

## INTERNET JOURNALISM OF CHINA AND PROBLEMS OF NATIONAL SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS



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### Abstract

The following article investigates development tendencies of Internet media of China in globalization century and also, specific features of intercultural communication in the Internet. Besides, the researcher studies the stages of Chinese Mass Media. It also deals with the analyses of several actual problems such as new format of Chinese journalism, its role in the sphere of informational communication and national self-consciousness.

**Keywords:** China; Internet journalism; Internet; blog; mobile connection; intercultural communication “Soft Power self-consciousness.

## ХИТОЙ ИНТЕРНЕТ ЖУРНАЛИСТИКАСИ ВА МИЛЛИЙ ЎЗЛИКНИ АНГЛАШ МАСАЛАЛАРИ

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### Аннотация

Ушбу мақолада глобаллашув шароитида Хитой Интернет-ОАВининг тараққиёт тенденциялари, Интернет маконида маданиятлараро мулоқотнинг ўзига хос хусуиятлари ўрганилган. Хитой масс-медиясининг тараққиёт босқичлари ҳам таҳлил қилинган. Шу билан бирга, Хитой журналистикасининг янгича формати, унинг ахборот соҳасида дунё билан янгича муносабат ўрнатиш, Хитой замонавий ОАВнинг муҳим ва ўзига хос хусусияти бўлган миллий ўзликни англаш каби долзарб масалалар тадқиқ этилган.

**Калит сўзлар:** Хитой; Интернет журналистика; Интернет; блоглар; мобил алоқа; маданиятлараро мулоқот; “Soft Power”; миллий ўзликни англаш.

## ИНТЕРНЕТ-ЖУРНАЛИСТИКА КИТАЯ И ВОПРОСЫ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ

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#### Аннотация

В статье изучаются тенденции развития Интернет-СМИ Китая в эпоху глобализации, а также специфические особенности межкультурной коммуникации в Интернет-пространстве. Кроме того, анализируются этапы развития китайских масс-медиа. А также исследуется ряд актуальных вопросов, таких как новый формат журналистики Китая, его роль в области информационных коммуникаций и национальной идентичности.

**Ключевые слова:** Китай; Интернет-журналистика; Интернет; блоги; мобильная связь; межкультурная коммуникация “Soft Power”; национальная идентичность.

Eastern countries, China in particular, is still attracting the world community with its peculiar culture, 5000 years history, customs and traditions.

China is one of the cradles of ancient civilization and the biggest country in the Central and Eastern Asia. It is the third country with according to its territory and the first one with its population.

It is not a secret today, that Modern China is the leading country not only with its economy and politics, but also in the sphere of mass media.

The development of Internet and Informational technologies is affecting all spheres of Chinese community. There is observed an increase in the necessity for Internet mass media rather than traditional one.

The main goal of any country today is to control the stream of information from Global media and provide the safety of state sovereignty.

In the process of globalization, digital technologies have directly influenced the development of mass media in China. As a result of this, the Chinese auditory got acquainted with completely different world of information and became the powerful owner of encounter. We can bring the following information from Zhuzhuai Lou’s dissertation “The peculiarities of the process of cultural relations between Russia and China” as a proof to this fact.

The researcher divides internet intercultural communication to the following groups according to its peculiarities:

– *The richness of the essence* – Internet sites provide participants of intercultural communication with an opportunity to use a comprehensive database. In other words, they will have access not only to use the materials of their own culture, but also to other culture-related documents;

– *On time provision of information* – this is explained by the activity of “real-time regime”, regardless of the geographical location of some countries;

– *concentration* – it ensures collective discussion of some or all of the information on the globe within a short space of time, taking into account the size and interconnection of the Internet space;

– *An access to various ideas* – gives the right to have a diverse range of information pertaining to all aspects of human life;

– *Lack of censorship and democratization* – provides the right for everyone to get published on the Internet and to present different perspectives;

– *Elimination of language barriers* – can be achieved by the development of various techniques on the internet;

– *“Direct” communication* – provides unlimited opportunities for intercultural communication at the individual level;

– *Hyperlink technologies* – allows you to link sites together and quickly move from one site to another (6, 75–76).

Indeed, the Internet has become an integral part of the social life of modern humanity. Through Internet people have the opportunity to communicate with the people of any country of the world using social networks, to create new types of exchanging information, and to debate on various topics, organize web conferences and, in particular, on-line mode.

The Internet network is rapidly covering all spheres, and journalism is no exception. As a result of the development of the Internet, the functions of traditional journalism, and role of the media have changed. This, in turn, led to the emergence of a new socio-cultural phenomenon.

Internet journalism, network journalism, journalism in electronic media – all of them create a new media today (12, 247).

The development of the Internet and information technologies leads to the formation of traditional mass media modification and transformation processes. This implies new requirements for their living and functioning. So, there arises a question – what are the requirements that make the whole media landscape change?

*First of all*, the global network is a new open space for information collection, storage and dissemination, and serves as an important factor in the development of civil society.

*Secondly*, today the Internet infrastructure, formed as an information and communication environment, combines telecommunication systems, information and communication technologies, information resources with different content applications.

*Thirdly*, new communication and information technologies on the network have completely changed time and space boundaries, allowing people to communicate in real-time intervals (8, 331).

The 21st century has influenced the entire world media system as an information and communication century. The exchange of information between people has made it possible to be aware of all happenings in any corner of the globe in spite of time and space, and become able to use fast and convenient social tools of networking.

It should be noted that the emergence of the Internet has created two major changes in the sphere:

- 1) Refusal of one-way communication streams;
- 2) The fact that new technologies have increased the ability to extract and distribute information even further (1, 14–15).

Thus, the Internet and information technologies in general, allow fast, easy access, storage, selection, processing and dissemination of information in various directions. Special features of the global network, such as interactivity, sensitivity, goal orientation, low cost, compactness and uniqueness, are widely used by people around the world.

Until 1978, China's media was not sufficiently developed. However, in the mid-eighties of the 20th century, the scope and size of the Chinese communications service had changed dramatically as a result of the adoption of western information technologies such as telephones, faxes, and mobile communications.

In the first decade of the XXI century, the total number of Chinese newspapers' circulation have reached 19 billion 500 million copies, radio coverage was about 88.2%, and TV had 89% (16, 108).

Chinese journalism differs from other countries by the fact that they have overrun the period of the “cultural revolution”. At that time, China's mass media consisted of three stages. In the *first period* of the “Cultural Revolution”, the country was overcome by the negative consequences of the revolution, and the previously banned publications were rebuilt and new ones emerged. There also emerged a network of newspapers focused on specific audience. During the *second period*, the number of media outlets increased dramatically and a modern Chinese media system has been formed. At the *third stage*, there was reached the following successes: sustainable development of mass media has been shaped; enhanced control over the quality of media in China has been reached; and the country strengthened the legal framework for journalists' work (2, 46–47).

China's Internet journalism has reached very impressive and robust development of its own; moreover, it emerged into the society as new and innovative type of media.

Under the influence of this process, Chinese information services are trying to create their own content and, based on its specific features, ensured successful development of the Internet is reached. Also, the issue of improving multimedia via the Internet is crucial to the development of Chinese Internet Media.

Since the mid –1990s, China's Internet media began to develop rapidly. On December 6 1993, the electronic version of the “Hangzhou” newspaper began to functions as one of China's first Internet-media models. By 1996, Chinese mass media went online one by one. As a result, in the late 2000s, more than 2000 of China's top 10,000 media outlets formed their sites. Today, all Chinese traditional media have their own sites (5, 108).

In China, the Internet has become a rare type of media, which expresses rapid reaction to important political events and emergencies. Due to the timely delivery of the information provided by the Chinese Internet media, it occupies a prestigious place among the world's media (13, 109).

It should be acknowledged that China has been successfully using large web sites, systems of information portals which are aimed to develop electronic technologies. Shanghai, Beijing, and Tianjin – are the largest and most prominent information ports.

In China, the Internet environment has its own peculiarities. For example, the usage of Western social networking as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram have been banned for some political reasons. Nevertheless, the population in the country uses a personal social network called Weibo (18). Today, microblogs have become an instrument of instant unofficial messaging. Veybo, a microblogging blogger, is a Chinese-language alternative to Twitter, which meets the needs of a large audience. This situation plays an important role in the formation of national self-consciousness in the country, in the sense of protecting people's historical and cultural values.

Beyond blogs, mobile media has also been directly influencing the development of media in China. Internet development, blogging, and mobile communications are characterized by year-to-year growth. According to statistics, the number of Internet users in China by December 2014 was 649 million. 23% of the whole population or 300 million people are blog users, and 39%, or 460 million people are mobile subscribers.

Because of these new opportunities, new guarantees of freedom of speech were ensured through expressing their own opinions among different layers of society. The Internet has encouraged relations between different layers of society. It played an

important role in further advancement of the country, enhancing the culture of the community and providing public control over the activities of the government.

As the number of Internet users grows steadily, many network terms began to be widely used. At the present time, microblogging has been launched by several government officials in order to answer the questions of the people and discuss existing issues.

Changes in the Chinese print media are being updated together with the changes in the TV industry. An example of this, we can name the creation of a specific media channel dedicated to the demands of various auditory within the context of a single media corporation. There is a sharp increase in the content of on-line media and mobile content in Chinese cyberspace. There are also opportunities for the development of media for mobile users in the country, and the owners of the mobile companies can place their content on sites that can be accessed by users through short messaging or mobile internet. However, one of the biggest opportunities is the broad introduction of mobile devices that can receive TV broadcasts. As a result of almost each Chinese citizen carrying a mobile phone, individual services are being provided to Internet users (3, 49–50).

During the time of Xi Jinping, China's current relationships with the world of information, as well as strengthening relations between the Chinese society and the press became evident both in the country and abroad. By 2010, Chinese journalism was launched new format in three state projects:

“One country – two systems” (inner political) was fulfilled through:

- 1) “One pole – one way” (foreign policy);
- 2) The “Soft Power” (conception);

Successful diplomacy, prosperous culture, history, and domestic and foreign policies have served as the sources of “Soft Power” (11, 75). Specific feature of the Chinese experience was the promotion of national culture abroad. In this process, Chinese media and journalism have become the most important propaganda tools. One of the main aims of China in this direction is not only to bring about the peculiarities of Chinese culture, but also the diplomacy, the domestic and foreign policy of China to foreign audience.

At the same time, the programming of the media will be developed at the XI Jinping's personal participation. For example, in the third plenum of the XVIII convocation of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in 2013, the idea of developing a media environment in the context of globalization of the Internet has been developed. There are put three major issues to the agenda:

- 1) Formation of public opinion in social networks;

2) Media resources integration and the development of network media with traditional media led by the central media of China;

3) Principles of content formation and network media distribution, management and usage technologies (4, 84).

In 2014, there was adopted a document named “Guidelines for the Support of Integrated Media Development in Network Media”. At this session, XI Jinping also emphasizes the formation of a number of modern means of information distribution and number of leading modern media groups with high rank (15, 84).

An important and specific feature of the Chinese modern media – is national self-consciousness. National self-consciousness becomes more evident whenever the reputation, honor, dignity of any nation is violated, or any contradictory action is taken towards it. As a result, the whole nation, society and the state unite together and try to defend it. Regarding this issue, the President of the People's Republic of China also said: “Journalists should strengthen their position by fighting against the negative features of China presented in the world media and promote Chinese culture and history” (10, 84).

Any society and state develops and is formed on the basis of its cultural, spiritual, historical and moral heritage. National self-consciousness is the basis of spiritual change of our society. National self-consciousness is related both with the individual's and nation's spiritual well-being.

Based on the above given information, we can state that the Chinese society has a number of possibilities, peculiarities and advantages in the Internet space. However, there are observed some other aspects of Internet monitoring in the country.

It should be noted that there exists a regulation of web resources in China, which is implemented through two strategies. *The first one* is the data filtering and *the second* is to support self-regulation through coordination and sanctions. For example, private users who have published and distributed anti-government materials are send to prison (7, 67).

Such regulation of the information does not only concern Chinese mass-media, but also other foreign media outlets in the country. In 1996, for the first time, state-controlled “Xinhua” news agency developed a law on censoring of foreign media. In 2006, Xinhua also issued a number of additional restrictions on “control measures for information and news agencies in China”. Under the new law, the following restrictions have been developed:

- The activity of all foreign information agencies are approved by “Xinhua”;
- “Xinhua” has the right to the direct censorship and editing of the information provided by foreign information agencies;

– Chinese media companies do not have the rights to publish or translate news of foreign news agencies directly without their permission.

Those who violate the foregoing provisions will be denied to an access to information in China in the future.

The information filtering system of China has been symbolically named as “Great Chinese News Wall” or “Golden Shield”. Today more than 30,000 people are working on this powerful system. Web pages are filtered by keywords related to public security. As a result of attempting to open the blocked web sites by Internet users, the message “Error 404” is displayed on the screen. One of the main components of the Chinese filtering system is self-censorship, and any organization is required to sign a “General security of self censorship and professional ethics” regulation (14, 110).

To conclude, we can say that, despite the fact that China’s Internet journalism is very promising; the country’s internal media policies are strictly regulated. All media are independent, but at the same time they are under state control. In particular, the information provided by the Internet is constantly filtered, and some restrictions on the use of some phrases in social networking are also set. This situation is convenient and preferable in controlling the current inflow of information.

Recent changes developed by the president of China serves to the recognition of China as a key player in the media and recognition of its 5000 years old history and culture as one of the most urgent and important factors of preserving national self-consciousness.

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