

## Sinophobia in the Kazakh Society: Content Analysis of Mass Media

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**Abstract:** A study is considered the modern dynamics of the Chinese migration to the Republic of Kazakhstan. There was analyzed dynamics of labor migration from China to Kazakhstan. Also, it is considered involvement of the Chinese workers according to a quota for Foreign workers which is one of the special directions of labor migration. On the basis of the content analysis of mass media, there was given the assessment of perception of the Chinese migration by the population of the country.

**Key words:** Foreign labor, migration, labor migration, Chinese workers, Chinese diaspora, huaqiao (Foreign Chinese), Sinophobia

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### INTRODUCTION

In the conditions of expansion of integration processes, there is more and more actual a studying of a state and tendencies of the international migration. The special interest represents the Chinese migration as it is the largest diaspora in the world. Now, the Chinese were left of the country and who are outside of China for various reasons >40 million people (Anonymous, 2015). Due to the investment appeal of Kazakhstan and openness to the whole world there is also increased inflow of migrants from China. Together with it the geographical proximity of Kazakhstan and China was played a big role. Today, the Chinese investments, the companies and also Chinese workers have an important role in national economy. And how does the accepting society think about the Chinese migrants?

The mass and media sphere is one of the main components at forming of the migrant image. Now, the Chinese migration is considered in the Mass Media (MM) mainly as objective and inevitable process but it is still quite often identified with expansion. How are fears and apprehension corrected concerning “the Chinese expansion”? How is estimated the level “the Sinophobia” in the Kazakhstan society? We will try to find answer to these questions.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Official sources about the chinese migrants:** Migration policy of Kazakhstan is one of the main the direction in ensuring national security of the country. On the one hand, it is based on the principles of protection of internal labour market and its preservation for domestic personnel, on the other hand, at the same time, it is directed on attraction of highly skilled Foreign Labor Force (further

FLF). In Kazakhstan, there is developed the order of attraction of FLF, based on system of quoting and the entry visa to the country for work.

For 2015, it was established by the Government a quota of attraction of FLF of 0.7% to the number of economically active population of the republic (about 63 thousand people). As of January 1, 2015, according to the permissions of local executive bodies in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan, it is functioned 30.7 thousand permissions on categories from them:

- The first (heads and their deputies) 2,000 people (6.5%)
- The second (heads of structural divisions) 6,337 people (20.6%)
- The third (experts) 13,196 people (43%)
- The fourth (skilled workers) 8,661 people (28.2%)

For seasonal agricultural works it is attracted 534 people (1.7%). The main countries of inflow of labor migrants continue to be: China 9,644 people, Turkey 6,085 people, India 2,335 people, Italy 1,487 people, Uzbekistan 1,119 people.

For half a year, the quantity of FLF was increased on 8 thousand. So as of August 1, 2015, there were functioned 38,160 permissions to attraction of Foreign labor force. From them, there are about 37.6% of working permissions for the Chinese citizens (13,489 people).

For today, in Kazakhstan, there have been working the representatives from 144 countries, the main part of them from China (32%) and Turkey (12%).

According to official data for the last 5 year, the number of the citizens of the People’s Republic of China, registered in the territory of Kazakhstan, increased by 52,249 people (55.9%; Table 1). And, it was caused by investment activity of China to Kazakhstan and also

Table 1: The number of the citizens of the people's Republic of China, temporarily staying in the territory of Kazakhstan

Year	It is registered in the territory of RK				
	Total	On the private aims	On the official aims	For working	Tourism
2010	41,092	18,666	14,036	6,408	1,982
2011	48,306	22,524	16,935	6,934	1,913
2012	65,284	41,111	16,733	5,841	1,599
2013	70,581	44,607	16,132	7,469	2,373
2014	93,341	60,930	16,287	12,593	3,531

It was made by the researcher on the basis of official data of Department of Migratory Police of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of RK (replies to the requests)

increasing the share of the Chinese workers in system of attraction of Foreign labor force. Also we can note that in this statistics are specified not only ethnic Chinese but also ethnic Kazakhs who makes bulk of the population.

Now 18,484 citizens of the People's Republic of China live in Kazakhstan with residence permit from them 17,891 (97%) ethnic Kazakhs (oralmanans) and 593 other nationalities 3%. Since 1995, the citizenship of the Republic of Kazakhstan was given to 73,893 citizens of the People's Republic of China from them 73,806 (99.9%) ethnic Kazakhs and 87 other nationalities (Anonymous, 1984).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Discussions in society and the opinion of expert:** As follows from statistics of official bodies and according to the opinions of experts, the number of Chinese in Kazakhstan fluctuates from 10-15 thousand including attracted as Foreign labor force. However, in society and some publications the number of Chinese reaches 200-500 thousand, so far as in official sources don't take into account a real picture and don't consider illegal migrants from the People's Republic of China. In consideration of that China is the political, economic and demographic giant; certainly, society has the complexes, fears and certain phobias. There was published a book of Syroyezhkin (2014) about it: "Is it necessary for Kazakhstan to afraid of China: myths and phobias of the bilateral relations" where the researchers assesses a real situation and possible threats, thus, he is considered unjustified and unwarranted "Sinophobia". In general about moods of society and opinion of Kazakhstan citizens there are conducted researches. In this sphere the most advanced scientist can be considered Sadovskaya (2014) who some years was investigated the Chinese migration and was conducted serious sociological researches. Also an importance of studying of the Chinese migration is noted by S. Kozhirova, marked out it in the context of regional security of the country.

For today, it is observed the ambiguous attitude to the Chinese migrants. If on the one hand, objective scientific researches prove that as such reasons for fears aren't present, on the other hand, we have many publications and beliefs of some national patriots about "the future Chinese demographic expansion", "fictitious marriages of Chinese with local girls", etc. I dare to note that at common people, the ordinary citizen far from policy the level of "Sinophobia" is more, than at the experts who are objectively assessed a situation. Such conclusions the researcher had done after conversations with residents of the cities of Almaty and Astana, Mangystau area and also after questioning of employees, colleagues of the Chinese workers; carrying out the content analysis of mass media and expert interview among scientists, representatives of public institutions, politicians and journalists. The public opinion generally develops not in the process of direct communication but as a result of infiltration of the judgments and attitudes created by means of media images.

**Sinophobia in mass media:** Mass media are most effective for rendering information impact on the big mass of people. The researcher doesn't set the task of studying of scales of a Sinophobia. However, considering that the press not only reflects but also forms public moods, it is very important to investigate and analyze it. Without claiming on the comprehensive analysis of this difficult subject, we can submit you the content analysis of mass media. For the analysis, there were taken 10 top internet sites of news portals on ZERO.KZ rating. It is service which since 2002 collects and analyzes statistics of visits of the Kazakhstan sites and on the basis of automatically collected information on thousands of internet resources builds a rating which data are available to all. On keywords "the Chinese migration", "the Chinese migrants", "Chinese in Kazakhstan", "the Chinese diaspora", "the Chinese expansion", "yellow threat", "the Chinese danger" were selected publications. We can note that in the analysis there were used not simply mentions on keywords but there were selected the articles, completely reflecting a subject on the chosen keywords. In total over the last 10 year, there were published 228 materials on this subject.

As it is specified in Table 2 the greatest number of publications falls on 2013. The statements of certain officials, discussions of experts, operational activities of the ministry of internal affairs for identification of illegal migrants became information reason for such frequent discussions. The speech of Akim (Head) of East-Kazakhstan region provoked a heated resonance in

Table 2: Publications on the subject “Chinese migration”, “Chinese migrants”, “Chinese in Kazakhstan”, “Chinese diaspora”, “Chinese expansion”, “Yellow threat”, “Chinese danger”

Years	Name										Total KZ
	NUR. KZ	ZAKON. KZ	Tengrinews	KAPITAL. KZ	INFORM. BURO.KZ	365 INFO. KZ	TODAY. KZ	FORBES. KZ	B NEWS. KZ	INFORM. KZ	
2006	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
2007	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
2008	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
2009	6	6	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
2010	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	13
2011	13	4	5	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	25
2012	7	3	7	6	0	0	0	1	3	0	27
2013	20	5	10	8	0	0	0	6	5	0	54
2014	12	1	3	8	0	3	2	2	2	0	33
2015	14	9	1	2	7	6	0	2	5	1	47
Total	78	42	28	31	7	9	2	11	19	1	228

Table 3: Character of publications according to the contents. P; positively, N; Negative, 0; Neutrally

Name of port folio	P	N	0
NUR. KZ	8	42	28
ZAKON. KZ	12	21	9
Tengrinews	5	15	8
KAPITAL.KZ	6	14	12
INFORMBURO.KZ	2	4	1
365 INFO.KZ	2	4	3
TODAY. KZ	1	1	0
FORBES. KZ	1	5	5
B NEWS. KZ	6	12	1
INFORM. KZ	0	1	0
Total	43	119	67

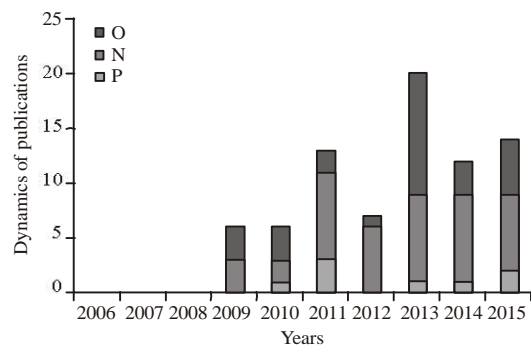


Fig. 2: Dynamics of publications for 2006-2015 (I half-year 2015) on the NUR.KZ portal

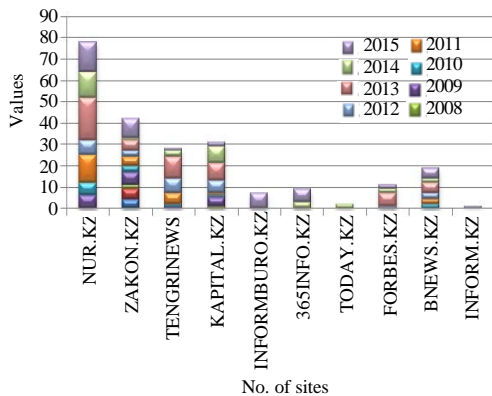


Fig. 1: Dynamics of publications on the subject “Chinese migration”, “Chinese migrants”, “Chinese in Kazakhstan”, “Chinese diaspora”, “Chinese expansion”, “Yellow threat”, “Chinese danger”

society and there were published the articles with the headings “Akim of East-Kazakhstan region suggested to give to Chinese unused lands for a while” (Anonymous, 2013), etc. and also there were organized the meetings. However later, Akim explained that he meant only attraction of the Chinese investments. However, publications with alarmist headings published in mass media and it was additional impetus in formation of public opinion.

Also from Fig. 1, it is visible that the most frequent reporting of this subject was on the NUR.KZ portal. According to an independent rating of ZERO.KZ, the Kazakhstan NUR.KZ portal is the most visited site of the Kazakhstan internet and is the leader in a rating. Monthly on the site there are >5 million visitors who do >70 million browsing (Anonymous, 2014).

During studying of materials, there were selected three groups: publications, reflecting the positive relation and not having signs of Sinophobia (P), publications with alarmist mood, Negative attitude (N), neutral publications (O) (Table 3).

Also there were analysed the comments to articles. For example, on the NUR.KZ portal there were placed 8 positive, 28 neutral, 42 publications of negative character; also there were given 5618 comments to these articles (Fig. 2).

Also information on implementation of a visa-free regime with China provoked emergence of a number of publications and caused heated responses of readers (judging by comments to articles). However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RK disproved this information. Proceeding from the analysis of publications it is possible to tell that the frightening headings as “About 5 thousand Chinese became citizens of Kazakhstan”, “>150 thousand

citizens of China arrived to Kazakhstan in 3 years”, “Five million Chinese will settle in Kazakhstan” and etc., not always correspond to the contents and the checked objective information.

Also information on operational activities of the ministry of internal affairs and detention of illegal Chinese migrants is published in mass media that promotes formation of negative attitude to the Chinese migrants and strengthens alarmist moods of the publication about the happened conflicts between local and Chinese workers, complaints of local population about discrimination in compensation. Though, official information from the authorities is poor that can and served emergence of conjectures and myths.

In general, the analysis of the materials which are selected on emotional coloring, allows drawing a conclusion that the vast majority of the analyzed articles have more negative character. It is connected with violation of the migratory legislation as the citizens of the People’s Republic of China staying in the territory of Kazakhstan and the Chinese firms functioning in the country and involving local experts (discrimination in compensation, etc.). It is noted an existence of offenses (illegal issue of visas, a fight of the Chinese workers with local workers, violation of registration control, etc.), also negative influence of Chinese on ecology (agricultural works in the East Kazakhstan region).

### **CONCLUSION**

According to official sources, the number of the Chinese workers attracted as Foreign labor force in a year doesn’t exceed 15 thousand people. At the same time, the state regulates and doesn’t allow a mass flow of the Chinese citizens to the country at the legislative level, also the state develops mechanisms, obliging the employer to train the local personnel, thereby it motivates local population. The number of Chinese in Kazakhstan perhaps reaches 15 thousand according to expert opinions but it is not hundreds of thousands as it was declared from some publications. Experts assure that a mass flow of the Chinese migrants won’t be expected in the near future, besides specifics of local population

won’t allow being in “Chinalization” as we are frightened in some articles. Really, how often do we meet the Chinese? Or for example, the Ukrainians who make 333,031 people according to population census in RK 2009, the Uigurs (224,713 people) or the Tatars (204,229 persons)? As it is shown the result, our emotions dominate in discussions and conclusions of rather Chinese migrants and it is prejudices, various kinds of fears and a phobia. It is quite difficult to explain the reason of such ambiguous relation, it can be caused and a historical, geopolitical and psychological factor. This direction demands separate in-depth study.

However, we consider that the most dangerous line of mass media is their ability to submit information in such a way that after visible images at people there is formed the virtual picture of reality. In this regard, it is necessary to come into closer contact of the state with mass media, in particular, with the press and television and it has to be by simplification of procedure of providing official information, increase of level of participation of the state in formation of information policy of the state media.

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