

ОБЩЕСТВО И ПОЛИТИКА SOCIETY AND POLITICS

research article
UDC: 327
DOI: 10.48612/rg/RGW.26.5

The “Zero-COVID” Policy of the People's Republic of China in the Discourse of Chinese and Western Media

Aleksandra R. Kiseleva ✉

Peter the Great Saint Petersburg Polytechnic University, Saint Petersburg, Russia
✉ a.kiseleva22222@gmail.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0774-4785>

Abstract. *The media is now considered to be the fourth branch of government due to the enormous influence exerted on people. Understanding this, governments often use this “power” for their own purposes. The political engagement of the media can be noticeable both in the domestic and foreign policy affairs of any state. Their influence on international relations makes the media to be one of the tools of “soft” and “hard power”. As a means of “soft power”, the mass media can be used to form a positive image of the state through the dissemination of its attractiveness; information can also be presented as propaganda, which is regarded as a “hard method. This paper will examine how China uses the media to maintain its own image abroad, and what kind of “reaction” it receives from Western media on the example of the changes in the “zero-COVID” policy at the end of 2022. Analyzing the Chinese media, the foreign and Chinese branches of one information agency, we have revealed discrepancies in the discourse. Different target audiences were provided with different information that was made for the sake of China’s own interests. Western media (British and American), assessing the “zero-COVID” policy, to a large extent criticize any Beijing’s decisions, that has a negative impact on the image of the state abroad. The lifting of restrictions and the opening of China’s borders led to a controversial reaction in the world. The way how China handles this new challenge will ultimately determine the viability of the “zero-COVID” policy.*

Keywords: China; People's Republic of China; “zero-COVID” policy; coronavirus pandemic; COVID-19; media; image of the state; “soft power”

For citation: Kiseleva, A.R. The “Zero-COVID” Policy of the People's Republic of China in the Discourse of Chinese and Western Media. *Russia in the Global World*. 2023. Vol. 26. Iss. 1. P. 51–66. DOI: 10.48612/rg/RGW.26.5.

© Kiseleva, A.R., 2023. Published by Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University.

научная статья

УДК: 327

DOI: 10.48612/rg/RGW.26.5

Политика «нулевого ковида» Китайской Народной Республики в дискурсе китайских и западных СМИ

Киселева Александра Рубэновна ✉

Санкт-Петербургский политехнический университет Петра Великого,
Санкт-Петербург, Россия

✉ a.kiseleva22222@gmail.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0774-4785>

Аннотация. Средства массовой информации сейчас признаются четвертой ветвью власти ввиду колоссального влияния, оказываемого на людей. Понимая это, правительства нередко используют данную «силу» в своих целях. Политическая ангажированность СМИ может быть заметна в той или иной степени как во внутренних, так и во внешнеполитических делах любого государства. Их влияние на международные отношения делает СМИ одним из инструментов «мягкой» и «жесткой силы». В качестве средства «мягкой силы» масс-медиа могут использоваться для формирования позитивного имиджа государства через распространение его привлекательности, информация также может быть подана в качестве пропаганды, что расценивается уже как «жесткий» метод влияния. В данной работе будет рассмотрено, как Китай использует СМИ для поддержания собственного имиджа за рубежом, и какую «реакцию» он получает от западных медиа на примере изменений в политике «нулевого ковида» в конце 2022 года. В ходе анализа китайских СМИ были выявлены расхождения в дискурсе иностранных и китайской веток одного информационного ведомства, то есть ради собственных интересов разным целевым аудиториям предоставлялась разная информация. Западные СМИ (британские и американские), оценивая политику «нулевого ковида», в значительной степени критикуют любые действия Пекина, оказывая негативное влияние на имидж государства за рубежом. Отмена ограничений и открытие границ Китая повлекло за собой неоднозначную реакцию в мире. То, как Китай справится с новым вызовом, окончательно определит состоятельность политики «нулевого ковида».

Ключевые слова: Китай; Китайская Народная Республика; политика «нулевого ковида»; пандемия коронавируса; COVID-19; средства массовой информации; имидж государства; «мягкая сила»

Для цитирования: Киселева А.Р. Политика «нулевого ковида» Китайской Народной Республики в дискурсе китайских и западных СМИ // Россия в глобальном мире. 2023. Т. 26. Вып. 1. С. 51–66. DOI: 10.48612/rg/RGW.26.5.

© Киселева А.Р., 2023. Издатель: Санкт-Петербургский политехнический университет Петра Великого.

Introduction

In 1992, J. Nye's book “Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power” about “soft power” was translated and published in China,

and in the following 1993, the chairman of the department of international politics at Fudan University and Jiang Zemin's presidential adviser Wang Huning wrote the country's first article on this topic, titled "Culture as National Strength: Soft Power". Since then, the institution of "soft power" has gradually developed in China [1].

The developing "soft power" foreign policy is, of course, closely related to domestic policy, and this is especially prominent in China. The current concept of "cultural confidence" appears quite often in President Xi's speeches. It is assumed that such a concept is manifested in the confidence of the Chinese in their culture, their identity and the unity of the nation. This is due to the fact that for centuries they have been prone to ontological distrust of foreigners (there was a division into "us" and "them"). There were two ways of interacting with "strangers", or as the Chinese called them, "barbarians": with a word or with a sword [2]. It is not hard to understand that "subjugation of barbarians with a word" is a kind of analogue of "soft power", and "subjugation with a sword" is an example of "hard power". Now China still prefers "soft" methods of interaction with other states.

China is actively spreading its "soft power" abroad, using a wide range of tools and techniques, but foreign influence on Chinese society is not welcome in the government. Hu Jintao was quite neutral about it, but Xi Jinping is set differently: he defends the cultural traditions of China and indirectly opposes them to Western ones, he also introduced the concept of "cultural security", which consists in resisting Western influence (here directly American influence is meant). Beijing is aware that China is inferior to the United States in the field of "soft power" implementation, and the American dream is still more attractive in the world than the Chinese one. Nevertheless, China still cannot overcome this obstacle for a number of reasons: firstly, the close connection between culture and state ideology cannot always be called a successful tandem; secondly, the continued closeness of China in the information sphere, the presence of strict censorship also hinder the development of China's "soft power"; thirdly, the internal political problems that China is currently experiencing negatively affect the image of the country (here we are talking about the violation of human rights, the problem of Taiwan, etc.).

The image of the state provides the basis for the further spread of its "soft power". China has been able to make significant progress in creating a good

image of the country abroad, but COVID-19 has made its own adjustments. This paper will examine how the CPC demonstrates and explains its internal policy to the world, and how foreign countries evaluate certain events taking place in the PRC. The analysis will be carried out on the example of two specific cases: the fire in Urumqi, which occurred on November 24, 2022, and the “zero-COVID” policy in general. We will consider the information given in Chinese news agency (its Chinese, English and Russian branches) and in some British and American magazines to “represent” the Chinese, European and American positions and compare them figuring out main ideas and points.

Results of the Study and Their Discussion

Analysis of the Chinese Sources

At the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, US President D. Trump sharply criticized China’s activities, accusing Beijing of spreading the virus around the world. Beijing has denied all these allegations. The statement of WHO experts who visited Wuhan with an inspection that China was not to blame for the spread of the infection was widely circulated in the country and abroad. And while Western states suffered from the second and third waves of the spread of COVID-19 in 2021, China seemed to be returning to normal life. Many sources spoke approvingly about the measures taken by China as part of the “zero-COVID” policy, admired the diligence of Chinese citizens, who unquestioningly obeyed all instructions from above. However, in 2022, the situation changed: Western states learned how to live with COVID-19, but China continued to apply tough measures to combat the virus.

One of the consequences of the policy was the fire in Urumqi (November 24, 2022). The fire occurred on the 15th floor of a storied building, and then the flames spread to other floors. According to the Chinese sources people could not leave the house due to fire and smoke, the Western sources claim that the exit was closed because the house was on lockdown, so people were blocked inside. It is confirmed that about 10 people died there. It is worth noting that this is not the first such case when a fire occurs in a quarantined house.

“People’s Daily” is the official source of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, so we have studied the articles from the Chinese, English and Russian versions of the online magazine, in which Beijing presents its vision of events to the world. We have analyzed articles about Urumqi that

appeared within the three weeks after the fire and some articles about the results of “zero-COVID” policy that appeared in December 2022 and January 2023.

For example, in the English version of “People’s daily”, there is only one article about the fire. It says that an investigation is underway, the mayor also promised to punish the perpetrators, offered condolences to the families of the victims, assured that the victims were provided with proper medical care; there was also provided information that a total of 109 firefighters and 23 fire engines were dispatched to the scene, but access to the building was difficult due to the narrow streets in the area and people were trapped in apartments due to the spread of the fire; the fire was believed to have been caused by a malfunction in the switchboard in the bedroom on the 15th floor of the building [3]. This article was followed by four other articles that mentioned Urumqi (not a fire, but just the city itself). They introduce information about optimization of anti-COVID measures before the onset of cold weather and a likely new increase in the cases of COVID-19. It also notes that “in implementing those measures, some local authorities have taken a “one-size-fits-all” approach and excessive policy steps, increasing the burden on local medical resources and residents, and some places have not fully followed the new measures, which has also amplified the impact on economic and public services to livelihoods”. The article also pointed out that in case of a lockdown, apartment doors should not be sealed or welded, and fire escapes should not be blocked with anything [4]. Interestingly, the increase of the anti-COVID measures is not intended to make people’s life easier, it is needed to “ease the burden on community management and relieve the already strained public healthcare resources.” We would also like to draw attention to the fact that the author of this article often refers to some Western sources that talk about the enduring threat of COVID-19, thereby confirming the highest observational group [5]. In the third article partial cancellation of PCR tests, the ability to stay in self-isolation at home, official opening of shopping centers and markets are described [6]. Also, in December there was one more article published that told the story of a 101-year-old from Urumqi that had successfully recovered from COVID-19, highlighting the high level of medical care system in Xinjiang [7].

It is interesting, that Russian branch of the People’s Daily was more laconic. Only one article was also devoted to the fire, where the authors indicated only the date, time of the fire and the number of victims who died,

“despite the efforts of rescuers and firefighters” [8]. Further, at the request of “Urumqi”, one can see three more articles with the following titles: “Express delivery services will be gradually resumed in the city of Urumqi” [9], “Urumqi developed political measures to help residents in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic” [10], “Winter sports season opened in Urumqi” [11]. The first article noted that there is an improvement in the epidemiological situation in Urumqi; the second article briefly talked about helping those in need to overcome the impact of the coronavirus epidemic (they are talking about subsidies that will be allocated to the poor and unemployed); the third article consists of only two sentences, the content of which is fully reflected in the title.

If we look at the Chinese version of the newspaper, we will not find any article about the fire there. On November 24 at 14:22, a few hours before the fire, an article was published about the work of the “i国网” app (guo wang, state network), which improves the efficiency of repair services at power plants [12]. Following this article, there are already works devoted to the weakening of anti-COVID measures in the city. Most of them were duplicated on the Russian and English versions of the site, but the original source covers all the news in a more detailed way. So, we can find out that many restaurants, markets, chain stores and cafes are reopening in the city, even though most of them work mainly takeaway, some places can now receive guests “offline” [13]. Talking about the opening of the winter sports season, the author limited himself to a selection of photos taken at a ski resort. It is noteworthy that two people in the photographs have protective masks lowered, that is actually forbidden [14]. You can also read an article on international trade in Urumqi, which notes that this year the city achieved a total import and export volume of 37.224 billion yuan, and exports amounted to 27.455 billion yuan [15].

Thus, we can see that the information in three versions of the same newspaper is different. Realizing that the fire on November, 24 became known abroad, the editors published articles about the tragedy in Urumqi in foreign branches, but in China this topic is hushed up. It clarifies the fact that Chinese government “protects” its nation from the provocative information that may cause accusations of any scale against the officials. At the same time, they provide foreign branches of the news agencies with such information in order to show the party’s official vision of the situation to the world. That is needed, we guess, for keeping the situation in the country under control.

Analysis of the Western Sources

The Chinese news agency Xinhua, for example, is the largest of the existing ones, however, it cannot compete with the Western media, which are more popular among foreign readers. Therefore, it turns out that these exact media form the general image of the PRC abroad. This problem is recognized in China, it has been talked about for the past twenty years, but very delicately. Probably, in the nearest future this problem will not be resolved.

When analyzing Western sources, we focused on the publications of the British magazines “The Guardian”, “The Economist” and the American “The New York Times”, as they paid great attention to the “zero-COVID” policy in their materials and are currently one of the most authoritative sources.

For example, “the Guardian” article titled “Awkward silence: China official speechless after question on protests” was talking about a situation that happened while Foreign Minister Zhao Lijiang delivered a report in defense of the “zero-tolerance” policy at a conference. The thing is that the fire caused some protests in Chinese cities, so one journalist asked him whether Beijing plans to roll back “zero-COVID” policy because of the situation in the country. The minister took a long pause, then asked to repeat the question, the question was repeated, the minister fell silent again, looked at something in the papers, and finally said that the information voiced by the journalist was not true, and that China was following a “dynamic “zero-COVID” policy” [16]. Seemed like he was not ready for such question.

Western interviewers are becoming harsher talking about Chinese internal policy from year to year. So, the CPC should be ready to react at any sort of provocative questions to protect the country’s own interests and the party’s policy.

All three Western journals published a number of articles about the fire itself, detailing all the circumstances of the incident and linking the number of victims to the ongoing anti-COVID measures. Even more attention was drawn to the Chinese protests. “The Economist” devoted the December issue to China’s fight against COVID-19, calling it “China's COVID failure.”

So, in the materials of the issue, it is noted that the “zero-COVID” policy in China really began with a “stunning success”, it saved many lives, and even the damage to the economy in the early stages was not so significant. Rejecting

the possibility of a relatively “peaceful” coexistence with COVID-19, the PRC government has taken the following measures: firstly, the population was required to do PCR tests every 1–3 days; secondly, after receiving a negative test for COVID-19, a person received a green QR-code, which allowed them to leave home and visit accessible locations (at the entrance to any institution, the code must be scanned – this was how the movements of each person were tracked); if suddenly a person received a red code (this could happen due to a positive test for COVID-19 or recent contact with an infected person), then the red code was sent automatically to everyone who could intersect with the sick person, and all these people were required to self-isolate; thirdly, the main measure to localize the spread of the virus were lockdowns, that could be all over entire cities and last for months (the house in Urumqi, where the fire occurred, was on lockdown for more than 100 days) [17]. Also, “The Biggest White” were mentioned, these are the disease control officers who are accused of exceeding their authority and even beating up citizens who refused to comply with certain quarantine rules. As a result, all these measures turned into a test of people's loyalty to the authorities in general [18].

The economy of the state is also being tested. If at the beginning of the pandemic China coped with all the difficulties, now the economic problems are becoming more obvious, according to Western publications.

In the first half of 2022, 35 major PCR test companies earned 150 billion yuan (\$21 billion). China has spent 1.7 trillion yuan (1.5% of GDP) this year, according to some estimates, but these figures are believed to be lowered down. Trade within the country and foreign trade both have also declined, supply chains have become more fragile. The urban youth unemployment rate is now nearly 18%, nearly double what it was in 2018. According to such economic and social problems, containment of COVID becomes even more difficult [19].

Here we would like to remind you that the CCP does not admit any of these problems and does not consider the policy of “zero-tolerance” to be difficult. News of China's victories over the virus were accompanied by reports about how the West was still suffering from COVID-19, so Beijing was forming a false impression of the epidemiological situation in the world. For example, during the World Cup in Qatar, they did not show football fans in close-up on Chinese air, so that people did not see foreigners without masks, because this would go against with the “working” legend. But at the same time, if one of the

Western experts spoke about the unfading danger of the virus and its derivatives, the Chinese media could refer to this statement since this corresponded to party's ideas [20].

Vaccination was also necessary to maintain the existing legend. Most of the Chinese population was vaccinated, in the shortest possible time almost everyone received the first component of the vaccine. To date, some citizens got 2–3 vaccinations, but now their effectiveness is no longer considered high due to new strains of the virus, in particular Omicron. In addition, only 40% of older people over the age of 80 have received all three vaccinations necessary for a sufficient level of protection against the virus. Considering that the percentage of the elderly population in China is large, on November 29, the government decided to launch a campaign to encourage the elderly to get vaccinated. Experts note that receiving a fourth booster will improve the epidemiological situation in the country, but the government has not yet begun this process [19].

The issue talks about the fire in Urumqi, but the main focus is still shifted towards the protests. The authors note that now it is not the right time calm down people with the easing of anti-COVID measures. Winter is coming, and experts expect a sharp increase in the incidence precisely because of the onset of cold weather. "People's Daily" articles also write about this, but in addition, they talk about the need for local authorities to control the spread of infection.

"The Economist" is trying to make its own predictions: even if the "zero-COVID" policy ends in December 2022, its negative impact on the economy will persist until 2024, and, even worse, the virus will spread at an incredible speed, and 96% of the Chinese population will test positive for COVID-19. Then the PRC will need more than 410,000 intensive care beds, and the number of deaths will be 680,000. The situation can be partially corrected if antiviral drugs are used, but the amount of their stocks in China is unknown, and repeated vaccination can also help [19].

After analyzing this issue of the magazine and articles in other publications, we can notice the following: the authors willingly criticize the "zero-COVID" policy, but do not offer alternatives that could ease the pressure on the population and save people's lives; they make predictions about how many people may die if the policy is lifted, but do not undertake to calculate how many deaths were avoided due to the lockdowns; some even argue that the

Chinese government is now in a state of crisis that could lead to a repetition of the events of 1989.

At the moment, these publications and others like them influence China's image abroad, weakening its “soft power”. Perhaps the country's leadership could somehow defend its policy, but Zhao Lijiang's reaction to a direct question about the protests indicates Beijing's unpreparedness to discuss this topic. Probably, such a dialogue between East and West will never happen, because China as a whole rarely responds to the attacks of foreign media [21].

It is worth noting, however, that there is no clear international condemnation of the “zero-COVID” policy. Beijing does not confirm any of the problems voiced by the West. Concerned about the state of the economy, experts also do not explain why, despite all the difficulties, China's GDP is increasing every year [22]. In fact, the economy remains the main factor determining and defending China's place in the international arena.

The End of the “Zero-COVID” Policy

Now we can see that China is gradually changing its anti-COVID policy, however, we doubt that this is done due to condemnation in the press, as back on November 11, 2022, the Central Government published “20 Points on Improving COVID Control”, the purpose of which is to mitigate anti-COVID measures in the country. On December 7, the State Council unveiled the “New Ten Points” to return to the COVID containment model that existed in China at the end of 2020 and 2021, rather than to completely abandon the “zero-COVID” policy. Local authorities could independently determine what measures should be taken in their regions. After the local authorities gradually began to lift restrictions, on December 26, the State Council issued a new circular fixing the lifting of restrictions [23]. On January 8, China fully opened its borders for the first time since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, making it easier for foreigners to obtain visas for business, study, family reunification; it has become easier to travel around the country, this is especially important now, on the eve of the Spring Festival (this period usually has increased loads on transport networks, because people go back home for holidays). However, such a sudden opening of borders has caused concerns in other states, and therefore dozens of countries around the world began to require testing for COVID-19 and

monitoring the health of travelers arriving from China. This caused a rebuke from Beijing, which stated that these steps have no scientific basis [24].

The influence of foreign critical articles in authoritative publications on China's soft power and its image is certainly obvious, but it is now quite difficult to measure it. We would venture to suggest that if the world community were not concerned about the more pressing problems that are shaking Europe, the condemnation of China's "zero-COVID" policy could be more significant, which would be another attempt to curb the development of the People's Republic of China. Nevertheless, at this stage, Beijing can still repair the damage done to its image by demonstrating how the country's leadership will cope (and we hope that they will still have success in this process) with a sharp increase in the COVID-cases (WHO reports that January, 12 27,590 new cases of coronavirus were detected, the total number of cases is 10,830,804 confirmed [24]). The winter is coming, and these two months are likely to be decisive. In the spring it will be possible to give a concrete assessment of the "zero-COVID" policy.

Conclusion

Thus, it can be noted that China taboos the discussion of the fire in Urumqi in the media for Chinese audience, but in foreign brunches this topic is discussed, probably to preserve their own image (paradoxically). This approach may indicate that China is cautious about publishing materials for its nation, but in relation to foreign audiences, they are more open to covering such topics in order to show their own vision of the situation and explain the events to the world community, which we believe is done to protect the interests of China.

We doubt that the effects of the fire made the government to accelerate its rollback of the "zero-COVID" policy, as long as steps to ease this policy were taken even before the incident. This means that Beijing has been gradually preparing an action plan for returning "to normal life" and, at the end of 2022, broke into its implementation.

We consider that it would be more appropriate to evaluate the "zero-COVID" policy in the spring, when Beijing will hopefully be able to suppress a virus outbreak. Still, we can assume that China will be able to recover quickly, as economic indicators have not fallen much during the pandemic.

Talking about the Western media here we can say they are more biased in assessing what is happening in China, but Beijing does not recognize any of the problems that are attributed to it in the press. The West highlights in detail all the shortcomings of Xi's domestic policy, and much less emphasis on Beijing's successes, while not specifying what would be the right decision to make for the state. It is clear that the position of the Western magazines correlates with the position of their government. As long as these magazines are more popular abroad than the Chinese sources, they have a greater influence on the public and discredit the Beijing's policy, which negatively affects the image of the state. However, if China puts more emphasis on the development and popularity of its media abroad, then it will be easier for the state to defend its own interests. It is worth noting that such provocations aimed at curbing the development and spread of the influence of the People's Republic of China are now becoming more and more frequent, and they are carried out not only by the press. But the CCP's position about its policy is always strict and adamant.

REFERENCES

1. Kovba D.M. Teoreticheskaya i prakticheskaya adaptatsiya koncepta «Myagkoj sily» vostochnoaziatskimi gosudarstvami [Theoretical and Practical Adaptation of the Concept of "Soft Power" by the East Asian States]. *Prostranstvo i Vremya*. 2014. №4 (18). S. 111–118. Available at <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/teoreticheskaya-i-prakticheskaya-adaptatsiya-kontsepta-myagkoj-sily-vostochnoaziatskimi-gosudarstvami> (accessed: 04.11.2022). (In Russ.).
2. Xian Jiangnan, Liang Jun. Xinjiang Vows Probe into Deadly High Rise Fire. 26.11.2022. *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1126/c90000-10176691.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).
3. Cai Hairuo, Wu Chaolan. Precision Urged as Cities Roll out Optimized COVID Response. 28.11.2022. *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1128/c90000-10176942.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).
4. Cai Hairuo, Liang Jun. More Cities Optimize COVID Measures, Striking a New Balance between Epidemic Control and Social Livelihoods. 05.12.2022. *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1205/c90000-10179987.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).
5. Chang Sha, Wu Chaolan. China Further Optimizes COVID-19 Response to Resume Businesses. 10.12.2022. *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1210/c90000-10182389.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).
6. Xue Yanyan, Sheng Chuyi. Centenarian COVID-19 Patient Recovers in Xinjiang. 11.12.2022. *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1211/c90000-10182543.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
7. 10 chelovek pogibli i 9 poluchili raneniya v rezul'tate pozhara v odnom iz zhilyh domov v Sin'czyane [10 People Died and 9 Were Injured in a Fire in a Residential Building in Xinjiang]. 25.11.2022. "Zhen'min' zhibao" on-lajn. Available at <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1125/c31516-10176562.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022). (In Russ.).

8. V gorode Urumchi budut postepenno vozobnovleny uslugi ekspress-dostavki. [Express Delivery Services Will be Gradually Resumed in the City of Urumqi]. 29.11.2022. "ZHen'min' zhibao" on-lajn. Available at <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1129/c31516-10177398.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022). (In Russ.).
9. V Urumchi razrabotali politicheskie mery po okazaniyu pomoshchi zhitelyam v usloviyah epidemii COVID-19. [Urumqi has Developed Policy Measures to Help Residents Amid the COVID-19 Epidemic]. 30.11.2022. "ZHen'min' zhibao" on-lajn. Available at <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1130/c31516-10177965.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022). (In Russ.).
10. Den Cze, YAn Cyan'. V Urumchi otkryli sezon zimnih vidov sporta. [Winter Sports Season has Opened in Urumqi]. 07.12.2022. "ZHen'min' zhibao" on-lajn. Available at <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1207/c31516-10180948.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022). (In Russ.).
11. Yan Zhuj 杨睿, Han' Tin 韩婷. Ulumuci gundyan': eu "CHzhanshanban" fuugengaosyao 乌鲁木齐供电: 业务“掌上办”服务更高效 [Electricity Supply of Urumqi: Zhangshanban Service Became More Efficient]. 24.11.2022. Zhen'min'van 人民网 [People's Daily]. Available at <http://xj.people.com.cn/n2/2022/1124/c394722-40208552.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022). (In Chin.).
12. Chen Sin'huej 陈新辉, Han' Tin 韩婷. Ulumuci can'in' e huejfu tanshi 乌鲁木齐餐饮业恢复堂食 [Restaurant Services in Urumqi Resumed Work]. 10.12.2022. Zhen'min'van 人民网 [People's Daily]. Available at <http://xj.people.com.cn/n2/2022/1210/c186332-40226758.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022). (In Chin.).
13. Czyao Lun 焦隆, Chzhou Vanin 周婉婷. Ulumuci: huvaj syueyue 乌鲁木齐: 户外雪趣 [Urumqi: Outdoor Snow Activities]. 08.12.2022. Zhen'min'van 人民网 [People's Daily]. Available at: <http://gs.people.com.cn/n2/2022/1208/c183342-40223605.html> (accessed 11.12.2022). (In Chin.).
14. Van Lyan'syan 王连香, YAn Di 杨迪. Tan'fan fu gunfu chan'houde ulumuci goczya erlejkou an' 探访复工复产后的乌鲁木齐国家二类口岸 [Class II National Port of Urumqi Resumed Operation and Production]. 10.12.2022. Zhen'min'van 人民网 [People's Daily]. Available at <http://finance.people.com.cn/n1/2022/1210/c1004-32584483.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022). (In Chin.).
15. Awkward silence: China Official Speechless after Question on Protests – Video. 29.11.2022. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2022/nov/29/awkward-silence-china-official-speechless-after-question-on-protests-video> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
16. Mozur P., Zhong R., Krolik A. In Coronavirus Fight, China Gives Citizens a Color Code, With Red Flags. 01.03.2020. *The New York Times*. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/01/business/china-coronavirus-surveillance.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
17. China's COVID Failure. 03.12.2022. *The Economist*. Available at <https://www.economist.com/weeklyedition/2022-12-03> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
18. China's failing covid strategy leaves Xi Jinping with no good options. 03.12.2022. *The Economist*. Available at <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2022/12/01/chinas-failing-covid-strategy-leaves-xi-jinping-with-no-good-options> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
19. Holmes O. China Censors Maskless Crowd Footage in World Cup Broadcasts. 28.11.2022. *The Guardian*. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/28/china-censors-maskless-crowd-footage-in-world-cup-broadcasts> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
20. Avetisyan E.G. Mezhdunarodnyj imidzh KNR: faktory formirovaniya i trendy [China's International Image: Shaping Factors and Trends]. *Aktual'nye problemy*

sovremennyh mezhdunarodnyh otnoshenij. 2017. № 9. S. 85–91. Available at <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/mezhdunarodnyy-imidzh-kr-factory-formirovaniya-i-trendy> (accessed: 12.12.2022). (In Russ.).

21. GDP (current US\$) – China. World Bank National Accounts Data, and OECD National Accounts Data Files. *The World Bank*. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?end=2021&locations=CN&start=1960&view=chart> (accessed: 12.12.2022).

22. Li Zhuoran. How Beijing Accidentally Ended the Zero COVID Policy. 07.01.2023. *The Diplomat*. Available at <https://thediplomat.com/2023/01/how-beijing-accidentally-ended-the-zero-covid-policy/> (accessed: 12.01.2023).

23. Stevenson, A., Wang Zixu, May, T. As China Lifts Pandemic Border Controls, Mixed Feelings at Home and Abroad. 09.01.2023. *The New York Times*. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/asia/china-borders-covid.html> (accessed: 12.12.2022).

24. China Statistics. *World Health Organization*. Available at <https://www.who.int/countries/chn/> (accessed: 12.12.2022).

СПИСОК ИСТОЧНИКОВ

1. Ковбова Д.М. Теоретическая и практическая адаптация концепта «мягкой силы» восточноазиатскими государствами // *Пространство и время*. 2014. № 4(18). с. 111–118. [эл. доступ]. URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/teoreticheskaya-i-prakticheskaya-adaptatsiya-kontsepta-myagkoy-sily-vostochnoaziatskimi-gosudarstvami> (дата обращения: 04.11.2022).

2. Xian Jiangnan, Liang Jun. Xinjiang Vows Probe into Deadly High-Rise Fire. 26.11.2022 // *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1126/c90000-10176691.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).

3. Cai Hairuo, Wu Chaolan. Precision Urged as Cities Roll out Optimized COVID Response. 28.11.2022 // *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1128/c90000-10176942.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).

4. Cai Hairuo, Liang Jun. More Cities Optimize COVID Measures, Striking a New Balance Between Epidemic Control and Social Livelihoods. 05.12.2022 // *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1205/c90000-10179987.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).

5. Chang Sha, Wu Chaolan. China Further Optimizes COVID-19 Response to Resume Businesses. 10.12.2022 // *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1210/c90000-10182389.html> (accessed: 10.12.2022).

6. Xue Yanyan, Sheng Chuyi. Centenarian COVID-19 Patient Recovers in Xinjiang. 11.12.2022 // *People's Daily Online*. Available at <http://en.people.cn/n3/2022/1211/c90000-10182543.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022).

7. 10 человек погибли и 9 получили ранения в результате пожара в одном из жилых домов в Синьцзяне. 25.11.2022 // «Жэньминь Жибао» онлайн: [сайт]. URL: <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1125/c31516-10176562.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).

8. В городе Урумчи будут постепенно возобновлены услуги экспресс-доставки. 29.11.2022 // «Жэньминь Жибао» онлайн: [сайт]. URL: <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1129/c31516-10177398.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).

9. В Урумчи разработали политические меры по оказанию помощи жителям в условиях эпидемии COVID-19. 30.11.2022 // «Жэньминь Жибао» он-лайн: [сайт]. URL: <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1130/c31516-10177965.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).
10. В Урумчи открыли сезон зимних видов спорта. 07.12.2022 // «Жэньминь Жибао» он-лайн: [сайт]. URL: <http://russian.people.com.cn/n3/2022/1207/c31516-10180948.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).
11. Ян Жуй 杨睿, Хань Тин 韩婷. Улумуци гун дянь е у чжан шан бань фу у гэн гао сяо 乌鲁木齐供电: 业务“掌上办” 服务更高效 [Электроснабжение Урумчи: служба Чжаншаньбань стала более эффективной]. 24.11.2022. // Жэньминьван 人民网 [Жэньминь жибао]: [сайт]. URL: <http://xj.people.com.cn/n2/2022/1124/c394722-40208552.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).
12. Чэнь Синь Хуэй 陈新辉, Хань Тинь 韩婷. Улумуци цань инь е хуэй фу тан ши 乌鲁木齐餐饮业恢复堂食 [Рестораны в Урумчи возобновили работу]. 10.12.2022. // Жэньминьван 人民网 [Жэньминь жибао]: [сайт]. URL: <http://xj.people.com.cn/n2/2022/1210/c186332-40226758.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).
13. Цзяо Лун 焦隆, Чжоу Вань Тин 周婉婷. Улумуци ху вай сюэ цюй 乌鲁木齐: 户外雪趣 [Урумчи: Снежные мероприятия на открытом воздухе]. 08.12.22. // Жэньминьван 人民网 [Жэньминь жибао]: [сайт]. URL: <http://gs.people.com.cn/n2/2022/1208/c183342-40223605.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).
14. Ван Лянь Сян 王连香, Ян Ди 杨迪. Тань фан фу гун фу чань хоу дэ у лу му ци го цзя эр лэй коу ань 探访复工复产后的乌鲁木齐国家二类口岸 [Национальный порт Урумчи класса II возобновил работу и производство]. 10.12.22. // Жэньминьван 人民网 [Жэньминь жибао]: [сайт]. URL: <http://finance.people.com.cn/n1/2022/1210/c1004-32584483.html> (дата обращения: 11.12.2022).
15. Awkward Silence: China Official Speechless after Question on Protests – Video. 29.11.2022 // The Guardian. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2022/nov/29/awkward-silence-china-official-speechless-after-question-on-protests-video> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
16. Mozur, P., Zhong, R., Krolik, A. In Coronavirus Fight, China Gives Citizens a Color Code, With Red Flags. 01.03.2020 // The New York Times. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/01/business/china-coronavirus-surveillance.html> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
17. China's COVID Failure. 03.12.2022. The Economist. Available at <https://www.economist.com/weeklyedition/2022-12-03> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
18. China's failing covid strategy leaves Xi Jinping with no good options. 03.12.2022. The Economist. Available at <https://www.economist.com/briefing/2022/12/01/chinas-failing-covid-strategy-leaves-xi-jinping-with-no-good-options> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
19. Holmes O. China Censors Maskless Crowd Footage in World Cup Broadcasts. 28.11.2022 // The Guardian. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/nov/28/china-censors-maskless-crowd-footage-in-world-cup-broadcasts> (accessed: 11.12.2022).
20. Аветисян Э.Г. Международный имидж КНР: факторы формирования и тренды // Актуальные проблемы современных международных отношений. 2017. № 9. С. 85–91. [эл. доступ]. URL: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/mezhdunarodnyu-imidzh-krn-factory-formirovaniya-i-trendy> (дата обращения: 12.12.2022).

- 21.** GDP (current US\$) – China. World Bank National Accounts Data, and OECD National Accounts Data Files // The World Bank. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?end=2021&locations=CN&start=1960&view=chart> (accessed: 12.12.2022).
- 22.** Li Zhuoran. How Beijing Accidentally Ended the Zero COVID Policy. 07.01.2023 // The Diplomat. Available at <https://thediplomat.com/2023/01/how-beijing-accidentally-ended-the-zero-covid-policy/> (accessed: 12.01.2023).
- 23.** Stevenson, A., Wang Zixu, May, T. As China Lifts Pandemic Border Controls, Mixed Feelings at Home and Abroad. 09.01.2023 // The New York Times. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/08/world/asia/china-borders-covid.html> (accessed: 12.12.2022).
- 24.** China Statistics. World Health Organization. Available at <https://www.who.int/countries/chn/> (accessed: 12.12.2022).

Сведения об авторах / Information about authors

Киселева Александра Рубэновна – магистрант Высшей школы международных отношений Гуманитарного института, Санкт-Петербургский политехнический университет Петра Великого.

E-mail: a.kiseleva22222@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0003-0774-4785

Автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

Kiseleva Aleksandra R. – Master-student, Higher School of International Relations, Institute of Humanities, Peter the Great Saint Petersburg Polytechnic University.

E-mail: a.kiseleva22222@gmail.com; ORCID: 0000-0003-0774-4785

The author declares no conflict of interests.

*Статья поступила в редакцию 13.01.2023. Одобрена после рецензирования 20.01.2023. Принята 20.01.2023.
Received 13.01.2023. Approved after reviewing 20.01.2023. Accepted 20.01.2023.*