

Historical Dictionary of the Russo–Japanese War

Rotem Kowner

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Revolution, and Civil Unrest, No. 29*



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Editor's Foreword

The Russo–Japanese War, which occurred a century ago, pitted one of the major Western powers against an emerging but amazingly dynamic nation in Asia. It affected the balance of power in Europe, causing shifts that were played out over the next several decades. For the loser, it had far-reaching repercussions that could hardly have been expected and that changed Russia into an entirely different country. For the winner, the consequences seemed more positive—for Japan if not for its neighbors—until it went too far. The war introduced a number of firsts, including the use of machine-gun and trench warfare; the laying of mines and launching of torpedoes; and the deployment of cruisers, destroyers, and battleships. The Russo–Japanese War was regarded as decisive, yet today it is all but forgotten. This book is an element in recovering this influential conflict from oblivion, in connection with its centenary.

This *Historical Dictionary of the Russo–Japanese War* consists of two basic elements. The most obvious is a recounting of the actual war, which is accomplished mainly in the introduction and dictionary, with its hundreds of entries about people both military and political, specific weapons and tactics, military units, virtually all of the warships, major battles, and many smaller encounters. The other element is the general background of the war, in the sense of examining its causes, the various diplomatic and political shifts, and the consequences that followed in its wake. This extended period of before, during, and following the Russo–Japanese War is examined in the chronology. Essential references are detailed in the bibliography.

There exist a limited number of specialists on the Russo–Japanese War. Both Soviet and Japanese scholars were more concerned with postwar events. Rotem Kowner is presently the chair of the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Haifa, Israel. He is also a co-organizer of a major international conference, “The Russo–Japanese

War and the 20th Century: An Assessment from a Centennial Perspective.” Although Professor Kowner had already written extensively on the conflict, this book goes considerably further—probably further than he originally expected. While often technical, it is written in an accessible style, making it an invaluable resource not only for other specialists but also the general public.

Jon Woronoff
Series Editor

Preface

While the central place of the Russo–Japanese War in modern history is still not recognized sufficiently by contemporary historians, its observers at the time were overwhelmed by its dramatic battles and short-lived political impact. Indeed it was an epic and almost conclusive triumph of the underdog over the mighty; it featured successful military leaders, such as Admiral Tôgô Heihachirô and General Nogi Maresuke, who would be venerated for generations, and failed leaders, such as Tsar Nicholas II, who were to be despised; it was a war with real territorial gains but also political repercussions around the world; it had tangible monuments to victory, such as Port Arthur, where the legacy of the heroic battles might be revered. Yet for all that, the Russo–Japanese War has somehow sunk into oblivion in our collective memory.

The Russo–Japanese War was indisputably the biggest and most significant conflict in the first decade of the 20th century. The object of the war was control of northeast Asia in general and Korea in particular, areas not then deemed of great importance, but the war's implications resounded across the world. The war was fought between tsarist Russia and imperial Japan—two nations which at the time were at the end of a process of expansion and growth. Their interaction has affected their histories directly and indirectly even to the present day. Both underwent many changes after the war, and they reached their peak only several decades later. The rivals did not fight alone. Behind each stood allies with different perceptions of the world. Russia, a large and expansionist absolute monarchy, represented traditional European power and was supported by Germany and France. Japan was the first non-Western nation to have achieved modernization and was backed by Great Britain. Being an Asian nation, non-“white” Japan became a model for imitation and admiration by most peoples under or threatened by colonial rule.

Japan's unexpected victory changed the course of modern history in a moment. During the conflagration, significant shifts were already noticeable in the ranking of the European powers, which had stayed constant for almost a century until then. The sudden fall of Russian power and the rise of Germany as an alternative led to alliances that were hardly imaginable a decade earlier. Two years after the war, a new order of power in Europe was established, which led to the outbreak of World War I and remained almost intact until 1945. In the Russo–Japanese War, the United States became, for the first time, an involved and balancing political power, yet this status set the United States on a collision course with Japan over control of the Pacific Ocean. This war had considerable repercussions in East Asia, then inhabited by a third of the world's population. Japan became a regional superpower, and its victories on the battlefields of Manchuria were merely an appetizer for further expansion. In China, the war was a catalyst for the revolution of 1911 and for modernization, while Korea lost its independence, to regain it only at the end of World War II, and only as a divided nation. Finally, many nations viewed the Russo–Japanese War as the first evidence in the modern age that an Asian nation, which just a few decades earlier had begun a process of modernization, was able to overcome a European nation by force of arms alone. This victory infused a spirit of nationalistic ambition into nations subject to European rule throughout the world. However, the war did not aid them directly in fulfilling those ambitions; on the contrary, it only strengthened the imperialistic ambitions of Japan.

In this historical dictionary, I have sought to bring to light a broader view than usually provided regarding the place and importance of the Russo–Japanese War in modern history. Based on Western, Japanese, and Russian sources, this book covers not only the battles, weaponry, and major personalities of the war, but also various international events and conflicts, agreements, schemes, and projects that led to the war. It is especially concerned with the political, social, and military consequences of the conflict, typically until the outbreak of World War I, less than a decade later, and occasionally even later. The core of this book is nearly 600 main-text entries, ranging in length from about 100 to 2,000 words. Arranged alphabetically, they cover virtually every aspect of the Russo–Japanese War. Items for which there are specific entries are bolded where first mentioned in the Introduction and in the Dictionary

entries. Breaking such a major event down to a dictionary-like sequence is bound to have some apparent limitations, but also advantages. I hope, though, that readers and users of this book, especially those who do not know Russian or Japanese, will be able to benefit from its novel aspects and draw an altogether new and more accurate picture of the war and its consequences.

Acknowledgments

In researching a book of this type, one inevitably incurs debts of various sorts, some of which I will never be able to repay. During this project, I was fortunate to discuss various issues related to this book with numerous colleagues and participants at two conferences on the Russo–Japanese War that I took part in organizing. Among these remarkable scholars, I am especially grateful to Yitzhak Shichor, Ben-Ami Shillony, Harold Zvi Schiffrin, Ian Nish, Aron Shai, Yigal Sheffy, Philip Towle, Jonathan Frankel, Gad Gilbar, Ury Eppstein, Bernd Martin, Dani Gutwein, Peter Berton, Guy Podaler, Richard Smethurst, Joseph Henning, Oliver Griffin, Seok Hua-jeong, Patrick Beillevaire, Thomas Otte, Yulia Mikhailova, Jan Kusber, Tilak Sareen, Monika Lehner, Anna Frajlich-Zajac, and Paul Norbury, for sharing with me their knowledge and insights about the Russo–Japanese War.

I would like to thank my research assistants at the University of Haifa, Ido Blumenfeld, Ran Snir, Gideon Elazar, and Felix Brenner, for their dedication and help in gathering materials, translating, and editing. Ido Blumenfeld and Dikla Berliner were more than instrumental in helping to draw the maps for this book. Their assistance, as well as the insistence of the series editor, Jon Woronoff, served as a catalyst in starting this project. The advice provided and materials shared by Inaba Chiharu, Shôbo Haruhiko, Ishii Kazuo, and Mark Conrad were invaluable in locating and deciphering Japanese and Russian sources and concepts. I remain, however, solely responsible for the writing, interpretations, and possible mistakes in this book.

The financial support provided by the Research Authority at the University of Haifa and the lasting encouragement of the Dean of Research, Prof. Moshe Zeidner, were also essential and are highly appreciated. Murray Rosovsky was indispensable, as usual, in providing painstaking proofreading and expert editing. The research environment facilitated

by Ogawa Toshiki and the University of Tsukuba, as well as the generous hospitality in Japan provided by the Shôbo and Dewaraja families, was beneficial for the completion of this project.

No dedication can do justice to the patience of loved ones. Without my wife, Fabienne, and our three daughters, Jasmine, Emmanuelle, and Narkisse, this book would not have been possible. I want to let them know just how valuable and sustaining their support and love have been over this period.

The book is dedicated to my father, Leon Kowner—a teacher and a friend, who has shared with me his clear perception and profound knowledge of military history since my childhood in long and patient discussions, who bought me numerous military history books that at first I could not read but could only enjoy the photos, and who steadily taught me the value of total history and its far-reaching importance.

Reader's Notes

The writing of this dictionary involved great difficulties in transliteration and occasionally even translation of many of the entries. Not only is the script of each belligerent's language not Latin, but the war was waged on the territory of China and Korea, where other non-Latin scripts are in use. Further, in the century that has elapsed since the war, that territory has changed hands and regimes, and many of the place names have changed, often more than once. Place names in Manchuria and Korea during the early 20th century posed perhaps the greatest problem for this book, as they do for any historian who wishes to write about the war. Each belligerent often had its own name for the various localities; the English-speaking world had a third name; and the local people had a fourth or fifth (especially in Manchuria). Many of these names were changed after the war, for political reasons or due to a change in the transliteration system.

An example is the southern harbor, fortress, and site of a great siege, known in the West as Port Arthur after 1860. The local Chinese population called the place Lüshun. The Russians, who leased the site during 1898–1904, called it Port Artur. The Japanese, who occupied it from 1905 to 1945, called it Ryojun. After World War II, the Soviet Union controlled the harbor for a decade and reverted to Port Artur. In 1955, the Chinese regained control of the area and reverted to their old name for it, Lüshun. In the following years, the Chinese united the city with the adjacent city of Dalien (or Dalian; Talien in old Chinese transliteration, Dalny in English, Dairen in Japanese, Dalnii in Russian), and today they are often known together as Lita. These historical, linguistic, and political shifts have been taken into account throughout the book, but they involved several editorial decisions to make it as systematic as possible.

NAMES OF PEOPLE

The names of people mentioned in the book follow several transliteration systems. Transliterations of Russian names, written originally in the Cyrillic alphabet, adhere to the modified form of the U.S. Library of Congress. Exceptions are names so familiar in English that they are written in the commonly accepted way so as not to mislead the reader (e.g., Nicholas II rather than Nikolai II); likewise, Russian names of German origin appear in the form usual in that period in the English literature (with the original German name in brackets). Japanese names are written according to the Hepburn transliteration system and in consultation with the Kodansha Encyclopedia (1983 edition). The circumflex used in some of the Japanese names indicates a long vowel. Chinese names are written according to the Pinyin transliteration system (with the Wade-Giles transliteration in brackets), while Korean names follow the McKuhn and Reischauer transliteration system. As commonly accepted in the East Asian tradition and in academic writing in English, all East Asian names appear with the family name first, followed by the personal name. Along with the above usages, many of the entry heads are followed by additional transliteration options in brackets. Notably, some of the Japanese first names have two different readings; one follows the Japanese reading (*kunyomi*) and one the so-called Chinese reading (*onyomi*).

NAMES OF PLACES

Names of locations in Manchuria and China are written according to the Wade-Giles transliteration system. While today the Pinyin transliteration system is in growing use, most books in European languages dealing with this period, and certainly all books written during the war itself and in the half a century that followed, apply the Wade-Giles system or similar traditional systems. Moreover, many of the place names in Manchuria and the names of battle sites are not in use today, partly because they were from local dialects or non-Chinese languages. Therefore, the use of current Chinese names or of old names in Pinyin transliteration may mislead the reader and make it impossible to identify these places. However, to allow the reader to identify the battle sites

and link them with present-day locations, the Pinyin transliterations are added in brackets, as well as the name in Japanese (written in italics), and the name in Russian if it differs substantially from the English name. Place names in Japan are written according to the Hepburn transliteration system, in consultation with the Kodansha Encyclopedia (first edition) and the fourth edition of the Kenkyusha Japanese–English dictionary. Finally, names of places of current special importance are written in the present transliteration, such as Tokyo (which a century ago was written *Tokio* and is transliterated fully as *Tôkyô*) and Beijing (Peking, Peiping).

DATES

The dates in the book are written according to the Gregorian calendar (the calendar which is commonly used today in the West and most of the world, including Russia), rather than either the Julian calendar, which was used in tsarist Russia until 1918, or the modern Japanese calendar, which is still in use today. The Julian calendar, used in many books on Russian history, was 12 days “behind” the Gregorian calendar during the 19th century and 13 days “behind” during the 20th century. Japan adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1873 but also began about that time to number years serially from the year in which a reigning emperor ascended the throne (the *entire era*). Therefore, the date of the outbreak of the war, which occurred on 26 January 1904 according to the Julian calendar in Russia, and on the 8th day of the second month of the 37th year of the Meiji era in Japan, appears in this book as 8 February 1904.

MEASUREMENT UNITS

The units of measurement in this book are given by the metric system, but to facilitate the text for those unfamiliar with it, units current in the United States appear in brackets. The description of the battles at sea pose a special problem because most fleets, including those of countries that had long since switched to the metric system, continued using traditional non-metrical units of measurement. Therefore, units of measurement that have additive professional meaning and were used for

general description (such as the caliber of guns) are provided as well in brackets. The displacement of ships is given in English tons (1 ton = 1,016 kg), even though no accepted unit for measuring and recording the displacement of battleships existed prior to the Naval Conference in Washington in 1922. Therefore, all measurements were related to “normal” displacement or to the displacement at the planning stage.

ARMAMENT AND ARMOR

Technical data regarding warships and guns are written in abbreviated form. Thus the inscription $4 \times 305\text{mm}/40$ [12in.] (2×2) means four guns of bore diameter 305 millimeters (12 inches) and barrel length 40 calibers (i.e., 12.20 meters), and the guns are arranged in two turrets of two guns each. The inscription TT (2AW 2sub) means four torpedo tubes, two of them above water and two submerged. For the various abbreviations, the reader is advised to consult the list of acronyms and abbreviations.

RANKS

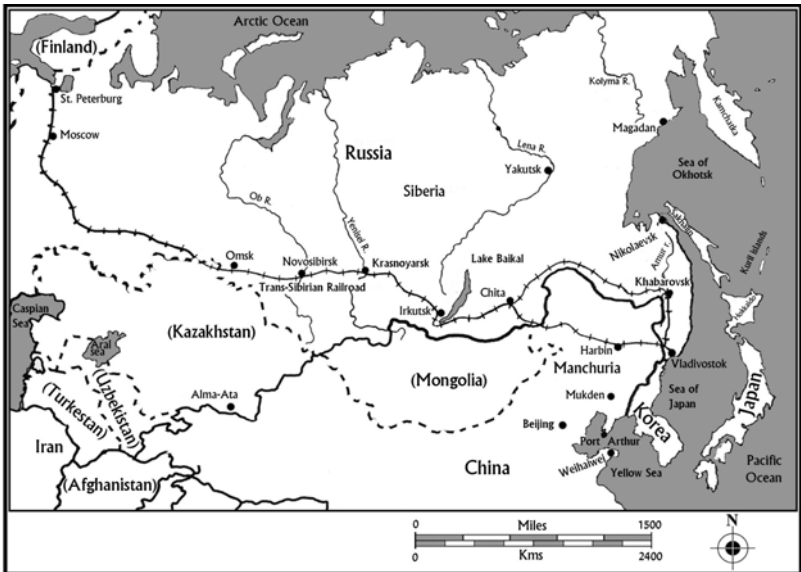
Ranks of the military figures are given according to the British system at the beginning of the 20th century. This is done to simplify the usage of different terms for the armies and navies referred to in the discussion, and to adhere to the names of the ranks as they appear in the contemporary literature in English on the war. Names of ranks of military and naval officers in both pre-World War I tsarist Russia and imperial Japan are listed with their corresponding British ranks in appendix 3.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

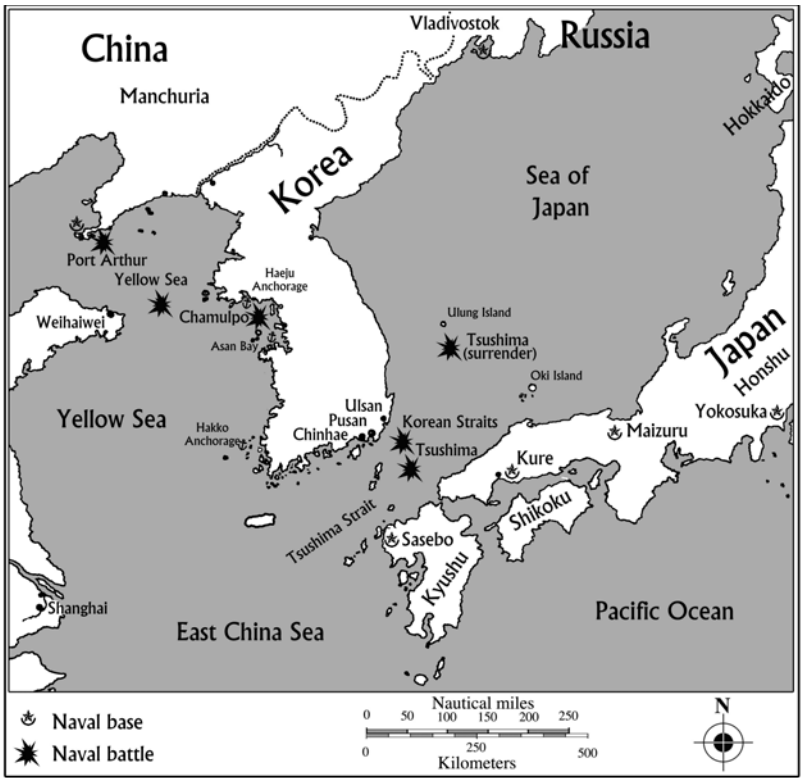
AAG	assistant adjutant general (British army)
ADC	aide-de-camp
Adm	admiral
AG	adjutant general (British army)
App.	appointed
Ass.	assistant
AW	above water
AX	Auxiliary vessel; transport ship
BB	battleship
BCE	before Christian era
Brig Gen	brigadier general
Brit.	British
Capt	captain
CBE	Commander of the Order of the British Empire (award)
CC	cruiser
Cdr	commander
C-in-C	commander-in-chief
cm	centimeter(s)
CO	commanding officer (commander)
Col	colonel
Comp.	complement (all of a ship's personnel required to operate the ship)
CoS	chief-of-staff
CR	armored cruiser
CT	conning tower
cyl	cylinder(s)
DAG	deputy adjutant general (British army)
DD	destroyer
Deg	degree(s)

Dep.	deputy
Displ.	displacement (the weight of water, in long tons, displaced by a ship)
E.	east
est.	established
Fin.	Finnish
Fr.	French
ft	foot, feet
GB	Great Britain
Gen	general
Ger.	German
GG	governor-general
GOC	general officer commanding (British army)
grt	gross registered tonnage
HMS	His/Her Majesty's Ship
hrs	hours
HTE	horizontal triple expansion
ihp	indicated horsepower
IJA	Imperial Japanese Army
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy
in.	inch [2.54 centimeters], inches
IRA	Imperial Russian Army
IRN	Imperial Russian Navy
It.	Italian
Jpn.	Japanese
KC	Krupp compound
KCB	Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (award)
km	kilometer(s)
kt	knot [1.853 kilometers per hour], knots
LBD	length, beam, draft (measurements of size of a ship)
lbs	pounds [1 pound = 0.454 kilogram]
Lt	lieutenant
Lt Cdr	lieutenant commander
Lt Gen	lieutenant general
m	meter(s)
m/sec	meters per second
Mac.	machinery
Maj	major

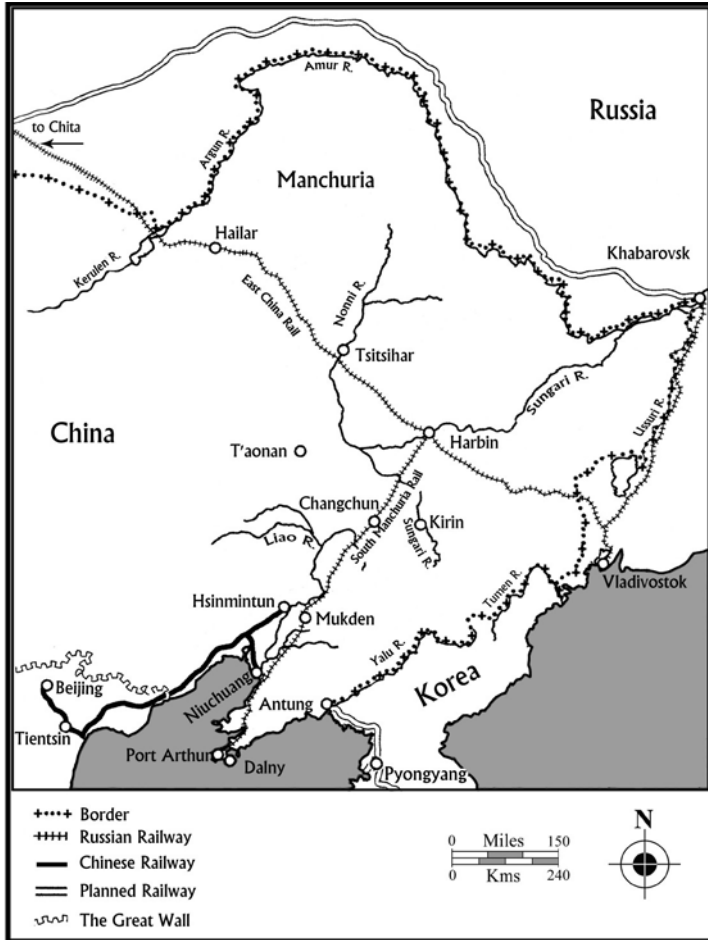
Maj Gen	major general
max.	maximum
mi	mile [1.609 kilometer], miles
ML	minelayer
mm	millimeter(s)
MN	naval mine(s)
MP	member of parliament
N.	north
NCO	non-commissioned officer
nm	nautical mile [1.853 kilometers], nautical miles
OBB	obsolete battleship (during the war) or coastal defense battleship
OCR	protected cruiser
pdr	pounder
PG	gunvessel and third-class cruiser
PM	prime minister
Pref.	Prefecture (Japanese administrative district)
QF	quick fire
QMG	quartermaster general
R Adm	rear admiral
r/min	rounds per minute
RN	British Royal Navy
Rus.	Russian
Sp.	Spanish
sq	square
sub	submerged
t	ton(s)
TB	torpedo boat
TT	torpedo tube(s)
USA	United States of America
USN	United States Navy
USS	United States Ship
v.	vice
V Adm	vice admiral
VTE	vertical triple expansion
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
y	yard [0.9144 meter], yards



The War Arena.



The naval arena.



Manchuria and North Korea



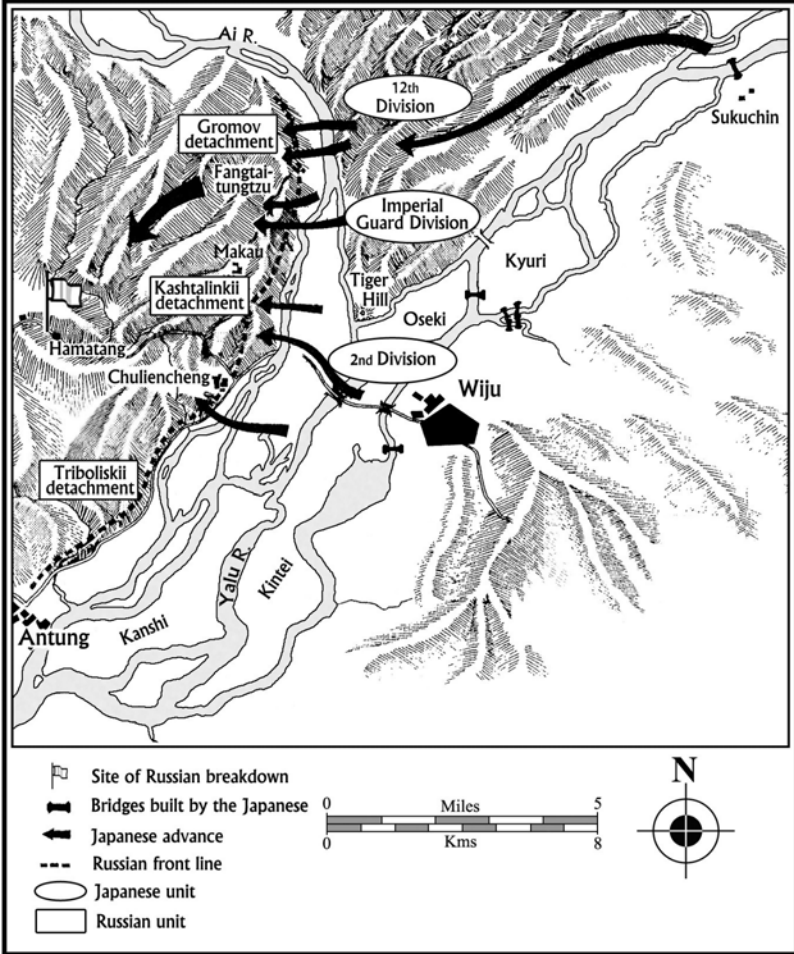
The battle arena (Liaotung peninsula).



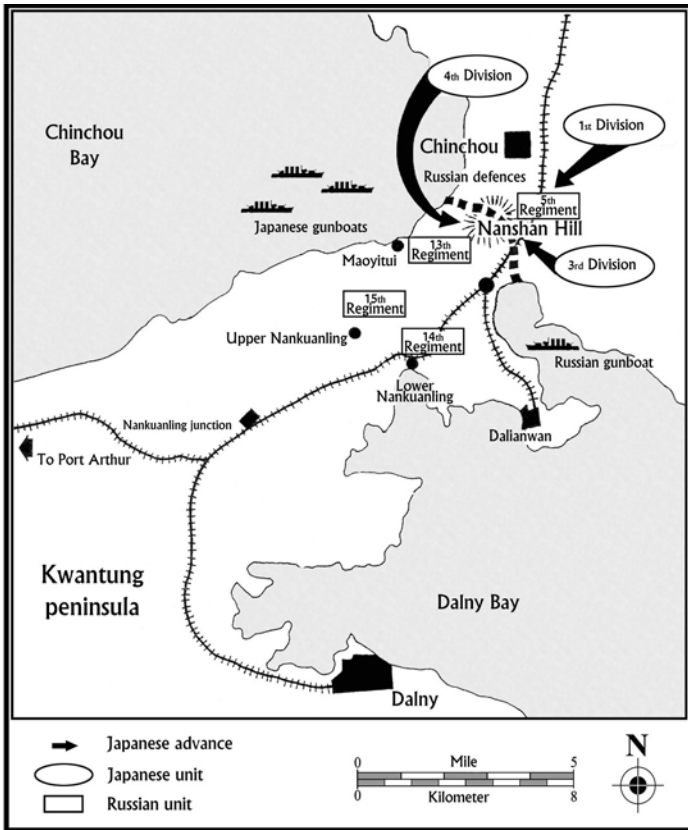
Korea.



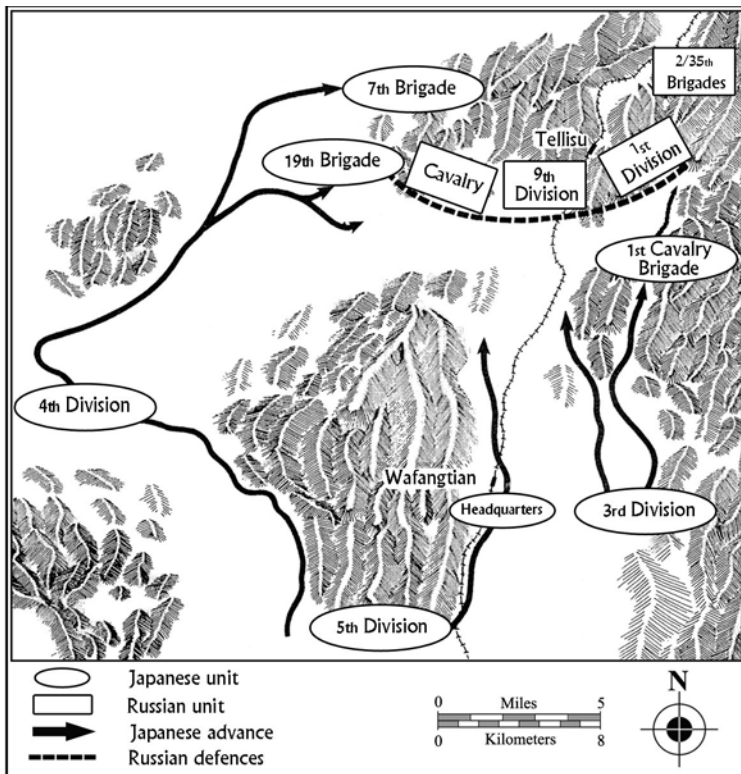
Landing and advance of the Japanese army.



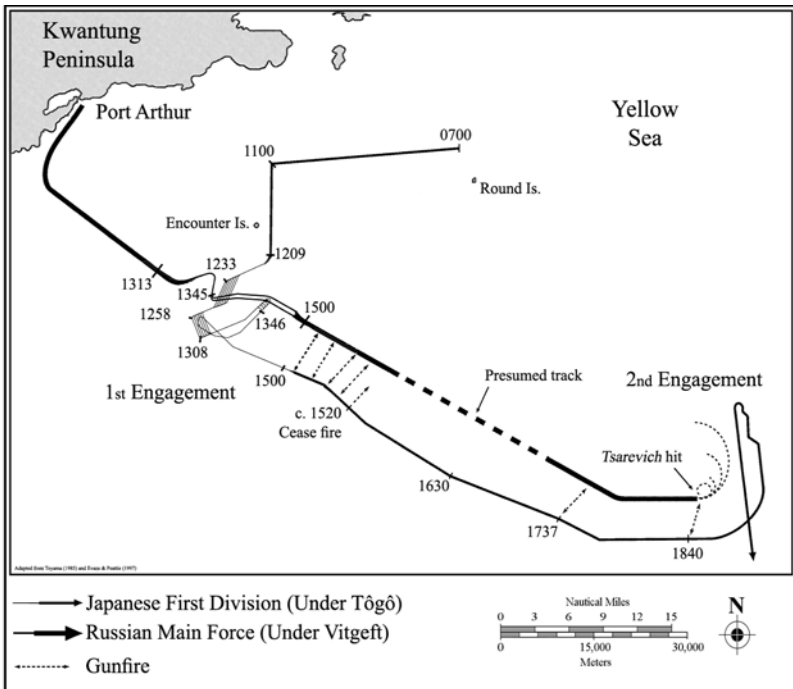
Battle of the Yalu.



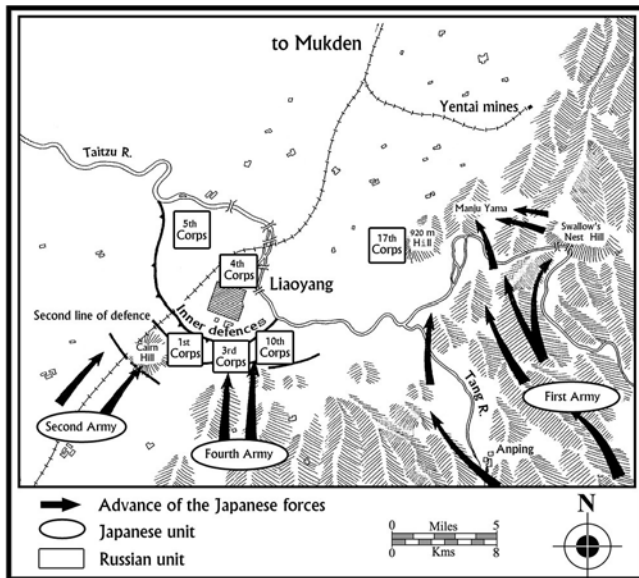
Battle of Nanshan.



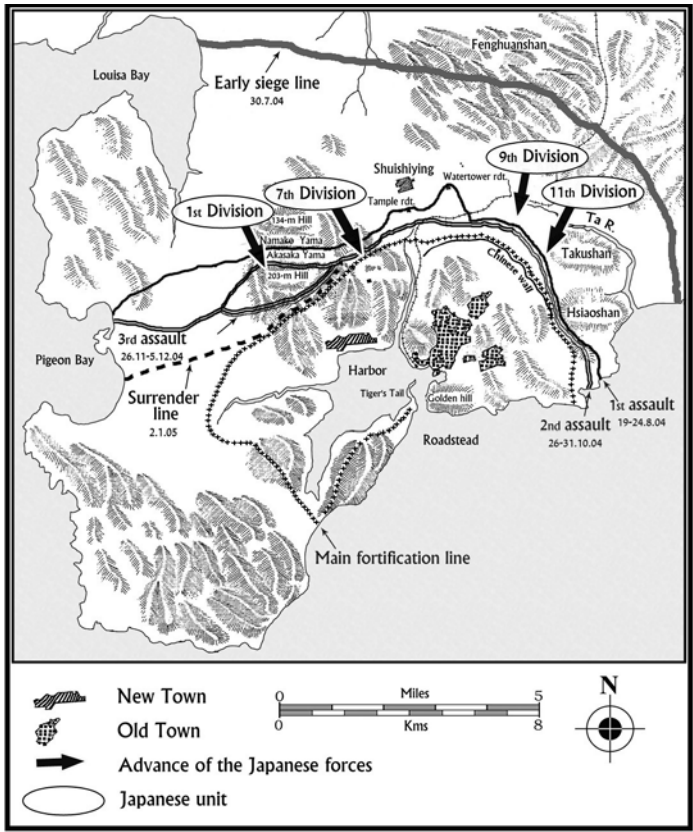
Battle of Telissu.



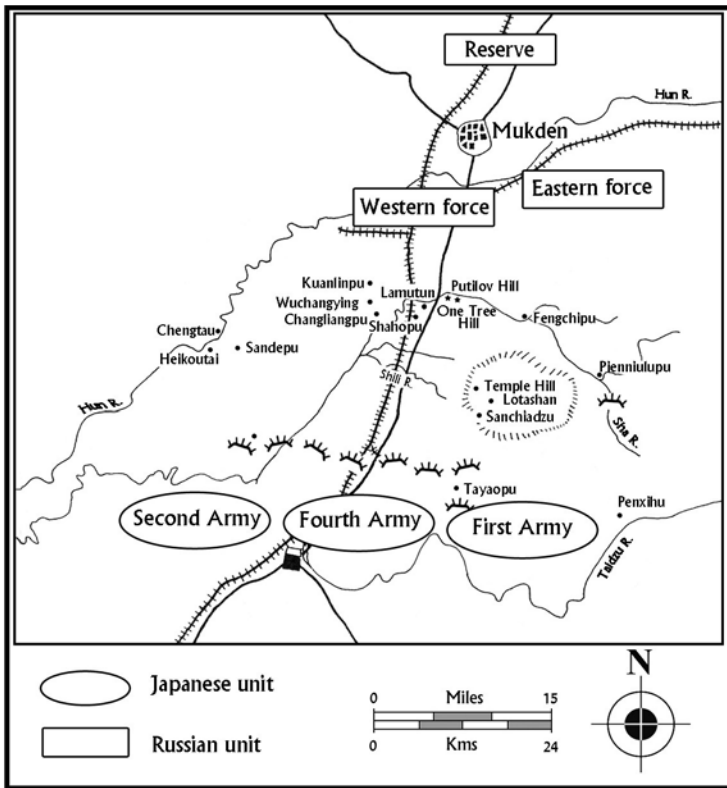
Naval battle of the Yellow Sea.



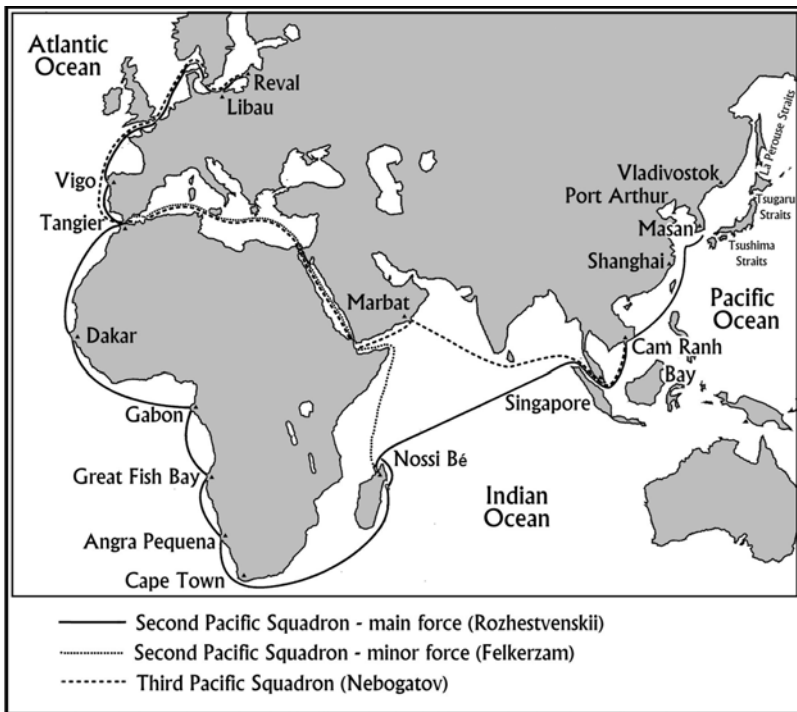
Battle of Liaoyang.



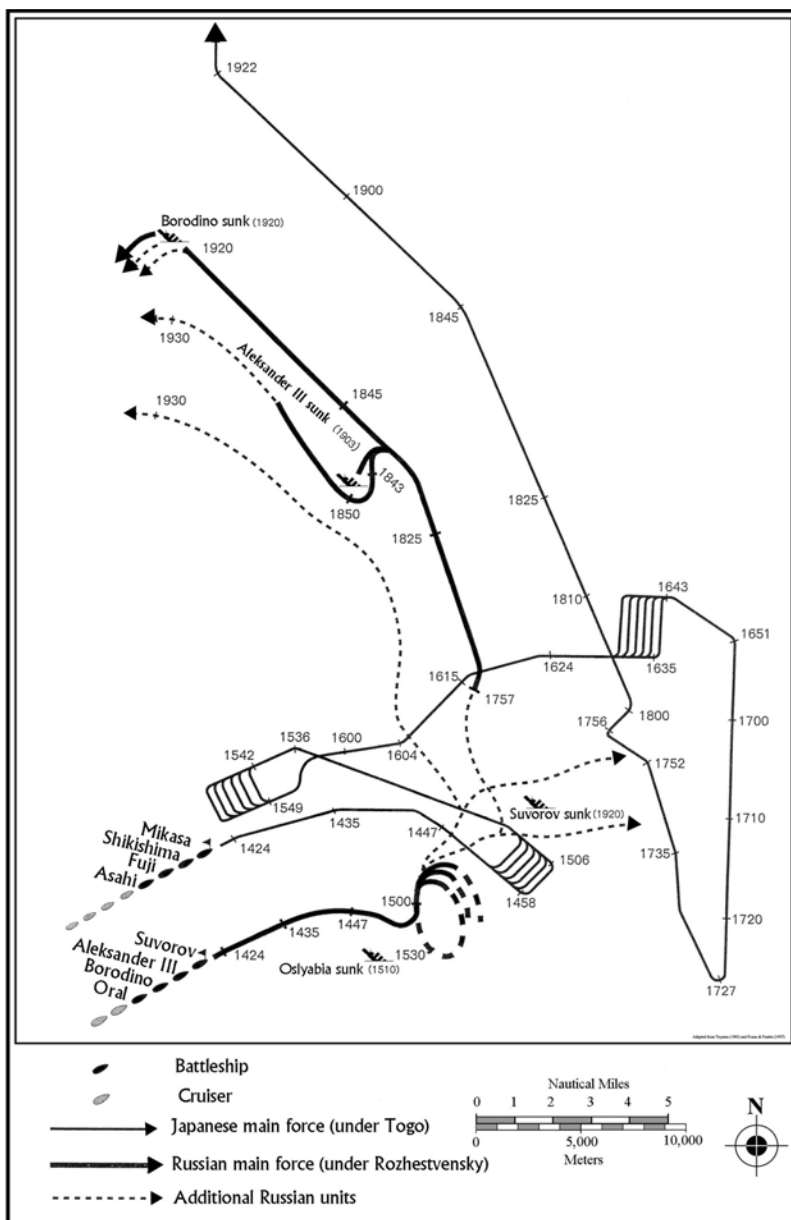
Siege of Port Arthur.



Battle of Sha-ho.



The voyage of the Baltic Fleet.



Naval battle of Tsushima.

Chronology

Prewar Events (1854–1904)

1854 31 March: United States and Japan sign the Treaty of Kanagawa.

1855 7 February: Russia and Japan sign the Shimoda Treaty; division of the Kuril Islands and joint control over Sakhalin.

1858 19 August: Russia and Japan sign a trade and navigation treaty.

1875 7 May: Russo–Japanese Exchange Treaty. Japan receives full control of the Kuril Islands while Russia receives full control of Sakhalin.

1876 February: Japanese naval force led by Kuroda Kiyotaka heads for Korea and negotiates the unequal Treaty of Kanghwa. The treaty opens Korean ports and allows for Japanese settlements on the peninsula.

1884 4 December: Progressive forces in the Korean government assisted by the Japanese minister stage a coup d'état in Seoul. Chinese military intervention suppresses the rebels and restores the king to the throne.

1885 5 April: China and Japan sign the Tientsin [Tianjin] Convention, which provides for the removal of their respective forces from Korean soil.

1891 11 May: In the Otsu Incident, a Japanese policeman wounds the Russian crown prince, Nicholas, in an assassination attempt during the prince's visit to Otsu, Japan. **31 May:** Construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway starts.

1894 February: Outbreak of the Tonghak rebellion in Korea. **21 July:** Japanese troops seize the Korean royal palace and install a puppet regent, while Japanese warships sink a Chinese troopship en route to Korea. **1 August:** Formal declaration of the First Sino–Japanese War. **October:** Japanese forces cross the Yalu River into Chinese territory. **1 November:** Tsar Alexander III dies; his son Nicholas II ascends the throne. **21 November:** Japanese forces take Port Arthur.

1895 17 April: Japan and China sign the Shimonoseki Treaty, ending the First Sino–Japanese War. **23 April:** Russia, Germany, and France submit an ultimatum to Japan, known as the Three-Power Intervention, to withdraw from the Liaotung peninsula. **8 October:** Korean Queen Min is assassinated in Seoul by members of the Japanese legation. **8 November:** A complementary treaty for the withdrawal of Japanese forces from China and Manchuria is signed.

1896 10 February: Korean King Kojong flees to the Russian legation (remains there until 20 February 1897). **3 June:** Conclusion of the Li–Lobanov agreement, granting Russia the right to build the Chinese Eastern Railway through Manchuria. **9 June:** Conclusion of the Yamagata–Lobanov agreement. **8 September:** A Russo–Chinese agreement for the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway.

1897 3 December: Germany seizes Kiaochow in Shantung peninsula. **14 December:** Russia informs Germany that it intends to seize Port Arthur.

1898 27 March: China grants Russia 25-year leases to the ports of Dalny and Port Arthur. **25 April:** Conclusion of the Nishi–Rosen agreement. **10 December:** Under the Treaty of Paris that concludes the Spanish–American War, Spain cedes the Philippines to the United States.

1899 Early: The secret society of the Harmonious Fists (the Boxers) steps up attacks on Chinese converts along the Shandong–Heibei border. **September:** U.S. Secretary of State John Hay announces the Open-Door Policy regarding China.

1900 10 June: The Boxers enter Beijing. **9 July:** Russian army forces enter Manchuria. **4 August:** Russian forces occupy Niuchuang. **14 August:** The Boxers’ siege lifted from the Foreign Legations quarter in Beijing. **Autumn:** Russian forces occupy the entire territory of Manchuria.

1901 **7 January:** Russia proposes neutralization of Korea. **8 February:** China asks support of the powers in opposing Russia. **July:** South Manchurian Railway is completed. **7 September:** China signs the Boxer Protocol (the Peking Protocol). **21 October:** Trans-Siberian Railway is complete, except for the Circumbaikal section. **25 November:** Itô Hirobumi arrives for talks in St. Petersburg.

1902 **30 January:** Anglo–Japanese alliance is signed. **16, 20 March:** Franco–Russian declarations in response to the Anglo–Japanese alliance. **8 April:** Sino–Russian agreement defining terms of military evacuation of Manchuria. **28 June:** Triple Alliance renewed. **July:** Sergei Witte establishes the Manchurian Mining Company. **8 October:** Completion of the first stage of military evacuation of Manchuria. **October:** Witte visits East Asia. **November:** Aleksandr Bezobrazov leaves for Manchuria.

1903 **1 March:** Aleksei Kuropatkin and the tsar discuss reinforcements for Manchuria. **1 April:** Sino–Japanese timber company is formed. **19 April:** Anti-Jewish pogrom in Kishinev. **22 April:** Kuropatkin leaves for East Asia. **April:** Bezobrazov returns to St. Petersburg. **15 May:** Bezobrazov appointed state secretary. **May:** Bezobrazov’s Yalu River Timber Concessions begins operations, providing a pretext for the deployment of Russian troops on the Korean northern border. **12 June:** Kuropatkin visits Japan. **13 June:** Bezobrazov founds the Lumber Company of the Far East. **29 June:** Bezobrazov arrives at Port Arthur. **30 June:** Kuropatkin arrives at Port Arthur. **1–10 July:** Port Arthur conferences (16 sessions). **July:** Russians cross the Yalu River at Yongamp’o, enter Korean territory, and found a settlement. **12 August:** Russo–Japanese negotiations open. The first Japanese proposals are introduced in St. Petersburg. Viceroyalty of the Far East is established. **28 August:** Witte is dismissed as finance minister. **9 September:** Komura Jutarô accepts transfer of negotiations from St. Petersburg to Tokyo. **3 October:** Roman Rosen presents a Russian counter-proposal in Tokyo. **8 October:** Scheduled completion of Russian evacuation of Manchuria. Japanese socialists protest Russian failure to complete the evacuation. **30 October:** Second Japanese proposals and amendments to the Russian proposal are presented to the Russian government. **11 December:** Russian counter-proposals are presented to the Japanese government. **21 December:** Third, “final” Japanese proposals are presented to the Russian government in

Tokyo and in St. Petersburg. **26 December:** Evgenii Alekseev in a message to the tsar describes the situation as hopeless. **28 December:** Russian government conference regarding the negotiations; the Japanese two main fleets are reorganized as the Combined Fleet.

1904 6 January: Russian government transfers third counter-proposals to Japan, offering the acceptance of limited Japanese influence in Korea. **12 January:** Japanese Imperial Council decides to make a final offer to Russia. **13 January:** Japanese government transfers fourth proposals and ultimatum to Russia. **14 January:** The tsar orders Russian forces not to interfere with Japanese troops in Korea south of the 38th parallel. **20 January:** Japanese Imperial Navy is put on alert. **28 January:** Russian government confers regarding the negotiations. **2 February:** The tsar approves Russian final counter-proposals. **4 February:** Japanese Imperial Council decides to end the negotiations and formalizes the decision for war. **4–5 February:** Russian government conveys fourth counter-proposals. **6 February:** Japanese announcement of suspension of relations with Russia. Japanese Combined Fleet departs Sasebo and heads for Korea and Manchuria.

The Russo–Japanese War (1904–1905)

1904 8 February: Outbreak of hostilities. Japanese troops land in Korea and naval force attacks Port Arthur. Japanese forces land in Chemulpo. **9 February:** Naval battle of Chemulpo; Japanese troops occupy Seoul; Tôgô's ships shell Port Arthur. **10 February:** Japan declares war; Russian minister Roman Rosen leaves Tokyo; Japanese minister Kurino Shin'ichirô leaves St. Petersburg. **11–12 February:** Russian minelayer *Enisei* and cruiser *Boyarin* are sunk by mines off Port Arthur. **11 February:** United States and Great Britain proclaim neutrality. **12 February:** China and France proclaim neutrality. **13 February:** Germany proclaims neutrality. **16 February:** Russia declares war on Japan. **20 February:** Kuropatkin is named commander-in-chief of the Russian land forces in Manchuria. **23 February:** First Japanese attempt at blockading Port Arthur; Japanese–Korean protocol regarding control in Korea is signed. **6 March:** Japanese fleet shells Vladivostok. **8 March:** Vice Admiral Stepan Makarov arrives in Port Arthur. **10 March:** Russian torpedo boat *Steregushchii* is sunk off Port Arthur. **13**

March: Japanese First Army begins to land at Chinnampo. **26–27 March:** Second Japanese attempt at blockading Port Arthur. **Early April:** Japanese First Army defeats a Russian advance force near Pyongyang in northern Korea. **13 April:** Battleship *Petropavlovsk* sinks and Makarov is killed. **25–26 April:** Japanese forces drive Russian forces from the islands in the Yalu River. **1 May:** Battle of the Yalu. **3 May:** Third and final Japanese attempt at blocking Port Arthur. **5 May:** Japanese Second Army begins to land at Pitzuwo. **11–12 May:** First Japanese foreign war loans. **15 May:** Japanese battleships *Hatsuse* and *Yashima* are sunk by mines off Port Arthur. **19 May:** Japanese Fourth Army begins to land at Takushan. **25–26 May:** Battle of Nanshan. **27 May:** The Russians evacuate Dalny. **6 June:** Japanese Third Army begins to land in Dalny. **14–15 June:** Battle of Telissu. **15 June:** Russian warships sink two Japanese transports. **16 June:** Russian governor general of Finland, Nikolai Bobrikov, is assassinated by an employee of the Finnish senate. **20 June:** Russia decides to dispatch its Baltic Fleet to East Asia. **23 June:** First attempt of the Russian fleet to escape from Port Arthur. **30 June:** Land siege is laid on Port Arthur. **July:** Japanese government approves first peace conditions and makes first peace efforts. **17 July:** Battle of the Motien Pass. **24–25 July:** Battle of Tashihchiao. **Late July:** Colonel Akashi Motojirō meets with Russian revolutionaries in Switzerland. **28 July:** Russian Interior Minister Viacheslav Plehve is assassinated by a member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party; Russo–German commercial agreement is renewed. **30–31 July:** Battle of Hsimucheng. **31 July:** Lieutenant General Fedor Keller is killed by Japanese artillery fire. **2 August:** A British expeditionary force reaches Lhasa, Tibet, and imposes terms opening Tibetan trade to Britain and prohibiting extension of commercial privileges to Russia. **7 August:** First shells from Japanese land guns fall on Port Arthur; Rear Admiral Vilgelm Vitgeft is ordered to leave Port Arthur for Vladivostok. **10 August:** Naval battle of the Yellow Sea. **14 August:** Naval battle of the Korea Straits. **16 August:** Russians at Port Arthur reject Japanese offer to let them leave. **20 August:** First Japanese assault on Port Arthur. **21 August:** Russian cruiser *Novik* is sunk in Sakhalin. **25 August:** Battle of Liaoyang begins (lasts until 3 September). **4 September:** Kuropatkin evacuates Liaoyang. **11 September:** Russian Second Pacific Squadron (Baltic Fleet) under the command of Vice Admiral Zinovii Rozhdestvenskii leaves Kronstadt for Reval [Tallinn]. **25**

September: The Circumbaikal section of the Trans-Siberian Railway is officially opened. **10–17 October:** Battle of Sha-ho. **11 October:** Russian Second Pacific Squadron leaves Reval. **15 October:** Russian Second Pacific Squadron leaves Libau [Libava] for East Asia. **21–22 October:** The Dogger Bank Incident. **26 October:** Russian Second Pacific Squadron is bottled up at the port of Vigo. **28 October:** War crisis between Great Britain and Russia ends, with the tsar's consent to refer the dispute to the Hague Tribunal. **29 October:** Large-scale Japanese assault on Russian posts surrounding Port Arthur. **1 November:** Arrival of Russian Second Pacific Squadron at Vigo, Spain. **16 November:** Arrival of Russian Second Pacific Squadron at Dakar, Senegal. **20 November:** Departure of naval detachment under the command of Captain Leonid Dobrotvorskii from Libau. **26 November:** Japanese forces renew their assault on Port Arthur. **1 December:** Arrival of Russian Second Pacific Squadron at Gabon. **5 December:** 203-Meter Hill is taken by the Japanese. **7 December:** Arrival of Russian Second Pacific Squadron at Great Fish Bay. **15 December:** Lieutenant General Roman Kondratenko is killed in Port Arthur. **16 December:** Arrival of Russian Second Pacific Squadron at Angra Pequena, German South West Africa. **22 December:** International commission on the Dogger Bank Incident meets for the first time in Paris.

1905 **1 January:** Lieutenant General Anatolii Stoessel is prepared to surrender Port Arthur. **2 January:** Port Arthur falls. **9 January:** Arrival of Russian Second Pacific Squadron at Nossi Bé, Madagascar. **22 January:** Demonstrations in St. Petersburg are brutally dispersed ("bloody Sunday"). **25–29 January:** Battle of Sandepu. **27 January:** A general strike begins in Warsaw. **January:** Seoul–Pusan railway line is completed. **14 February:** Arrival of Dobrotvorskii's detachment at Nossi Bé. **15 February:** Departure of Russian Third Pacific Squadron from Libau. **17 February:** Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich is assassinated. **25 February:** The Hague Tribunal rules against Russia in the Dogger Bank dispute. **27 February:** The first battle of the Mukden campaign begins. **9 March:** Russian ambassador in London pays £65,000 for the Dogger Bank claim. **10 March:** Conclusion of the battle of Mukden; Russian forces retreat from Mukden and Japanese forces enter the city. **13 March:** General Ôyama Iwao notifies Imperial Headquarters of difficulty of continuing the war. **16 March:** Departure of Russian Second Pacific Squadron from Nossi Bé. **20 March:** U.S. Pres-

ident Theodore Roosevelt announces his willingness to act as a mediator. **24 March:** Third Japanese foreign war loan. **31 March:** German emperor lands at Tangier, Morocco. **8 April:** Japanese government approves general principles of the peace terms; passage of Russian Second Pacific Squadron off Singapore. **14 April:** Arrival of Russian Second Pacific Squadron at Cam Ranh Bay, Indochina. **21 April:** Japanese government approves peace terms; Roosevelt calls for direct peace talks. **25 April:** Japanese government makes preliminary proposal regarding American mediation. **9 May:** Meeting of Russian Second and Third Pacific Squadrons in Indochina. **27–28 May:** Naval battle of Tsushima. **31 May:** Japanese government formally requests Roosevelt's mediation. **3 June:** Germany urges Russia to accept American mediation. **8 June:** Roosevelt issues formal invitation to the belligerents to a peace conference. **10 June:** Japanese government formally accepts Roosevelt's offer. **12 June:** Tsar formally accepts Roosevelt's offer. **27 June:** Mutiny on the *Potemkin* (ends 7 July). **July:** Lenin publishes *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*. **5 July:** Japanese emperor approves Russian peace conditions. **7 July:** Japanese army and navy units begin to attack Sakhalin (completed 7 August). **24 July:** German emperor and the tsar meet in Björkö, Finland. Germany and Russia sign the Treaty of Bjorko. **28 July:** Japanese representatives Komura Jutarō and Kaneko Kentarō visit Roosevelt. **3 August:** Russian chief plenipotentiary Sergei Witte arrives in the United States. **8 August:** Russian and Japanese representatives reach Portsmouth, New Hampshire. **9 August:** Negotiations start at Portsmouth. **12 August:** Great Britain and Japan extend the Anglo–Japanese Alliance. **28 August:** Japanese Imperial Council decides to accept the Russian terms. **4 September:** Japanese Anti-Russian Society protests peace conditions. **5 September:** Japan and Russia sign the Treaty of Portsmouth.

Postwar Repercussions (1905–1950)

1905 6 September: Mass demonstrations and riots erupt in Hibiya Park in Tokyo. **7 September:** Martial law in Tokyo. **27 September:** Anglo–Japanese Alliance is published. **26 October:** St. Petersburg soviet is established. **27 October:** Japanese government approves policies regarding the Korean protectorate and conditions for conference with the

Chinese government. **30 October:** October Manifesto is circulated in Russia. **4 November:** Finnish autonomy is restored by Russia. **17 November:** Beginning of negotiations between Japan and China. **18 November:** Japan forces Korean officials to sign the Protectorate agreement, which stipulates that all foreign policy is to be controlled by Japanese officials residing in Korea. **21 November:** Lenin returns to Russia. **29 November:** Martial law is lifted in Tokyo. **15 December:** Japanese prisoners of war are formally handed over to the Japanese government. **22 December:** The Treaty of Beijing is signed between Japan and China.

1906 **19 February:** Russian prisoners of war are formally handed over to the Russian government. **April:** Seoul–Uiju railway line is completed. **16 April:** Russia negotiates an international loan of 2.25 billion francs, half from the French government. **27 April:** Anglo–Chinese agreement is signed confirming Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. **6 May:** Tsar promulgates the Fundamental Laws. **10 May:** First Duma is convened. **22 July:** First Duma is dissolved by the tsar. **1 September:** Courts-martial are established in Russia. A thousand people are condemned to death over the following eight-month period.

1907 **5 March:** Second Duma is convened. **1 April:** Prefectural-level administration is established in Sakhalin. **13 June:** Russo–Japanese railway demarcation line agreement is reached. **15 July:** Russo–Japanese fisheries agreement is signed. **19 July:** Japan forces Korean King Kojong to abdicate in favor of his son Sunjong. The action sparks a series of anti-Japanese demonstrations. **24 July:** Japanese Resident General Itô Hirobumi assumes total control of the Korean government. **30 July:** Russia and Japan sign the first postwar agreement. **1 August:** Japan dissolves the Korean military. **18 August:** Anglo–Russian Entente is signed acknowledging Chinese sovereignty over Tibet.

1908 **10 April:** Russo–Japanese rapport on partition of Sakhalin is reached. **6 August:** Russo–Japanese agreement on the division of Sakhalin. **30 November:** Japan and United States sign the Takahira–Root Agreement.

1909 **26 October:** Japanese statesman and resident general in Korea, Itô Hirobumi, is assassinated in Harbin by An Chung-gon.

1910 **4 July:** Russia and Japan sign the second postwar agreement. **22 August:** Annexation of Korea by Japan is formulated in a treaty signed

by Japanese Resident General Viscount Terauchi Masatake and Korean Prime Minister Yi Wan-yong. **29 August:** Korean King Sunjong abdicates and announces Korea's submission to Japan.

1911 13 July: Renewal of the Anglo–Japanese Alliance for a further decade. **October:** Revolt spreads in China, leading to collapse of the Qing dynasty. **1 December:** Following collapse of the Qing dynasty in China, some Mongolian princes proclaim Outer Mongolia's independence from China. They expel the remnants of Chinese forces from Outer Mongolia.

1912 12 February: Qing court announces the abdication of the last emperor. **8 July:** Russia and Japan sign the third postwar agreement. **30 July:** Emperor Meiji dies. He is succeeded by his son Yoshihito (later called Emperor Taisho; reigns 1912–1926). **3 November:** A Russo–Mongol agreement is signed on the question of Mongol independence. Russia supports “autonomy within China.”

1914 28 July: Austro–Hungary declares war on Serbia. **1 August:** Germany declares war on Russia. World War I breaks out. **23 August:** Japan declares war on Germany, entering World War I on the side of Great Britain and the Allies. **2 September:** Japan seizes German possessions on Shantung peninsula, China; during the following month Japan ousts Germans from Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall islands in the Pacific Ocean.

1915 25 May: Russia, China, and Mongolia sign the Treaty of Kyakhta, which formalizes the autonomy of Outer Mongolia in internal affairs; Japan submits the Twenty-one Demands to China calling for territorial and political concessions.

1916 3 July: Russia and Japan sign the fourth postwar agreement.

1917 15 March: Tsar Nicholas II abdicates. **2 November:** Japan and United States sign the Lansing–Ishii pact in which both parties agree to Open-Door Policy in China, and the United States recognizes Japanese special interests in China.

1918 16 July: Tsar Nicholas II and his family are executed. **November:** Japanese troops land in Vladivostok as part of the Allied Siberian Intervention during the Russian Bolshevik Revolution.

1921 11 July: Mongolia declares itself an independent state. **August:** Soviet troops enter Outer Mongolia (remain until March 1925).

1925 20 January: Japan and Soviet Union sign a convention establishing diplomatic relations and Japan agrees to withdraw from northern Sakhalin.

1928 4 June: Extremist army officers of the Japanese Kwantung Army in Manchuria assassinate warlord Zhang Zuolin.

1931 18 September: Japanese military personnel detonate a bomb on the rail near Mukden, using the event as a pretext to seize the Chinese garrison in Mukden and ultimately to occupy Manchuria.

1932 18 February: Japanese Kwantung Army declares the puppet state of Manchukuo.

1934 27 November: Soviet Union and Mongolia reach an agreement on military cooperation against the threat of Japanese expansion.

1935 January: Soviet troops reenter Mongolia.

1936 24 November: Japan and Germany sign the Anti-Comintern Pact in which they agree to oppose the Soviet Union (Italy joins the pact on 6 November 1937).

1937 7 July: Second Sino–Japanese war erupts. **13 December:** Nationalist Chinese capital of Nanjing falls to the Japanese.

1938 3 November: Japan announces a “New Order in East Asia.”

1939 12 May: Armed conflict erupts between Japanese forces stationed in Manchuria and Soviet–Mongolian forces. Fighting centers on Nomonhan and Khalkyn Gol in northeast Mongolia. **16 September:** Japan and the Soviet Union sign a peace agreement regarding their conflict in Mongolia.

1940 27 September: Japan, Germany, and Italy sign the Tripartite Pact.

1941 13 April: Japan and the Soviet Union sign the Soviet–Japanese Neutrality Pact. **7 December:** Japan attacks Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, drawing the United States into World War II.

1945 8 August: Soviet Union declares war on Japan. **15 August:** Japan surrenders and the war in the Pacific ends.

1950 25 June: North Korean troops launch a full-scale invasion of South Korea, starting the Korean War (war continues until 27 July 1953).

Introduction

The Origins of the Russo–Japanese War

THE ORIGINS OF THE RUSSO–JAPANESE WAR

From a broad historical perspective, the Russo–Japanese War was the flash point of prolonged friction between two expanding powers. From the west the Russian empire had been encroaching eastward for centuries, whereas from the east the Japanese empire had been expanding in the direction of the Asian mainland for three decades. The encounter between these two nations in the killing fields of **Korea** and **Manchuria**, areas that both sides were eager to control, was the first and most memorable confrontation between them.

Both belligerents were growing empires that tended during the pre-modern era to spread outward to new regions and to expand their borders. Still, **Russia** had more experience in the activity of territorial expansion. The Russian yearning for territorial expansion into East Asia was centuries old, pursued with economic, religious, and adventurous passion. In the 16th century, the area of Russia extended as far as the Ural Mountains. Beyond was Siberia, populated by tribal peoples who were unable to stem Russian intrusion. The Tatars cut off the Russian fur trade in the border areas in 1578, but a year later an expedition of **Cossacks**, led by an adventurer named Ermak (Yermak), was dispatched to renew it. In the following years, this expeditionary force pressed eastward for about 1,000 kilometers and, in less than a century, Russian explorers reached the Amur River.

At about the same time as Ermak's expedition, Japanese forces under the command of Toyotomi Hideyoshi strove to seize Korea and even **China**. Their failure, however, ended Japanese involvement in Asian affairs for almost three centuries. A few decades later, the fear of European-Christian involvement in the internal affairs of **Japan** drove the second shogun of the Tokugawa dynasty to a policy of long years of iso-

lation (*Sakoku*, 1640–1854). During that time, Japan maintained a continuous policy of non-involvement in Asian affairs, except for admitting a limited number of Chinese and Korean traders, as well as annual visits of Dutch merchant ships at the port of Nagasaki. For the time being, the Japanese need for territorial expansion was satisfied by the slow advance northward within the northern part of the Honshu mainland and the island of Ezo (now Hokkaido).

In 1697 Russian explorers arrived at Kamchatka, where they encountered for the first time a Japanese national and took him to Moscow. In the early decades of the 18th century, Russian hunters, researchers, and government officials penetrated the Kuril Islands northeast of Ezo. In 1739 Russians set foot for the first time on Japanese soil, and in 1792 a Russian expedition returned to Ezo but was not allowed entry. In 1804 a Russian flotilla arrived in Nagasaki; when not granted permission to enter the port, it shelled the villages in the area and attacked Japanese settlements in the Kuril Islands and in the adjacent elongated island of **Sakhalin**. Exactly a century before the Russo–Japanese War, tension between these two nations arose for the first time.

In the following half-century, Russo–Japanese relations calmed down, although Japan continued to bar Russian visits. In 1853, however, Tsar Nicholas I decided to dispatch another delegation to Nagasaki under the command of Vice Admiral Evfimii Putiatin, which did not complete its mission due to the outbreak of the Crimean War. Its timing, however, was exceptional, as in February 1854 an American flotilla under the command of Commodore Matthew Perry succeeded in forcing the shogun regime to end Japan's long period of isolation. A year later, Russia and Japan signed the first of three **prewar Russo–Japanese Treaties**, which included a temporary compromise regarding the division of Sakhalin. In 1868 a revolution known as the Meiji Restoration broke out in Japan, during which the shogun regime was replaced by an oligarchy of young samurai from the periphery. In consequence the Japanese nation entered into an accelerated process of modernization. That same year, the Japanese annexed Ezo and changed its name to Hokkaido.

During much of the second half of the 19th century, Russia and Japan maintained fairly stable relations, while both of them at the same time strengthened their hold in the region. In 1860 the Russians founded the city of **Vladivostok** on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. But they con-

tinued to look for an all-year-round open port of their own and therefore kept trying to expand southward. In 1875 Japan and Russia signed the second prewar Russo–Japanese treaty (the “exchange agreement”) that set out once again their common borders. Partly pushed into an imperial struggle, the Japanese oligarchy was quick to examine ways not only to prevent the conquest of Japan by Western forces but also to strengthen its position in the eyes of the West. Its inability to change the unequal treaties signed by the shogunal representatives after the opening of the country led many in Japan to the conclusion that the road to regain national respect was by forming new relations with its neighbors in East Asia—China and Korea. In 1873 Japan felt internal pressures to take over Korea, but the debate was resolved with a pragmatic call for temporary restraint. To palliate the militant circles, a Japanese naval force landed in Formosa (Taiwan) in 1874 and forced the opening of Korea in 1876. During the 1870s, Japan expanded its territory by annexing the Ryukyu Islands in the southwest, the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands in the south, and the Kuril Islands in the north.

Japanese military activities worried the Chinese, who decided to restore their now-weakened influence on Korea, and the 1880s were marked by a growing struggle in that country between China and Japan. From Japan’s viewpoint, any attempt thereafter by a foreign power to take control of Korea was to be considered a *casus belli*. Such a power was China in 1894, and Russia a decade later. To prevent such escalation in Korea, in 1885 Japan and China signed the Tientsin [Tianjin] Convention. The status quo between Russia and Japan began to show cracks in 1891, the year the Russians announced the laying of the **Trans-Siberian Railway** from European Russia to the Pacific Ocean, a distance of about 9,200 kilometers. Russians often defined this project as a cultural mission—bringing civilization in general and Christianity in particular to the peoples of Asia. But it was too expensive an enterprise for purely cultural purposes. This ambitious project, with all its branches, was to change the face of East Asia.

As the construction of the line progressed, it became clear that its military goals had implications that were no less far-reaching. Once completed, the line was expected to assist, whenever necessary, in the rapid mobilization of military forces to East Asia. In **St. Petersburg** and in the capitals of Europe, observers saw it as a bridgehead for Russian expansion in East Asia. Major interest in the project was shown by

Russia's crown prince Nicholas, who in 1890 set out on a long trip to East Asia. His final destination was Vladivostok, where he was to lay the cornerstone for the railway terminal. On his way, the crown prince, who three years later became Tsar **Nicholas II**, visited Japan. There he was attacked by a fanatic policeman (the **Otsu Incident**), which may have affected his attitude toward Japan.

The Crucial Decade: The First Sino–Japanese War and Its Aftermath

In the decade before the Russo–Japanese War, a political vacuum was created in Korea, into which Russia was drawn. Ironically perhaps, it was Japan that contributed to this vacuum. The question of Japanese and Chinese hegemony in Korea led to the outbreak of the **First Sino–Japanese War** in the summer of 1894. While for China this was just another war in a series of struggles to maintain the integrity of its borders, for Japan it was the first war against a foreign country in modern times.

The impressive military victories of the Japanese army and navy aroused great joy in Japan, but in Europe they caused grave fears about the power of this country in particular and the ascendancy of East Asian nations in general. During the war, the German emperor, **William II**, invented the term “yellow peril,” which quickly entered the international vocabulary as the hidden threat of the East Asian nations against Western civilization. Japan's victory was finalized diplomatically in the **Treaty of Shimonoseki**, according to which China was forced to cede Formosa and the **Liaotung peninsula**, with the harbor and fort of **Port Arthur** in its tip. Russia was alarmed by the notion of Japanese control in this peninsula, a gateway to Manchuria and the Chinese capital, Beijing. Less than a week later, on 23 April 1895, Russia managed to obtain the support of **France** and **Germany**, and together they relayed a message to Japan, “advising” it to restore to China the territories it had conquered in southern Manchuria, “for the sake of peace in the Far East.” Under the explicit ultimatum of this **Three-Power Intervention**, Japan decided to give up the Liaotung peninsula. The enlarged indemnities it eventually received from China were no compensation, and the surrender to the threats of the powers was regarded as a national degradation.

After the defeat of China, Russia became the main rival of Japan, not only because of its involvement in the Three-Power Intervention, but by reason of its expansionist ambitions in East Asia. Japan was aware of the Trans-Siberian Railway project, but the focus of the Russo-Japanese rivalry centered at that time on Korea, whose king was beginning to view the Russians as his saviors. Russia, together with the **United States**, objected to the plans to grant the Japanese exclusive rights in Korea, and they induced the other powers to demand Korean concessions in the peninsula, such as a franchise for mining and for railway tracks. The position of Japan began to deteriorate, and in the summer of 1895 its agents attempted abortively to turn the country into a Japanese protectorate. On 8 October 1895, several members of the Japanese legation in **Seoul**, dressed in local garb and led by the Japanese minister to Korea, **Miura Gorô**, entered the palace and carried out the **assassination of Queen Min**, the most vehement opponent of Japanese presence in Korea.

In February 1896, when Japanese troops landed near the capital to assist in another revolt, King **Kojong** found sanctuary in the building of the Russian legation in Seoul, which was surrounded by 200 Russian marines for its protection. Many Koreans interpreted the “internal exile” of their monarch as an uprising against the Japanese presence and began to act accordingly. Japanese advisers were expelled from their positions, collaborators were executed, and the new cabinet was constituted of persons regarded as pro-Russian. A year after the First Sino-Japanese War had ended, Russian involvement in Korea was greater than ever before, while Japan fell back to its prewar position. In **Tokyo**, prominent figures such as **Yamagata Aritomo** claimed that Japan had to accept Russian hegemony in Korea for the time being and avoid a situation in which Japan might have to confront all the Western nations on this issue. In May 1896, the representatives of Russia and Japan signed a memorandum in which the latter recognized the new Korean cabinet. The two nations also agreed to station the same number of troops in Korea. A month later, this memorandum was ratified as the **Yamagata-Lobanov Agreement** during Yamagata’s visit to Moscow for the coronation ceremony of Nicholas II.

The Russians also invited to the coronation ceremony the Chinese statesman **Li Hongzhang**, who was bribed to sign the **Li-Lobanov agreement**. The core of the agreement was mutual aid in the event of

Japanese aggression, but it was unclear how valid it was and who in the Chinese imperial court knew about it. However, one clause in the agreement was implemented at once: Li's consent to grant Russia the concession to build a significant shortcut for the Trans-Siberian Railway line across Manchuria to Chita [Cita], which led to a substantial increase in Russian involvement in the region.

The landing of German troops in Kiachow Bay on the Shantung peninsula in November 1897 caused the Chinese to invite the Russians, as a counter-measure, to temporarily occupy Port Arthur. From a Japanese perspective, the lease of Port Arthur by Russia was a critical step. With the memories of the evacuation still vivid, public agitation in Japan compelled the Russians to offer the Japanese a free hand in Korea in return for similar freedom in Manchuria. For the first time, the Japanese now formulated the doctrine of **Manchuria–Korea exchange**, which quickly resulted in the **Nishi–Rosen agreement** signed in May 1898. The Russians' desire for compromise was motivated by the need to buy time, a factor that was to underlie their policy toward the Japanese until the war. After it absorbed Manchuria, Russia began to envisage a continuous maritime link between Port Arthur and Vladivostok. This necessitated the control if not the subjugation of Korea, which Japan considered vital to its own empire. Henceforward the clash between the two nations was only a matter of time, as both sides were to increasingly view the competition for rail concessions, commercial expansion, and regional dominance as a zero-sum game that only one of them could win.

Russia indeed began to show greater interest in Korea in 1899, but the **Boxer Uprising** that spread throughout the north of China during 1900 momentarily restrained the simmering rivalry. Both Japan and Russia dispatched troops to aid in suppressing the Chinese rebellion. Russia, forced to abandon Korea, used this opportunity to occupy Manchuria with military forces. With the joint intervention over, the time was ripe for the Japanese to settle the struggle over Korea. Fearing that the impending completion of the Trans-Siberian Railway would bring the Russians back into Korea, the militant cabinet of **Katsura Tarô** pushed fiercely for a Russian evacuation of Manchuria. Although their negotiations with the Russians soon proved futile, the Japanese were more successful in their talks with **Great Britain**. The **Anglo–Japanese Treaty**, signed on 30 January 1902, provided Britain

with a strong Asian ally that could assist it in the struggle against Russian expansion on several fronts across Asia. For Japan, however, the treaty ensured that Russia would be isolated in case of another conflict with Japan, and in this way the treaty prevented this local confrontation from becoming an all-out European war, contrary to what occurred in 1914.

The Final Year: The Descent toward War

From the Japanese viewpoint, Russia's reluctance to withdraw from Manchuria was fully in line with their knowledge of its renewed interest in Korea. In February 1903 the Russians requested Korea to grant franchise for a Russian railway enterprise from Seoul northward to the border of the **Yalu River**. In June the general staff of the **Imperial Japanese Army** concluded that Japan should not disregard Russia's failure to keep to its commitment to withdraw from Manchuria, but that it should resort to military means if negotiations failed. Because of the sense of emergency, the **Imperial Council** also met in Tokyo on 23 June 1903 but seemed more willing to compromise.

In the spring of 1903, a Russian enterprise known as the **Yalu River Timber Concessions** set up its main office on the Korean side of Yalu delta. In an attempt to bring the hardliners together and to encourage Russian activity in Korea, on 12 August 1903 the tsar appointed Admiral **Evgenii Alekseev** to the new position of viceroy of the Far East region, residing in Port Arthur. Alekseev was supposed to be directly in charge of Russian interests in the region, although his authority was not fully defined. Two weeks later, the tsar completed his round of appointments. Finance Minister **Sergei Witte**, the architect of the Trans-Siberian Railway and a political dove, fell out of favor and was dismissed, whereas two adventurous and militant figures rose to power: the energetic **Aleksandr Bezobrazov** and his cousin **Aleksei Abaza**, secretary of the newly formed "Special Committee for the Far East." These two, as well as a number of prominent figures in St. Petersburg known collectively as the **Bezobrazov Circle**, urged a more adamant policy and the securing of additional concessions in Korea. Although the Trans-Siberian Railway was near completion, only a few in St. Petersburg believed that the Japanese intended to go to war. War Minister **Aleksei Kuropatkin** and Foreign Minister **Vladimir Lamsdorf** also submitted

their resignations but were persuaded to withdraw them. From then on, their moderating influence was muted and Russian foreign policy was fashioned through two voices that were more aggressive than before, one from the capital and the other from Port Arthur.

The shift in Russian policy had an effect on relations with China. In the autumn Alekseev halted negotiations over the Russian withdrawal from Manchuria and instead held a grand parade in **Mukden**. In September, Japanese and Russian representatives began negotiations in Tokyo. The Russian response, which was given at the beginning of October, disappointed the Japanese. It included an offer to turn the northern part of Korea beyond the 39th parallel into a neutral zone in return for removing Manchuria from Japan's sphere of interest. The Russians did not include in their proposal any obligation regarding the withdrawal of their forces. On 30 October the Japanese representatives offered amendments to the Russian proposal, limiting the neutral zone in Korea, moving its western borderline into Manchurian territory, and demanding recognition of their commercial rights in Manchuria.

Japanese decision-makers were aware that the Russians were trying to buy time. Moreover, the tsar was absent from the capital until November 1903, allegedly preoccupied with more urgent diplomatic issues in the European arena and in distress due to his wife's illness. At the beginning of December, Japanese opposition factions grouped together in Tokyo against the government of Katsura, claiming it was not doing enough to counter the Russian threat. An opportunity for action came on 11 December when the Russian minister in Tokyo, **Roman Rosen**, delivered his government's response. It did not contain any significant change from the former proposal and refrained from mentioning Manchuria, an area regarded as a matter for China and Russia alone. It rejected the Japanese exchange formula of Korea for Manchuria without any alternative compromise offer. In Tokyo a sense that there was no diplomatic solution to the crisis prevailed, although on 21 December another proposal, stated as the final one and containing the issue of Manchuria, was delivered to Russia. Simultaneously, the oligarchy in Tokyo sought to build a broad consensus for going to war over Manchuria if the Japanese proposals on Korea were rejected; Japanese preparations for war continued unabated. During December the **First** and the **Second Fleets** of the **Imperial Japanese Navy** were combined under a joint command; toward the end of the month, comprehensive

discussions took place at different military levels regarding the approaching war against Russia.

In St. Petersburg, matters proceeded calmly. On 28 December the tsar met with several of his ministers to discuss the Japanese proposals. The general attitude at the meeting was a desire to avoid war, at least for the time being, on the assumption that time was in Russia's favor and that the Trans-Siberian Railway would soon be fully functional and would aid in any future war effort. Besides, there was a general sense of confidence as to the power of Russia to withstand a Japanese attack, considering the relatively large number of forces in the region since the entry into Manchuria. Even though there was no agreement over the response to the Japanese proposal, it was decided to make an effort to calm Japan, and a message in that spirit was indeed sent by Rosen on 6 January 1904. The Russian message reiterated the need to create a neutral zone in Korea and that Japan should recognize Manchuria as being outside Japan's sphere of interest. It also intimated that Russia would not interfere with Japan or any other power taking full advantage of the rights granted them in the area according to their agreements with China, "except for the founding of settlements."

It is quite probable that before the Boxer Uprising the Russian response would have satisfied the Japanese. But as things stood, in early 1904 the general mood in Tokyo was that the Russians were not willing to compromise and that they could not be trusted. The winter gave the Japanese an advantage because the port of Vladivostok was frozen and naval vessels could not sail. On 12 January another meeting of the Imperial Council determined that Russia had not made any significant concessions over Korea and was not willing to enter into negotiations regarding Manchuria while trying to build up its military strength there. The next day Japan sent the Russians an ultimatum, stating its readiness to accept their proposals regarding Manchuria if Russia agreed to similar conditions regarding Korea. The Japanese ultimatum reached St. Petersburg on 16 January but was not given immediate attention and was probably not understood as an ultimatum.

On 2 February 1904 **Kurino Shin'ichirô**, the Japanese ambassador at St. Petersburg, informed his government that the Russians had no intention of replying. The same day the tsar approved a Russian counter-response to the ultimatum, which was conveyed to Tokyo via Port Arthur. The response did indeed include a reference to Manchuria, but

it contained no significant change in the Russian position, despite the feeling among Russian historians later that the response was “generous.” The message reached Tokyo only on 7 February, although its gist had already been forwarded by the Japanese ambassador. It was too late. During the previous week the Japanese army made final preparations for war. On 6 February, Kurino announced the rupture of diplomatic relations and began preparations to leave St. Petersburg. That day too the Russian ambassador was called to the residence of the Japanese foreign minister and received an identical announcement. In it Japan accused Russia of delaying its response in an inexplicable manner and stated that it was difficult to reconcile the military actions of Russia with its declared intentions of peace.

Military Balance and War Plans

In purely numerical terms, Japan’s venturing into war against Russia was compared, at least in the eyes of the world press at that time, to David facing Goliath. But when the prewar **military balance** is examined, the seemingly unbridgeable differences between the rivals is seen as a product of widespread illusions rather than careful analysis. Granted, the Russian standing army was more than three times greater than the Imperial Japanese Army, and the **Imperial Russian Navy** was far larger than its rival. Nonetheless, in East Asia the Russian military presence was fairly limited, and only the Russian **Pacific Fleet** was roughly of similar strength to the Imperial Japanese Navy (see appendix 4). At the beginning of the war, in fact, and during certain significant stages, Japan enjoyed a qualitative and at times even a quantitative advantage in the number of soldiers and the number of vessels at its disposal. Nevertheless, Japan had to exploit its superiority rapidly, and it could not afford to fail, because failure at any stage of the war could yield up the local advantage to Russia.

The Japanese **war plans**, prepared separately by the army and the navy, played a central role in shaping the course of the battle. The first premise of the plan was that in a war against the Russians in northeast Asia, Japan would benefit from its short supply lines and from the ability to array its forces rapidly along the front. The war scenario proposed an opening blow by the Japanese against the harbors of Port Arthur and Vladivostok that would put the Pacific Fleet totally out of action. Next

the army could overrun the relatively small **Imperial Russian Army** units in Manchuria before it could muster any reinforcements by the still unfinished Trans-Siberian Railway. The plan recognized that Japan could not eliminate the Russian threat forever, but it assumed that even partial success would bring the Russians to the negotiating table, around which Japan could use Manchuria as a bargaining chip.

The Russian war plans were by nature defensive, and they allowed for a scenario in which the Japanese would be the first aggressors, trying to invade Manchuria. The Russian plans were constantly subject to change, and were still not complete when war broke out. Their first draft had been prepared in 1895 after the show of Japanese strength in the First Sino–Japanese War. They were updated to suit the changing realities in 1901 and again in 1903. The updated plan on the eve of the war stated that in case of Japanese attack, the Imperial Russian Army would protect both Port Arthur and Vladivostok, and deploy defensively behind the Yalu River, with particular emphasis on the region of Mukden. It was also planned to send reinforcements to the region, and once the Russian forces attained numerical superiority, they would go on the offensive. The war was supposed to conclude with an invasion of the Japanese home islands, although there was no detailed plan beyond an initial deployment of the Russian defense. The final version of the plan was based on Russian control of the sea and on a land struggle lasting long enough for reinforcements to arrive overland.

THE COURSE OF THE WAR

On the morning of 6 February 1904, the day diplomatic relations between Japan and Russia were broken off, the Japanese **Combined Fleet** under the command of Admiral **Tôgô Heihachirô** sailed for the shores of Korea. Opposite the port city of **Chemulpo**, in the vicinity of Seoul, the force split into two. Most of the warships made for Port Arthur, while a small naval force under Rear Admiral **Uryû Sotokichi** remained to protect the **landing operations** of the army in Chemulpo on the night of 8 February. On the following morning the forces of the **First Army** took control of the Korean capital. From outside the neutral port, a Japanese naval force demanded that the Russian naval detachment depart from it. Following a short engagement outside the harbor, known

as the **battle of Chemulpo**, the Russian **cruiser *Variag*** and the **gun-vessel *Koreets*** returned to the port. Their crews scuttled the vessels rather than hand them over to the enemy. In Port Arthur, 10 Japanese **destroyers** attacked the Russian warships in the harbor with **torpedoes** but did not inflict much damage. On 10 February, Japan declared war (see appendix 1), whereupon a 19-month war officially began.

In the first two months of the war, Japan occupied the entire Korean peninsula with virtually no Russian opposition. While Russia hoped that Japan would be content with this territory, the latter was determined to cross the Yalu River and invade Manchuria. The mid-scale engagement between the two belligerents along this river from 1 to 5 May 1904 produced the first major defeat of the Imperial Russian Army. Generally, the **battle of the Yalu** marked the start of the Russian defeat by the Japanese and was to be remembered as such for decades to come. It was the first time in the modern age that an Asian force overcame a European force in a full-scale clash. The contemporary psychological impact of the rout on the Russian land forces was so great that in retrospect some writers have viewed this as the decisive battle of the war.

The Japanese Takeover of the Liaotung Peninsula

Within a month of the crossing of the Yalu River by the Japanese First Army, the **Second**, **Fourth**, and **Third Armies** landed along the southern coast of the Liaotung peninsula. At this stage, Field Marshal **Ôyama Iwao**, commander-in-chief of the Japanese **Manchurian Army**, turned to **Liaoyang**, the point where he planned to have his armies converge. Defeating the Russians around the city, he assumed, would enable him to take control of all the Liaotung peninsula and to overpower the defenses of Port Arthur. An initial step in accomplishing this goal was the Japanese success in cutting off the garrison in Port Arthur from the rest of the Russian **Manchurian Army** in the north. The Japanese chose the hills of **Nanshan**, the narrowest passage connecting the **Kwantung peninsula** to the Liaotung peninsula. The **battle of Nanshan** was fought on 26 May 1904, and in its aftermath the Russian forces abandoned the nearby port of **Dalny**.

While the Third Army under General **Nogi Maresuke** was designated to lay siege to Port Arthur, the main Japanese forces turned northward, en route to Liaoyang, and on 14–15 June 1904 they engaged Rus-

sian forces in **Telissu**. The quick, disastrous defeat in the **battle of Telissu** ended Russian attempts to move south, and consequently the Russian commander, General Aleksei Kuropatkin, resumed his defensive strategy. On 24–25 July 1904, Japanese and Russian forces engaged in the **battle of Tashihchiao**. Units of the two belligerents fought again a week later, on 30–31 July 1904, farther north, and this **battle of Hsimucheng** resulted in another Russian retreat.

Finally, on 25 August 1904, the **battle of Liaoyang** was joined. This was the biggest land engagement so far, fought near the city of Liaoyang, where Kuropatkin had set up a new defense line during his “planned withdrawal” up the Liaotung peninsula. Not only did he regard the site as suitable for “a decisive battle,” but the viceroy, Evgenii Alekseev, assumed that Russia’s Manchurian Army had at last accumulated sufficient forces for its first victory over the Japanese, thereby breaking the siege of Port Arthur. Liaoyang was also the point at which Ôyama planned to have his three armies converge. Defeating the Russians around the city, he assumed, would enable him to overpower the defenses of Port Arthur. At that stage the two belligerents were convinced that the impending collision at Liaoyang would determine the outcome of the war. Instead, the battle determined only that the decisive moment would occur later and elsewhere. Altogether the two forces numbered close to 300,000, a figure exceeded at that time only by the battle of Sedan of 1870.

On 3 September, when the battle ended, the Russians retreated and Kuropatkin established his headquarters in Mukden. The Japanese victory was not complete, as the Russians managed to retreat with confidence and to postpone the decisive battle to another occasion. Just over a month later, another large-scale land battle broke out near the Sha River (Sha-ho), on the route to Mukden. The **battle of Sha-ho** was fought from 10 to 17 October 1904, and it too ended in a Russian retreat. Tactically the overall results were not decisive, and the Russians re-formed just south of Mukden on the Sha River.

The Siege of Port Arthur

From the onset of the war it was apparent that Port Arthur had not only strategic importance but also great symbolic significance, since it represented Russian power in East Asia. Despite Port Arthur’s separation from the rest of the Russian army in Manchuria, the almost intact

units of the Pacific Fleet in its harbor remained a constant threat to Japanese naval hegemony. In the first months of the war, the Imperial Japanese Navy attempted in vain to impose a naval blockade on the harbor. It used altogether 21 blockships and simultaneously began **mining operations** of the port that led to the sinking of the Russian flagship *Petropavlovsk* together with the illustrious commander of the Pacific Fleet, Vice Admiral **Stepan Makarov**. On 10 August 1904 the Japanese Combined Fleet and the Russian Pacific Fleet in Port Arthur engaged in their most important battle during the war, known as the **battle of the Yellow Sea**. It was a consequence of the intensifying Japanese **siege of Port Arthur** and the growing pressure on the Russian naval force in Port Arthur to escape to Vladivostok. Following the death of Rear Admiral **Vilgelm Vitgeft** caused by two Japanese shells, the Russian warships returned to their harbor. Thereafter the Japanese actions continued undisturbed by any Russian naval intervention until the arrival of the **Baltic Fleet** nine months later.

Japanese determination to take this principal naval base and fortress at all costs resulted in one of the greatest sieges in history. It lasted about seven months and cost both sides over 100,000 casualties. The siege began once the Imperial Japanese Army gained control of southern Manchuria following the seizure of Nanshan. Consequently the Third Army assumed the task of conquering the site, and following the crucial fall of **203-Meter Hill** in November 1904, the fort surrendered on 2 January 1905. With the takeover of the fort, the Third Army headed north and joined the main Japanese land forces for the decisive confrontation against the Russian Manchurian Army in the vicinity of Mukden.

The Final Battles: Mukden and Tsushima

The final major land engagement and the largest single battle of the Russo–Japanese War occurred in the vicinity of the city of Mukden. The two deeply entrenched forces faced each other for several months. The Russians were the first to move. On 25–29 January 1905, there was a short engagement known as the **battle of Sandepu**, which ended in great losses but without a significant change in the lines. Both forces were then reinforced during the interlude until the decisive **battle of Mukden**, fought between 23 February and 10 March 1905. This was the largest engagement in military history until then, and it ended in a

Russian retreat. Both sides suffered horrific casualties. Following the battle, both forces were spent and needed much time to reorganize and replace the casualties. The Japanese forces in particular lacked additional sources of manpower, and the government began more earnestly to seek an end to the conflict through negotiation.

Nevertheless, the war was still far from over, since a Russian naval reinforcement consisting of the Baltic Fleet, and renamed the **Second Pacific Squadron**, was heading toward the shores of Japan under the command of Vice Admiral **Zinovii Rozhestvenskii**. The decision to dispatch this fleet was made in June 1904, although its first units sailed only in October. When Port Arthur fell in early January 1905, most of the warships had already rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Still, the epic **voyage of the Baltic Fleet** continued five months more, until its 52 warships approached the **Tsushima Straits**.

The Russians encountered the well-prepared Japanese Combined Fleet under the command of Admiral Tôgô Heihachirô, and two great forces clashed on 27–28 May 1905. The outcome of the **battle of Tsushima** was decisive. It was not only the most devastating defeat suffered by the Imperial Russian Navy during its entire history, but also the only truly decisive engagement between two fleets of **battleships** in modern times. All the Russian battleships were lost; only a few of the surviving Russian warships managed to escape. Three vessels alone completed the voyage and arrived safely in Vladivostok. Following the battle, the Russian government's hopes of somehow reversing the military situation in East Asia were shattered. Now it was compelled to enter into peace negotiations, which resulted in the **Treaty of Portsmouth**, signed a little more than three months later.

Political and Social Features of the War in Russia and Japan

Public opinion in Japan and Russia on the war differed substantially, and consequently it had a great effect on the conduct of the war by the two sides. In Japan the war was perceived as vital to the preservation of national sovereignty and a cause for patriotic mobilization. The public supported the war wholeheartedly and was ready for human sacrifice and economic hardship. Since the turn of the century, associations such as the **Kokuryûkai** and the **Tairo Dôshikai**, and groups such as the one leading to the **Seven Professors Incident**, pushed for expansion in Asia

and urged the government to take a hard line against Russia. This militant approach prevailed among the Japanese public and was manifested most extremely in the **Hibiya Riots**, soon after the disappointing terms of the Treaty of Portsmouth were revealed. Only a tiny minority of Japanese opposed the war, for humanistic motives, as manifested by **Uchimura Kanzô** and to a certain extent by the poet **Yosano Akiko**, or for socialist motives, as manifested by the **Heiminsha** members.

In Russia the war broke out with subdued public support, which waned still more as soon as the people realized that this remote conflict was irrelevant to their own troubles. The most significant internal event in Russia during the war was the **Revolution of 1905**, which adversely affected Russia's military capability generally and fostered the tsar's willingness to end the war and to accept the **Portsmouth Peace Conference**. While the origins of the revolution can be found decades earlier, Russia's successive defeats in the first half of the war brought to the surface strong discontent among the rising urban middle class and industrial workers. On 22 January 1905, three weeks after the surrender of the fortress of Port Arthur, tsarist troops opened fire on a non-violent demonstration in St. Petersburg, resulting in a massacre known as **Bloody Sunday**.

The tsar's promise in March to summon a "consultative assembly" was insufficient to calm the mounting agitation, and throughout the spring and early summer of 1905 there were strikes, severe civil disturbances, such as the **Lodz Uprising**, and assassinations of political figures. In the army and navy there were many mutinies, the most notorious being the **Potemkin mutiny** that broke out aboard a warship of the **Black Sea Fleet**. The revolutionary activities continued also after the conclusion of the Treaty of Portsmouth. At the end of October, all European Russia was paralyzed by a general strike, directed in the capital by the first workers' *soviet* (council). The tsar eventually yielded on 30 October and issued the **October Manifesto**, granting Russia a constitution and promising a legislative **Duma**. The revolution then began to calm down, although in some locations, notably in Moscow, riots and mutinies continued until early 1906.

The War and the World

Upon the declaration of war on 10 February 1904, the Japanese government sent a message to various governments announcing its deci-

sion. In the following 12 days, it received declarations of **neutrality** from 18 nations, including all the great European powers and the United States. Neutral nations were expected to fulfill their obligations strictly and not to succor either of the two belligerents. During the war the issue of neutrality thus arose, particularly in regard to war contraband and internment of warships. Although the Russo–Japanese War has not lingered long in the collective memory of humanity, it had much exposure at the time. The war attracted many renowned **war correspondents** such as **Jack London**, **Frederic Villiers**, and **Maurice Baring**, who reported its progress to avid readers in the West, using **radio** transmission for the first time. More than in any war before, the conflict in Manchuria also attracted a large number of **military observers**, who were dispatched to the front by non-belligerent governments to observe the war for military purposes. All in all, over 80 officers from the armed forces of 16 different nations observed the conflict from both sides. Many of them were to enjoy distinguished military careers and rose to become leading military figures in their respective armies and navies, especially during World War I. These observers included renowned military figures such as Lieutenant General (at the time of the Russo–Japanese War) **Ian Hamilton**, Captain (Royal Navy) **Ernest Troubridge**, and Lieutenant Colonel **James Haldane** from Great Britain; Major General **Arthur MacArthur** and Captain **John Pershing** from the United States; Captain **Carl Hoffmann** from Germany; and Major **Enrico Caviglia** from Italy.

The Conclusion of the War

The peace initiative that brought the two belligerents to the negotiating table was the brainchild of U.S. President **Theodore Roosevelt**, who in February 1905 sent messages to the two governments informing them of his readiness to serve as mediator. Following the battle of Mukden, the Japanese oligarchy was increasingly willing to end the hostilities, as they could not reach a decisive victory on land and the war had depleted Japan's economy and human resources. In Russia the war had very little support among the public, but the political leadership, especially the tsar, were prepared to continue the fight on the assumption that time would be in their favor. This attitude too changed following the defeat at the battle of Tsushima. Still, the obstinate stance of the tsar

forced the Japanese to give their opponents a defiant reminder that the military option was well in hand. Following Roosevelt's suggestion, they did not hesitate to invade Sakhalin in July 1905. After the **conquest of Sakhalin**, their troops were deployed in a position to capture Vladivostok.

The two belligerents eventually met in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and from the very start of the negotiations it became clear that the issue of reparations would be the bone of contention, since both parties saw it not only as having serious economic significance but also as a symbolic issue. Between 9 and 30 August, 12 sessions were held, in which Russia's chief plenipotentiary, Sergei Witte, became gradually convinced that Japan desperately wanted peace. He consequently presented Russia's "last concession," which included recognition of Japanese control over the southern half of Sakhalin but no indemnity or any other financial compensation. A refusal, he believed, might place the blame for the breakdown of the talks on Japan. Japan indeed yielded to Witte's ultimatum, and on 5 September 1905 the two nations signed the Treaty of Portsmouth, according to which Korea became a Japanese protectorate. Japan also won control of the Kwantung peninsula and the southern half of Sakhalin, while Russia removed all its armed forces from Manchuria. When news of the peace agreement reached Tokyo, 30,000 demonstrators amassed and the Hibiya Riots broke out, leading to the declaration of temporary martial law in the capital.

REPERCUSSIONS AND LEGACY OF THE WAR

The Balance of Power in the West

During the Russo–Japanese War and soon after, significant geopolitical changes began to crystallize in Europe, leading to a new balance, or rather imbalance, of power. Critically, the defeat of Russia undermined the military balance that had endured in Europe since the Napoleonic era, principally due to the emergence of Germany as an unequalled military and industrial power, which became a source of apprehension in France, Great Britain, and later Russia. To face the German threat, these nations overcame their colonial differences and formed the **Anglo–French Entente** (*Entente Cordiale*), signed during the first stages of the war, while Russia joined them three years later to form the

Triple Entente of 1907. These changing circumstances were one of the underlying motives for the German landing in Tangiers in March 1905 and the ensuing **Moroccan Crisis**, which served as a message to France that Germany would take up arms if its imperialistic ambitions were not respected. In 1907, two years after the war ended, a new balance between the European powers was created and remained in force until the outbreak of World War I. The impulse to an all-European war was not irreversible, but on the diplomatic front no change occurred in the power relationships over the next decade, and no new alignment was formed to avert a major conflict in Europe.

The Russo–Japanese War was not the only cause of the Revolution of 1905 in Russia, but it served as its main catalyst. While the upheavals in Russia prevented the government from acting with full force against Japan, the war outside Russia made it difficult to respond resolutely to the turmoil within. Above all, the Russian defeat had a psychological effect on the public, who for the first time witnessed the weakness of the autocratic regime. The urban population and even the peasants were susceptible to the speeches of the revolutionaries, and the people's belief in the tsar began to wane. The direct outcome of the war was Nicholas II's readiness to set up a legislative council called the Duma, and to grant the people a constitution. The first Duma was received in the palace of the tsar in 1906, but from the very start it struggled to obtain political and civil rights, and to implement plans that were not included among the concessions of the tsar at the end of 1905. The struggle for less autocratic rule during the war led to the formal dissolution of the Duma within a few months, although it continued to function up to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The tsar's inability to cope simultaneously with a foreign enemy and an internal rebellion, as evident in the Russo–Japanese War, was to recur with even greater intensity after 1914, and to lead to his downfall three years later.

Even on the European periphery of the Russian empire, such as in **Finland** and **Poland**, there were clear signs of rebellion and change. Toward the end of 19th century, the Russians tightened their control over the semi-independent duchy of Finland, but the Revolution of 1905 in Russia sparked a national awakening among the Finns. Following demonstrations and a general strike, the status quo that had been in force in Finland until 1899 was restored, and the rights of the local parliament were reinstated. Divided between Russia, Germany, and **Austro–Hungary**,

Poland experienced a surge of hope for independence during the war. In 1905 two movements fighting for the unification of Poland were founded, and a year later 36 Polish delegates were elected to the Duma.

The Russo–Japanese War was accompanied by keen international awareness of the increasing importance of the United States, which had emerged earlier as a leading economic power but still lacked the skills and experience to exploit its economic achievements for decisive international influence. Despite its initial sympathetic attitude toward Japan, the United States was interested in balancing and weakening both belligerents, so as to sustain its own economic involvement in East Asia. Maintaining its neutrality throughout the war, the United States eventually acted as a mediator. The conclusion of the war at the Portsmouth Peace Conference was nonetheless the achievement of the American president, Theodore Roosevelt, who later received the Nobel Prize for peace for his efforts. While demanding that Japan maintain the **Open-Door Policy** in Manchuria, and return this territory to Chinese sovereignty, the Americans were reluctant to enter into conflict with Japan, and recognized Japanese control over Korea in the **Katsura–Taft agreement**.

The goodwill on both sides of the Pacific, however, could not prevent the looming American–Japanese confrontation as the United States continued in its ascent to global supremacy. In 1907 the Americans updated their “Orange Plan” to protect the waters of the Pacific Ocean against the Japanese menace, for fear that their rival would take control of American outposts in the Philippines and Hawaii, and might even blockade the Panama Canal. American apprehension of Japan, slightly premature but not unrealistic, tightened the restrictions on Japanese immigration to the United States and was the first step of a hostile policy toward Japan in the 1920s. The Russo–Japanese War was therefore the beginning of “Cold War”-like relations that steadily deteriorated and erupted in a full-blown military confrontation in December 1941.

The balance of power among the nations was also upset in the military sphere. Rather than a typical “colonial war,” the Russo–Japanese War served as a dress rehearsal for World War I. As a conflict between two large and modern powers, it attracted the attention of all the larger armies and navies. The military observers dispatched to the front witnessed a number of large-scale battles and recorded their conclusions in thick volumes. The Russo–Japanese War provided overwhelming proof

for those who still doubted the importance of firepower as the dominant factor in military combat, and some of the sharper observers did not have to wait for Verdun to realize the deadly and decisive effect of intensive **artillery** in general and the **machine gun** in particular. Nonetheless, even after the war, supporters of the offensive still maintained that initiative and fighting spirit, as shown by the Japanese, could break through any line of defense. So it came about that European armies' indifference to adopting fresh tactical or strategic approaches, considering the dramatic increase in firepower in warfare, begot such carnage a decade later.

In the naval arena as well, the war was followed by drastic transformations, although it did not result in a disturbance of the naval balance among the major powers. The loss of a significant part of the Imperial Russian Navy, the third largest in the world before the war, put the British **Royal Navy**, the biggest fleet in the world, in a far stronger position at the end of the war than it had enjoyed throughout the previous two decades. Great Britain was concerned now by the rapid growth of the German Imperial Navy, and expected that the construction of the **dreadnought**, a revolutionary class of battleship, would ensure it the upper hand. With the commission of HMS *Dreadnought* in 1906, more than 100 battleships of earlier classes became obsolete and a new naval arms race began in the world. While **submarines** did not take part in this war, both sides successfully employed torpedoes, **mines**, and radio transmitters.

Implications of the War on Asia and the Colonial Empires

The Russo–Japanese War also had far-reaching implications for East Asia. They resulted from the victory of Japan and its rise to power on the one hand, and from the decline in the power of Russia on the other. Russia had posed a direct threat to Chinese and Korean sovereignty, but also helped to maintain equilibrium by acting against Japan's expansionist ambitions after the defeat of China in 1894–1895. It was only after defeating Russia that Japan was viewed by others, and especially by itself, as equal to all other imperial powers active in East Asia; only then did it become, at least from a military perspective, the strongest power in the area. With the end of the war, the number of businessmen and private entrepreneurs who went from Japan to Manchuria in search of new

business opportunities began to soar. The victory over Russia not only did not curtail military requirements, but even increased them. With the occupation of territories on the Asian mainland, this created among the decision-makers in Japan an exaggerated sense of the need to strengthen the army and establish a strategic infrastructure.

Two years after the war, a national security plan was formulated in Japan that defined Russia, France, and for the first time the United States as possible national foes. At that time they all had normal relations with Japan, but they also had interests in East Asia and in the Pacific Ocean that were viewed by the decision-makers in Japan as opposed to their national security. As a lesson in history, the war was firm evidence that the modern Japanese nation was invincible. With the removal of the existential threat against Japan, together with the overwhelming proof of the success of the modernization, Japanese intellectuals put their minds to questions of national identity. During the following years, they made a concentrated effort to redefine the essence of being Japanese and developed a national discourse. This activity laid the foundations for the bitter racial struggle that the Japanese waged against the West three decades later.

In China the war prompted widespread political activities that led six years later to the Revolution of 1911 and the elimination of the Qing dynasty after reigning for 267 years. Already in 1905 the foundations for a constitutional monarchy were laid, and at the same time the first modern political movement was established. Sensing the undermining of its power, the government began in the following years to introduce several reforms that included an attempt to establish elected assemblies and to eradicate opium smoking. During the war the Chinese public manifested solidarity with the Japanese, and regarded them as brothers in a racial struggle. Many Chinese went to Japan to study and regarded it as a role model for a successful modernization process. Within three years, however, this sentiment changed to deep suspicion toward the Japanese, who not only displayed profound disrespect for the Chinese but were determined to wrest the entire territory of Manchuria from them.

The Japanese presence in Manchuria indeed led to increased friction with the Chinese population in Manchuria but also to a Japanese desire to interfere in Chinese affairs elsewhere. This was expressed in the notorious **Twenty-one Demands** document which the Japanese submitted to the Chinese government a decade after the war, and which was im-

plemented fully through Japan's conquest of China during the long war that broke out in 1937. Such a move would have seemed fantastic at the end of the 19th century, but with historical hindsight it had evidently begun to take shape already during the Russo–Japanese War.

Korea was perhaps affected the most by the war. It gradually lost its sovereignty until it was finally annexed by Japan in 1910. From a Korean point of view, the end of the war marked the beginning of a period of oppression and a Japanese attempt to destroy the identity of the Korean people—a period that ended only with the fall of Japan in 1945. The annexation of Korea has left its mark on the nation to the present day. The fracturing of its society and national identity during the 35 years of Japanese domination made possible the territorial division of Korea, no less than the political contest between American and Soviet forces in the country that created a capitalist regime in the southern half and a communist regime in the northern. This political division still characterizes the two states of the Korean peninsula at present. Not only is there great hostility between them, which endangers the peace in the area, but North Korea still bears a grudge against Japan for its occupation, and similar sentiments exist in South Korea, even if muted.

The war was also a catalyst for many new radical movements and organizations all over Asia. Spanning a political and ideological spectrum from socialists to nationalists, anarchists, and even communists, these movements were a source of many striking developments that characterized Asia politically in the following decades. The war contributed to the radicalization of moderate socialist movements in the area, to the delegitimization of parliamentary democracy, and to emphasis on national issues. Extremist movements sprang up during the war in China and Japan, but also in colonial countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines. In the ensuing years they worked for the independence of their countries, albeit with no great success at that time.

The echoes of the war reached even to the Middle East. During the war, when **Sun Yixian** [Sun Yat-sen], the first president of the future Republic of China, was making a passage down the **Suez Canal**, Russian ships with wounded soldiers from the front on their decks were likewise passing through. A local person who met Sun asked him if he was Japanese. “The joy of this Arab, as the son of a great Asian race,” he noted, “was unbounded.” The victory of a developing Asian country over a big European power was perceived as a symbol and model for the prospect

that an Arab nation could break free from foreign rule. National movements across the Arab world, which at that time was almost entirely under the rule of the Ottoman empire, saw the war as a sign that they could win their independence. One year after the war, a revolution began in **Iran**, which for the first time put a constitutional government in power. This revolution was partially the result of the weakening of Russia, but it was also due to the knowledge that the victor was an Asian power with a constitution, and that the vanquished was the only European power without a constitution. Two years later a revolution began in **Turkey**. There too, Japan served as a model of a country that had succeeded in adopting modern technology without losing its national identity.

As a global turning point, the role of the war is recognizable in the new definition of race relations in the world. This was the first modern conflict in which an “Eastern,” “non-white” nation overcame a “Western,” “white” nation. For the first time the myth of the superiority of the white man was shattered. For this reason, the Japanese victory had powerful reverberations among the nations then under Western rule, and even more so among future revolutionaries. In the **Indian sub-continent**, for instance, which was then under British rule, there was much gloating, not only at Russia as a longtime colonial threat, but also because of the victory of an Asian country over a European power. Years later Jawaharlal Nehru, who was to become the first prime minister of India, recalled how the war helped to reduce “the feeling of inferiority from which we all suffered.” In Vietnam also, which was then under French control, the nationalist **Phan Boi Chau** believed that the outcome of this battle “opened up a new world.” As a modern nation with significant military power, Japan won international recognition for the first time, and this paved the way 15 years later for its obtaining a permanent seat on the Council of the League of Nations. Japan’s victory in the Russo–Japanese War, therefore, upset the hegemony enjoyed by the European nations since the industrial revolution.