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**Interstate relations between the Russian Empire and China in the second half of the 19th century**

**Abstract.** This scientific article examines the interstate relations between Russia and China in the second half of the 19th century, since it was during this period that major changes in the system of Russian-Chinese relations began to occur. The international situation in the far East contributed to Russia's further rapprochement with China and to solving the accumulated problems in relations between States. Both States found themselves at war with England and France, the powers that played the most active role in East Asia in the mid – nineteenth century. This was the reason for the activation of Russia's policy in the far East, in particular, contributed to the resolution of issues related to the borders between the States-Russia and China.

**Keywords:** Far East, interstate relations, trade relations, Russia, China, treaties.

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The formation and development of Russian-Chinese interstate relations in the second half of the nineteenth century is a new and systematic era of diplomatic, political, and trade and economic relations between States. It should be noted that although the General state of relations between the Russian and Chinese States along the border line was characterized by a formally friendly character, in fact, these relations bore the General imprint of distrust [1, p. 55].

There was a process of establishing and developing contacts between Russia and China. The decline of feudalism and the emergence of capitalism influenced the change in Russian-Chinese relations. Although Russia often sided with the West, its policies differed significantly from those of the colonial powers. Both States sought to equiangular relationship. Russian-Chinese relations in the second half of the 19th century can be divided into several stages. Over time, relations between States moved to a new level, experiencing certain changes. The first stage can be attributed to the middle of the 19th century. At this time, Russia sought to strengthen Russian-Chinese relations through negotiations. At the same time, rafting was carried out on the Amur river to lands not delimited between Russia and China. [2, p. 55].

During this period Russia signed with China Aigun, Tientsin and Beijing treaties, by which Russia was to return their land in the Amur region, had been taken away Qing dynasty by the Treaty of Nerchinsk 1689, and secured for him the land in Primorye, the rest is not differentiated from the late seventeenth century a new stage of Russian-Chinese relations is associated with the

aggravation of international relations in the 60-70 years of the XIX century. After the conclusion of the Beijing Treaty, Russia aimed to strengthen good-neighbourly relations and develop economic ties with Qing China. Therefore, the Russian government sought to implement the terms of the agreement as soon as possible [3, p.129]. In the 60s and 70s, Russian-Chinese relations were stable. Various political issues and problems that arose between the two countries were related to China's internal problems, with mass anti-government uprisings in internal China and in Xinjiang[4, p. 30].

At this stage, Russia followed its traditional policy with regard to the Qing Empire, expressing interest in preserving the unity and stability of China. At the same time, St. Petersburg tried to pursue a cautious and restrained policy, and border problems were mostly solved at the local level [3, p. 82]. The next stage is in the 80s-early 90s of the 19th century. At this time, there was a conflict with China in connection with the Qing government's claims to part of the Posyet Gulf coast, which deprived Russia of access to the border with Korea[5, p.32]. The Russian government rejected these territorial claims, despite the fact that Russian-Chinese relations were experiencing a period of stability. This is a new stage in the system of dividing borders and developing bilateral relations. This period, as a result of concessions from both sides to the most important issues of the time, is one of the most stable in the history of Russian-Chinese relations [3, p. 104].

Russia's policy towards China has always been characterized by willingness to compromise on certain issues. China most often ignored Russia's friendly position and actions and manipulated its economic interests. This caused significant damage to the development of trade relations between the countries. For these reasons, Russia was dissatisfied with the development of relations with China. But the primary direction in Russia's foreign policy in the middle of the 19th century. The goal was to resolve political issues in relations with China - the delimitation of adjacent territories in the Far East and Central Asia. In the mid-nineteenth century, China was also interested in developing relations with Russia. The Chinese government had pinned its hopes on Russia as an effective mediator with the potential to contain the material, political, and economic demands of Britain and France in the pending peace talks. The offensive policy of European countries has contributed to a more intensive development of relations between Russia and China. This is confirmed by the Russian-Chinese agreements. Thanks to the Aigun (28.05.1858) and Beijing (14.11.1860) agreements, the border of the two empires in the Far East was finally stabilized. The process of territorial division in Central Asia was also initiated, the logical continuation of which was the Chuguchak Protocol (25.09.1864). The Tianjin treatise (13.06.1858) contributed to the further development of Russian-Chinese trade and economic relations. An important event was the establishment of a permanent Russian diplomatic mission in China. In the 70s of the 19th century, a new stage in interstate relations between Russia and China began, which is characterized by the activation of Russia's policy in Central Asia. Russia's desire to draw a line in its interests on the strategically important section of the Central Asian border with China did not lead to the expected result. The Qing government refused to ratify the terms of the Livadia Treaty, which was really not profitable for China (20.09.1879). The countries were on the verge of war. Appropriate preparations were made both by China, which was potentially the initiator of a possible armed conflict, and by Russia, whose mobilization of armed forces should be considered a defensive measure. This conflict of interest was averted during the negotiations held in St. Petersburg, where the agreement of the same name was signed (12.02.1881). The main achievement of the talks was the creation of a base for the further development of peaceful and mutually beneficial Russian-Chinese foreign policy relations [6, 152-156]. Trade relations were an important aspect of the interstate relations between Russia and China. Their development was facilitated by Russian-Chinese agreements of the 50-80s of the XIX century. All the agreements touched on economic issues. The most active trade relations developed at the turn of the 50-60 years of the 19th century, which was associated with the growth of Kyakhta trade. This was explained

by a number of reasons: 1) Russia's isolation on the European market during the Crimean war. Russia was forced to reorient its foreign trade to Asian markets to some extent; 2) in Kyakhta, the exchange of goods at free prices was allowed without any restrictions. It was during this period that a period of growth in the export of Russian goods to the Chinese market began-mainly an increase in the export of cotton products of the Russian industry. Over the next two decades, the growth of exports of key Russian goods not only slowed, but also began to decline annually. On the other hand, the volume of Chinese imports to Russia increased, which was explained by an increase in tea exports to Russia. Delivery of goods from China to Russia overland cost up to 4-5 times more expensive, however, the share of Russia in China's Maritime trade until the end of the study period was insignificant [7, 129].

During the 50-80s of the 19th century, Russia and China were linked by political and trade interests. Despite disagreements at the turn of the 70-80s of the 19th century, relations between the countries continued to be friendly, which was largely facilitated by the peaceful orientation of Russia's foreign policy [8, 78-79].

At the end of the XIX century, Manchuria became the centre of Russian-Chinese relations. The scale, level, prospects, forms and methods of Russian expansion in North-Eastern China have created prerequisites for the emergence of the most difficult set of problems and contradictions in the history of bilateral relations in this region. It is worth noting the influence of Western powers on changing relations between China and Russia. As you know, by the middle of the XIX century, the military and political situation in the Far East changed, which could not but affect the development of Russian-Chinese relations and the intervention of other States in them. In the middle of the XIX century, relations between Russia and China developed in a contradictory international context. On the one hand, both Russia and China were at that time objects of aggressive actions by England and France. Based on the common strategic positions with regard to Britain, Russia offered its military assistance to the Chinese side, but Beijing did not fundamentally develop strategic ties with its Northern neighbour. On the other hand, Russia, being a serious political force on the world stage, tried to use the situation in China, which was involved in the second «opium war», for its geopolitical interests. Russia in the activity of England in China reasonably saw a direct threat to its interests in the Far East [3, p. 142]. The British and French, following the development of Russia's relations with China, suspected that Russia was providing military assistance to Qing China. In England, they were sure that at that time Russian-Chinese military ties could be an objective response of these countries to foreign policy challenges. By developing relations with China, Russia provoked discontent from the Western powers, who sought to prevent the strengthening of its positions in the Far East. Objectively, Russia was interested in a stable and strong China that could independently resist other powers [9, p.76].

The defeat of the Qing Empire by England and France forced the signing of unequal treaties with Western countries that limited the country's sovereignty. The weakening of China and activity in the Far East of Great Britain forced Russia to intensify actions on the Russian-Chinese border and change the system of relations between the two empires [10, p. 83]. It is important that Russia did not take part in the internal struggle (1851. - the peasant war in China) and did not enjoy the privileges received by Western countries in commercial ports, but the two-century Russian-Chinese border trade conducted on equal terms, as well as the refusal to participate in the demarche against China of the Western powers [2, p. 55]. Thanks to all these points, the attitude of the Chinese public towards Russia was favourable. At the same time, military-political relations between Russia and China in the middle of the XIX century did not actually receive any real development, despite the desire of the Russian side to establish and strengthen them. Qing China's attitude to Russia was characterized by a steady distrust, suspicion, and a pronounced lack of interest in dialogue with its Northern neighbour. China, being subjected to constant aggression by Western powers, was actually deprived of the opportunity and right to independently decide its own fate and choose its partners, including in the military sphere. China» voluntarily and

independently “refused the outstretched hand of military assistance, and help disinterested and highly professional. Such assistance could really contribute to the processes of reorganization and reform of the Chinese armed forces [3, p. 158]. The Russian side did not have the strength and ability to counteract the influence of Western powers in China and actually «ceded» China to them, including as a promising market for arms sales. The military-political and diplomatic dominance of Western States, especially England, in China was complete. On the other hand, despite the failure to develop any form of military-political cooperation with China, Russia did not find itself at war with China throughout the XIX century and, unlike the Western powers, did not commit any aggressive actions against a weak and defenceless neighbour. Moreover, it is Russia that has taken on the role of mediator in the difficult relationship between Manchurian China and European powers. Russia’s foreign policy in the Far East has always been based on the need to maintain friendly relations with China. As evidenced by the reports of Archimandrite Palladius (head of the spiritual mission in Beijing) and N. N. Muravyov (gen. - lips). The Qing government favourably regarded the development of the Amur by the Russians in order to protect them from the invasion of England and other foreign States [3, p. 159]. Speaking of relations between the Russian and Chinese States, V. A. Gringmut wrote: «to Asia we must, therefore, direct our eyes and our thoughts, for there lies the talisman that will give us the necessary indestructible power» [11, p. 133].

**Conclusion.** In the middle of the 19th century, Russian-Chinese relations became the most active in the two-century history of their existence. The far Eastern direction became almost the key foreign policy line of Russia, which was due to the defeat in the Crimean war. One of the results of the failure in the war of 1853-1856 was the actual isolation of Russia on the European continent. The Qing Empire found itself in a similar position. British foreign policy took various forms: from relatively peaceful penetration of the Chinese economy at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries to military pressure in the mid-19th century. The desire to achieve even greater privileges in trade with China intensified British foreign policy, resulting in the second «opium» war.

The second half of the 19th century was a period of embassies and missions, negotiations and agreements. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Russia and China concluded the largest number of treaties and other international legal acts. They solved many issues of dividing no-man’s territories and established a Treaty regime on adjacent borders. So, in 1858, the Aigun Treaty was concluded, which established the Russian-Chinese border along the Amur river, and in 1860, the Beijing Additional Treaty, which defined the last section of the far Eastern Russian-Chinese border-from the mouth of the Ussuri river to the sea (twenty Chinese Li above the confluence of the Tumynjiang river into the sea). Based on the Treaty of Peking, the Chuguchak Protocol was concluded in 1864, establishing the Chinese border in Central and Central Asia. The final design of the border on the Western section was made by the Treaty of Saint Petersburg in 1881. The special nature of relations between Russia and China and their changes were reflected in foreign policy. During a difficult period for Qing China, when it was unable to contain the advance of British and French troops during the second «opium war», the Qing government asked Russia to mediate in the peace talks. Russia sided with China. In the second half of the 19th century, inter-state relations between Russia and China largely depended on the international situation around China and the Far East in General that developed in the middle of the century. It is noteworthy that the two States have never been at war with each other (at least officially) in the entire history of bilateral relations. Relations between the States have developed in different directions, which have always been mutually beneficial. In General, a similar trend in relations between empires persisted during the study period. In the 50-80s of the XIX century, relations between Russia and China went through two stages - from the settlement of «debatable» territorial issues, which were resolved on the basis of equal diplomatic negotiations (the turn of the 50-60s. 19th century.), to the state of a kind of «cold» war, which ended with the signing of a compromise

agreement (the turn of the 70-80s. of the 19th century.).

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### **Межгосударственные отношения Российской империи и Китая во второй половине XIX века**

**Аннотация.** В данной научной статье рассматриваются межгосударственные отношения России и Китая во второй половине 19 века, так как именно в этот период начали происходить крупные изменения в системе российско-китайских отношений. Международная обстановка на Дальнем Востоке способствовала дальнейшему сближению России с Китаем и решению накопившихся проблем в отношениях между государствами. Оба государства оказались в состоянии войны с Англией и Францией – державами, игравшими наиболее активную роль в Восточной Азии в середине XIX века. Это и явилось причиной активизации политики России на Дальнем Востоке, в частности, способствовало разрешению вопросов, касающихся границ между государствами – Россией и Китаем.

**Ключевые слова:** Дальний Восток, межгосударственные отношения, торговые отношения, Россия, Китай, договоры.

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### **XIX ғасырдың екінші жартысындағы Ресей империясы мен Қытайдың мемлекетаралық қарым-қатынастары**

**Андатпа.** Бұл ғылыми мақалада XIX ғасырдың екінші жартысындағы Ресей мен Қытайдың мемлекетаралық қатынастары қарастырылады, өйткені дәл осы кезеңде Ресей-Қытай қатынастары жүйесінде ірі өзгерістер болды. Қиыр Шығыстағы халықаралық жағдай Ресейдің Қытаймен жақындасуына және мемлекеттер арасындағы қарым-қатынастарда жинақталған проблемаларды шешуге ықпал етті. Екі мемлекет XIX ғасырдың ортасында Шығыс Азияда неғұрлым белсенді рөл атқарған Англия және Франция – державалары бар соғыс жағдайында болды. Бұл Қиыр Шығыстағы Ресей саясатының жандануына себеп болды, атап айтқанда, Ресей мен Қытай арасындағы шекараларға қатысты мәселелерді шешуге ықпал етті.

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