

**Territorial Dispute between Japan and Russia on Kuril
Islands: A Realist Perspective (2011-2017)**



**Thesis for Partial Fulfilments for the Degree of B.S.
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MUHAMMAD HASSAN ALI

DECLARATION

I, MUHAMMAD HASSAN ALI s/o MADAD ALI NASIR, ID No. 15003126002, student of B.S. Political Science at the University of Management of Technology, Lahore, do hereby solemnly affirm that this thesis entitled as Territorial Dispute between Japan and Russia on Kuril Islands: A Realist Perspective (2011-2016) is entirely my individual research work and has not been submitted to any other university or institution for any other purpose.

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Abstract

The Russian and Japanese territorial dispute on the Kuril Islands is changing the security dynamics for the both countries. Russia and Japan had peace treaties and resolution accords in the past but it never resulted in peace or solution between them. Due to the non-flexible behaviour of Russia and the U.S. pressure on Japan, relations between Japan and Russia are in stress. Qualitative research methodology within post-positivists paradigm has been used in this study. Historical, descriptive and exploratory approaches has been used to find the answers of the research questions. Realist theory within broader framework has been tested using the qualitative directed content analysis. If the non-flexible behaviour by the Russia and Japan continues, this might result in a war between Russia and Japan that would also effect the peace of whole region.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The territorial disputes between Russia and Japan is discussed widely in the international relations. Japan claims the South Kuril Islands as its Northern territories but on the other side Russia calls it as own territories. According to Japan four main Islands which are Kunashir (known as in Japanese Kurashiki), Iturup (Etorofu), Shikotan and the Habomai are the Japanese territory on which Russia occupies forcefully. Japan considers that its demands concerning the returns of the Northern territories are reasonable. Russia is of the opinion that all of the Northern territories belong to Russia because Russian soldiers shed their blood during World War II in this region to own this territory. There are several peace treaties signed between Japan and Russia to resolve this disputes but all of them remained unsuccessful. These both countries are acting straight forward, like Russia is maintaining the status quo by trying not to change its vision about the Kuril Islands while Japan is trying to reject Russian occupation over these Islands, and wants to take back those Islands which Japan lost during World War II. Despite many political and diplomatic initiatives, both countries are not willing to compromise on their long standing claims.