

CHINESE-CANADIAN RELATIONS IN MODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY

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From a historiography perspective, this study comprehensively analyses literature on the history of China-Canada relations in three languages, Chinese, English and Russian, in different databases. The article adopts the methods of documentary analysis and comparative study to compare the narratives, analyses and interpretations in the literature resources of the three other languages on the same topic to reveal the differences in the scholars' understandings and interpretations of the development of China-Canada relations in different cultural and academic contexts. By horizontally comparing the historical sources and literature in the three languages, this study aims to construct a more comprehensive, multifaceted, and multi-perspective narrative framework of the history of China-Canadian relations. It is found that despite the differences in perspectives and emphases of the literature in the three languages in interpreting China-Canadian relations, together they constitute an in-depth understanding of the complexity of the history of the relationship between the two countries and provide a more diversified range of research ideas for future comparative studies and reflections on the history of international relations.

Keywords: international relations; history; China-Canada relations.

КИТАЙСКО-КАНАДСКИЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ИСТОРИОГРАФИИ

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С точки зрения историографии, в этом исследовании всесторонне анализируется литература по истории международных отношений Китая и Канады на трех языках, китайском, английском и русском, в различных базах данных. В статье используются методы документального анализа и сравнительного изучения, чтобы сравнить повествования, анализы и интерпретации в литературных источниках на трех других языках по одной и той же теме, чтобы выявить различия в понимании учеными развития китайско-канадских отношений в различных культурных и академических контекстах. Путем горизонтального сравнения исторических источников и литературы на трех языках это исследование направлено на построение более всеобъемлющей, многогранной и многоперспективной повествовательной структуры истории китайско-канадских международных отношений. Установлено, что, несмотря на различия в перспективах и акцентах литературы на трех языках в интерпретации

китайско-канадских отношений, вместе они обеспечивают глубокое понимание сложности истории взаимоотношений между двумя странами и предоставляют более разнообразный спектр исследовательских идей для будущих сравнительных исследований и размышления об истории международных отношений.

Ключевые слова: международные отношения; история; китайско-канадские отношения.

The development of Canadian studies in China can be traced back to the 1980s. Before that time, there was relatively little research on Canada in China, with only a few articles and translations. However, as Canada became the third Western country to establish diplomatic relations with China, more attention was paid to the study of Canada in China. In 1981, the International Council for Canadian Studies was established. In 1985, the Chinese Society for Canadian Studies was admitted as a full member, marking the beginning of a new stage in the development of Canadian studies in China. This paper focuses on the interaction between China and Canada bilaterally, the main line of changes in international development in different periods, and the literature in different languages as references to provide a theoretical basis for Chinese Canadian studies. In comparing the literature in different languages, we can find a rich historiographical vision of China-Canada relations from multiple perspectives as well as the cross-cultural development of the history of China-Canada relations with other disciplines, such as the fields of philosophy, political science, law, economics, and communication in the new era. These studies provide new perspectives and theoretical support for our in-depth understanding of China-Canada relations. Studying the history of China-Canada relations has become a dynamic and promising discipline. More than 50 years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Canada, the study of the history of China-Canada relations will continue to make more achievements and progress in the future.

With the development of the globalisation process and the evolution of the international power structure, "Oceans separate China and Canada, distant from each other, with different cultures" [1]. The history of China-Canada relations demonstrates the uniqueness of cross-cultural exchanges from the perspective of international relations, and its study has evolved with the deepening of historiography and changes in the global landscape. Analysing the relationship between the two countries calls for cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparative studies, revealing the diversity and complexity of the research and exploring the impact and shaping of the times, politics and cultural factors on the bilateral relationship.

The Chinese literature is mainly based on the perspective of Chinese authors, while a few Chinese authors think differently and look at China from a Canadian perspective. The China-Canada Research Society, established 40 years ago, has promoted in-depth studies in this field by Chinese scholars and enriched the relevant historical materials. These studies usually focus on the relationship between the two countries at different stages of history and on political issues and emphasise their importance in Chinese history, diplomatic history and policy continuity. The diverse research focus has spawned interdisciplinary work that blends the history of international relations with several Canadian disciplines.

In Liang Yi's article *«Historical Observations on the overseas study of China's Revolutionary History-Series on Canada»* (2000) reviews Canadian research on the history of the Chinese Revolution since the 1960s, noting its rapid development and contributions in areas such as the history of Chinese immigration while mentioning key research institutions and scholars. Nonetheless, in-depth analyses of specific cases and assessment of results are still lacking [2].

In Yang Lingxia (the tenth president of the China Society for Canadian Studies) 's article *«On Research of Canadian History in China : 1978~2008»* (2009) mentions that since China's reform and opening up in 1978, the study of Canadian history in China has grown significantly, producing some 300 articles and more than 40 books covering a wide range of aspects such as immigration, education, and economics. Although the field has only been developing for a short period and the research base has yet to be strengthened, it has already shown growth in the depth and breadth of research characterising the history of Chinese-Canadian relations. Over the past thirty years, research in this field has witnessed an expansion of the field, innovation in perspectives and increased scholarly contributions. However, there are also problems, such as the weakness of the research foundation, the instability of the research team, and the unevenness of the research level [3].

In Pan Yingchun's article *«Canada's relations with China, 1931-1945»* (2009) examines Canada's relationship with China from 1931 to 1945, revealing the shift in Canadian foreign policy from appeasement of Japan to support for China's war of resistance. By analysing archival sources, the study illustrates the formation of Canada's independent foreign policy and its positive impact on Canada-China relations and adds to the gaps in previous research. The study provides new insights from non-Anglo-American perspectives and enhances the understanding of the complex relationship between Canada and China during the Second World War [4].

In Qian Hao's article *«Theory and Practice: The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between China and Canada»* (2022) sequentially reviews critical historical events in China-Canada relations, emphasising that the relationship is a complex process of interaction between the two countries at different periods of history, covering several dimensions of analysis, including culture, diplomacy, international political economy and civil exchange [5].

The activities of Canadian missionaries in China from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries were a key component of China-Canada relations, involving religion, modernisation, resistance and social change, establishing educational and medical institutions and figures like Dr Norman Bethune, symbolised cultural exchanges between China and Canada. During the Second World War, Canada's military aid and loans to China reflected its strategic foreign policy. In the post-Cold War period, Canada adopted a "composite neorealism" foreign policy. It is actively involved in international affairs, while China plays a more critical role in global governance. It is recommended that structural tensions between the two countries be resolved through historical dialogue, assessing cooperation and conflict, seeking consensus, and emphasising crisis management, diplomatic dialogue and pragmatism to manage differences and promote collaboration.

The English-language literature typically examines China-Canada relations through a cross-cultural and multidimensional analytical lens, with a flexible selection of topics and a focus on phenomenal narratives, such as immigration and policy impacts, as well as the roles of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, and an exploration of the policy interactions and impacts between the two countries.

In Laura Madokoro's article *«Family reunification as international history: Rethinking China--Canadian relations after 1970»* (2013) explores the little-known 1973 family reunification agreement between Canada and the People's Republic of China based on emerging scholarship on global migration history as a key aspect of international history. The article argues that this is an important milestone in the history of China-Canadian relations [6]. The article analyses the impact of changes in Canada's family reunification policy on China-Canada diplomacy in the 1970s, innovatively linking it to international relations and human rights, providing a new perspective for the study. In Wenran Jiang's article *«Seeking a strategic vision for Canada-China relation»* (2009) aims to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada by discovering novel perspectives on linking the rise of China to Canada's foreign policy while reflecting in depth on Canada-China relations. The article reviews the historical development from Canada's wheat sale to China in the early 1960s to the establishment of diplomatic relations by former

Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1970 [7]. It details the rise of China as a global superpower and its importance to Canadian foreign policy while also analysing the changes in Canada-China relations since the Conservatives came to power in 2006. The paper also examines the implications of China's rise in Canada and provides some non-partisan policy recommendations. The shortcoming of this article lies in the possible limitations of the research. In Prof. B. (Bernie) Michael FROLIC's article *«Canada and China at 40»* (2011) examines how Canada established diplomatic relations with China in 1970, drawing on the author's first visit to China in 1965, analysing the shaping of Canada-China relations in the context of the Cold War, and describing the "Canadian solution" as an innovative response to the "one-China" policy. [8]. The article's detailed discussion and personal testimonies add to the empirical foundation of scholarship in this area. In Dr Scott N Romaniuk's article *«Timeline of Canada-China Relations»* (2021) provides a detailed account of the development of bilateral relations between Canada and China from the 18th century to the present day, from exchanges before the establishment of formal diplomatic relations to the modern day cooperation between the two countries and the challenges they face in several areas [9]. This paper presents a timeline of the transformation of the relationship over time, encompassing economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions. It reviews the cooperation between the two countries on globally important issues. In Gordon Houlden's article *«50 Years of Canada-China Relations: Complexity and Misperception»* (2020) explores the evolution of Canada's relationship with China since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1970 and provides a non-linear analysis of the relationship between the two countries. A non-linear analysis highlighted the conflicts between the two countries, such as the demographic gap and the political system. The paper points out that current political tensions and increased great power rivalry between China and the United States may pose obstacles to the further development of the relationship. Finally, it is emphasised that solving global issues such as climate change requires cooperation with China. However, dealing with China while respecting Canada's core values and national interests is a major challenge for Canadian policymakers [10]. In Charles Burton's article *«50 Years of Canada-China Relations: Complexity and Misperception»* (2020) explores the evolution of Canada's relationship with China by establishing a multi-perspective historical framework, focusing on the evolution of Canada's relationship with China since 1970, the historical background and development of Canada's policy towards China have been analysed, emphasising the independence and autonomy of Canada's policy towards China [11]. The article details the changes since China's reform and opening-up policy was introduced in 1978, as well as Canada's political decision-making in its relations with China. The article also

discusses how, during the Trudeau era (1968-1984), Canada established diplomatic relations with China and engaged with China economically, socially and politically. However, the article overemphasises the continuity and consistency of Canada's policies. It ignores the differences and discontinuities that may have existed between different governments in Canada's policies towards China. In B. Michael Frolic's article *«The China challenge: China-Canadian relations in the 21st century»* (2011) discusses Canada's relationship with China from a historical perspective, in particular the China strategy of 1987. Since Canada's recognition of the People's Republic of China in 1970, the relationship had matured by 1985. China then became Canada's fifth-largest trading partner. High-level visits between the two countries increased, and the relationship grew stronger. Both governments invoked the spirit of Dr Norman Bethune to claim that they had developed a "special relationship". China began a reform policy and opening up in 1978 that emphasised modernisation over class struggle, joining the United Nations in 1970 and the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the mid-1980s. By 1984, the new government under the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada revealed a shift in foreign policy. Although the Canadian government did not significantly change its policy towards China, it showed new trends in economic and international relations [12].

Examining the Russian-language literature provides a third perspective on China-Canada relations that reflects the views of Russian-speaking scholars on North American relations. The relationship between Russia and China, the central Russian-speaking region, has a complex history, ranging from Cold War confrontation to strategic cooperation based on geopolitics, economics, and international collaboration. This perspective contributes to an understanding of how China-Canada relations fit within a broader global and geopolitical framework.

In E.A.Babaev's article *«Chinese-Canadian relations in the 70s-80s of the XX Century: a socio-cultural aspect»* (2012) examines the bilateral relations between the People's Republic of China and Canada from the 1970s to the 1980s, with a particular focus on cultural exchanges. The document refers to the foreign policy shifts in Western countries (including Canada) since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, as well as the gradual normalisation and strengthening of relations between the two countries in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. Promoting Chinese socialist culture internationally is emphasised, and exchanges and cooperation between the two sides in education, science and technology, art, etc., are demonstrated. The document also deals with the ideological treatment of the foreign cultural policy of Chinese intellectuals, which provides an empirical basis for the study of China's foreign cultural communication strategy [13]. In Gunina Anastasia

Alexandrovna's article «*Interaction between China and Canada in the XXI century: problems, achievements, prospects*» (2016) mainly analyses the historical development and current status of Canada-China relations [14]. The authors delineate in detail the main stages of Canada-China relations: the period of the no-China policy, the period of the one-China policy, and the period of the Great China Strategy. The study highlights the importance of the U.S. factor as a dominant force in the changes in foreign relations. It discusses China's role in regionalisation and globalisation and its impact on Canada's internal affairs and economy.

Through a comprehensive analysis and comparison of the literature on the history of China-Canada relations in three languages, namely Chinese, English and Russian, the study indicates that there are differences in scholars' understanding of the development of China-Canada relations in different cultural and academic contexts. From a historiographical perspective, the Chinese literature may focus more on the early interactions between the two countries, while the English literature may focus more on the co-operation and conflict in the modern period. In terms of political stance, the English literature focuses on human rights issues, while the Russian literature may place more emphasis on cultural, economic cooperation. Scholars of different languages may also have different understandings of the history of China-Canadian relations depending on their cultural backgrounds, and despite the differences in the perspectives and emphases of the literature in the three languages in interpreting the China-Canadian relationship, they collectively provide insights into the complexity of the history of the relationship between the two countries. This provides more diversified research ideas for future comparative studies and reflections on the history of China-Canadian relations, helps to construct a more comprehensive, diversified and multi-perspective narrative structure of the history of China-Canadian relations, and also provides valuable historical insights for future research on bilateral relations and international policy-making.

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