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The history of Chinese–Russian relations' development since 1990s

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Abstract. The article deals with the challenges that the Chinese-Russian relations have faced recently. Over the past 30 years, the partnership between China and Russia has continued to develop steadily and got stronger progressively under the joint governance and initiative of both states' leaders. Therefore, the purpose of the article is to reveal and evaluate the current economic situation and the prospects for economic and trade relations between China and Russia by analyzing four economic stages. In order to achieve the goal, the following tasks have been set: - to discuss Chinese-Russian historical regional cooperation; - to compare the four stages of cooperation history; - to analyze the present situation, the problems and obstacles that arose and their solutions. The relevance of the topic is connected with the Sino-Russian economic and trade cooperation development, which is gaining peace nowadays. The author discusses both the history of Sino-Russian relations' development and the problems that have appeared since 1992. The conclusion has been drawn that the trade relationship with Russian companies is to be promoted steadily and progressively. However, the foreign trade companies of China should not only cooperate with Russian foreign enterprises in order to strengthen the concept of cooperation, but also improve the image of Russian business in China. Furthermore, it is important to strengthen the awareness of both quality and law. The states should pay greater attention to the process of the in-depth implementation of the Asian-Pacific Economic development strategy.

Keywords: China; Russia; Sino-Russian history; trade and economic cooperation; economy; WTO

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История развития китайско-российских отношений в 1990-х гг.

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Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются вызовы, с которыми китайскороссийские отношения столкнулись в последнее время. За последние 30 лет партнерство между Китаем и Россией продолжало неуклонно развиваться и постепенно крепнуть под совместным управлением и инициативой лидеров обоих государств. Поэтому цель статьи состоит в том, чтобы выявить и оценить текущую экономическую ситуацию и перспективы торгово-экономических отношений между Китаем и Россией путем анализа четырех экономических этапов. Для достижения цели поставлены следующие задачи: обсудить китайско-российское историческое региональное сотрудничество; сопоставить четыре этапа истории сотрудничества; проанализировать текущую ситуацию, возникшие проблемы, препятствия, и пути их решения. Актуальность темы связана с развитием китайскороссийского торгово-экономического сотрудничества, которое в настоящее время набирает обороты. Автор обсуждает как историю развития китайско-российских отношений, так и проблемы, возникшие с 1992 года. Сделан вывод о том, что торговые отношения с российскими компаниями следует развивать неуклонно и поступательно. Однако внешнеторговые компании Китая должны не только сотрудничать с российскими зарубежными предприятиями в целях укрепления концепции сотрудничества, но и улучшать имидж российского бизнеса в Китае. Кроме того, важно повышать осведомленность как о качестве, так и о законе. Государствам следует уделить больше внимания процессу углубленной реализации стратегии Азиатско-Тихоокеанского экономического развития.

Ключевые слова: Китай; Россия; Китайско-русская история; торговоэкономическое сотрудничество; экономика; ВТО

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Introduction. China and Russia, as friendly neighbors are linked by mountains and rivers, and not only have close geographical relations, but also have strong economic interdependence and complementarity. The potential market of bilateral trade is huge. Especially in recent years, the leaders of China and Russia frequently have exchanged visits, and the relations between China and Russia have made great progress in various fields [1]. While promoting the steady development of the strategic partnership between the two countries, the economies of the two countries are growing and the scale of trade is expanding. The two countries have carried out comprehensive and in-depth cooperation in energy, science, technology, finance and other fields achieved fruitful results. For China, the largest developing country, and Russia, which is on the way to rejuvenation, evaluating the current situation and prospects of the economic and trade relations between the two countries will help the two countries achieved

their respective strategic goals and move towards common prosperity. The development of bilateral trade between China and Russia has roughly gone through the following four stages.

The *first* stage of cooperation history, from 1992 to 1993, was a new period for Russia to seek foreign development after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The trade between China and Russia was mainly through government agreement trade and barter trade between enterprises. During this period, the main reason for the rapid development of bilateral trade was that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian government adopted radical reform measures and quickly liberalized prices, but domestic goods were very scarce and needed to be imported from China [2, pp. 19–28]. In addition, China encourages trade with the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, and promotes a large number of Chinese consumer goods to enter the Russian market, resulting in a substantial increase in trade volume. However, this kind of growth is not the result of the natural development of trade, so it lacks stamina.

In the *second* stage, from 1994 to 1996, the bilateral trade between China and Russia gradually changed from barter trade to spot trade, and the trade scale decreased. In 1996, the bilateral trade volume was only US \$6.84 billion. The main reason for this situation is that in 1993, Russia greatly increased import tariffs, which reduced the profits of China's exports and inhibited exports to a certain extent. At the same time, Russia greatly reduced export tariffs and encouraged exports, which led to the rebound of China's imports to Russia in 1995 and 1996 [3].

The *third* stage of history is from 1997 to 1998. This period is mainly due to the continuous impact of the above reasons, and the bilateral trade volume continues to decline. In 1997, the trade volume was US \$6.12 billion, down 10.5% from the previous year. In 1998, it dropped to US \$5.48 billion. However, during this period, the local border trade between the two countries developed rapidly. In 1998, the volume of border trade increased by more than 20% over 1997, accounting for about one third of the total trade volume between the two countries.

The *fourth* stage of cooperation history has been since 1999 up to the present period. This is the most optimistic period for bilateral trade. The bilateral trade volume has stopped falling and rebounded, maintaining rapid growth for many years (with an average annual growth rate of 31.1%). It exceeded 10

billion US dollars in 2001, 33.39 billion US dollars in 2006 and 55 billion US dollars in 2010.

From these four stages, it took 10 years for Chinese-Russian bilateral trade volume to break through the top 10 billion US dollars, while it took only three years to break through 20 billion US dollars, and the time to break through 300 billion US dollars or 40 billion US dollars is even shorter. It can be said that the trade between China and Russia is developing well and has great potential. By 2010, the total trade volume proposed by the leaders of the two countries will basically reach US \$60–80 billion.

Research results and their discussion

1. The current situation of regional cooperation between China and Russia.

In the current complex of international economic environment, China and Russia, as economic powers are playing the important role in the world's economic development and political stability. As China's "one belt, one road" initiative is being implemented and implemented, China will continue to benefit the neighboring countries at the same time of developing itself. It is self-evident that Silk Road Economic Belt and "One belt, one road" one of the important partners one belt, one road construction. On this basis, deepening and strengthening trade cooperation between China and Russia is of great significance to both sides.

2. "One belt, one road" trade cooperation between China and Russia.

China and Russia are important economic and trade partners to each other. Under the framework of the strategic partnership of comprehensive cooperation between China and Russia, the economic and trade cooperation between China and Russia is constantly expanding and deepening. From 2013 to 2018, the total bilateral trade volume between China and Russia was 683.3, 884, 635.5, 661.1, 869.6 and 1082.8 (unit: 100 million US dollars) respectively. From 2013 to 2018, the proportion of bilateral trade volume between China and Russia in Russia's total trade volume increased year by year, which were 8.12%, 11.27%, 12.07%, 14.12%, 14.86% and 15.76% respectively. China has become Russia's largest trade partner for the ninth consecutive year [4, c. 247–256].

China Silk Road Economic Belt "One belt, one road, one country, one country" is the key factor for the development of the Silk Road Economic Belt. The data in 2013 and 2018 showed that China and Russia played an important

role in the construction of the "Silk Road Economic Belt". In the future, both sides should seek new development direction and carry out deeper and greater cooperation on this basis. As Andrey Denisov, the Russian ambassador in China, said, "the comprehensive cooperation between Russia and China in promoting the integration of the Eurasian Economic Union and the Silk Road Economic Belt will undoubtedly become a new cornerstone of the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Russia in the next few years." The cooperation between the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Eurasian Economic Union is also an important measure to promote and develop bilateral trade between China and Russia" [5]. On this basis, China and Russia take energy cooperation as the core, actively promote logistics docking cooperation, and large-scale project trade cooperation.

3. The current problems in regional cooperation between China and Russia.

Looking at the regional cooperation between China and Russia, it is not difficult to see that the two sides have a high degree of overlap in the field of regional cooperation. Russia's economic transfer is consistent with China's development strategy of revitalizing the eastern economy and building the Eastern Economic Zone. Both sides have new development space in the fields of heavy industry, culture and education, tourism resources development and technical cooperation. However, in the process of future cooperation, there are still several obstacles that cannot be ignored [6].

Firstly, there is the question whether the attitude of the Russian side toward the cooperation is firm. For Russia, the development of the Far East region depends on its own efforts, which is obviously inadequate. Whether it is to introduce labor force to inject power into economic construction, or to attract foreign capital to strengthen technical cooperation, it needs a firm open attitude and strong laws and regulations to support. However, considering the military security status of the Far East, a considerable number of people are worried about the continuous enhancement of China's national strength and the "China Threat Theory", which will be the negative factors hindering the adherence to the opening-up policy; The cultural core values of Russia's ethnic and religious groups all reject the idea of opening the country to the outside world, which is also the deep reason why Russia always has a cautious attitude towards the opening of the labor market.

Secondly, there is the problem connected with the establishment and implementation of institutional mechanisms can meet the needs of bilateral development and cooperation. Since Russia's political and economic transition, the old system has been overthrown, and the new system is still being established and improved [7]. When the new market economic system is not perfect, the government's work efficiency is low, official corruption is prevalent, and the implementation of policies and regulations is difficult. If the two sides want to realize the cross regional development of regional cooperation, there will be many frictions and collisions in the field of trade. If there is no effective legal system and enforcement guarantee, the practical interests of both sides will be lost and the deep cooperation will be shadowed.

Thirdly, the regional cooperation between the two sides faces international competition and pressure. With China's important position in the economic development of the Asian- Pacific region and even the world, the cooperation between China and Russia in the region is also facing competition and pressure from neighboring countries [8]. The current regional cooperation between China and Russia mostly stays in general trade, lacking mutual investment and technical cooperation. The opening up of both sides in southern China is not one-way, but multilateral. This is bound to face competition from cooperation with other countries. In the future development, both sides should focus on expanding barter trade to resource joint development, project contracting, product processing and R & D base. For the southern region of China, we should strengthen scientific and technological cooperation with Russia, such as aviation, marine, nuclear technology, optical fiber and other fields where Russia has world-class core technology. At present, China has many professionals in the field of technology [9]. In addition, China is vigorously developing emerging science and technology industries. It is reasonable to believe that Russia and China will make achievements in cooperation in this regard, drive the economic restructuring of China and Russia, and promote the economic development of the country and region.

Finally, for Russia, "China Threat Theory" has more and deeper contents. First of all, the Russians are worried about whether China will take back the territory of more than 1.5 million square kilometers ceded by the Qing government forced by the Tsarist period after it becomes a world power. Despite the establishment of the strategic partnership of cooperation between China and Russia and the fact that China and Russia have announced in the document that the border and territorial issues between China and Russia have been completely resolved, the Russians still have concerns [10]. The second problem is connected with the anxiety about China's economic growth and development. It is believed that China's rapid economic development has made it a world economic power, which is weaker only to the United States, resulting in the imbalance of the power balance between China and Russia. According to this logic, some Russian political scientists and scholars infer; economic power is bound to become a political power, military power, and China as a military power is bound to pose a major threat to Russia. Finally, there are concerns about Chinese immigrants. Under the influence of the theory of "China threat", Russia's Anti China sentiment caused by the problem of "Chinese immigrants" is rising in the Far East [11]. Therefore, it is urgent to eliminate the influence of "China Threat Theory" and increase mutual understanding.

Furthermore, there are some ideological differences between China and Russia and the tendentiousness of Russia's foreign policy. Because of its unique geographical position across Eurasia, most Russians have formed a unique cultural mentality. They always put themselves in the position of European countries. They are aware that they agree with and welcome the western culture. When facing backward Asian countries, they have a strong sense of cultural identity; however, it often reveals the superiority and exclusion of Russia as a big European country intentionally or unintentionally. Faced with the contempt of developed European countries, Russians often breed inferiority in their consciousness, which has a great impact on their consumption behavior. On the one hand, Russian consumers have a special "preference" for products from the west, and they praise them almost without any choice [12]. On the other hand, they are unwilling to pay the equivalent price for similar products from China. Moreover, in the specific transaction negotiations, most Chinese and Russian businesses deliberately keep the price very low, so that Chinese companies can't make plans. Many Russians often complain that China sells the best goods to western countries, but dumps fake goods into Russia. In fact, even if China wants to sell high-quality products to Russia, it will have to give up trading opportunities because Russia has pushed the price below the cost line, and eventually withdraw from the Russian consumer goods market [13].

4. The solutions of the problems in regional cooperation between China and Russia.

It is necessary to change the concept of opening up and cooperation with Russia. There are many reasons for the above-mentioned gap, but we should pay enough attention to the reasons of the two sides' concept. It is worth thinking about how China can give full play to its own advantages in concept, pay more attention to the Russian market, and implement the strategy with characteristics. China plays a key role in the effective implementation of Russia's economic and trade strategy [14]. Firstly, the trade with Russia should be promoted step by step. We should do well in Russia's economic and trade cooperation, avoid risks and seek long-term cooperation and development. Secondly, strengthen the concept of cooperation. China's foreign trade should not only cooperate with foreign enterprises, but also cooperate with Russia at home. In cooperation, we should avoid "vicious competition" and further strengthen the sense of cooperation, teamwork and overall situation [15]. Thirdly, to strengthen the awareness of quality and law, it is necessary to further enhance the level and quality of Hainan's trade and investment in Russia, so as to win the trust of the Russian market. We should strengthen the concept of operation according to law, abandon illegal trade forms, establish a civilized business image and carry out standardized trade [16]. At the same time, Russia should also consider how to pay more attention to and tap the potential of regional cooperation with China from its own perspective, so as to deepen the regional cooperation between China and Russia;

Although China is actively carrying out trade with Russia and has held various promotion and negotiation conferences, in order to highlight the advantages and strength of Hainan's economy and trade with Russia, we should make full use of relevant resources to establish a think tank and think tank for Russia's countermeasures research, and formulate China's policies, measures and strategies for regional cooperation with Russia Direction and cooperation focus in different periods [17]. Especially under the background of the best historical period of Sino Russian relations, the new opportunities of Sino Russian economy and trade, the in-depth implementation of the Western development strategy, and Russia's vigorous implementation of the Far East development strategy, we should seize the favorable opportunity of Russia's accession to the WTO, highlight the advantages of various parties, vigorously expand the Russian market, and promote the in-depth development of regional cooperation between China and Russia.

Conclusion. To establish a new image of Russia, over the years, Chinese-Russian regional cooperation has made gratifying achievements, but disharmonious notes often appear, such as misunderstanding, fraud and other non-standard behavior [18]. Among them, the integrity of the Chinese people and the quality of Chinese goods are also frequently seen in Russian newspapers. At present, Russia attracts foreign investment by developing vigorously the eastern region [19]. As the leader of the Asian-Pacific economic development, China should give full play to the advantages of the media, improve its own image, reshape its integrity and attract Russia's greater attention in the process of the country's in-depth implementation of the Asian- Pacific Economic development strategy and the framework of the country's implementation of the foreign image strategy, so as to effectively boost the in-depth development of regional cooperation between China and Russia.

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