

# The Elbe River Trade from the Perspective of Civilization Exchange and Mutual Learning

—Take the turn of the millennium as an example

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**Abstract:** In the topic of “Deepening Mutual Learning among Civilizations and Building the Community of Asian Civilizations” of the Asian Civilizations Conference. The scientific historical view of “learning from each other in communication and developing in mutual learning” has been elaborated in detail. From the point of civilized exchanges and mutual learning, the trade of the Elbe river at the turn of the millennium has not only promoted the economic and trade exchanges between the various regions of Europe, but also promoted the exchange and understanding of the oriental civilization, Europe civilization and African civilization. And it has the universal significance in the world.

## 1. Introduction

The Elbe River is one of the main rivers in Central Europe. It originated in the Karkonosze Mountains in the northern Czech Republic, then crossed most of Bohemia (Czech Republic), followed by Germany, and flowed into the North Sea of Kushvine, 110 km (68 miles) northwest of Hamburg. Its total length is 1094 kilometers (680 miles). The Elbe river waterway is the only navigable waterway between some of the European inland waterways to the major ports of Hamburg, Bremen, Rotterdam and Antwerp [3]. The river is expected to have a capacity of at least 8 million tonnes per year. Since ancient times, the river has a status of transport in Europe. Especially in the middle ages in Europe, the river was an important transportation and trade channel[4].

In the topic of “Deepening Mutual Learning among Civilizations and Building the Community of Asian Civilizations” of the Asian Civilizations Conference. The scientific historical view of “learning from each other in communication and developing in mutual learning” has been elaborated detail. This paper tries to analyze the impact of the trade of the Elbe River on the exchange of different civilizations at the turn of the millennium from the perspective of civilized exchanges and mutual learning. Since ancient times, the Elbe River Basin has been the trade center of Central and Eastern Europe. In the Elbe river, the business is very prosperous about 1000 years ago. Even though the civilizations have different levels of development in the surrounding areas. The important port of the estuary of the Elbe river, Hamburg is not only an important city of the European alliance of medieval trade “Hanseatic league”, it is still considered one of the main hub of the silk road. In the context of the current international strategy “one belt, one road”, the river is an important area for china's cooperation with the countries of central and eastern Europe. From the point of civilized conversation and mutual authentication, it has great practical significance to analyze the influence of trade at the millennium [1].

## 2. International Trade in Europe in the Early Middle Ages

European trade in the early Middle Ages inherited Roman trade to some extent. Shipping was the basis for the transport of goods from one end of the Mediterranean to the other, from south to north by rivers and waterways. There was a movement of goods, especially luxury goods (such as precious metals, horses and slaves), but it was not clear whether the specific quantity and transaction involved money, barter or gift exchange. Jewish merchants had filled the void left by the

Roman Empire until the 7th century. After the ninth century, international trade began to develop in Europe. The slaves, leather and silk are the bulk of trade [2]. After the 10th century, northern Europe has acceded, and international trade in Europe has been developed. The Elbe river was becoming the focus of international trade.

### **3. Elbe River Trade at the Turn of the Millennium**

In Europe of about 1000, society tends to be safe and stable. The Vikings of Nordic encroachment on the European continent was weakening; Hungarians stopped attacking Europe because they were completely defeated by Emperor Otto III of Saxony in 955, the West Slavs were basically contained in the east of the Elbe River and in the front line of the Oder River, the Arab Empire was declining and unable to attack Europe, while Germany of Central Europe entered an era of economic prosperity, Poland gradually established a stable feudal state. The zones of influence of the three empires of the Holy Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire and the Hafsid Cordova Empire. The Spanish were basically stable, the European economy is starting to recover, there is an urgent need for the exchange of goods and services and production of new currency enhances the activities of enterprises. In short, the stable social environment for Europe and the economic recovery had laid the foundation for the prosperity of the trade of the Elbe river [5].

During this period, Saxons, Nordic Vikings, Slavs, Muslims and Jews all concentrated on the Elbe River to trade and exchange their needs. At that time, the Saxony Dynasty of medieval Germany (919-1024) carried out a large-scale development of the plain of the Elbe River. The forests on the West Bank of the Elbe River have been reclaimed as new land, and minerals such as iron ore and silver ore have also been exploited on a large scale. Labor export also began to rise in this period. The Vikings gained a large number of slaves from their invasion of Europe, which became the source of labor export from the Elbe River. Jewish merchants mainly engaged in this large slave trade, shuttling between Christian civilization and Islamic civilization as mediators. They built settlements on the Elbe River and transported slaves from northern Europe to areas such as Spain via the Elbe River. Therefore, the Elbe River trade promoted the prosperity of slave trade in northern Europe [6].

At the same time, the shipping industry of the Elbe River is very developed. Agricultural products and minerals in the East are transported to Lorraine and Burgundy by the Elbe River, and silver ores from the Scandinavian Peninsula to the Silk Road controlled by Muslims are also transported to various areas by the Elbe River. More importantly, the Elbe River Basin was part of the world's widest commercial network at that time [7]. The Jewish merchants then imported slaves, brocades, beaver furs, minks and other furs, as well as swords, from the Elbe Valley, and then from France to Egypt. Then the merchandise was transferred to the camel's back and sailed along the Red Sea to Port Medina and Port Mecca. Continue to India and China. After that, they came back to China with musk, camphor, cinnamon and other oriental products to Egypt, where they sailed the Mediterranean and Europe. The river is also an important starting point for the countries of central and eastern Europe and the land trade network in Asia. The merchants went to the river, across the country have reached the area of Slavic, travelled to central Asia and the Caspian sea and crossed the Amu river, arrived in central Asia and arrived in China. The trade route is the famous "silk road" on the earth.

### **4. International Trade of the Elbe River at the Turn of the Millennium from the Perspective of Civilization Exchange and Mutual Learning**

The exchange of civilizations and the concept of mutual learning of history are the main topics of the article "Deepening mutual learning of civilizations and building a community of Asian civilizations" at the Asian Civilization Conference. This issue points out that Asian people began to exchange civilizations and learn from each other long ago. The Silk Road, the Tea Road, the Spice Road and other ancient trade routes have promoted the popularity of silk, tea, ceramics, spices, paintings and sculptures in various Asian countries, recording the exchanges and exchanges

between Asian ancestors. nowadays, “the belt and the road”, two corridors and one ring and “the Eurasian Economic Union” has broadened the channels for mutual exchange of civilizations. The cooperation between countries in the field of science and technology, education, culture and health and non-governmental trade developed civilization has also strengthened its own internal and external trade, with the global civilization. On the basis of reviewing the exchanges and mutual learning of Asian civilizations, this issue puts forward four proposals on the construction of the Asian Civilization Community and the Community of Human Civilization. First, we should adhere to mutual respect and treat each other equally. Second, adhere to the beauty of beauty, beauty and common. Third, we should be open and inclusive and learn from each other. Fourthly, we should keep pace with the times and develop innovatively. In a word, mutual learning of civilizations and the concept of history of development advocate that civilizations should learn from each other and develop in mutual learning. From the point of civilized exchanges and mutual learning, we can understand the influence of trade on the river at the turn of the millennium civilizations and understand the ancient “silk road” in china for the development of human civilization more deeply. The contribution and overall understanding of the importance of the strategy and “belt”for the development of human civilization [8].First of all, from the perspective of civilization and mutual learning, the trade of the Elbe River at the turn of the Millennium promoted the exchange between Nordic Europe and the European continent. It is the trade of the Elbe River that connects the North Sea to the Continent of Europe.It promoted the development of maritime trade and commerce on earth.It laid the foundation for the prosperity of the “Hanseatic League” in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Secondly, from the perspective of civilized exchanges and mutual learning, the trade of the Elbe River at the turn of the Millennium promoted the trade exchanges and mutual learning of civilizations between the eastern and western parts of the European continent. Since the collapse of the Frank Empire in 843, the social process of rebuilding the new order has begun in the Continent of Europe. Until the early eleventh century, the Saxony Dynasty of Germany successfully established a partial imperial order. The Elbe River Basin in its eastern border area has been effectively defended. Shipping on the Elbe River and trade exchanges around it were strongly supported by the Saxony rulers. Slavic fur, honey, etc. were transported to other areas through the Elbe River. At the same time, civilized exchanges are accompanied by trade exchanges. The Elbe River is an important frontier for the Western Roman Church to spread Christianity to Slavic regions. Saxony established many archdioceses on the Elbe River. These archdioceses, while protecting the trade on the Elbe River, preached to Slavic regions and promoted the civilization process of Slavs. It was during this period that the ancestors of modern Czechoslovakia and Poland, the Slavs, accepted Christianity. The Slavic language has also been widely used and spread in the trade exchanges on the Elbe River.

Finally, from the perspective of civilized exchanges and mutual learning.The trade of the Elbe River at the turn of the millennium has promoted the exchanges and development of civilizations in Asia and Europe. Jewish businessmen at that time established many settlements on the Elbe River. Therefore, Jewish churches and cathedrals - the focus of Jewish and Christian religions - are close to the public spaces of Jews and Christians. Their communication also permeates almost every aspect. The Jewish civilization and christian civilization exchange each other through trade [9]. The Spanish Jews lived in a religious environment comfortably. They travelled between the Elbe and the Mediterranean. They sold Slaves From the Elbe to the Muslim Spain. At the same time, the products of silk, musk and other china are shipped to Europe. Although there are some differences of civilization, trade results in the exchange and understanding of the culture.During this period,the Jews started to settle in china. Although the river is only a small part of all the way of international trade, its role and influence on the communication of civilization should not be ignored. The thriving trade on the Elbe river has strengthened exchanges between the Chinese civilization, the Jewish civilization and Christian civilization,the Islamic civilization, and promoted their development.

## 5. Conclusion

In short, from the perspective of civilized exchanges and mutual learning, the prosperous trade of the Elbe River at the turn of the millennium has enhanced the exchanges and mutual learning among regional cultures and civilizations. It brings together trade between North Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea and Mediterranean Sea in Central Europe. In a broader sense, it has enhanced exchanges and mutual learning among Asian, European and African civilizations.

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