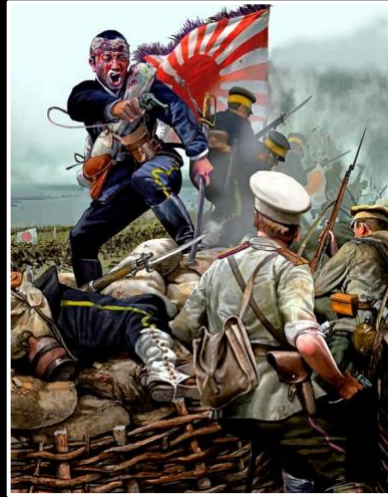


Forgotten War 3

Russo – Japanese War 1904-1905



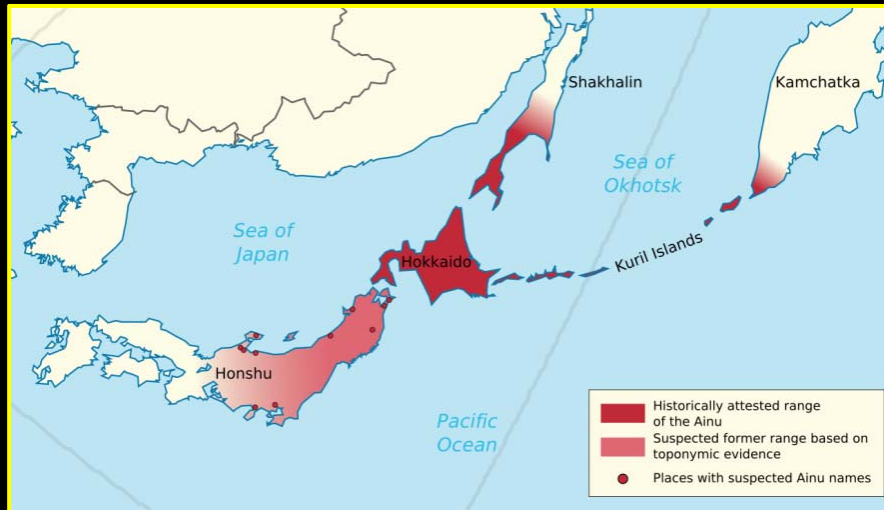
Background to the Russo-Japanese War



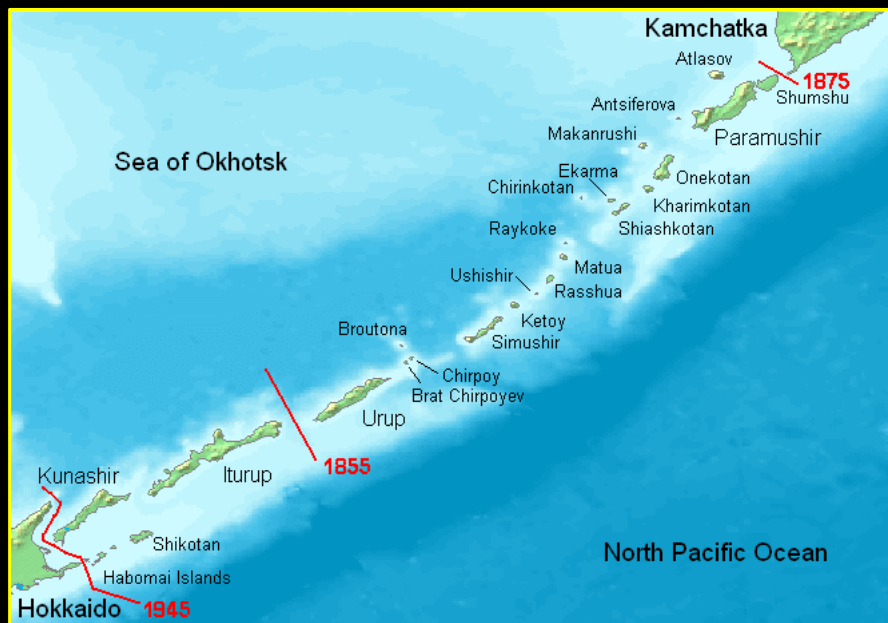
- As the Eighteenth Century drew to a close the Czarist Empire of Russia was militarily the most backward in Europe. However they no doubt envied the other European powers' ability to obtain colonies around the world.
- Russia's military and ruling class had the dream of having access to warm water ports on the Black Sea with rights to the Mediterranean and similar facilities on the Pacific. The Crimean War put an end to these ambitions in the West. Those in the East brought Russia into conflict with the rising ambitions of Japan.
- In 1875 Russia handed over the Kurile Islands to Japan in return for Sakhalin.
- In 1896 it intervened on behalf of China against Japan with the backing of both France and Germany and in return received railroad concessions in Manchuria from China.
- Russia had already leased Port Arthur and Liaotung from China. In addition it had used the Boxer rising in 1900 as a pretext for reinforcing its military presence in Manchuria in order to one day penetrate into Korea.

History of Warfare, H.W. Koch, Bison Books, 1987

Shakhalin



Kurile Islands





“Japan, whose geographic position to the Asian mainland was similar to that of the British to the European mainland, could not in the interests of its own security, allow a major European power to dominate the collapsing Chinese Manchu Empire. This situation was the main cause of the war between Russia and Japan in 1904.”

H.W. Koch “History of Warfare” Bison Books



Japanese and Russian soldiers of the period

Russian Weaknesses

- There was considerable opposition to the 6 year conscription introduced in 1874.
- Despite the formal abolishment of serfdom in 1861, the peasantry were still deeply in debt to their landlords.
- Land reforms had proved ineffective.
- The burden of taxation fell mainly on the peasants.
- A vast bureaucracy had spread across the entire Empire.
- The three main factions in Russia (excluding peasants) were:

Ruling Classes

Aristocracy and bourgeoisie (of the city) with political, cultural and financial investment in society.

Narodniks (Populists)

Advocated separation from the West and rise of peasants based on Russia's moral and economic strengths.

Nihilist Socialists

Rejected authorities (Church and State). The most remote from the majority of the population.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

Russian Weaknesses

- Like many of the intelligentsia in Europe and the USA, most Russian intellectuals argued that patriotism was an outmoded concept and that war was a crime and military virtues were an obstacle to progress. Contrary to this the Japanese population backed its military forces to the hilt.
- The education of Russian army officers was meager.
- Promotion was slow and more often than not based on social connections
- There were enormous differences between officers in St. Petersburg and those in line regiments.
- Promotion was quicker for those on staffs in St. Petersburg.
- Due to the low status of Russian officers there was no rush to become one.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

Additional problems with the Russian Military System

- A premium was placed on formal training, not on individual initiative.
- War games were a rarity.
- The Russians favored strict execution of orders issued by senior staff officers and carried out to the letter down to the lowest level soldiers.
 - Russian military staffs were over-manned.
 - Many civilians were attached to the military staffs.
 - The staffs lived in extreme luxury causing resentment in the ranks.
- Most of the troops in the ranks were illiterate. Many did not know what the wars they fought in were about.
- The soldiers excelled in steadfastness and stubbornness as long as their officers were with them. Once the officers were killed they gave up all resistance.
- As the officers never had even the vaguest outline of the situation as a whole, they were vulnerable to panic.
- The Czarist Empire was multi-national with many troops from national minorities which led to a lower moral than purely Russian troops.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

Organization of the Russian Field Army

- The Russian Army was divided into corps , each with 2 divisions.
- An engineer battalion was attached to each corps.
- A standard infantry division had 4 infantry regiments , each with under 3000 combat Troops, as well as cavalry detachments for raids and reconnaissance.
- At the end of August 1904, the Russian General Kuropatkin had 7 army corps, 4 divisions of Cossacks, 590 pieces of artillery, but only 16 machine guns.
- Artillery tactics were still influenced by the maxims of late 18th and early 19th century.
- The telegraph system was utterly inadequate.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

- Russian artillery was always stationed on the top of hills or along ridges. They had no explosive shells – only shrapnel.



1st Battery, 6th East Siberian Artillery Brigade at the Dalian Pass on June 14, 1904.

Organization of the Japanese Army

- The Japanese military situation was the exact opposite to that of the Russians. It was structured and equipped to the most modern standards of the time.
 - The army had been trained by the Germans and the navy by the British.
 - The only weakness was a lack of trained officers and NCOs.
- Three divisions formed an army.
 - The infantry divisions consisted of four regiments each with three battalions.
 - Three squadrons of cavalry.
 - An artillery battalion with three batteries of six guns each.
 - An engineer battalion.
 - A telegraph communication detachment for each division.
- In addition to the above the Japanese Army was more flexible.
- Their 224-man infantry company was superior to the Russians.
- Each Japanese company had one heavy machine gun.
- The regular army numbered 270,000 men with 870 pieces of artillery.
- They were supported by 530,000 men from the reserves.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

Transport to the Front

- Japanese forces had to be carried across the sea.
- Only three divisions and equipment could be transported from Japan at a time.
- Embarkation took three days and disembarkation five days.
- There was always a problem of food supply except when there was a good harvest making living off the land.
- As a result Japanese success depended on supremacy at sea.



Japanese Navy

- 29 modern ships including 6 battleships and 90 older vessels
- Japanese docks could repair ships but not undertake new construction.



Russian Pacific Squadron

- 72 vessels, some based at Vladivostok and some at Port Arthur.

- In order to gain naval supremacy and prevent interference with movement of their armies and supplies the Japanese naval leader, Admiral Togo, was sent to attack Russian naval units in Port Arthur on 8th February, 1904.
- It was a complete success and established Japanese supremacy at sea.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

Events leading up to the outbreak of war - I

- Rapid modernization of Japan's armed forces in the 1880s.
- Increase in number and influence of nationalist groups in Japan.
- Political pressure on the Meiji Government for continental expansion especially in Korea and China.
- Chinese reluctance to recognize Japan's interests in Korea forced the hand of the government, resulting in a negotiated settlement of Sino-Japanese interests in Korea.
- A crisis in Korea resulted in an armed clash between China and Japan over which power would dominate the Korean Peninsula.
 - In 1894 war was formally declared between China and Japan.
 - Japanese forces quickly overran the Korean Peninsula.
 - In 1895 Japanese forces moved through the Liaotung Peninsula. China sued for peace.

The Rise and Fall of Imperial Japan. Bison Books Ltd. 176 Old Brompton Road. London

Events leading up to the outbreak of war - II

- April 1905 Russian, French and German diplomats expressed displeasure over Japanese annexation of the Liaotung Peninsula and threatened intervention if Japan did not return it to Chinese control.
- Japan agreed to return the Liaotung Peninsula to China.
- China and Japan signed a peace treaty ending Sino-Japanese war but Japanese leaders lost popularity at home. The Japanese became more determined not to bend to overseas pressure.
- Japan continued to modernize its armed forces. By 1903 it had become a major Pacific power.
- Encouraged by an alliance with England and as a result of the Russians refusing to withdraw from Manchuria in January 1904, Japan declared war on Russia on February 10, 1904.

The Rise and Fall of Imperial Japan. Bison Books Ltd. 176 Old Brompton Road. London

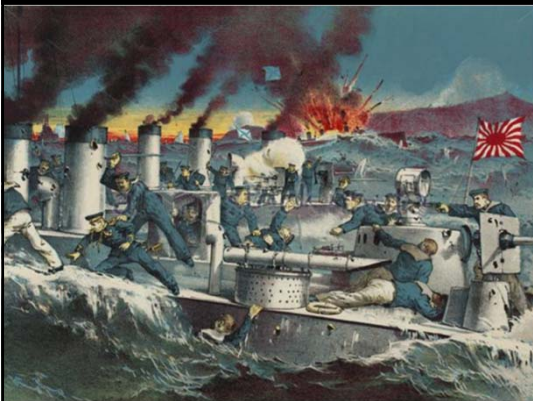
List of Battles in the Russo-Japanese War 1904 -1905

Battle	Location	Date	Notes	Victor
Port Arthur	Port Arthur	8/9.2.1904	Japanese Navy attacks Russian Fleet at Port Arthur	
Chemulpo Bay	Inchelon (m)	9.2.1904	Attack on Russian Fleet	
Yalu River	Wiju, Korea	30.4-1.4, 1904	Russians fail to hold line	
Nanshan	Manchuria	25/26.5, 1904	Chinchou and Dalny fall	
Battle Te-li-Ssu	Wafangdian	14 & 15.6 1904	Skirmish	 
Battle Motein Pass	Liadong Pen.	27/6. 1904	Russians withdraw	
Battle Tashihchiao	Dashiqiao	24-25.7.1904	Japanese take village	
Siege of Port Arthur	Port Arthur	30.6.1904-2.1.1905	Japanese success	
Battle of Hsimucheng	Hsimucheng	31.7.1904	Russians abandon village	
Battle of Yellow Sea	Shantung, Man.	10.8.1904	Stalemate	 
Battle of Ulsan	Off Ulsan, Korea	14.8.1904	Russians cease activity	
Battle of Korsakov	Off Kosakov, Russia,	20.8. 1904	Russian cruiser Novik scuttled	
Battle of Liaoyang	Liaoyang, Manchuria	4.9.1904	Japanese occupy Liaoyang	
Battle of Shaho	Sha River, Manchuria	5-17.10.1905	Both heavy casualties	 
Battle of Sandepu	Sth.of Mukden, Manchuria	25-29, 1905	Both heavy casualties	 
Battle of Mukden	Mukden, Manchuria	20.2.1905-3.10.1905	Russians leave Mukden	
Battle of Tsushima	Tsushima Straights	27/28.5.1905	Russian fleet destroyed	

- In March 1904, the Japanese landed an army half-way up the Korean Peninsula then moved up to the Yalu River.
- A second army landed North-east of Port Arthur which turned towards Kuropatkin's forces in Liaoyang. The rest turned towards Port Arthur which was then still held by Russian Forces.
- The Russians planned to hold a defensive line backed by the Harbin-Mukden-Port Arthur railroad while at the same time waiting for reinforcements so that they could move to the offensive.
- All Russian plans depended on what was happening at sea.
- The Japanese naval dominance allowed them to capture harbors and thus gain better access to Port Arthur.
- Russians gained a temporary respite when Russian forces from Vladivostok managed to sink Japanese vessels carrying the siege train for Port Arthur.
- Russian forces failed in their attempt to keep the land route to Port Arthur open. They were forced to withdraw when Japanese forces from Liaoyang lined up with those crossing the Yalu River.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

- Again and again the Russian frontal counter attacks failed.



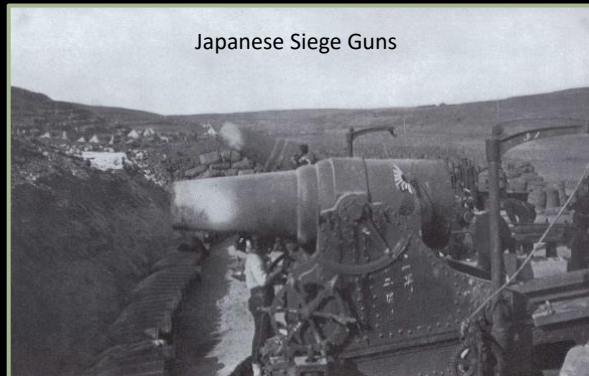
Fighting off Port Arthur during the Russo-Japanese War in April 1904. Sailors from a Japanese torpedo boat, *Sazanami*, board a Russian torpedo boat. The Japanese blocked the Russian attempt to break out of Port Arthur to join Russian warships at Vladivostok

- Attacks to get around the flanks also failed. The war of movement turned into a war of fixed positions, trenches and field fortifications.
- The two armies faced off for months without much activity.

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

The Siege of Port Arthur

- Port Arthur was in many ways similar to the battles which were to follow in the First World War.
- Fifteen thousand Japanese died capturing the ring of outer fortifications.
- Large 280mm howitzers were used on the harbor and docks.
- Engineers became more important than infantry.
- However on 3rd January, 1905 Port Arthur capitulated.



Japanese Siege Guns

H.W. Koch "History of Warfare" Bison Books

The Battle of Mukden - I

- The Battle of Mukden was one of the largest land battles to be fought before World War I. It was the last and most decisive major land battle of the Russo-Japanese War.
- It was fought from 19th February to 10 March 1905 between Japan and Russia near Mukden in Manchuria.
- The Russian forces, numbering more than 340,000, under General Alexei Nikolajevich Kuropatkin, fought the attacking Imperial Japanese Army forces numbering more than 270,000, led by Marshal Marquess Ōyama Iwao.
- The battle involved 610,000 combat participants and with 164,000 combatant casualties. It was the largest modern-era battle fought prior to World War I, and possibly the largest battle in world history at that point.
- The scale of the battle, particularly with regards to the amount of ordnance expended, was unprecedented in world history. The Japanese side alone fired 20.11 million rifle and machine gun rounds and 279,394 artillery shells in just over ten days of fighting (the Russians fired more), matching the ammunition consumption of the German army in the entire 191-day Franco-Prussian War.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Mukden

The Battle of Mukden - II

- General Alexei Kuropatkin's three Russian field armies retreated in a near rout under heavy pressure from Field Marshal Oyama Iwao's five Japanese field armies. This map shows the Japanese advance each day.



The Battle of Mukden - II

- The Russians had 300,000 troops, 1,386 field guns, and 56 machine guns against the Japanese 270,000 troops, 1,062 field guns, and 200 machine guns.
- Kuropatkin's initial positions extended east-west along a 150-kilometer (93-mile) line that was crossed by the South Manchurian Railroad just south of Mukden.
- His entrenched troops held these positions in places to a tactical depth of 15 km. (9.3 miles), and he backed his forward echelon with two corps in operational reserve.
- Oyama's positions initially mirrored the Russians', but were lengthened to 110 kilometers (68 miles) because he held his newly arrived Third Army (under Nogi Maresuke, victorious in the recent siege at Port Arthur) to the west and slightly to the rear, and his newly created Fifth Army (under Kawamura Kageaki) to the east and also slightly to the rear.



<https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/mukden-battle>

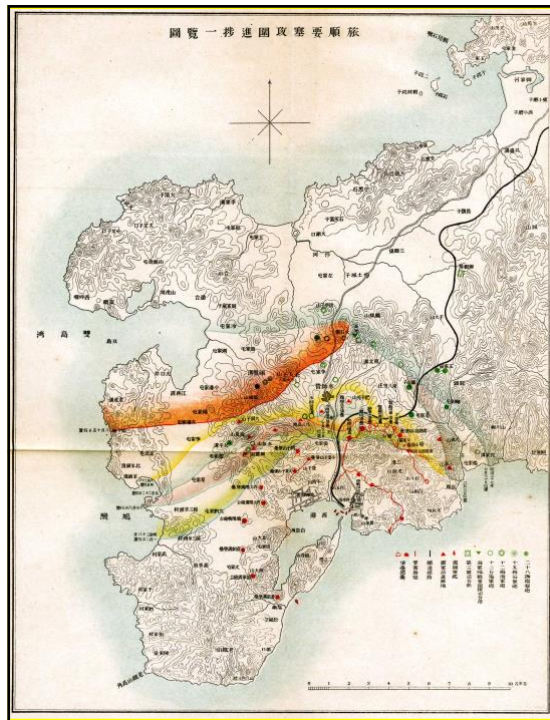
The Battle of Mukden - III

- These "refused flanks" were part of Oyama's larger operational concept: deceive Kuropatkin and then lock his army group in the deadly grasp of a double envelopment, thus repeating the Prussian success at Sedan in 1870.
- Oyama would open an offensive with Kawamura's Fifth Army in hilly terrain to the east, then add pressure with pinning attacks on Kuropatkin's center.
- Once Kuropatkin had risen to the bait by shifting his reserves to the east, then Oyama would launch Nogi's Third Army in a deep envelopment over open terrain to the west of Kuropatkin's right flank.
- The enveloping Japanese Third and Fifth Armies would link up north of Mukden, thereby trapping Kuropatkin in a battle of encirclement.



Russian retreat towards Sino-Russian border

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/mukden-battle>



Scale of the Battle of Mukden



Port Arthur after Japanese attack



Russian soldiers in Trenches

The Naval Battles

The Japanese navy dominated the Russian navy throughout the war, from the start when the Japanese made a surprise attack on Port Arthur to begin hostilities.

- **The Attack on Port Arthur, February 8-9, 1904**

In order to achieve complete dominance at sea, on 8th February, 1904, without a declaration of war, Admiral Togo was sent to attack Russian naval units stationed at Port Arthur. The attack was a complete success establishing Japanese naval dominance.

- **Battle of Chemulpo Bay, February 9, 1904**

Simultaneous with the attack on Port Arthur the Japanese also attacked Chemulpo Bay (modern Incheon) to complete the destruction of the Russian Pacific Fleet.

- **Battle of Yellow Sea, August 10, 1904**

The Russian and Japanese navies clashed off Shantung resulting in a stalemate.

- **Battle off Ulsan, August 14, 1904**

Russian naval units were forced to cease interfering with Japanese shipping.

- **Battle of Korsakov, August 20, 1904**

The Russian cruiser *Novik* scuttled herself (right).



The Battle of the Straights of Tsushima 27 May 1905

“The great sea battle that was fought on 27 May, 1905 in the straits dividing Tsushima Island from Japan ended with the complete destruction of a first-class European battle squadron by the navy of a country with only 50 years of modern industrial and organizational experience.”

The Mammoth Book of Modern Battles. Edited by Jon E. Lewis Robinson

Photo of Japanese fleet on morning of the battle



<https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/battle-tsushima>

The Long Lead-up to the Russian Disaster at Tsushima

- In 1894 the Chinese Empire was close to breaking up. Korea and the Manchurian hinterland were tempting targets for the growing ambitions of the Japanese military which sent a large army to Korea in August.
- The two sides clashed at the mouth of the Yalu River resulting in a Japanese victory and Japanese control of the ice-free port of Port Arthur on the Liaoutang Peninsular.
- However, this was soon taken away from them when European Powers applied pressure to protect China.
- Soon after it was returned Russia bullied China into allowing them to build the Trans Pacific Railway into Vladivostok.
- By 1898 the Russians were in Port Arthur itself and developing an ice-free naval base to complement Vladivostok 300 miles to the north.
- Japan, however had already started naval expansion entailing 6 new battleships, six armoured cruisers and eight light cruisers.
- The above tensions resulted in the Russo-Japanese War which began on February 8, 1904 when Japanese destroyers made a surprise night attack against the Russian First Pacific Squadron in Port Arthur. Only 3 torpedoes found their mark but they crippled three battleships.

The Mammoth Book of Modern Battles. Edited by Jon E. Lewis Robinson

Timeline to Disaster

- February 8th, 1904. Japanese destroyers launched a night attack on the Russian 1st Pacific Squadron in Port Arthur. Three battleships were crippled.
- For a month, the Japanese controlled the Yellow Sea and began to move armies to the mainland.
- Russians repaired damaged ships under Admiral Makarov.
- Admiral Togo used ships to close blockade
- Russian incompetence found new heights when Admiral Makarov lead a whole destroyer squadron over a minefield. The Battleship *Petropavlovsk* (right) sank, taking 27 officers and 652 seamen, including Stepan Makarov, down with it .
- Russians lost all hope of being able to stop a landing by the Japanese on the peninsula.
- Admiral Togo's attempts to block the harbor failed when two Japanese battle ships were lost to mines.



- Russian commander, Admiral Vitgelf, received orders from the Tsar to take the naval squadron to Vladivostok
- The Russian fleet left harbor on the 10th of August 1904. As a result the reluctant Japanese admiral was forced to accept battle.
- As darkness fell two 12-inch shells struck the Russian flagship "Tsarevitch" killing all on the bridge.

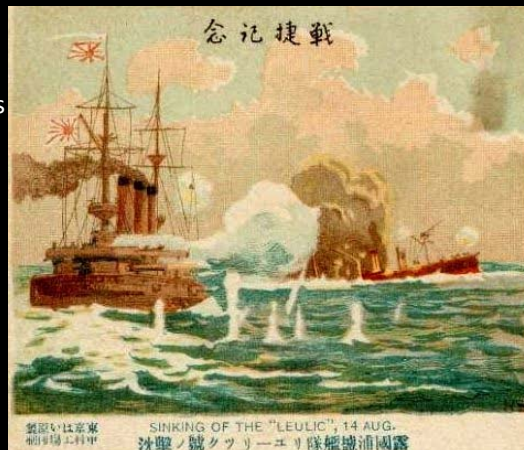
A stern view of the *Tsesarevich* dockside at Port Arthur, 1904.

Note shrapnel holes visible in her funnels.



- Admiral Prince Uhtomski lead the squadron back to Port Arthur.
- In the darkness the Russian stragglers managed to regain the harbor they had recently left.
- The Vladivostok squadron was brought to action on 14 August but again it resulted in a Russian defeat.
- The cruiser Rurik was sunk and the cruiser Gramoboi ran aground.
- All that was left was the cruiser Rossiya and three Russian admirals who could not reach Port Arthur where the leaderless battleships had retired. The Russians had been crushed by Admiral Togo Heiacho and his British-built battleships.

Sinking of the Russian cruiser *Rurik* in the Battle off Ulsan (note the Japanese spelling)



- Meanwhile in the Baltic a force of new Russian first-class battleships were under construction and older ships were undergoing refits. If Port Arthur held out a powerful new fleet could come to the rescue. Japan might still be denied her ambitions.
- The “Second Pacific Squadron” was to be commanded by Rear-Admiral Zinovei Petrovitch Rozhdestvenski (right), nicknamed “Mad Dog”. He faced a mass of problems.
- The Baltic Fleet had to cover 19,000 miles of sea round the Cape and the Indian Ocean.
- While crossing the North Sea they mistakenly fired on British fishing boats near the Dogger bank in October 1904.
- The biggest problem was that of coal. Britain controlled a monopoly through a chain of coaling stations. Russia had none. A fleet of 60 German colliers met the Russian fleet at prearranged points between Libau in the Baltic and Port Arthur.
- Every few days the world’s newspapers printed the whereabouts of the Russian fleet. At the time it was the longest attacking voyage in the history of naval warfare history.



- During the long trip ships got lost, engines broke down and sailors went mad in the heat. The ships were so full of extra coal any combat training became impossible.
- At Tangier the fleet divided and joined together again at Nosse Be’ (below) in Madagascar, where they learned that Port Arthur had fallen.
- At Nossi Be, coaling arrangements broke down and the fleet was stuck.



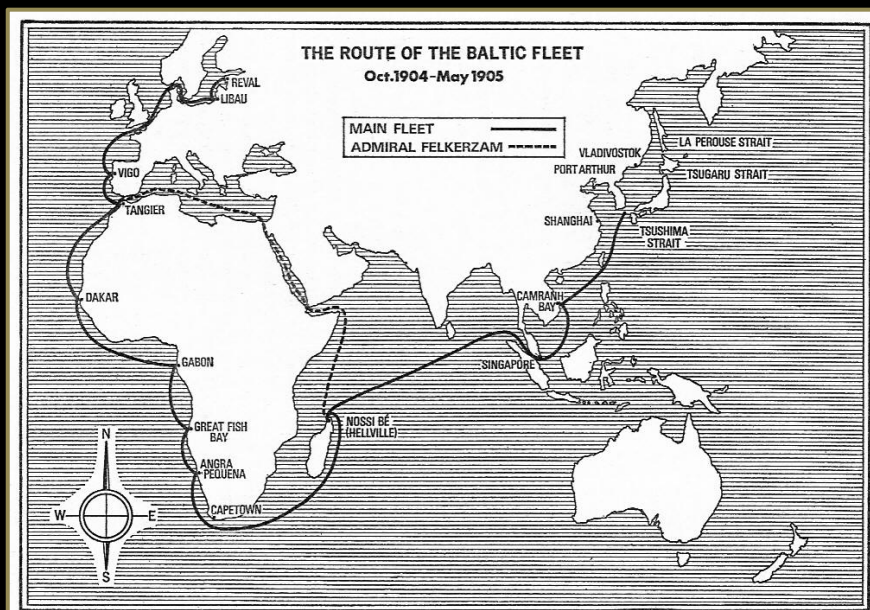
68. - MADAGASCAR. - NOSSI-BE. - Escadre Russe - Flotte de la Mer Baltique sur Rade
 Série 4 - Edition W. H. Freeman & Co., New York

- The Russian Admiralty decided to send a Third Pacific Squadron under Rear-Admiral Nebogatov. The Third Pacific Squadron caught up with the rest of the fleet off French Indo China.
- On 9th of May the Russians loaded coal for the last time.



The Mammoth Book of Modern Battles. Edited by Jon E. Lewis Robinson

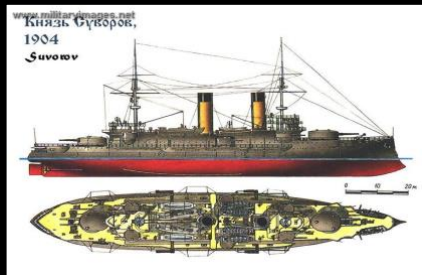
Map of the Russian Baltic Fleet's Voyage to Tsushima Strait



Details of the Russian Fleet at Battle of the Tsushima Strait May 27 1905

Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Cruisers
Admiral Rozhdestvenski	Admiral Velkerzam (D)	Admiral Nebogatov	Admiral Enquist
Flagship	Flagship	Flagship	Flagship
Suvorov	Oslaba	Nicolai 1	Oleg
Battleships	Battleships	Battleships	8 vessels
Aleksandr 11	Sissoi Veliki	Apraxin	
Borodino	Navarin	Seniavin	
Orel	Admiral Nakimoff	Ushakoff	

Russian Flagship Suvorov





Details of Japanese forces at the Battle of the Tsushima Straits 27 May 1905

First Division	Second Division	Third Division
Admiral Togo	Vice Admiral Kanimura	Vice Admiral Dewa
Battleships	Armoured cruisers	Cruisers
Mikasa	Izuma	Naniwa
Shikishima	Tokira	Takachino
Fuji	Yagumo	Tsushima
Asahi	Iwate	Akashi
Kasuga		
Nisshin		

Every ship was fueled and armed for maximum combat efficiency and able to make 18 knots. The fleet could bring into action 16x 12-inch guns, 112x 8-in and 6-in. This compared with the Russian firepower consisting of 26x 12-in and 10-in and 121x 8-in and 6-in guns.

The battle would be decided by how the rival forces used their gunpowder.

Japanese and Russian forces at the beginning of the Battle of Battle Of Tsushima Straights May 27, 1905

	 Japanese Empire	 Russian Empire
Battleship	5	8
Coastal Battleship	-	3
Cruiser	27	6
Destroyer	21	9
Other: Torpedo Boats, Gunboats and Auxiliary Vessels	- 37	12 -
TOTAL Vessels	89	38

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Tsushima

Details of the Battle of Tsushima

- Togo determined that the Russian fleet would head for Vladivostok through the Tsushima Straights.
- This area was divided into boxes with each patrolled by Japanese cruisers.
- Togo took a risk in leaving the Tsugau Strait thinly protected.
- The Russians hoped that fog would help to conceal the movements of their fleet until they arrived at Vladivostok. However they also wanted to avoid the same fate met by the First Pacific Squadron at Port Arthur.
- The Russian admiral had to cause some damage to the Japanese fleet so speed was adjusted in order to enter the zone of maximum danger at daylight May 27.
- The Japanese merchant cruiser made first contact at 0330 hours.
- Ninety minutes later Togo led the battleships of the first division out of Masan. The other divisions followed.
- Every ship was fuelled and armed for maximum efficiency. They were able to make 18 knots compared with the worn-out Russian nine or ten.

The Battle of the Straights of Tsushima 27 May 1905



The crew of the Asahi watch as a captured Russian ship passes



"Togo's operations officer, Commander Akiyama, had set a seven stage trap for the Russians to fall into. The battle would open with torpedo and destroyer attacks and the third stage would be the direct fleet engagement. The remaining stages envisaged the piecemeal destruction of any survivors who might break through towards Vladivostok."

"The Mammoth Book of Modern Battles" Constable & Robinson Ltd. London, 1999

- The Russian fleet was detected too late for torpedoes but the Japanese cruisers forced the Russians to weaken their formation.
- Fearing an attack Rozhdestvenski ordered his fleet into formation to cross the T of the Japanese forces.
- When the shadowing cruisers disappeared the Russian admiral ordered the First and Second Battleship divisions to make an eight-point turn to starboard to bring the ships line abreast.
- As the first Russian ship began to turn the Japanese cruisers reappeared and the order to the Second Division was contradicted. As a result the Russians were suddenly steaming towards the enemy's fleet at a closing speed of 24 knots in a ragged formation exposed on the port side.
- It was not Togo's intention to make a north-south broadside pass as this would leave the Russians open to travelling towards Vladivostok.
- At 1355 the Japanese line swung to port, following the *Mikasa* in line ahead.
- Rozhdestvenski, however, had ordered the first division to increase speed and come out from behind the weaker line to his left and take up battle formation in one line ahead. Then when Togo reached the chosen position, with a breathtaking manoeuvre, the whole Japanese line swung round 180 degrees, turning in succession with *Mikasa* leading.
- At the moment of the turn the Japanese ships were easy targets but only the lighter Russian shells were making hits. When they came out of their turn, one after the other they opened up at a range from 5,000 to 6,000 yards at the head of the Russian column. A classic crossing of "the T" had been achieved.

"The Mammoth Book of Modern Battles" Constable & Robinson Ltd. London, 1999

- As the Japanese gunners found range they subjected the Russian fleet to a wicked battering and *Oslyaba* was soon set ablaze.
- Stunned Russians struggled with primitive damage control procedures.
- Suvorov fell out of line on fire.
- *Oslyaba* sank causing chaos to the ships following.
- *Aleksandr III* turned to port to try and escape under a smoke cloud.
- Only the *Suvorov* was left in sight, still fighting back with a few remaining guns.
- *Rozhdestvenski* was severely wounded and carried back to a gun turret.
- An hour latter the missing Russian main body was re-sighted.
- Togo's ships hammered them at a range of 1000 yards.
- *Aleksandr III* was forced out of formation, then capsized and sank. The *Borodino* burned until her magazines exploded and ripped her apart.
- Suvorov was destroyed by torpedoes.
- Cruisers *Oleg* and *Zhemtchug* were set alight and sunk.
- Admiral Nebogatov in the dated *Nicolai* tried to get the survivors of the First and Second Divisions together, but they then came under attack from torpedo boats. *Navarin* and *Sissoi Velki* were sunk.
- Cruisers Admiral *Nakhimoff* and *Monomakh* were scuttled on Tsushima.
- The slaughter continued on the following day when the Japanese found the Russians again.
- The Russians ran up the white flag but the Japanese did not cease firing until the Russians turned off their engines.

"The Mammoth Book of Modern Battles" Constable & Robinson Ltd. London, 1999

Cost in Ships and Lives in the Battle of Tsushima

Casualties and Loses Japan

117 dead
583 injured
3 torpedo boats sunk
(450 tons sunk)

Casualties and Loses Russia

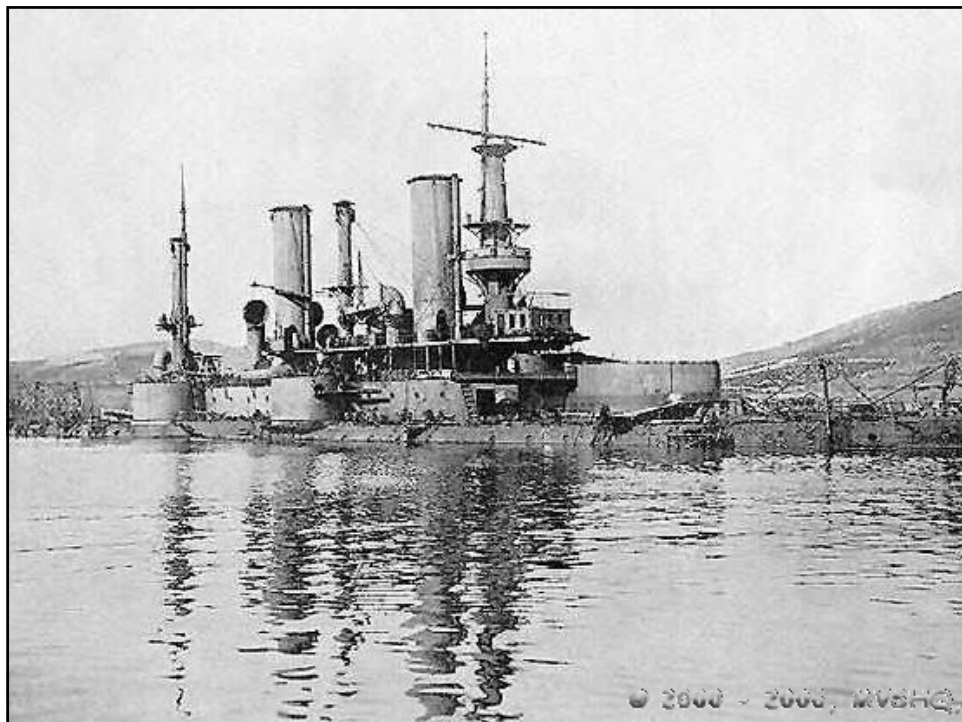
4,380 dead
5,917 captured
6 battleships sunk
1 coastal battleship sunk
14 other ships sunk
7 ships captured
6 ships disarmed
(126,792 tons sunk)

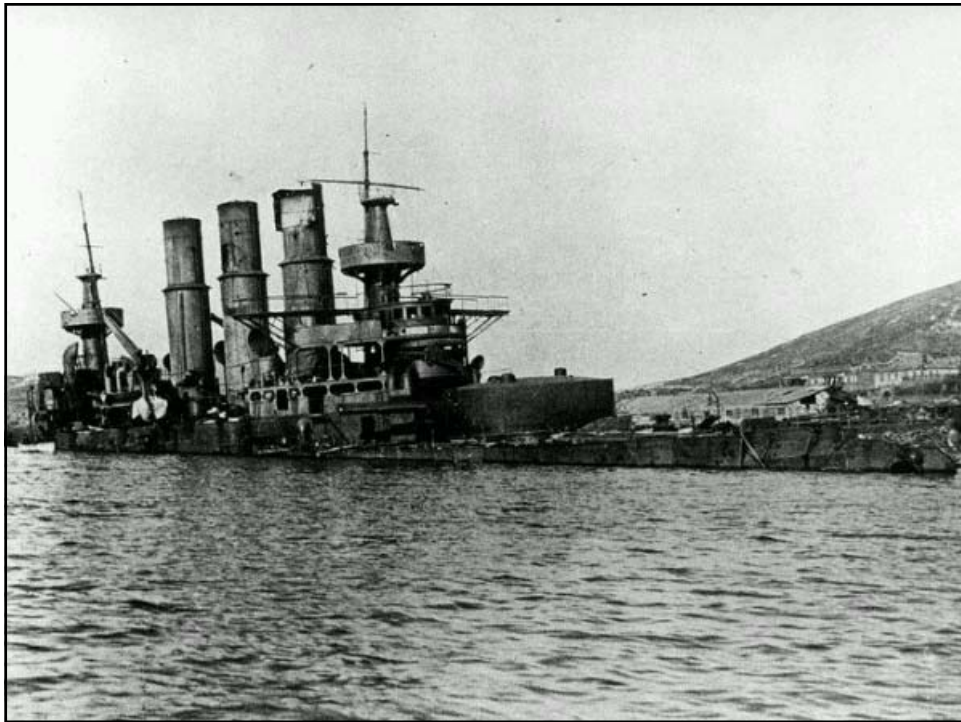
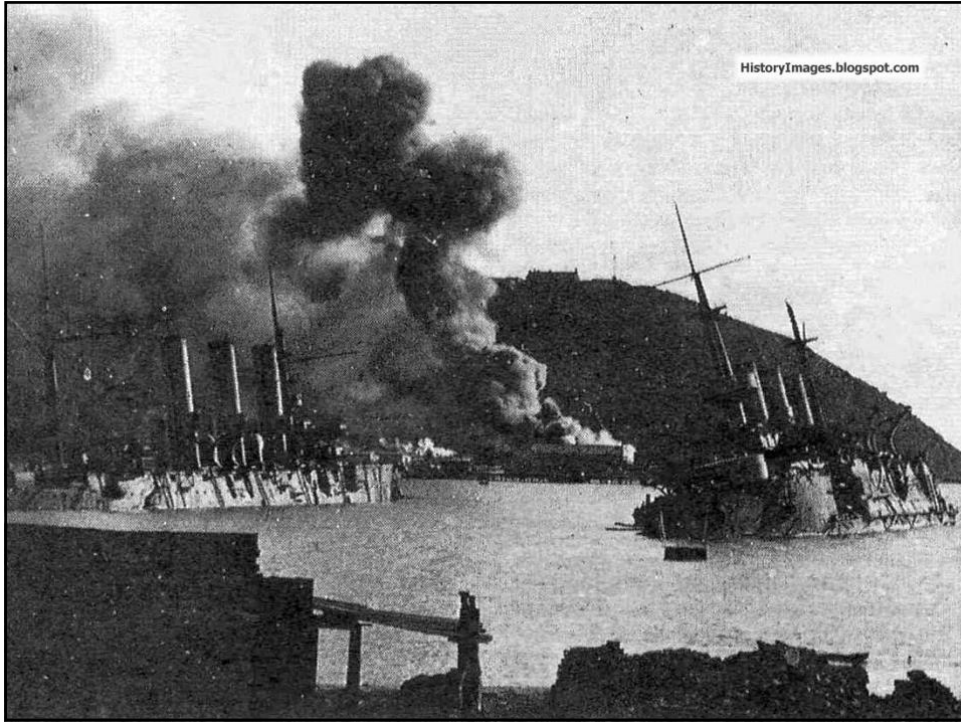


Battleship Oslyabya destroyed by Japanese gunfire

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Tsushima









Why did the Russians lose so completely when on paper the forces looked fairly even?

- The Russian gunnery had been accurate at long range but fell off in accuracy when they themselves came under fire.
- High-explosive shells, rather than torpedoes, had caused most of the damage.
- A high proportion of Russian shells hit their target but failed to explode.
- Although both sides fought with courage, the Japanese were much more competent.
- The Russian ships and crews were worn out by the long voyage across the world.
- The Russians had gone into the conflict with too much coal, much of which was stacked on deck.
- The Japanese had dumped coal before the battle in order to lose weight and increase speed.
- The Japanese had concentrated their fire on the Russian flagships resulting in the crews fighting qualities declining after the loss of their leaders.



The initiative and confidence of the Japanese seamen and their officers was of an extremely high level. When implored to take cover by his crew Admiral Togo refused. He signaled to the Fleet "The rise and fall of the Empire depends on the result of this engagement. Do your utmost everyone of you"

"The Mammoth Book of Modern Battles" Constable & Robinson Ltd. London, 1999



Admiral Togo and his comments on The Battle of Tsushima

"The Mikasa and 11 other other ships of the battle main force had taken years to design and build, and yet they were used for only half an hour of decisive battle. We studied the art of war and trained ourselves in it, but it was put to use for only that short period. Thought the decisive battle took such a short time, it required 10 years of preparation."

"In August 1905 U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt mediated a peace treaty at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. (He was later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for this achievement.) Japan emerged from the conflict as the first modern non-Western world power and set its sights on greater imperial expansion. However, for Russia, its military's disastrous performance in the war was one of the immediate causes of the Russian Revolution of 1905."

<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-russo-japanese-war-begins>