

Data Retrieval Chart: Historical Photographs*

educated guesses are encouraged!

Question the Source

What is the photograph's date, title, & creator?	1905; <i>A Dead War Monster—Russian battleship 'Peresviet' Wrecked by Japanese Shells, Port Arthur Harbor</i> ; and Underwood & Underwood.
What type of person might have created this photograph, and for what purpose?	The photographer is unknown; the copyright owners are (Elmer) Underwood & (Bert) Underwood, brothers who started a photography company to provide newspapers with images to accompany articles and sell more copies.
Was it random or posed, amateur or professional, private or published?	Seemingly random because the wrecked ship and the person on the beach are both independent of the photographer. Yet, somewhat posed in the sense that the photographer obviously wanted both in the viewfinder.

Observe the Context

Describe what you see in the photograph. <i>(be specific and attentive to detail)</i>	The floating item could be a sea mine, then called a “torpedo” because of its resemblance to the “torpedo fish” (an electric ray that can produce a 220-volt charge). Sea mines were a relatively new and controversial weapon used to devastating effect in this war.
Explain what is happening in the photograph. <i>(use your specific details as clues)</i>	The Baiyu Mountain Range in Manchuria, a region of Northeast China. It overlooks the harbor and port city of Lushun (Westerners called it “Port Arthur” after British Admiral William Arthur who surveyed the area). the <i>Peresvet</i> survived the controversial start of war, a Japanese surprise attack on the Russian fleet at Lushun. Russia and Japan were competing for control and influence in Asia and when Russia refused to negotiate, Japan withdrew its diplomats and issued an ultimatum, promising “to take independent action necessary to defend our position menaced by Russia.” Two days later, Japan attacked
In about one sentence, state the photograph's overall message.	This person may be wearing a traditional Chinese (Mandarin) hat and seems to be working to collect seafood for a meal or to sell at market. Lushun is known for excellent scallops that often live in shallow water, under rocks, and in muddy conditions; they are a key export for the region In 1905 Japan and Russia were at war, fighting a naval battle in a calm water-area near a coastline where ships load and unload, and if the title is an accurate indication of this battle (and the war) Russia is losing.

Corroborate the Evidence

How does this photograph compare with other evidence?	Much of the information gathered from this photograph coheres with texts from the 1899 and the 1907 Hague Conventions' treaties. This photograph explores international law as it concerns conduct of war, other photographs may explore outer space, national sovereignty, or the environment.
Why might other evidence (messages & data) agree or disagree with this photograph?	Other photographs or texts may explore international law from different perspectives and answer the question differently. Other sources may have different reasons for presenting data, such as to make their perspective seem more reasonable, or to present the “other side” in a worse way.
What else do you need or want to know about this photograph?	To what degree was international law followed after the 1907 convention? What subsequent conventions have met and what have they added to international law? Is “international law” enforceable? What should policy-makers do when international law conflicts with their national interests?

* adapted from a synthesis of the Persistent Issues in History's “Document Analysis Worksheet” and the Library of Congress's “Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tools” and Wineburg, S (1991) Historical problem solving: A study of cognitive processes used in the evaluation of documentary and pictorial evidence. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 83(1) 73-87.