

The formation of Syrian Media System: From the Ottoman Empire to the French Mandate period

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The research relevance. The Syrian media system has undergone a long transformation, from the emergence of the first printed publications in the 19th century to the widespread use of digital platforms in the 21st century. The media have always played a significant role in the political, social and cultural life of the country. However, political and economic crises, war, and global digitalization have significantly changed the media landscape in Syria. The study of the formation and development of the Syrian media system is important for understanding the processes of the evolution of mass communications in this country, as well as modern events taking place in general in the Arab world.

The research problem. The issues of forming the Syrian media system, taking into account historical data and sociocultural context, are key to the theory of journalism and strategic media communications.

Solution to the problem. In our research we examined several stages of the development of Syrian media - from the first newspapers to the emergence of radio and television, including the Ottoman Empire and the French mandate.

Ottoman period

At this stage, the media were under strict external control. Print media began to develop in the 19th century, but they were strictly limited in their capabilities, as they operated under censorship by the colonial authorities [1]. Syrian media began to develop during the Ottoman rule, which lasted for more than four centuries until the end of World War I in 1918.

The first printed publication in Syria was the newspaper *Al-Juwaib*. This publication was an important step towards the formation of the media space in the region. It is noteworthy that it was during the Ottoman rule that printed publications in Arabic emerged, which contributed to the spread of Arabic culture and language among the population.

However, the role of the print media at this stage remained very limited. The Ottoman Empire maintained strict control over information and all publications were subject to strict censorship. Syrian publications such as *Al-Rai al-Aam* began to appear towards the end of the 19th century, reflecting a diversity of opinions and cultural currents.[2] These newspapers tended to limit themselves to issues of culture and education, trying to avoid overt political criticism in order to avoid sanctions from the Ottoman authorities.

The French Mandate Period (1920–1946)

In 1920, the Syrian Arab Republic was proclaimed, but its independence lasted only a few months, after which France established control over the territory of the country. During the French Mandate (1920–1946), the French authorities continued to use the media as a tool of governance and propaganda, seeking to control information. The French administration imposed strict regulations on the press, requiring publishers to obtain licenses and prohibiting the publication of material that could undermine French rule. French authorities also controlled the dissemination of information, directing key newspapers to support colonial policies.

This period also saw the emergence of prominent journalistic figures who gained a national audience and important national Arab publications such as *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* (founded by journalist Khaled Mohamed Khaledi), and *Al-Ittihad* (founded by journalist Khalil Sakakini). These newspapers played a significant role in the development of Syrian national consciousness and resistance to colonial rule. The journalists and writers working for these publications sought to develop Arab culture, defend the interests of the Syrian population, and fight for the country's independence.

In addition to Arab national publications, during the French Mandate there were also newspapers and magazines in French, addressed to European society, as well as to the enlightened sections of Syrian society. French-language publications promoted the ideas of modernization, the spread of European culture and the close ties between Syria and France, trying to create a positive image of the French Mandate.

Conclusion

The development of the Syrian media system has gone through several key stages, starting with the appearance of the first printed publications in the late 19th century and up to the present day, when online media are becoming the main source of information. At the first stage, the most important role in the formation of the Syrian media system was played by print media. They were published intermittently and irregularly, and mainly covered social issues. With the increase in print media, as well as the increase in people's political activity, they began to cover more political and civil society topics.

Источники и литература

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