

The Influence of the Cultural and Religious Factors on the Media

Anastasiya Khudarova

*Federal State Autonomous University of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation
(Sechenov University), Moscow, Russia*

Yerbol Abdramanov

International University of Tourism and Hospitality, Turkestan, Kazakhstan

Milena Tsvetkova¹

Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria

Konstantin Sokolovskiy

Humanitarian and Technical Academy, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan

Abstract: The article is devoted to the study of quantitative characteristics of the influence of cultural and religious characteristics of individual civilizational (cultural) regions on the work of the media. The study was conducted with the help of media analytics experts selected according to strictly defined criteria, who, using the Delphi method, determined the number and characteristics of narratives in the most popular media of three regions - the United States, China and the Arab countries of the Middle East. In the course of numerous iterations, the criteria for identifying a narrative and its characteristics about the objectives of the study were empirically determined. The study reveals significant findings about distinct patterns of engagement with internal and external narratives within the three examined regions. Each region, driven by its unique cultural and historical attributes, strives to ensure sustainability and media antifragility through diverse approaches. The practical contribution of the study can be used in the analysis and organization of the work of international media, taking into account the cultural and civilizational characteristics of large audiences.

Keywords: civilizational paradigm, journalism, media, professional ethics, propaganda

The work of the media is subject to general laws that are dictated by the peculiarities of human perception of information, economic laws, and general laws of information exchange (Boccia Artieri & Gemini, 2019; Boulianne, 2020). This may explain the common features of the existence of media in different countries. However, the features of media management, features of economic conditions and ideology that can influence or even control the activities of the media make the picture of media work in different countries critically different (Berges Puyo, 2022; Buckingham, 2019; Cao & Yu, 2019). The most noticeable influence on the media comes from the restrictions of totalitarian and authoritarian ideologies or the strong religious context of a particular country. In the latter case, the media and journalists may follow self-censorship under the pressure of the dominant public discourse (Grau, 2021; Tuzov & Masood, 2024; Xia et al., 2019). For example, in many countries with a traditional patriarchal way of

¹ Corresponding author: an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication of Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria. E-mail; mmtsvetkova1@gmx.com

life or a dominant religious way of life, feminism can be discussed only as a phenomenon that exists in other societies (Harvey, 2019; Marciniak & Imre, 2007; Walter, 2021).

Hereinafter, narrative is used in its terminological meaning characteristic of media research. Narrative refers to a method of constructing and presenting a narrative that has unique characteristics or a specific narrative used in media or political discourse to influence audiences (Piper et al., 2021; Shiffman et al., 2020). It is difficult to find a single precise definition of narrative in this context. A common example of a narrative would be the presentation in Russia of the Second World War as the sole victory of the Red Army over fascism, which formed the duty and moral obligations to the Soviet Union among the rest of the countries of the anti-fascist coalition. Narrative is not necessarily about facts or coherent argumentation, but rather a method of telling a story or a unique way of describing an event (Mäkelä et al., 2021). Narratives, adeptly crafted by the mass media, are considered a particular form of “soft power” capable of gradually and covertly shaping social approval or condemnation of certain phenomena, which may not necessarily be openly discussed by the state, as exemplified by the formation of public opinion regarding the importance of reviving nuclear energy in Poland (Žuk, 2023).

The exertion of pressure on the media is not solely accomplished through administrative means or explicit threats, as the historical example of samizdat in the Soviet Union illustrates, indicating that such pressure can be overcome relatively easily (Vaissié, 2022). Effective pressure is carried out precisely at the level of discourse and the generally accepted ideology that the media adhere to because they follow society in this (Arafat et al., 2021; Boccia Artieri & Gemini, 2019). Frequently, Western and liberal media, along with prominent media corporations, disseminate narratives that possess a detrimental impact on societies adhering to more traditional values (Fadhlorrohan & Purnomo, 2020). This can cause complex and even military-political consequences, as in the case of Russia, in which the dominant ideology is repelled by opposition to the liberal values of the West, which are supposedly destroying a normal society and civilization. Close views are professed by some Arab countries, and, with some clarifications, China (Jones Luong, 2019; Luo & Harrison, 2019; -Ospina & Roser, 2023). The countries of Central and Eastern Europe, of which Bulgaria can be a prominent representative, despite the Christian traditions (Catholic or Orthodox in each country, depending on the historical context), are secularized. A feature of the work of the honey of these countries is, to a greater extent, the use of a traditionalist narrative as a defense of their right to make independent decisions and preserve their identity within the framework of large interstate and supranational associations. For Bulgaria, these are the EU and NATO the work of media in Central Asia (Splichal, 2019). For China, the preservation of public morality and social order is not only a matter of ideology or philosophy but the preservation of its own identity and the pace of economic development based on a certain approach to working with human capital, which can be destroyed by Western discourse. The contemporary ideological policy of China is disseminated through a complex fusion of orthodox ideology, predominantly conveyed by official mass media, and its combination with more liberal popular sentiments, utilized as a means to sustain the popularity of desired ideas within society (Wang, 2023).

The situation of COVID-19 and opposition to vaccination in many societies have demonstrated what a huge role the “antifragility” of the public media system plays (Brailovskaia & Margraf, 2022; Kim et al., 2020; Mheidly & Fares, 2020). Unpredictable events can lead to the fact that it is the exchange of information and the dissemination of adequate and correct information that is the key to survival and maintaining the stability and sustainability of society (Kvasničková Stanislavská et al., 2020; Luo & Harrison, 2019). Free discussion and access to the discussion of any ideas characteristic of the liberal ideology is often seen as a prerequisite for sustainability. The historical record of 20th-century post-colonial nations indicates that contrary to the assertion, the influence of international media and the imposition of a discourse that undermines traditional values can give rise to highly detrimental trends in

both political and economic spheres (Park et al., 2020). Therefore, several tasks arise to find the optimal balance of openness and “antifragility,” to preserve the identity of discourse and freedom of the media, journalistic ethics, and freedom of speech, which cannot be solved uniformly for all countries (Aven, 2015; Cosenza et al., 2020).

Each cultural milieu possesses, to some extent, an established model of power relations among authority, media, and society, the comprehension of which is crucial for attempts to convey certain ideas to society successfully. Understanding these dynamics facilitates the exploration of ways to address conflicts between representatives of different cultures and social groups and overcome negative phenomena mediated by media influence. One of the key features is how the media in various states maintain a balance between local and global contexts and how they transmit messages of international significance, as this significantly impacts interethnic and interstate relations in the future. The primary aim of this study is to compare regions that are culturally and ideologically divergent, examining how their respective media outlets interact with narratives originating from various sources.

An attempt was made to determine the relationship between different types of narratives propagated by the media in various regions: narratives concerning purely domestic state processes, international narratives originating from other states and transmitted in relatively unchanged form, and based narratives—narratives with foreign origins but significantly altered through the addition of specific local interpretations or assessments. The United States, China, and countries of the Arab world were chosen as regions of study due to their pronounced cultural differences and frequent roles as poles in interstate and interethnic conflicts. The conducted research can help reveal the dynamics of interaction between the international, and local agenda and global behavioral strategies of media clusters of large countries or large clusters of countries united by common cultural and religious characteristics.

Literature Review

Modern research in the field of specific features of the work of the media in various countries is most often based on separate significant discourses, for example, feminist (Hartley, 2019; Harvey, 2019; Marciniak & Imre, 2007) or related to the pandemic and its perception (Kim et al., 2020; Mheidly & Fares, 2020; Theocharis et al., 2023). The globalization of media and the availability of any media from any country due to the Internet, social networks, and now artificial intelligence and machine translation leads to a completely new structure of influence on society (Humprecht et al., 2022; Jin et al., 2019; Luttrell & Wallace, 2021). The historical media acted as a means of conveying ideology to the mass public consciousness and reflecting the interests of the masses so that the elites could get acquainted with it (Qalati et al., 2022; Stam, 2019). It is this approach to the media that has formed from them the so-called “fourth estate,” according to some researchers (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2020; Shiffman et al., 2020; Sopiieva, 2019). The rapid advancement of information technologies has altered the way people consume information. Nowadays, access to content from various countries and sources has become significantly broader, thereby intensifying globalization, and the influences of other cultures, and creating new challenges regarding the maintenance of local identity and unity, which state leadership must address (Darawsheh et al., 2023; Sutrisno, 2023).

The advent of Web 2.0 and then Web 3.0 and the formation of the social networking society radically changed the position of the media, which can no longer be a translator of ideology. To preserve self-identity and form public opinion, different models and different modes of operation of the media arise (Rossi, 2020; Sutkutè, 2019; Twenge & Campbell, 2019). Modern Western society is characterized by the formation of network-centric distributed communities based on interests that coexist with large media-controlled corporations. Such a structure allows us to largely maintain the flexibility of society and realize the public interests and interests of individual communities (Sutkutè, 2019; Vrontis et al., 2021). Nevertheless,

contemporary media outlets are also becoming more susceptible to certain negative phenomena, such as the rapid spread of misinformation, which can entail significant adverse consequences for society (Piper et al., 2021; Traberg et al., 2022). Modern researchers even consider the necessity of additional monitoring of the media by the public (Lauk & Berglez, 2024).

Developing post-colonial countries and countries of the global South often find themselves in a position where they need to fight to maintain social homeostasis by maintaining certain features of social relations, social order, and traditional ideology (Radebe, 2020). According to researchers, they can follow the path of increasing control over the activities of the media or involve non-state media in the implementation of state policy, as in China and several other countries. In addition, these countries have the option to utilize a robust and prevailing religious discourse, which serves not only to safeguard their identity but also to disseminate it beyond their borders, particularly to the nations formerly exercising hegemonic control (Luo & Harrison, 2019; Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2023). This approach can often be seen in Arab countries. Media outlets in some postcolonial states are also characterized by a greater propensity, as noted by researchers on African media, to highlight narratives based on conflict when covering international agenda events (Ditlhokwa & Cann, 2024). The researchers note that the concept of the clash of civilizations or the theory of the agenda does not always accurately reflect how this complex process of interaction between global capitalism and civilizational uniqueness takes place in the media space (Heidenreich et al., 2019; Park et al., 2020; Rifai et al., 2021). Furthermore, media in some postcolonial countries are currently undergoing a process of gradual transformation in response to changes in the political landscape of the state, as well as the emergence of new opportunities in the media sphere associated with the proliferation of online media. Specifically, the shift from large state-owned media, which were tasked with broadcasting government policy, is sometimes being supplanted by quasi-state online media. Thus, there is an observed attempt by the country's leadership to adapt to the evolving landscape and maintain their positions within society (Lusike Mukhongo et al., 2023; Ndlovu & Mutanda, 2024).

Modern media in the Arab countries of the Near and Middle East function in a way that is different from that usual for Western media. Chinese media deliberately conform their activities to the established “party line” and do not follow the information agenda formed by major economic actors (corporations, lobbyists, etc.) since their activities are controlled in terms of how they can influence the user (Luo & Harrison, 2019; Stockmann et al., 2020). Arab media, on the other hand, may present a news agenda or present information in a way that is consistent with, and may be heavily influenced by, the influence of certain religious or ethnic groups (Byman, 2021; El Maknoui et al., 2023; Freedman, 2020; Wolsfeld, 2023). Some researchers have noted that information disseminates and resonates differently in the media of different cultural macroregions (e.g., China and the Middle East) (Hartley, 2019; Hinck et al., 2019; Humprecht et al., 2022). Information or commentary that is considered of public importance and will be displayed by the entire Western press may be disseminated primarily by Shia media and be ignored by Sunni etc. Furthermore, following the events of the Arab Spring in 2010, there has been the observed development of certain independent online media platforms serving as forums for youth-driven uncensored exchange of opinions (Pálfi, 2023). However, independent journalists in Arab countries encounter significant challenges such as limited access to comprehensive information in areas under state control, censorship, surveillance of journalists' activities, and independent media outlets currently struggle to wield influence comparable to those media affiliated with the state or religious groups (AlAshry, 2024). Researchers note that these differential features of media in different countries have now been little studied and represent a field of undoubted research interest (Richter, 2023; Stam, 2019).

In Russia, the media space has formed its organized discourse containing multiple narratives focused on the historical context, the role of Russia in the most important events in

world history, and specific mythologemes originating from imperial history (Yablokov & Schimpfössl, 2021). The prevailing discourse strongly and consistently expresses opposition to the liberal agenda, subjecting it to criticism, repression, and scrutiny. In this way, a certain internal homeostasis is formed, and state control over the media makes it possible to maintain it indefinitely (Pirbudagova & Omarova, 2020). Such a strategy is close to the Chinese one but has significant differences with it, which should be considered.

Kazakhstan, the largest country in Central Asia, in the media space almost completely repeats the algorithms of media work that are typical for other countries of the Arab world (Grasso et al., 2020; Jelly et al., 2021; Jones Luong, 2019; Yessenbekova et al., 2020). In the information landscape of Kazakhstan, the dominant entities are state-owned media outlets, which convey positive attitudes towards the current state policies of the country's leadership. However, there also exist non-state media outlets that frequently broadcast opposing viewpoints (Togtarbay et al., 2024). Eastern European countries, including Bulgaria, establish their media practices based on the Western liberal model while simultaneously endeavoring to uphold narratives that foster the preservation of identity and political subjectivity within the context of interstate associations (Splichal, 2019). In these countries, the influence of the developed countries of the West is especially significant, and international media corporations are more powerfully represented. According to experts, these countries gravitate towards the structure of the work of media close to the United States (Harlow et al., 2023).

The influence of culture on art and media is highly ambiguous, and researchers often use civilizational theory to determine it. This theory chooses civilization as a concept that reflects a commonality based not only on cultural traits or religion but, first of all, on discourses that unite large masses and geographical territories with common economic goals and historical destiny (Hoang et al., 2023). This concept is convenient because it overcomes the limitations of ethnos, country and political nation, which are completely inappropriate when it comes to the transmission of narratives or the fate of discourses (Kovalenko, 2023). In this study, a narrower definition of a cultural region is employed. All the mentioned discarded concepts, such as ethnos, exhibit the capacity to encompass numerous discourses and employ diverse narratives and patterns of behavior under varying circumstances (Samuratova, 2016). However, civilization serves to unify them specifically through a shared overarching discourse that shapes their historical trajectory.

This study partially closes the gap in academic research on the media narrative using quantitative methods, which involve the analysis of media reports over a specific period, their classification into distinct categories based on the nature of the presentation of international and local events, and the calculation of the proportion of different narrative categories across various regions. This allows the creation of a more accurate and adequate picture of the processes that relate not to the economic but to the ideological, informational and ideological transformation of societies.

Methods and Materials

Theoretical Background

This study is based on structuralist methodology and a somewhat postmodern approach to the study of media (Hesmondhalgh & Toynbee, 2008) since a detailed and quantitative study of media practices is extremely difficult due to the huge amount of material studied. Therefore, in the case when the quantitative content side of media content, the features of narrativity and discourse, is evaluated, it is inevitable to resort to several specific restrictions that help determine the field of study. In this case, to achieve the goals of the study, the task was to cover a representative volume of the most popular and influential mass media, which would represent opposed, ideologically and politically opposed to each other and culturally maximally

differentiated regions. At the same time, it was obvious to the researcher that it was technically impossible to cover a statistically representative number of texts, just as it was impossible to accurately determine the parameters for selecting and coding texts for further research. Perhaps in the future, the solution to such a problem will become feasible with the help of artificial intelligence. Nevertheless, in this instance, the existence of numerous valid claims encompassing legal aspects, coupled with well-founded critiques regarding the utilization of open artificial intelligence for addressing intellectual and research challenges, prompted a decision to discontinue its application. A similar study could be carried out shortly if the existing problems of AI are successfully solved and the solutions found are confirmed by academic practice.

It is also necessary to take into account the different histories of the origin and development of media in China and the countries of the Near and Middle East. The functioning of media in each of the mentioned regions has specifics that are radically different from those in Europe and America. The specificity lies in the features of the presentation of information, its resonance and discussion, and the level of control of state authorities and local administrations or religious and economic groups over the dissemination or method of communicating this or that information to the public (Hinck et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2021; Stockmann et al., 2020). This is a very broad topic that is still relatively under-researched to date (Byman, 2021). In the case of the research presented here, we eliminate some of the problems by including in the selection of sources precisely those media that are the most influential in their macroregion, are widely known in the world outside this macroregion, and have existed for a long time and have the necessary connections to publish exclusive information (Hinck et al., 2019; Tellaeche García, 2022; Wolsfeld, 2023). At the same time, the reader should consider the above comments to understand the inherent limitations of the study.

To achieve the objectives of the work, it is necessary to rely on several previously formulated hypotheses. The first of them concerns how much and what kind of media outlets need to be evaluated to get a reliable picture of what is happening in the information field. To obtain a quantitatively assessed picture of the interaction of narratives produced by various political, religious and cultural contexts, it is necessary to obtain an exhaustive, but rather significant sample of the most significant sources. When encompassing influential international and local media outlets, it becomes apparent that their impact is generally more pronounced compared to smaller media entities. This assertion finds support in the information transfer model, which suggests that less prominent media outlets frequently disseminate narratives and information from larger and more influential counterparts. When compelling information or noteworthy comments emerge from smaller media sources, which hold significance for a larger user base, they are rapidly picked up and propagated by larger media platforms. If one considers this hypothesis to be reasonably representative of the current state of affairs, then studying the most influential media outlets is adequate for capturing the dynamics of narrative and discourse transmission, as well as their reciprocal influence within society.

From the described hypothesis, it is obvious that this picture is losing its representativeness at the level of local and regional media space, where news, narratives and discourses appear that are relevant only in the local regional context and do not always fall into the national or even more so international context. But in this case, the study is devoted to the very top layer of the information field, namely the level of individual countries and the international media information field.

The second assumption of the study is based on the next presupposition: subjectivity in the selection and evaluation of narratives can be largely overcome using the Delphi method. This method involves a joint discussion of several professionals in a particular field who have different opinions, and in the process of joint work and discussion, can develop evaluation criteria that will have a smaller total statistical error than if only one of the experts' opinions

was used in the selection. This method has a solid history of successful application in academic research and a theoretical background that allows it to rely on its reliability (Barrios et al., 2021; Guo & Vargo, 2020; Zarthia Sossa et al., 2019).

Sampling and Coder Training

The method of using expert selection and subsequent coding of media materials for their statistical evaluation was used by Hinck et al. (2019) in a study of narratives in three global macro-regions regarding the US presidential election. This technique has also been used in recent years for media research in cases where it is necessary to identify narratives or quantify the discursive parameters of a text (Brennen, 2021; Jensen, 2020; Piper et al., 2021).

The study of media in this case is based on their current state of inclusion in the digital environment. The largest and most influential media have evolved from the emergence of electronic versions of print publications to fully integrated multimodal electronic representations of digital media for all platforms and devices (Stam, 2019; Vu et al., 2020). The influence of social networks has in turn reached a level where all studied media are represented in various social networks and use the means of presenting information and influence characteristic of these networks (Rifai et al., 2021; Theocharis et al., 2023; Vrontis et al., 2021). Therefore, within the framework of the approach used here, the influence of social networks on narrative is almost not discussed, given that all influential media are now an integral part of social networks as such.

For the analysis of media outlet narratives, a total of twelve experts were invited, with four experts selected for each of the regions under study. Experts were selected by the requirements described below, and invitations to participate were sent to them by e-mail. With those who agreed, convenient work schedules and pace of work, the timing of meetings and discussions within the framework of the Delphi method (Cuhls, 2023), and other work processes were discussed. Ultimately, those who consented were selected who agreed and whose work schedules were consistent with the needs of the study.

Each expert involved in the study should possess native proficiency in the language of the respective cultural region whose media they were tasked with investigating. The expert has worked in the analytical field of the media business for at least 15 years and has experience in applying media analysis methods (content analysis, etc.), expressed in successful projects, reports, and published research manuscripts over the past 10 years. The expert's selection criteria mandated political neutrality, absence of affiliation with any ecclesiastical organization, lack of overt political opinions, and non-membership in political parties or social movements. These measures were implemented to mitigate subjective bias and minimize the potential influence on the selection of politically, ideologically, or religiously significant media materials.

The experts formed three groups: one for each of the studied regions, within which successive Delphi sessions were held to discuss the process of working on the selection of narratives. During these sessions, expert researchers had to come to a consensus on the principles for identifying a narrative, about which ones to single out and solve other practical problems. Experts from each region collaboratively determined specific narratives to be identified for that region and categorized each narrative according to its local or international nature, as well as the degree of change and adaptation to local ideological needs. The purpose of the Delphi sessions was considered achieved when, during two consecutive sessions in a row, experts almost immediately achieved mutual agreement on the selected material without the need for additional discussions. To maintain the quality of the consensus reached, such sessions continued to be held every week after reaching the objectives of the Delphi sessions.

Also, Delphi sessions were held once a week between all three groups to achieve the same qualitative agreement between each of the regions. This agreement was reached within 2

sessions after reaching a consensus in separate groups. Delphi sessions were held on Zoom through online rallies, and experts could also use social networks or e-mail that were convenient for them in practical communication.

Following data collection and consensus on narrative classification, their computation was conducted across regions and defined categories regarding the local or international nature and the mode of information transmission. Ratios of different narrative types were identified for the three studied regions, serving as the basis for further analysis of the influence of cultural characteristics of these regions on the nature of information dissemination in the media. The conclusive findings of the study were subjected to subsequent deliberation in a dedicated session, wherein all participating experts concurred that the results aligned with the approaches and methodologies developed during the research endeavor.

It is important to emphasize that the selection method employed in this study is predominantly empirical and relies on the content of the materials analyzed by the researchers in conjunction with the distinctive characteristics of the cultural regions under investigation. It seems obvious that it makes no sense to describe the finally obtained selection principles because they are rather voluminous and include a large number of empirically formulated characteristics of media content that cannot be extrapolated to all types of media and all cultural regions not included in this study. However, these selection principles are unequivocally effective and applicable within the framework of this study. They correspond to the principle by which artificial intelligence carries out similar selections: this is the “black box” principle. That is, it is impossible to establish exactly what algorithms the AI used in order to obtain the result, but the result is verifiable and of high quality. Finally, study participants participated based on personal consent and anonymity. The personal data of the involved experts were not used in the research process.

Study Design

The study focused on three major regions, namely China, the countries of the Near and Middle East with Arabic-language media, and the United States. These regions were selected due to their enduring political and existential tensions. Moreover, they exhibit profound religious, economic, and cultural differences among themselves. All three regions have been entangled in a succession of profound historical conflicts with one another. For example, China is accused of persecuting Muslims, the US and China have had a strategic and economic confrontation over the past decade, and the US and the Arab world have a history of confronting Muslim terrorism and US interference in the politics of the Middle East and North Africa. This situation makes the differences in the ideologies and narratives of the parties more conceptually defined and more rigidly demarcated, which makes it easier to identify them.

The selection of media in each of these regions was carried out using a series of selection filters. First of all, those media selected that had the most links in other media of their language region, as well as in international media over the past year. At the same time, the study covers the period from May 2022 to the end of May 2023. The second filter was the opinion of experts who, based on their own choice and experience, had to form lists of the most influential and well-known media in the respective regions. If the list compiled by the experts included publications not selected by the first filter, they were checked by the number of links to them in other publications, the number of subscribers, and the number of views of their accounts on social networks and the sites of these media. If their scores fell within a range of 25% in comparison to the most prominent media, they were also included in the list. A final list of all media used in the study is provided in Appendix 1.

The selected coders reviewed the content of the selected media to identify all or the absolute majority of the narratives that appeared in these sources during the study period (one year). As one narrative, one specific event, significant information, or significant commentary

was singled out, changing the meaning of understanding a certain event, prediction, or analysis regarding one specific phenomenon or object (person, country, enterprise, institution, or other subjects of international or other legal relations, cultural phenomenon or object, etc.). All narratives were considered for statistical quantitative assessment for the entire language region and not for one edition. Thus, for example, important information that appeared simultaneously in many media was taken into account as one narrative if no additional significant information or commentary was added to it, changing the interpretation or understanding of the meaning of this event. In the latter case, such an additional comment was taken into account as a second, independent narrative.

Based on the collected data after discussion using the Delphi method and the final confirmation by experts of the content of the list of isolated narratives, they were processed using descriptive statistics. To determine consensus among experts regarding the categorization of narratives, the percentage of participants selecting each option was utilized. Subsequently, statements were ranked according to the degree of consensus, with the determination of the interquartile range and standard deviation. In cases where sufficient agreement was not initially achieved, the issue was returned to the experts for further consideration. The use of more complex forms of statistical evaluation, such as to determine statistically significant differences between groups, ANOVA or correlation analysis, in this case, seems inapplicable due to the specific nature of the object under study. The objects of research (narratives, discourses) are not homogeneous objects of the same type, which can be perceived as discrete units. An important characteristic of them is the relationship between them and the influence at the time of their appearance, as well as other characteristics that should also be taken into account in more accurate statistical analysis.

At the same time, descriptive statistics make it possible to demonstrate a snapshot of the state of the information field and is a good basis from which to build further research. Descriptive statistics make it possible to compare different cultural and religious environments and determine the degree of their mutual influence and the nature of the movement of information and the mixing of discourses between them, which is the purpose of the study. At the same time, one has to agree that the resulting picture is relatively accurate and conveys only the most generalized characteristics of the object under study.

Data Analysis

During the study, several parameters were analyzed, which formed the basis of descriptive statistics, based on which the conclusions and findings of the study were subsequently made. First of all, this is the number of links to a particular media in other media; the number of references was grouped not by publication, but by the three regions studied, to get a picture of how influential and cited sources are within one region and in the international field, and how influential are large international information corporations in other, possibly conflict-minded regions of the planet.

The second examined indicator encompassed the quantification of narratives originating from a particular cultural region, rooted in the rhetoric and discourses distinctive to that region. Frequently, these narratives are localized in nature, detached from the international agenda, significant solely within a specific cultural region, and not associated with major international sources of information. An example of what was coded as an international narrative could be a discussion of the US-China trade conflict in Arab countries that are not directly involved in this process. An example of a local narrative is a discussion of the problems of confrontation between Republican candidates before the primaries in one of the American states in the media of the same state. The basic or regional narrative can be considered the description of the Palestinian problem in a number of Arab countries neighboring regions populated by Palestinians in the media of Arab countries in the same region. This indicator should

demonstrate how active the information field is within the region and how much it relies on its own news stories and internal events to compare them with external influence and the degree of integration into the international agenda.

Narratives were chosen as the third indicator, which served as a base from which the media repelled in creating their narratives. For example, if an Arabic publication reacts to an event in the United States but, at the same time, imposes its commentary on it based on the rhetoric characteristic of the Arab region. In response to someone else's narrative, various reactions can emerge, including supportive, contradictory, clarifying, and expansive responses, and even outright rejection (such as asserting that the primary narrative is a falsehood and an orchestrated information campaign by an unfriendly entity).

The final measure to explore was narratives based on the rhetoric or discourse of a source outside the region. For example, a local influential Arabic or Chinese information channel reports on events in the US, commenting on these events in the way that they could be commented on in the US, with the same approaches and cultural accents. Such narratives indicate a significant and direct influence of external discourses on a given cultural region since foreign discourse presented without commentary should already be understood by the internal audience of this region and should be perceived not as alien but relatively painlessly. Finally, the tools of the statistical package SPSS 24.0, as well as Microsoft Excel 2019, were used to statistically process the obtained data and present and visualize them.

Research Limitations

The study certainly does not cover all or most of the media in the regions under study, but only claims to capture statistically significant most of the most influential narratives that determine public opinion. Although the major media outlets examined in this study dominate a significant portion of the media landscape in each region and exert considerable influence on the information disseminated by smaller media outlets and spread on social networks, exceptions may exist in some countries regarding minor digital media. Nevertheless, these minor digital media outlets may behave quite differently from mainstream media and significantly impact segments of society, for instance, through the dissemination of protest sentiments. The study primarily emphasizes the quantitative aspects of narratives rather than their qualitative characteristics. Consequently, in this context, the specific content of information, messages, and comments from individual media sources is not of paramount significance, as the focus does not revolve around examining specific cases or media reactions to particular events (such as the US elections or COVID-19). The research findings may also vary somewhat when considering the different characteristics of media coverage of local and international news across various thematic domains (political, economic, cultural, artistic, etc.).

Also, a limitation is the arbitrary choice of cultural regions for research and the very definition of a cultural region, which is used in this study only in a sense sufficient for the study itself. This work is a pilot work in this type of narrative research, and, accordingly, has all the limitations of a pilot product.

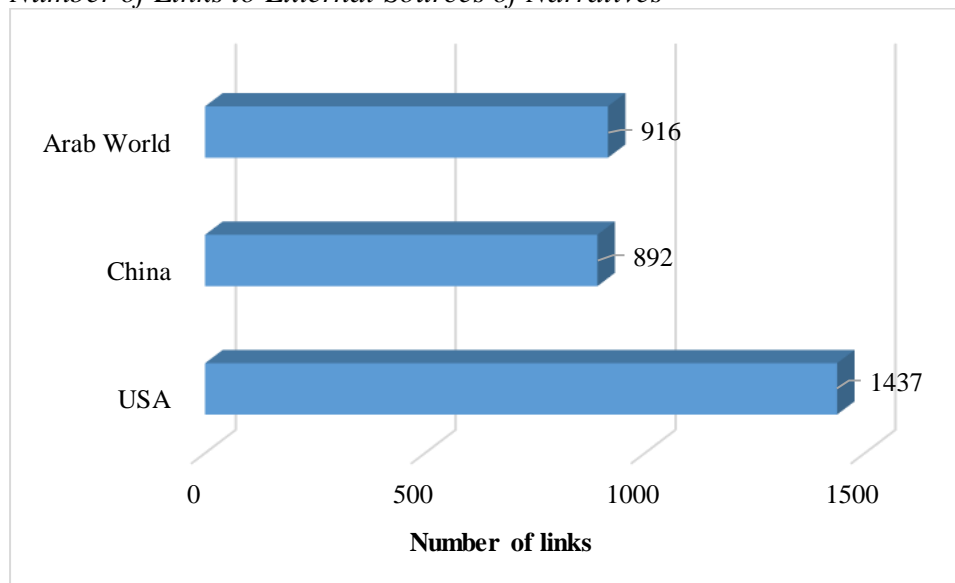
Results

The number of citations per year to sources outside the given cultural region as a whole indicates simultaneously two factors at work (Figure 1). Firstly, it reflects the level of interest in external events and comments, thereby showcasing the extent of openness and engagement with global occurrences beyond the confines of the cultural and religious region under consideration. The second factor is the readiness to perceive external narratives, the degree of openness towards a different culture and its influences. The second factor, as the experience and studies cited earlier show, can be strongly blurred by the further process of assimilation of

foreign narratives through commenting, appropriation, evaluation from the point of view of local discourse or religious approach, etc. Often direct quoting in Arab countries and China is intended to emphasize the alien origin of the indicated information and is subsequently accompanied by a specific comment from the point of view of the dominant local rhetoric. However, the fact of citing an external source indicates an interest in the outside world and a certain dependence on it.

Figure 1

Number of Links to External Sources of Narratives



It is worth noting that the number of citations in the US (1,437) is almost 1.5 times higher than in the other two regions. The United States concentrates on many international television and information networks that have significant influence throughout the world. These media, respectively, are represented worldwide and broadcast in the US not only as a stream of news and commentary from around the world but also actively rely on local media in other countries.

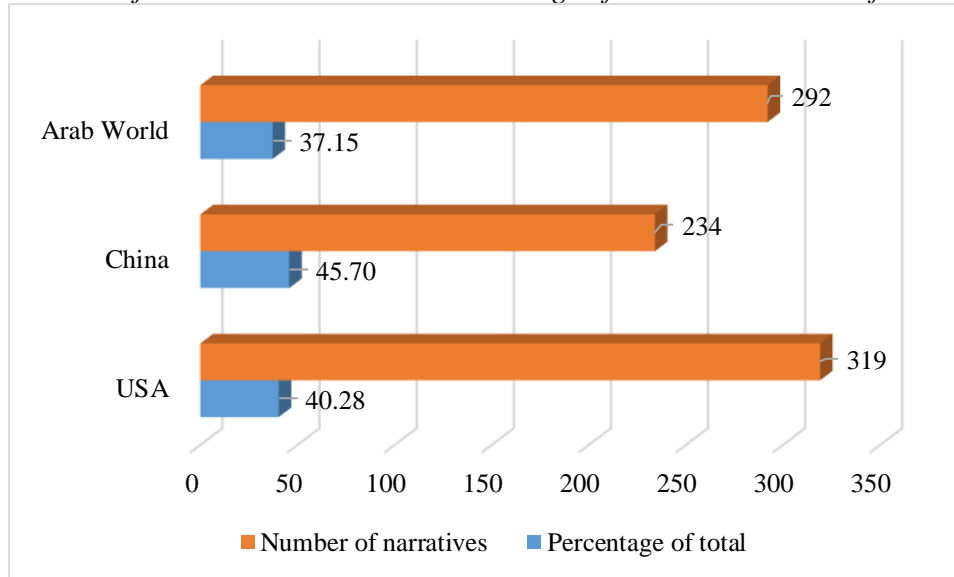
The countries of the Arab world and China are pursuing a specific policy, making efforts to maintain the dominance of local features. For Arab countries, this is the Muslim religious ideology, which can vary significantly in detail for each country but continues to serve as a public focus of agreement in the perception of information from other countries (as will be shown below). For China, the communist ideology plays the same role, through the prism of events in other countries are comprehended. Please note that the number of links in these regions is also very high despite the fact that it is less than in the US. The dominant and rapidly evolving trend in these two regions is the imperative to communicate, receive, and disseminate news from various parts of the world.

Figure 2 gives much more material for conclusions. Local subjects constitute a significant portion (40.28%) of the narrative within the United States, a proportion that is relatively close to that observed in China, despite China's greater ideological and informational seclusion. China is the champion in the internal narrative, which occupies 45.7%. The reason for this state of affairs may be a whole branch of factors. First of all, this is a high level of control over the media by local and state administrations, which allows for maintaining the stability of society, focusing on issues of internal development and solving regional problems. In China, the maintenance of public morality traditionally plays a high role, and traditional values are formed and maintained at the state level. Historically, the people of China considered themselves as people living in the center of the universe (Zhongguo), in the Middle Kingdom (Tianxia), and everything that happens outside is the work of "barbarians," which is not worth

special attention. Although these notions are no longer valid for today's modernized China, according to the experts who selected and analyzed the narratives, they are profoundly manifested in the national discourse in the form of opposition to everything “Western.” There is almost no religious element in this opposition because the specific religious history of China did not imply a messianic type of religion that spread its influence over the whole world and preached total tolerance.

Figure 2

Number of Local Narratives and Percentage of the Total Number of Narratives per Year



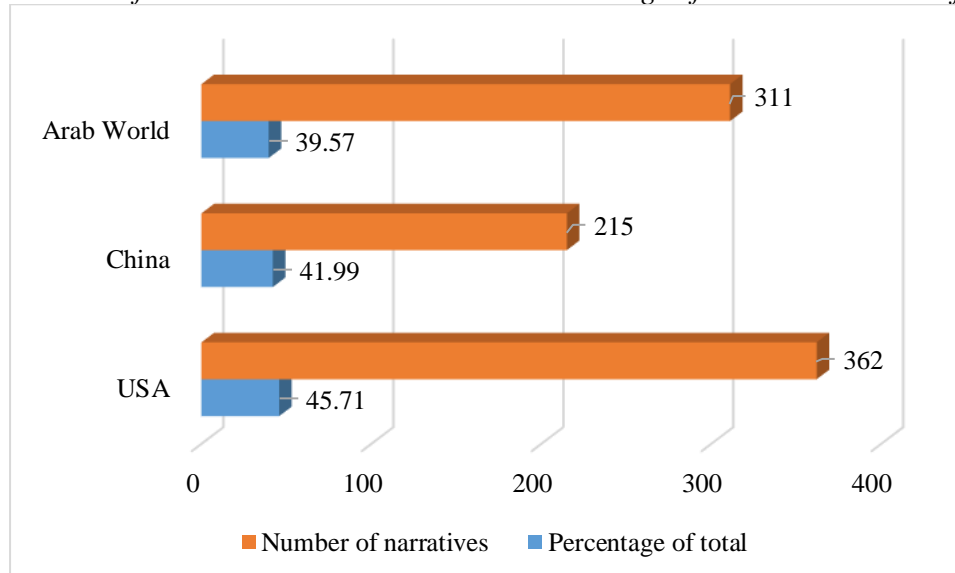
In Arab countries, the amount of local narrative is minimal (37.15%), which is surprising. This may be due to the fact that local affairs are too local in nature and are concentrated at the level of cities, villages, and individual localities and are mostly not broadcast even to the national media level. But this hypothesis requires further testing and the situation may be very different for different Arab countries. The religious context can exert a particular influence, given that Islam stands out as the most expansive and evangelistic religion, actively propagating itself. In this regard, a strong discourse of interest in foreign affairs and other countries as points of distribution of Arab influence, the resettlement of Arabs and the transfer of their religion is formed. In addition, as the analysis of the content of the narratives by experts during the course of the study shows, economically Arab countries are much more dependent on the outside world for trade, the sale of carbohydrates and the acquisition of technology.

Narratives received from outside, i.e. from international information networks, international TV broadcasters, etc. occupy a much larger place in the Arabic (39.57%) and Chinese information space (41.99%). Moreover, there is a marked predominance of these narratives in Arabic countries, whereas China exhibits a relatively lower prevalence of such narratives. The largest number of pure external narratives transmitted in the form in which they were accepted are characteristic of the United States (45.71%), apparently due to the most open and liberal information policy (Figure 3). The comparison shows that China relatively adequately perceives the discourses and narratives coming from the outside world, discusses them and, contrary to the opinion prevailing in some Western academic circles, does not distort the incoming narrative, but presents it in the form in which it receives. This means preserving the original interpretation and commentary, the nature of the presentation of the material and its primary meaning. It is important to acknowledge that certain spheres, such as academia and domestic settings, may exhibit a more pronounced manifestation of these characteristics, while others, such as socio-political domains, may display them to a lesser degree. This observation

arises from the consideration that the aforementioned characterization is based on average values, without specific delineation by subject or area.

Figure 3

Number of International Narratives and Percentage of the Total Number of Narratives per Year

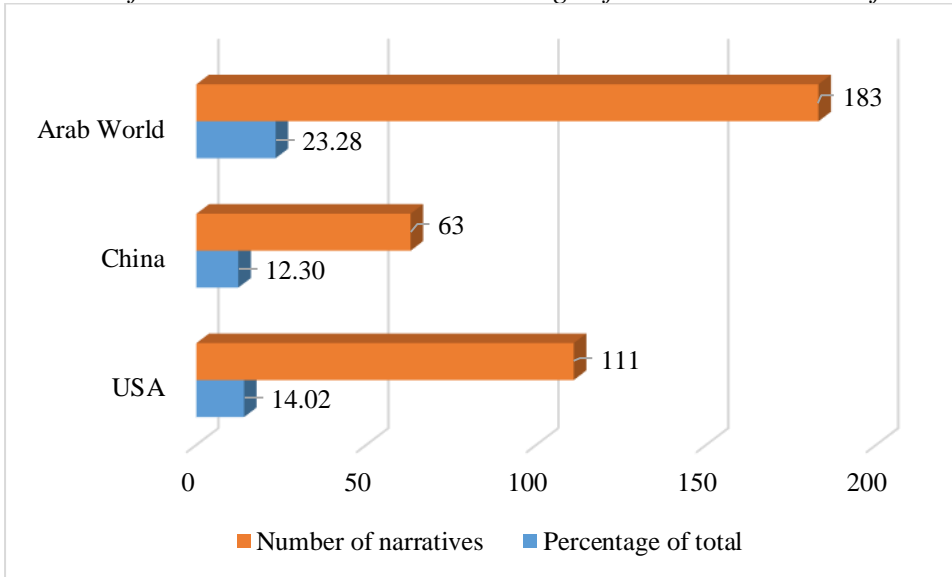


Narratives adopted from outside the Arab cultural region slightly prevail over local ones because a significant part of such narratives fit into broader discourses that transcend the context of a particular country. For example, it is the characteristic ideology of Sunnis or Shiites, pro-Western modernization movements or conservative groups in various Arab countries that publish narratives from outside that correspond to their ideological orientation.

From the data in Figure 3, an opinion can be formed about a certain information vulnerability of the Arab cultural region, which contradicts its expansiveness, as noted earlier. The data in Figure 4 provide an answer to these doubts. Within the Arab region, the highest proportion (23.28%) of narratives is observed as serving the purpose of either bolstering, refuting, or expanding upon one's discourse in response to the received information. In Arab countries, external narratives characterized by diverse ideological and religious discourses function as a foundation for advancing one's ideology or arguments. This feature, noted by experts in the course of the study, is well set off by the corresponding results for large countries with a well-organized state and information structure (12.3% for China and 14.02% for the USA). The Chinese information and media structure is the most deeply controlled and closed; other people's narratives are shown but almost do not serve as a basis for further discussion. The same picture is observed for the US but with an excellent estimate. The United States primarily generates and propagates its narratives, establishing a dominant position in the media landscape. Consequently, narratives originating from external sources seldom catalyze media actions. Americans mostly start from their narratives and mostly live within their discourse. For example, it discusses events related to human rights, discourse created in the Western world and "native" to the US media; the event takes place outside the US but is part of the internal discourse projected outside. This informational dominance could be reflected in the fact that the United States should have been more characterized by the prevalence of based narratives, that is, external informational occasions that are rethought based on narratives characteristic of their culture. However, journalistic ethics and the standards that large media companies try to adhere to result in the fact that most of the incoming external narratives receive at least primary commentary, appropriate to the cultural background from which they came (respectively, fall into Figure 3).

Figure 4

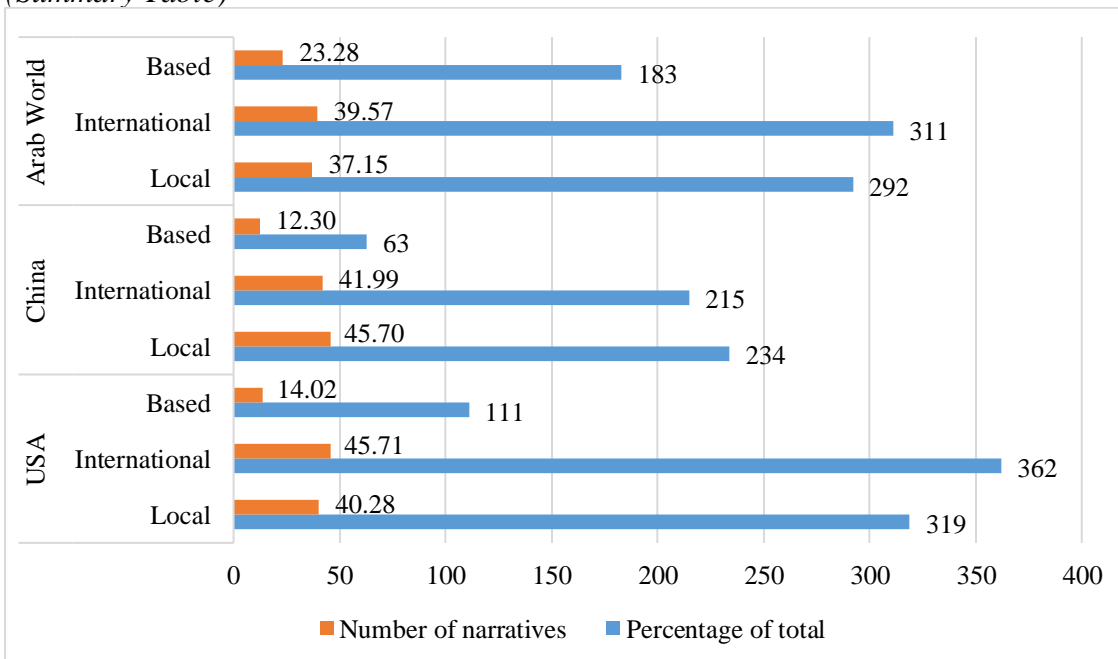
Number of Based Narratives and Percentage of the Total Number of Narratives per Year



A general comparative description of all regions is provided in Figure 5, which shows that the international narrative or narrative from other countries dominates in the United States and Arab countries, and the local one, in China. It seems to researchers that the differential characteristics of even such culturally different regions turned out to be as different as one might expect. The processes of globalization significantly impact the exchange of information and how the discourse of other cultures is perceived, which is quickly assimilated or appropriated.

Figure 5

Number of Narratives by Type and Percentage of the Total Number of Narratives per Year (Summary Table)



The results of the study show that actively developing countries and regions (the Arab world and China) are developing information openness and, although they are trying to export their ideology and cultural context in the form of soft power outside, they maintain a high degree of openness to external narratives. At the same time, the United States demonstrates the highest level of antifragility in the media space due to a good balance of both the high

importance of local narratives and the enormous susceptibility to external narratives and the readiness to perceive and integrate them into their discourse. Perhaps, against this background, the Chinese and Arab models may look more reliable in the short term for maintaining the homeostasis of one's discourse and its outward transmission. However, these models can come under strong pressure and can be fragile in the event of rapid global change, which is accompanied by a change in assessments of reality and the need for a rapid transformation of one's country discourse.

Discussion

The role of a certain discourse that dominates the media is considered by many authors as a generally recognized property of the media field (Deuze, 2020; Hartley, 2019; Hinck et al., 2019). At the same time, researchers acknowledge that it is difficult to determine the limits of the field in which this or that discourse operates since these are rather abstract concepts. The same media in different situations can change their assessments and move along with the opinion of their users since they are designed to reflect it (Boccia Artieri & Gemini, 2019; Jelly et al., 2021). In autocratic states, the dominant ideology, and in theocratic states, religion must have a dominant discourse through which any narrative is evaluated and passed (Kongjian, 2020). Such a situation can lead to increased fragility of the ideology, to which any reasoned opinion or fact that diverges from the ideology can deal a devastating blow (Luo & Harrison, 2019; McDougall, 2019).

This kind of risk could threaten Russia's media system (Pirbudagova & Omarova, 2020; Tuzov & Masood, 2024). The work of media in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, to a greater extent, demonstrates images of flexibility close to the strategies revealed in the findings of the study on Arab countries (Jones Luong, 2019; Pirbudagova & Omarova, 2020). Countries such as Bulgaria are more in the economic and media context of the developed Western countries, and their media models of dealing with narratives should more closely reflect models similar to the United States, but this requires practical testing and may change over time (Cosenza et al., 2020). Truly "antifragile" ideological constructions are created in conditions when "all flowers bloom" any ideas are discussed, and narratives coming from outside the system are not distorted by ideology or the influence of religion even before they enter the media (Luttrell & Wallace, 2021; McCombs & Valenzuela, 2020).

Researchers point out that the nature of the dissemination or replication of certain narratives varies greatly across cultural regions (Humprecht et al., 2022; Kongjian, 2020). For example, China has a controlled distribution pattern driven by self-censorship and party surveillance, including the removal of inappropriate speech (Huang et al., 2021; Luo & Harrison, 2019; Stockmann et al., 2020). In Latin America and Arabic-speaking countries, some researchers document the much more complex and multi-layered nature of narratives, in which local significant events may play a relatively large role (Guo & Vargo, 2020; Jelly et al., 2021; Tejedor et al., 2020). The traditions of dictatorships and coups, on the one hand, and the Bolivarian revolution, on the other, create an extremely complex picture of media and a picture of the spread of narratives in Latin American countries, which requires a more thorough and separate study.

On the other hand, researchers point out that in a state of constant cultural and ideological dominance in several developed countries, there is a need to strictly support discourses that correspond to the personal identification of the country's citizens (Rossi, 2020). These may be discourses related to history, religion, the dominant ideology, or other elements of worldview or behavioral concepts. However, they must be supported as some non-negotiable values, the significance of which cannot be questioned, although they can take part in the discussion (Ritonga et al., 2020). Thus, the modern feminist movements of the last generations of feminism as a philosophy as a whole cannot find a place in the system of morality and social

order in China, and, therefore, their narratives will be broadcast only as a source for criticism or discussion.

The researchers point out that certain factors, independent of the content of the news or the narrative as a whole, can determine the flow of international news. The size of the country, its economic power, or its military influence may lead to the fact that its news will be distributed more actively and may dominate the information field of other countries (Sopieva, 2019). In accordance with the data of our study, such dominant narratives, as a rule, are reflected unchanged, which is their characteristic feature. Narratives emanating from countries involved in dynamic economic and cultural interactions, as well as fostering amicable relations, commonly serve as the primary catalyst for subsequent deliberations and commentaries, often referred to as “based narratives.” The “news” and, more broadly, “informational” value of one country for another is more often determined by the presence of national and historical kinship and common borders (Shiffman et al., 2020). Within the framework of the proposed study, large countries with a significant number of international connections can afford significant information openness (e.g., China and the United States).

A huge role is played by the ethical standards of journalism and the desire to reflect information and comments as closely as possible to the content of the source, as well as a large number of competing information channels around the world (Stam, 2019). This competition forces us to be more pragmatic about the accuracy of informing and broadcasting information, at least within the framework of large media. This statement may not apply at all to small media, social media, bloggers, and opinion leaders in different countries (Plantin & Punathambekar, 2019; Vu et al., 2020; Wilson & Wiysonge, 2020). It may also be completely untrue for countries with authoritarian regimes like Iran or at war like Russia. In these countries, the dominance of religious or current political and ideological needs can completely and radically negate journalistic ethics and radically change the picture of interaction with narratives and the formation of one's discourse (Aven, 2015; Boulianne, 2020).

Conclusion

The intensive development of global media, social media, and the Internet has led to a new information context. The purpose of the studies is to find out the basis of a quantitative assessment of narratives that are of local or international origin and are the result of the reaction of the media of a particular cultural region to an external narrative. The study recruited 12 media analytics experts selected according to strictly defined criteria throughout the Delphi method to determine the number and characteristics of narratives in the most popular media of three regions - the USA, China, and the Arab countries of the Middle East in context with EECCA countries media policies. The determination of narrative criteria and specification of their characteristics, as well as the analysis of media strategies adopted by the countries under scrutiny, were accomplished through empirical investigation. The practical significance of the study lies in the proposal of an effective quantitative approach to describing the influence of external and internal discourses and narratives on the work of the media and information field of a particular country or region. This methodology can be employed to formulate a strategic approach for introducing new media platforms to the market, shaping policies for existing media entities, and developing predictive models to anticipate the media and societal responses to specific challenges. The results obtained can be easily implemented using public search engines at minimal cost and can contribute to the development of new types of media analytics based on quantitative methods for analyzing the content side of the media. State and private media companies can utilize the approach explored in this study to determine the receptivity of a given environment to narratives of foreign origin, as well as to assess how and to what extent desirable messages should be adapted to the local context to harmoniously integrate them into the established modes of information dissemination within the chosen cultural environment.

This will help enhance communication effectiveness in cases where significant cultural tension is observed. There are implementation restrictions in the form of the relative duration of the analysis procedure. Further developments should move towards expanding the use of AI and deep learning to create a streaming daily system for evaluating media-produced narratives and learning AI or AI in collaboration with experts to determine meaningful characteristics of topical narratives. A promising direction for expanding research is the study of narratives according to their temporal characteristics: novelty, restoration of old narratives, and the birth of completely new ones. In further research, it is also worthwhile to conduct a more detailed content analysis of narratives to comprehend not only the extent to which local media in different countries engage with the international sphere and how often they relay international messages in unchanged or ideologically adapted forms but also how the adaptation of narratives occurs in different countries. Based on this, a more detailed classification of approaches to modification and adaptation of narratives can be developed, and characteristic approaches for different cultural environments can be studied, thereby revealing valuable new insights into communication dynamics with society in various cultural contexts.

Funding

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict of interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Data availability

All data generated or analyzed during this study are included in this published article.

References

- AlAshry, M.-S. (2024). Arab journalists have no place: Authorities use digital surveillance to control investigative reporting. *Communication & Society*, 37(1), 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.37.1.61-77>
- Arafat, S. Y., Islam, M. A., & Kar, S. K. (2021). Mass media and panic buying. In S. Y. Arafat, S. Kumar Kar, & R. Kabir (Eds.), *Panic buying: Perspectives and prevention* (pp. 65–80). Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-70726-2_5
- Aven, T. (2015). The concept of antifragility and its implications for the practice of risk analysis. *Risk Analysis*, 35(3), 476–483. <https://doi.org/10.1111/risa.12279>
- Barrios, M., Guilera, G., Nuño, L., & Gómez-Benito, J. (2021). Consensus in the Delphi method: What makes a decision change? *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 163, Article 120484. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2020.120484>
- Berges Puyo, J. (2022). Ethical Leadership in Education: A Uniting View Through Ethics of Care, Justice, Critique, and Heartful Education. *Journal of Culture and Values in Education*, 5(2), 140-151. <https://doi.org/10.46303/jcve.2022.24>
- Boccia Artieri, G., & Gemini, L. (2019). Mass media and the web in the light of Luhmann's media system. *Current Sociology*, 67(4), 563–578. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392119837542>

- Boulianne, S. (2020). Twenty years of digital media effects on civic and political participation. *Communication Research*, 47(7), 947–966. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650218808186>
- Brailovskaia, J., & Margraf, J. (2022). Addictive social media use during Covid-19 outbreak: Validation of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) and investigation of protective factors in nine countries. *Current Psychology*, 43, Article 13022–13040. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03182-z>
- Brennen, B. S. (2021). *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003122388>
- Buckingham, D. (2019). *The media education manifesto*. John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650218808186>
- Byman, D. (2021). The social media war in the Middle East. *The Middle East Journal*, 75(3), 449–468. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/839266>
- Cao, X., & Yu, L. (2019). Exploring the influence of excessive social media use at work: A three-dimension usage perspective. *International Journal of Information Management*, 46, 83–92. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2018.11.019>
- Cosenza, M. G., Gavidia, M. E., & González-Avella, J. C. (2020). Against mass media trends: Minority growth in cultural globalization. *Plos One*, 15(4), Article e0230923. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230923>
- Cuhls, K. (2023). The Delphi method: an introduction. In *Delphi methods in the social and health sciences: concepts, applications and case studies* (pp. 3-27). Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Darawsheh, S. R., Al-Shaar, A. S., Alshurideh, M., Alomari, N. A., Elsayed, A. M., Abdallah, A. K., & Alkhasawneh, T. (2023). The Relation Between Creative Leadership and Crisis Management Among Faculty Members at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University in Light of the Corona Pandemic from the Perspective of Department Heads. In *The Effect of Information Technology on Business and Marketing Intelligence Systems* (pp. 1503-1514). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Deuze, M. (2020). The role of media and mass communication theory in the global pandemic. *Communication Today*, 11(2), 4–16. <https://doi.org/10.25139/jsk.v4i2.2182>
- Ditlhokwa, G., & Cann, V. E. (2024). Postcolonial analysis of transcultural news frames: A case study of Facebook rebranding. *Journal of Transcultural Communication*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jtc-2023-0004>
- El Maknoui, M. E. H., Jadalhaq, I. M., Abdulhay, I. E., & Alqodsi, E. M. (2023). Islamic commercial arbitration and private international law: Mapping controversies and exploring pathways towards greater coordination. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), Article 523. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02031-z>
- Fadhlorrohman, M. I., & Purnomo, E. P. (2020). The role of online mass media as a tool for the 2019 political campaign in Indonesia. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 4(2), 311–325. <https://doi.org/10.25139/jsk.v4i2.2182>
- Freedman, A. S. (2020). *Opened and closed doors: An inside look at how the internet changed Middle East Policy* [Doctoral dissertation, Johns Hopkins University]. <http://jhir.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/62791>
- Grasso, C., Lenzi, C., Speiran, S., & Pirrone, F. (2020). Anthropomorphized nonhuman animals in mass media and their influence on human attitudes toward wildlife. *Society & Animals*, 31(2), 196–220. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685306-BJA10021>
- Grau, A. B. (2021). Multifaceted Offenders and Minimization of Victims: U.S. National News Media Coverage of Offenders and Victims in Coverage of Filicide. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 5(1), 185-205. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/10929>
- Guo, L., & Vargo, C. J. (2020). Predictors of international news flow: Exploring a networked global media system. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 64(3), 418–437. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2020.1796391>

- Harlow, S., Camaj, L., & Pjesivac, I. (2023). Protest reporting across clientelist media systems. *International Communication Gazette*, 85(5), 365–385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17480485221146862>
- Hartley, J. (2019). *Communication, cultural and media studies: The key concepts*. Routledge.
- Harvey, A. (2019). *Feminist media studies*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Heidenreich, T., Lind, F., Eberl, J. M., & Boomgaarden, H. G. (2019). Media framing dynamics of the ‘European refugee crisis’: A comparative topic modelling approach. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 32(S1), i172–i182. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fez025>
- Hesmondhalgh, D., & Toynbee, J. (2008). Why media studies needs better social theory. In *The media and social theory* (pp. 15–38). Routledge.
- Hinck, R. S., Cooley, S. C., & Kluver, R. (2019). *Global media and strategic narratives of contested democracy: Chinese, Russian, and Arabic media narratives of the US presidential election*. Routledge.
- Hoang, S. D., Dey, S. K., Ratilla, M., & Tučková, Z. (2023). Investigating the antecedents of ecotourism and destination loyalty among Vietnamese tourists: An expectation–confirmation perspective. *Global Business Review*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09721509231174740>
- Huang, J., Cook, G. G., & Xie, Y. (2021). Between reality and perception: The mediating effects of mass media on public opinion toward China. *Chinese Sociological Review*, 53(5), 431–450. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21620555.2021.1980720>
- Humprecht, E., Castro Herrero, L., Blassnig, S., Brüggemann, M., & Engesser, S. (2022). Media systems in the digital age: An empirical comparison of 30 countries. *Journal of Communication*, 72(2), 145–164. <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqac010>
- Jelly, P., Choudhary, S., Sharma, R., Mahala, P., & Aggarwal, P. (2021). Role of mass media on mankind: Time to rethink. *Pondicherry Journal of Nursing*, 14(2), 37–41. <https://doi.org/10.5005/jp-journals-10084-12167>
- Jensen, K. B. (2020). *A handbook of media and communication research: Qualitative and quantitative methodologies*. Routledge.
- Jin, S. V., Muqaddam, A., & Ryu, E. (2019). Instafamous and social media influencer marketing. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 37(5), 567–579. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-09-2018-0375>
- Jones Luong, P. (2019). *The transformation of Central Asia: States and societies from Soviet rule to independence*. Cornell University Press.
- Kim, H. K., Ahn, J., Atkinson, L., & Kahlor, L. A. (2020). Effects of COVID-19 misinformation on information seeking, avoidance, and processing: A multicountry comparative study. *Science Communication*, 42(5), 586–615. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1075547020959670>
- Kongjian, Y. (2020). The conflict between two civilizations: On nature-based solutions. *Landscape Architecture Frontiers*, 8(3), 4–9. <https://doi.org/10.15302/J-LAF-1-010008>
- Kovalenko, Y. (2023). Civilizational paradigm of the study of management culture phenomenon: Theoretical and methodological aspect. *Socio-Cultural Management Journal*, 6(1), 27–54. <https://doi.org/10.31866/2709-846X.1.2023.278647>
- Kvasničková Stanislavská, L., Pilař, L., Margarisová, K., & Kvasnička, R. (2020). Corporate social responsibility and social media: Comparison between developing and developed countries. *Sustainability*, 12(13), Article 5255. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12135255>
- Lauk, E., & Berglez, P. (2024). Can media enhance deliberative democracy? Exploring media monitoring capabilities in 14 EU-countries. *Media and Communication*, 12, Article 7888. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.7888>
- Luo, Y., & Harrison, T. M. (2019). How citizen journalists impact the agendas of traditional media and the government policymaking process in China. *Global Media and China*, 4(1), 72–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059436419835771>

- Lusike Mukhongo, L., Mwaura, J., & Omwoha, J. (2023). Reconceptualising media ownership and shifting power relations in an emerging digital media framework. *African Studies*, 82(3-4), 300–315. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2024.2304199>
- Luttrell, R., & Wallace, A. A. (2021). *Social media and society: An introduction to the mass media landscape*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Mäkelä, M., Björninen, S., Karttunen, L., Nurminen, M., Raipola, J., & Rantanen, T. (2021). Dangers of narrative: A critical approach to narratives of personal experience in contemporary story economy. *Narrative*, 29(2), 139–159. <https://doi.org/10.1353/nar.2021.0009>
- Marciniak, K., & Imre, A. (2007). *Transnational Feminism in Film and Media*. Springer.
- McCombs, M., & Valenzuela, S. (2020). *Setting the agenda: Mass media and public opinion*. John Wiley & Sons.
- McDougall, J. (2019). *Fake news vs media studies: Travels in a false binary*. Springer Nature.
- Mheidly, N., & Fares, J. (2020). Leveraging media and health communication strategies to overcome the COVID-19 infodemic. *Journal of public health policy*, 41(4), 410–420. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41271-020-00247-w>
- Ndlovu, K., & Mutanda, P. (2024). Public service broadcasting in transition: The rise of digital non-state public service media in Southern Africa. In H. S. Dunn, M. Ragnedda, M. L. Ruiu, & L. Robinson (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of everyday digital life* (pp. 451–467). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-30438-5_25
- Ortiz-Ospina, E., & Roser, M. (2023). *The rise of social media*. <https://ourworldindata.org/rise-of-social-media?ref=tms>
- Pálfi, L. (2023). Gems of Germans in Namibia. *Journal of Central and Eastern European African Studies*, 3(1), 240–243. <https://doi.org/10.59569/jceas.2023.3.1.207>
- Park, S., Fisher, C., Flew, T., & Dulleck, U. (2020). Global mistrust in news: The impact of social media on trust. *International Journal on Media Management*, 22(2), 83–96. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14241277.2020.1799794>
- Piper, A., So, R. J., & Bamman, D. (2021). Narrative theory for computational narrative understanding. In M.-F. Moens, X. Huang, L. Specia, & S. Wen-tau Yih (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 2021 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing* (pp. 298–311). Association for Computational Linguistics. <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/2021.emnlp-main.26>
- Pirbudagova, D. S., & Omarova, A. M. (2020). Formation of mass media law in the Post-Soviet Russia: constitutional foundations and stages. *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, 11(2), 524–531. [https://doi.org/10.14505/jarle.v11.2\(48\).24](https://doi.org/10.14505/jarle.v11.2(48).24)
- Plantin, J. C., & Punathambekar, A. (2019). Digital media infrastructures: Pipes, platforms, and politics. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(2), 163–174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443718818376>
- Qalati, S. A., Ostic, D., Shuibin, G., & Mingyue, F. (2022). A mediated–moderated model for social media adoption and small and medium-sized enterprise performance in emerging countries. *Managerial and Decision Economics*, 43(3), 846–861. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mde.3422>
- Radebe, M. J. (2020). *Constructing hegemony: The South African commercial media and the (mis)representation of nationalisation*. Routledge.
- Richter, C. (2023). Digital MENA: An overview of digital infrastructure, policies, and media practices in the Middle East and North Africa. In J. F. Khalil, G. Khiabany, T. Guaaybess, & B. Yesil (Eds.), *The handbook of media and culture in the Middle East* (pp. 134–146). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119637134.ch13>
- Rifai, E., Pitriadin, P., & Triono, A. (2021). The influence of online mass media on anti-corruption legal awareness education. *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy*, 12(2), 439–447. <https://doi.org/10.31838/srp.2021.2.60>

- Ritonga, S., Samosir, H. E., Luthi, M., Junaidi, J., & Nugroho, E. (2020). Clash of civilization in the news reality construction of the Anti-Ahok Rally in Kompas and Republika newspapers. *Jurnal Komunikasi Ikatan Sarjana Komunikasi Indonesia*, 5(1), 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.25008/jkiski.v5i1.370>
- Rossi, I. (2020). Toward a new globalization paradigm and a UDHR-based inter-civilizational world order. In I. Rossi (Ed.), *Challenges of globalization and prospects for an inter-civilizational world order* (pp. 1069–1126). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44058-9_57
- Samuratova, T. (2016). The symbolic image of the yurt in Kazakh applied arts. *Acta Histriae*, 24(2), 427–447. <https://doi.org/10.19233/AH.2016.17>
- Shiffman, D. S., Bittick, S. J., Cashion, M. S., Colla, S. R., Coristine, L. E., Derrick, D. H., Gow, E. A., Macdonald, C. C., O’Ferrall, M. M., Orobko, M., Pollom, R. A., Provencher, J., & Dulvy, N. K. (2020). Inaccurate and biased global media coverage underlies public misunderstanding of shark conservation threats and solutions. *iScience*, 23(6), Article 101205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.isci.2020.101205>
- Sopieva, B. A. (2019). Political and media discourse in the paradigm of CDA. *News of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Series of Social and Human Sciences*, 1(323), 73–76. <https://doi.org/10.32014/2019.2224-5294.10>
- Splichal, S. (2019). *Media beyond socialism: Theory and practice in East-Central Europe*. Routledge.
- Stam, R. (2019). *World literature, transnational cinema, and global media: Towards a transartistic commons*. Routledge.
- Stockmann, D., Luo, T., & Shen, M. (2020). Designing authoritarian deliberation: How social media platforms influence political talk in China. *Democratization*, 27(2), 243–264. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2019.1679771>
- Sutkutė, R. (2019). Media, stereotypes and Muslim representation: World after Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons controversy. *EUREKA: Social and Humanities*, 6, 59–72. <https://doi.org/10.21303/2504-5571.2019.001054>
- Sutrisno, S. (2023). Changes in media consumption patterns and their implications for people’s cultural identity. *Technology and Society Perspectives (TACIT)*, 1(1), 18–25. <https://doi.org/10.61100/tacit.v1i1.31>
- Tejedor, S., Ventín, A., Cervi, L., Pulido, C., & Tusa, F. (2020). Native media and business models: Comparative study of 14 successful experiences in Latin America. *Media and Communication*, 8(2), 146–158. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v8i2.2712>
- Tellaeche García, B. D. (2022). *The impact of the media on the war of Afghanistan from a Western and Middle Eastern perspective*. Universidad Pontificia Comillas.
- Theocharis, Y., Cardenal, A., Jin, S., Aalberg, T., Hopmann, D. N., Strömbäck, J., Castro, L., Esser, F., Aelst, P. V., Vreese, C. D., Corbu, N., Koc-Michalska, K., Matthes, J., Schemer, C., Sheaffer, T., Splendore, S., Stanyer, J., Stępińska, A., & Štětka, V. (2023). Does the platform matter? Social media and COVID-19 conspiracy theory beliefs in 17 countries. *New Media & Society*, 25(12), 3412–3437. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211045666>
- Togtarbay, B., Zhaksylyk, A., Mukasheva, M. T., Turzhan, O., & Omashev, N. O. (2024). The role of citizen journalism in society: An analysis based on foreign theory and Kazakhstani experience. *Newspaper Research Journal*, 45(1), 25–44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07395329231213036>
- Traberg, C. S., Roozenbeek, J., & Van Der Linden, S. (2022). Psychological inoculation against misinformation: Current evidence and future directions. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 700(1), 136–151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027162221087936>

- Tuzov, V., & Masood, M. (2024). Striving towards democracy? Political participation in post-Soviet countries. *European Politics and Society*, 25(1), 34–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2022.2135341>
- Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, W. K. (2019). Media use is linked to lower psychological well-being: Evidence from three datasets. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 90, 311–331. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-019-09630-7>
- Vaissié, C. (2022). Who read, typed, and distributed samizdat in the Soviet Union? *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, 23(4), 941–946. <https://doi.org/10.1353/kri.2022.0055>
- Vrontis, D., Makrides, A., Christofi, M., & Thrassou, A. (2021). Social media influencer marketing: A systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 617–644. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12647>
- Vu, H. T., Trieu, L. T., & Nguyen, H. T. (2020). Routinizing Facebook: How journalists' role conceptions influence their social media use for professional purposes in a socialist-communist country. *Digital Journalism*, 8(7), 885–903. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2020.1770111>
- Walter, Y. (2021). Towards a Qualitative Model of Religious Worship Experiences: Perceived encounters with the divine in the ritual context of musical devotion practices. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 5(1), 94–141. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/10814>
- Wang, C. Y. (2023). The ideology is blowing in the wind: Managing orthodoxy and popularity in China's propaganda. *Political Communication*, 41(3), 435–460. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2023.2290492>
- Wilson, S. L., & Wiysonge, C. (2020). Social media and vaccine hesitancy. *BMJ Global Health*, 5, Article e004206. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2020-004206>
- Wolsfeld, G. (2023). Media and political conflict: News from the Middle East. In R. Negrine, & J. Staney (Eds.), *The political communication reader* (pp. 69–74). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003416654-16>
- Xia, C., Wang, Z., Zheng, C., Guo, Q., Shi, Y., Dehmer, M., & Chen, Z. (2019). A new coupled disease-awareness spreading model with mass media on multiplex networks. *Information Sciences*, 471, 185–200. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ins.2018.08.050>
- Yablokov, I., & Schimpfössl, E. (2021). A brief history of news making in Russia. *Journalism*, 22(12), 2895–2905. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884920941951>
- Yessenbekova, U. M., Turzhan, O. I., Koshanova, K. A., Yegemberdiyev, I. D., & Kutym, B. K. (2020). Role of media in addressing the socialization problems of the younger generation: The case of Kazakhstan. *Media Watch*, 11(2), 348–355. <https://doi.org/10.15655/mw/2020/v11i2/195659>
- Zartha Sossa, J. W., Halal, W., & Hernandez Zarta, R. (2019). Delphi method: analysis of rounds, stakeholder and statistical indicators. *Foresight*, 21(5), 525–544. <https://doi.org/10.1108/FS-11-2018-0095>
- Żuk, P. (2023). Soft power and the media management of energy transition: Analysis of the media narrative about the construction of nuclear power plants in Poland. *Energy Reports*, 9, 568–583. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.egyr.2022.11.192>

Notes on Contributors

Anastasiya Khudarova is an Assistant at the Department of Polyclinic Therapy, Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education I.M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation (Sechenov University), Moscow, Russian Federation. Email: rude_panda@mail.ru.

Yerbol Abdramanov is an Associate Professor at the Humanitarian School of International University of Tourism and Hospitality, Turkestan, Kazakhstan. Email: e.abdramanov@iuth.edu.kz. He has more than 70 scientific articles in domestic and foreign publications, 2 textbooks, 1 monograph.

Milena Tsvetkova is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication of Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria. Emails: mmtsvetkova1@gmx.com, milenaic@uni-sofia.bg. Her works focuses mainly on the book science, media studies, reading literacy.

Konstantin Sokolovskiy is an Associate Professor at the Department of General Subjects, Humanitarian and Technical Academy, Kokshetau, Kazakhstan. Email: k_sokolovskiy@fastmail.com. His research interests include mainly social media and political communication, cultural management, and social service effectiveness issues.

ORCID

Anastasiya Khudarova, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0689-7934>

Yerbol Abdramanov, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5377-9332>

Milena Tsvetkova, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9414-7174>

Konstantin Sokolovskiy, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5529-3865>

Appendix 1

USA Sources	Chinese Sources	Arabian Sources
Barron's	Caisin	Ad-Dustoir
Black Enterprise	Cankao Xiaoxi	Al Ahram
Bloomberg Businessweek	China Electrons	Al Alam
Chicago Tribune	Chinese Communist Party	Al Arabiya
Consumer Reports	Enlightenment Daily	Al Hayat
Consumers Digest	Global Times	Al Jazeera
Entrepreneur	Hongguo Qingnian Bao	Al Manar
Fast Company	Ifeng news	AL Mustaqbal
Forbes	Jingni Cankao Bao	Al Qabas
Fortune	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Al Rai Media
Futures	News 163	Al Riyadh
Harvard Business Review Inc.	Phoenix Info News	Al Sabaah
Kiplinger's Personal Finance	Qingdao news	Al Wasat News
Latin Trade	QQ News	Al Wehda Thawra
Los Angeles Times	Remin Ribao	Alghad
MIT Sloan Management Review	Sina	Al-Shuruq
New York Post	Sohu News	Al-Wafd
New York Times	Southern Weekly	Al-Watan Kuwait
Newsday	Tiexue	Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation
Optimize	Xinhua	Lebanon Files
Site Selection		SANA Arabic
Star Tribune		
Technical Analysis of Stocks & Commodities		
The Boston Globe		
The Chronicle		
The Economist		
The Wall Street Journal		
The Wall Street Journal		
The Washington Post		
USA Today		