying any taxes. Putin wanted a peace treaty with Japan because he realized it would open doors for financial aid (Lambacher, 2005). Putin, a former career KGB operative, after reviewing the fifty plus years of fruitless *see-saw* negotiations with Japan over the Kuril Islands, decided he would endeavor to negotiate a peace treaty. In 2000, after meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori in St. Petersburg, Putin was aware that a peace treaty with Japan could not be achieved without first negotiating a settlement of the Kuril Island dispute. Mori indicated that Japan would settle with nothing less than a complete return of all four islands, but Putin refused to comply with Mori's demand. Following the St Petersburg meeting with Mori, Putin cancelled his scheduled trip to Japan (Tregubova, 2000). Engaged in border disputes of one form or another with almost every neighbor--China, Japan, Kazakhstan,

Georgia, Azerbaijan--Putin refused to set a weak example by giving into Japan's demand for the return of the four disputed islands (US Central Intelligence Agency, 2013; Tregubova, 2000). Constitutionally restricted to two consecutive terms as president, Putin in 2008 had virtually traded offices with his Prime Minister, Dmitry Medvedev, who would remain president of the Russia until the end of his term in 2012, when he and Putin would once again trade seats.

After Putin's effort to sign a peace treaty with Japan's Prime Minister Mori failed, he placed the issue of the Kuril Islands and the peace treaty on the back-burner (Weir 2011). Numerous overtures by both Soviet and Russian Federation leaders had failed to bring about a peace treaty, even with offers of returning the Habomai Islands and Shikotan Island. Medvedev, president of Russia, 2008 to 2012, understood that nothing would happen in regard to negotiating a peace accord with Japan unless he did something to motivate Tokyo to return to the bargaining table. He decided he would be the first national leader to visit the Kuril Islands (New Statesman, 2010). In November 2010, Medvedev visited Kunashir where he met with local residents and promised to take actions to improve their quality of life. Returning to Moscow, Medvedev increased expenditures on the islands infrastructure and augmented the islands military and border police forces. Naturally, the Japanese were outraged by Medvedev's visit to Kunashir. Prime Minister Naoto Kan described Medvedev's trip as "unforgivable" (BBC, 2010).

In April 2011, Japan's foreign minister, Seiji Maehara and Russia's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov met with the objective of formulating a peace treaty. The talks broke down on the disposition of the Kuril Islands, as in previous conferences. Trying to salvage something out of the conference, Lavrov suggested that the topic of ownership of the disputed islands should be handed-over to a joint committee of Japanese and Russian historians to debate the issue. Since Japan lost its 'gamble' on a ruling by a joint committee of scientists when they ruled in Russia's

favor by stating the islands of Kunashir and Iturup were indeed Kuril Islands, Maehara did not want to gamble again. Maehara dismissed Lavrov's suggestion as being "without prospects." The Japanese attitude in dealing with the issue of the treaty and the islands irritated Lavrov who was hoping for resolution and a peace treaty. In a moment of heated debate, Foreign Minister Lavrov stated, "When radical approaches gain the upper hand in Japan and are shared by the country's leadership, of course, it is useless to conduct discussions on this issue" (Weir, 2013). When discussing the Kuril Island dispute, Elgena Molodyakova, head of the Center for Japanese Studies in Moscow, stated, "positions are locked, with the Japanese insisting the islands must be returned, and Russian policy equally firm that they are sovereign territory" (Weir, 2011).

In 2012 Vladimir Putin returned to power as the President of the Russian Federation. Trying once again to negotiate a peace accord with Japan, Putin met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to discuss a solution to the 67-year-old problem. Discussing the treaty, Putin, a karate and judo aficionado, used the judo term *hiki-wake* which basically means a draw. Putin's statement indicates that he is willing to adopt a solution which would include the return of the Habomai islands and Shikotan in exchange for a peace treaty (Weir, 2013). Putin's solution is basically 'a move back to square one', meaning Russia's stance is the same today as it was in 1956 when Nikita Khrushchev offered to return Shikotan Island and the Habomai Islands, while the Soviet Union retained Kunashir and Iturup. The plan was unacceptable to the Japanese in 1956--although times have changed over the past half century--Japan's answer remains recalcitrant.

In 1956 Japan was worried that if it acquiesced to the Soviet Union and relinquished its claims on Kunashir and Iturup, the US would keep Okinawa and the Ryukyuan Islands. The Ryukyuan Islands were returned to Japan in 1972 which eliminates this dimension from today's

decision making process. The Cold War, a factor in 1956, has ended and the Soviet Union is no longer a threat to Japanese security. In today's political environment, a security threat, to both Japan and Russia, could come from China.

China's modernization of its military, especially its naval forces, and the expansion of its nautical territorial limits has caused considerable concern amongst Japan's leadership. Instead of considering they should be more cooperative with the Russians and obtain a mutually supporting peace treaty which would enhance their mutual security posture, the Japanese believe the Russians need the Japanese more now than previously and would be more obliging to the Japanese and give them the four disputed islands in exchange for Japan's support in confronting China. Japan's Prime Minister Abe has openly expressed his belief that the Russian's would now be willing to return the disputed islands to Japan in exchange for a peace treaty ending WWII along with accompanying treaties of mutual support in economic and defense measures. It is unrealistic to think the Russians would cede all four of the islands in exchange for a peace treaty (Weir, 2013). Japan's theory is as flawed as its assumption that the four islands were indeed Japan's northern territory. Japan underestimates the importance of the Vries Strait to the Russian Pacific naval strategy. The Vries Strait is Russia's primary transit point between the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean. Neither Putin nor any of his top military strategists would ever consider sharing control this vital waterway with another foreign power (English News, 2011).

An event which impacts the need for improved Russian-Japanese cooperation is the 2012 nuclear disaster at the Japanese Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. The disaster caused Japan to cut back on nuclear generated electricity and is now more reliant on Russia for natural gas. Concluding the unresolved problem of not having a peace treaty to end WWII, would reap financial benefits to both parties. Currently Japanese businessmen are reluctant to invest heavily

in Russian business ventures without the protection conveyed by of a peace treaty. Putin and Abe are equally determined to sign a peace treaty while they are in office (Matsuyama, 2013).

Japan has recently shed its passive defense policy and has increased military spending as well as the size and scope of its armed forces. The current Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is using the Kuril Island dispute as a tool to generate anti-Russian sentiment in Japan which benefits his drive to get public support for his increased military budget. The Japanese military budget which shrank for ten straight years has jumped for 1% of the GNP to 5% of the GNP (Tisdall, 2013).

### **The Rule of International Law**

Revisiting the research question; "According to international law encompassing decisions based on rules of discovery, treaty negotiations, and conquest, which nation is the rightful owner of the Southern Kuril Islands; Russia or Japan? This paper reviews customary law as used in international relations in regard to issues of territorial acquisition prior to the UN directed 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties and the provisions of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (Call, 1992).

Customary Laws are internationally accepted norms in international relations. Customary Law was used to settle territorial disputes prior to the UN sponsored Vienna Convention on Laws and Treaties, 23 May 1969. Russia and Japan both claimed ownership of the Kuril Islands under customary law due to discovery and occupation. The conflicting claims of ownership due to discovery, according to customary law, were nullified by the Treaty of Shimoda regardless of who was first to discover the islands. Once a treaty between the two parties is enacted it becomes and remains law until either dissolved or changed by another treaty.

Treaty of Shimoda (1855), officially The Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, was the beginning of official relations between Japan and Russia. The treaty defined the border between Russia and Japan as the strait between the islands of Iturup and Urup with Russia and Japan sharing interests in Sakhalin.

The 1875 the Treaty of St. Petersburg negated the Treaty of Shimoda by establishing a new boundary between Japan and Russia. The Japanese and Russian settlers on Sakhalin Island could not peacefully coexist and after a year of negotiations Japanese and Russian diplomats signed the Treaty of St. Petersburg. The treaty gave the entirety of the Kuril Island chain to Japan in exchange for Japan relinquishing all claims to Sakhalin Island (Call, 1992).

Japan would like to ignore the rest of history and use the Treaty of Shimoda, minus the provision regarding Sakhalin, as the document to be retained as the basis for the resolution of the Kuril Islands dispute, but Article 59 of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties makes it very clear the Treaty of Shimoda is no longer valid in a court of law.

#### Article 59

1. (a) A treaty shall be considered as terminated if all the parties to it conclude a later treaty relating to the same subject-matter and:

(b) The provisions of the later treaty are so far incompatible with those of the earlier one that the two treaties are not capable of being applied at the same time.

"Comparison of the relevant provisions of the 1855 treaty with the relevant provisions of the 1875 treaty plainly illustrates that the two are incompatible, (Call, 1992)."

The 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth, which concluded the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, did not alter the status of the Kuril Islands and their status would remain unchanged until 18 August 1945, when the Soviet Union invaded and occupied the Kuril Islands, the Japanese

northern territorial islands of the Habomai islands and Shikotan, and Sakhalin Island (Call, 1992).

The next document which influences the settlement of the Kuril Island dispute is the Potsdam Declaration, a document created at the Potsdam Conference which is also referred to as the Berlin Conference, 17 July-2 August 1945 held in occupied Germany. The Potsdam Declaration reiterated the promise made to Stalin at Yalta, which stated the Soviet Union would receive **all** of the Kuril Islands and **all** of Sakhalin in exchange for declaring war on Japan. On 9 August 1945, three days after the US bombed Hiroshima, Japan, the Soviets invaded Manchuria. On 15 August 1945 the Japanese agreed to surrender and three days later, 18 August 1945, the Soviets occupied the Kuril Islands. The Potsdam declaration was not a treaty per say, but it was the template used to write the Japanese surrender document which was signed by Japan and the Allies on 2 September 1945 (Manchester, 1978, P. 627-638; Spector 1985, P. 546-571). The Potsdam Declaration and the Japanese document of surrender are important to Russia's claim of ownership of the Kuril Islands.

The Treaty of San Francisco is the last document Japan uses to justify its claim to ownership of the disputed islands. Japan keys in on two issues: the first issue is the Soviet Union's failure to sign the treaty, and secondly the ambiguity of the treaty in stating Japan would surrender the ownership of the Kuril Islands without specifying who would be the recipient nation, although it was well understood to be the Soviet Union.

In regard to Japan's insistence that Russia does not have any legal rights to the Kuril Islands per the provisions of the Treaty of San Francisco because the Soviet Union refused to sign the treaty, the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties--Articles 34, 35, and 36--sets

forth rules regarding the effect of an international agreement on states by which third parties need not participate in the agreement in order to benefit from the agreement as long as the third party does not reject the agreement. In other words the Soviet Union's refusal to sign the San Francisco Treaty was not a refusal to accept the provision of the treaty which stated Japan would relinquish all claims to the Kuril Islands (Call, 1992).

The second part of the Treaty of San Francisco, which Japan refers to in its assertion of ownership of the dispute islands, is the fact that the treaty states Japan will surrender the Kuril Islands without identifying a recipient state. The 2 September 1945 document of surrender, signed by Mamoru Shigemitsu representing the emperor of Japan and Yoshijiro Umezu representing the Japanese General Headquarters clearly stated that Japan would surrender **all** of the Kuril Islands to the Soviet Union. There was no doubt in the minds of the Japanese signatories, or any Allied signatory of the Treaty of San Francisco, that the Soviet Union was the designated recipient of the Kuril Islands.

Scientific evidence and legal evidence justify Russia's claim to all of the Kuril Island chain, including the islands of Kunashir and Iturup.

## **FINDINGS and ANALYSIS**

The research involved in this paper suggests a solution to the territorial dispute between Russia and Japan over the ownership of the Kuril Islands appears obvious, be that as it may, why has this issue not been resolved? An in-depth analysis of existing research material indicates that the four islands in question, the northern territories as claimed by Japan and Southern Kurils as claimed by Russia are in part both, the Habomai Islands and Shikotan are geologically part of Hokkaido's northern islands while Kunashir and Iturup are part of the Kuril Island chain. Joint

## The Russo-Japanese Dispute over the ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands

teams of Russian, Japanese, and American geologist and environmentalist conducted in-depth studies of the geological and biological composition of the Kuril Islands including the four disputed islands. They found that the Habomai islands and Shikotan were indeed part of Hokkaido's offshore islands and Kunashir and Iturup are part of the Kuril Island chain. Russia and Japan acknowledged the findings of the scientific evidence. Russia is willing to return the Habomai islands and Shikotan Island to Japan in exchange for a peace treaty, while Japan has refused all of Russia's attempts to resolve the dispute and sign a peace accord.

When the Japanese claim that all the disputed islands are geologically part of Hokkaido was proven to be inaccurate, Tokyo pressed forward using the Treaty of Shimoda to support its right of legal ownership. This claim is seriously flawed. The provisions of the 1875, Treaty of St. Petersburg nullified the treaty of Shimoda removing it from the bargaining table. In addition, the 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth, which concluded Russo-Japanese War, did not affect the status of the Kuril Islands.

The document of surrender signed by the Japanese on 2 September 1945 followed by annexation of **all** of Sakhalin Island, **all** of the Kuril Islands, plus the Habomai Islands and Shikotan Islands leaves Russia with the undisputed ownership of all of Sakhalin Island, all of the Kuril Islands except the Habomai Islands and Shikotan. Although faced with the legal reality of Russia's ownership of the disputed islands, Japan still refuses to accept Moscow's offers of returning the Habomai islands and Shikotan Island.

Tokyo selects ambiguities in irrelevant unrelated documents resulting from various WWII Conferences, while ignoring specific statements in the Potsdam Conference, and the articles of surrender, which stated Russia would gain **all** of the Kuril Islands and **all** of Sakhalin

## The Russo-Japanese Dispute over the ownership of the Southern Kuril Islands

in exchange for declaring war on Japan within 90 days of the termination of hostilities with Germany. Japan insists that the Potsdam Conference was invalid because they did not attend. Japan was not a party to the Potsdam Conference, as it was a belligerent state at the time of the conference. The reality, ignored by the Japanese, is that the wording of the Potsdam Agreement is applicable to the surrender of Japan and it assigned the ownership of the Kuril Islands and southern Sakhalin Island to the Soviet Union. This wording was also incorporated into the Japanese surrender document, signed by Japan's representatives in Tokyo Bay 2 September 1945.

With geological and legal evidence backing Russia's claim to the Kuril Islands and Russia's willingness to return the two islands which are part of Japan's northern territories, Russian negotiators are stymied by Japan's refusal to sign a peace treaty which would be financially rewarding to both parties. When asked what the current problem is, the Japanese response is that the loss of Kunashir and Iturup is 'an issue of national dignity' and Japan cannot sign a treaty which does not include the return of all four islands.

The issue of 'national dignity' is Japan's denial of its colonial aggression prior to and during WWII which led to the deaths of millions of Chinese, Allied POWs, and Japanese--both civilian and military--the knowledge of which Japan has tried to curtail from the Japanese public (Chang, 1997, P. 267-276; Harris, 1994, P. 190-221; Kim-Gibson, 1999, P. 196-205).

Japan desires 'to turn back the hands of time' to a period that is beneficial to its intended outcome of the dispute, while negating the necessity of admitting its culpability in WWII. The Japanese are in denial as to the extent of Japan's involvement in WWII to the point where Japanese imperialistic past has been completely absent from school textbooks. It was not until

2012, when a new textbook placed in the Japanese school system showed a map depicting Japan's colonial expansion, did Japanese students learn of the nation's dark colonial past (Weir,2013). Japanese foreign relations have been flawed by the country's refusal to admit to atrocities committed by Japan during WWII. Sino-Japanese relations continue to be haunted by Japan's denial of its involvement in the Rape of Nanking (Chang, 1997, 267-276) and the existence the Harbin medical experiment facility, where hundreds of thousands Chinese and allied POWs died as guinea pigs in Japanese medical experiments (Harris, 1994, P. 190-221). Japanese-Korean relations have their ghosts also. Japan refuses to admit to the inhumane treatment it imposed on the people of Korea during the thirty-five years of occupation, and the tens of thousands of Korean, Taiwanese, and Philippine women who were taken as sex slaves--comfort women--for the Japanese Army (Kim-Gibson, 1999, P. 196-205). Since the termination of WWII, at conference after conference with Soviet and Russian negotiators, the Japanese agree to the elements of a treaty and then return home without resolution due to 'issues of national pride.'

## CONCLUSION

After examining the historical documentation of the Kuril Islands, their geography, geology, Japan's acceptance of the provisions of the Potsdam Declaration, by which it ceded sovereignty of the Kuril Islands to the Soviet Union, and Japan's assent of the Treaty of San Francisco, one can only conclude that Russia has rightful title to Iturup and Kunashir. However, Russia, in good faith, should return to Japan their northern territorial islands of Shikotan and the Habomai Island.

This paper's intent was to examine the Russo-Japanese unresolved dispute over ownership of four islands--Kunashir, Iturup, Shikotan, and the Habomai island group, aka. the Kuril Islands--which stood as obstacle to the signing of a peace treaty to bring resolution to WWII. Research has uncovered that the complete opposite is true, in order to resolve the Kuril Island dispute and Japan and Russia should first terminate WWII.

Successive Soviet and Russian leaders--Khrushchev, Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Putin, and Medvedev--repeatedly and in good faith have sought to return Shikotan Island and the Habomai Island group to Japan in exchange for a peace treaty that would bring closure to the longest unresolved period of belligerency in the last century and a half. To the bewilderment of the Russians and regardless of any offer Moscow, short of returning all four islands, the Japanese refused any and all offers. Why is this?

Unconditional surrender for Germany, at termination of WWII in Europe, resulted in total eradication of Nazi-ism from Germany, the demonization of Hitler, the prosecution all war criminals, and a continual reeducation program for the German citizens, showing the evils inflicted on Europe by Nazi Germany. In contrast, unconditional surrender in Japan was very different. The emperor, in whose name more than 30 million Asians were either murdered or died as a result of combat, remained in place as the spiritual leader of Japan. The emperor and his extended family, some of whom were some of the most notorious war criminals, were given blanket immunity from precaution (Manchester, 1978, P. 547-551). The horrors of WWII, which were inflicted on the peoples of Asia by the Japanese, have remained hidden from Japan's last three generations (Harris, 1994, P. 190-221).

Japan is highly unlikely to sign a peace treaty with Russia, bringing WWII closure, until it takes responsibility for involvement in WWII. The Japanese code of bushido, along with the worship of their god emperor, remains a part of Japan's psyche and influences Japanese politicians today.

A series recent events initiated by Tokyo has sparked international interest, concern, and in one incident, infuriation. On 26 December 2013 Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited the Yasukuni Shrine which houses the ashes of many of Japan's WWII war dead to include the ashes of some of Japan's most notorious war criminals. Naturally, this annual ritual infuriates the Chinese and the Koreans, but regardless of the political fallout, many of Japan's prime ministers have repeated this pilgrimage. In 2009, Japan deployed combat forces overseas for the first time since WWII. They sent naval vessels to waters off Somalia to fight Somali pirates and established a Japanese military base in Djibouti. In 2012, Japan introduced new textbooks to the Japanese school system with a map showing Japan's territorial losses since the decline of its overseas empire. Prime Minister Abe has instigated anti-Russian sentiment by referring to this map and illuminating Japan's territorial losses. The current expansion of the Japanese National Defense and a 2013 defense budget five times that of the 2012 defense budget, has some international observers speculating whether Japan is reentering a period of militarism (Weir, 2013).

Japan is not exhibiting any intent to atone for its past wrongs during the Second Sino-Japanese War and WWII or seek reconciliation with Korea, China or Russia. Until Japan signs a peace treaty with Russia to conclude WWII, the Kuril Islands dispute will most likely remain unresolved.

## REFERENCES

- Aquino, F. (2013, July 29). *Politics with no comments*. Retrieved August 15, 2013, from Japan Daily Press: <http://japandailynews.com/japan-reluctant-on-russias-joint-proposal-of-four>.
- BBC News. (2013, April 29). *Kurils Islands dispute between Russia and Japan*. Retrieved August 15, 2013, from Asia-Pacific: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11664434?print=true>
- . (2010, November 10). *Russian president visits disputed Kuril islands*. Retrieved October 19, 2013, from Asia-Pacific: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11663241?print=true>
- . (2010, November 1). *Why Kuril dispute will not end any time soon*. Retrieved October 19, 2013, from Asia-Pacific: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-11665770?print=true>
- Bello, W, (2010). *With neoliberalism debunked, why hasn't it been junked?* CCPA Monitor, November, P. 38.
- Bergreen, L. (2008). *Marco Polo: From Venice to Xanadu*. New York: Vintage Books.
- . (2004). *Over the edge of the world*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Bickers, R. (2011). *The scramble for China: Foreign devils in the Qing Empire 1832-1914*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Call, K. A. (1992). *Southern Kurils or Northern Territories? Resolving the Russo-Japanese Border Dispute*. Brigham Young University Law Review .
- Chang, I. (1997). *The rape of Nanking*. New York: Basic Books.

Chi, C. (2002, April 30). *Taiwan documents project*. Retrieved September 7, 2013, from Taiwan documents project: <http://taiwandocuments.org/summary.htm>

Craft, L. (1999). Devided by politics, united in flight. *International Wildlife* , May/June.

Elleman, B. A. (1998-1999). A historical reevaluation of America's role in the Kuril Islands. *Pacific Affairs* , Winter, P. 489.

English News. (2011, February 12). *Backgrounder: The importance of the Kiril Islands*. (L. Hui, Ed.) Retrieved November 1, 2013, from English New CN:

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/video/2011-02/12/c\\_13729119.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/video/2011-02/12/c_13729119.htm)

Franz, E. (2008). *Siebold's Involvement in the Friendship Treaty between Japan and Russia* . Kyoto: Ritsumeikan University.

Glantz, D. (2003). *Soviet operational and tactical combat in Manchuria 1945*. London: Routledge.

Hamilton, M. (1989, May 5). Islands dispute stalls better Soviet-Japanese relations. *Los Angeles Times* , P. 5.

Harris, S. (1994). *Factories of death Japanese biological warfare 1932-1945*. London: Routledge.

Hill, F. (1995). A disagreement between allies: The United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet-Japanese. *Journal of Northeastern Asian Studies* , Fall, P.s 3-47.

Hosking, G. (1997). *Russia: People and empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kerr, G. (1958). *Okinawa: The history of an island people*. Boston: Charles E. Tuttle .

Kim-Gibson, D. S. (1999). *Silence is broken: Korean comfort women*. Parkersburg, Iowa: Mid-Prairie.

Kirk, D. (2001, June 27). Seoul escalates war of words over fishing. *New York Times* , W-1.

Lambacher, J. F. (2005). Envisioning a Russo-Japanese International Peace Park in the Kuril Islands. *Conference Papers--International Studies Association Annual Meeting*. Istanbul: International Studies Association, P.s 1-33.

Manchester, W. (1978). *American Caesar*. Boston: Little, Brown.

Matsuyama, M. (2013, July 29). *Politics*. Retrieved August 15, 2013, from RIA Novosti: <http://en.rian.ru/politics/20130729/182467467.html>

New Statesman. (2010, November 10). Intelligence: Japan: Russia spat. *New Statesman* , P. 3.

Newnham, R. (2001). How to win friends and influence people: Japanese economic aid linkage to the Kuril Islands. *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, P.s 247-259.

Obe, M. (2012). Japan, Russia to work on ties. *Wall Street Journal-Eastern Edition* , A11.

Okuyama, Y. (2003). The dispute over the Kuril Islands between Russia and Japan in the 1990s. *Pacific Affairs* , P.s 37-53.

Price, J. (2001). A Just peace? The 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty in historical perspective. *Japan Policy Research Institute* , P.s 1-9.

Spector, R. H. (1985). *Eagle against the sun: The American War with Japan*. New York: Vintage.

Takayama, S. (Jan-Mar 1991). From contention to cooperation with the Soviets. *Japan Quarterly*, P. 33.

Tisdall, S. (2013, November 27). *Is Shinzo Abe's 'new nationalism' a throwback to Japanese imperialism?* Retrieved December 15, 2013, from The Gardian:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/27/japan-new-nationalism-imperialism-shin..>

----- (2011, December 1). *Putin prepares the Russian empire to strike back*. Retrieved August 31, 2013, from The Guardian:

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/dec/01putin-prepares-russian-empire>

Tregubova, Y. (2000). Putin postpones autumn until December. *Current Digest of Post-Soviet Press* , P.s 1-3.

Tyler, S. (1905). *The Japan-Russia War*. Harrisburg, PA: Minter.

U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. (2013, August 13). *The World Factbook*. Retrieved August 21, 2013, from Central Intelrgence Agency: <http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rs.html>

US Department of State. (1945, February 4-11). *Milestones: 1937-1945*. Retrieved November 30, 2013, from US State Department Office of the Historian: <http://state.gov//milestones/1937-1945>

Waltz, K. (1959). *Man, the state, and war*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Warner, D. (1974). *The tide at sunrise*. New York: Charterhouse.

Weir, F. (2013, April 29). Japan and Russia want to finally end World War II, agree it is 'abnormal' not to. *The Christian Science Monitor* , P. 3.

----- (2011, March 28). Japan get coal, gas from historic rival Russia. *Christian Science Monito*, P. 1.

----- (2011, February 28). Russia's renewed focus on Kuril Islands draws Japanese ire, P. 1.

White, S. (2011). *Understanding Russian politics*. Cambridge,UK: Cambridge University Press.