

For the Publication of the First Issue of the Journal “China: Society and Culture”



It is sometimes difficult to navigate in the flow of a huge number of international scientific publications about China and a growing number of journals. But it so happened that in Russia in recent years there have been no specialized scientific journals specifically on China, although Chinese studies are certainly actively covered in comprehensive journals on Oriental studies, history and philology, and international relations. And popular magazines and articles, even written by quite professional authors, can not replace the strictly scientific study of China.

The presented journal is built around several fundamental principles, which the editorial board is going to strictly adhere to in the future. First of all, each issue of the journal is built around the main scientific topic of the issue, which can be devoted not only to a specific problem, but also to a particular scientific school, methodology, and discussion points. In this regard, each issue has its own issuing editor, which makes it possible to provide a platform for Sinologists of various views and directions related to a single problem. Thanks to this, each issue can be considered as a relatively complete collective monograph, the parts of which are related thematically and logically, and gives an idea not just about a narrow topic, but about the whole scientific direction.

But this does not mean that the authors do not argue among themselves, do not offer alternative points of view — a correct scientific discussion is not only welcome, but is also an important part of the editorial policy.

Another key editorial principle is that the journal provides a platform for both established and often outstanding scientists and the younger generation of researchers working under the guidance of “masters” in their field, who, we hope, will one day become a worthy face of Russian and international Chinese studies

Of course, the articles of the journal are, as is customary, double-blind peer review, and in addition, we rely on the experience and opinion of the international editorial board.

This issue is devoted to a very complex, but at the same time actively developing methodology: quantitative and structural methods of studying the history of China. Formally, the articles in this issue cover a huge period from

early antiquity to the XII century, although the methods of quantitative and structural research themselves are quite successfully used to study the modern political and economic life of China.

This issue, therefore, is devoted to an extremely interesting research methodology and how it can be applied to establish the reality and frequency of certain events. This question is far from idle, since Chinese historiography itself, as well as historiographies of other countries, often report extremely subjective information about themselves. Admittedly, this is not the easiest reading, but it allows you to give answers to many questions, including, for example, whether the early Chinese texts were transmitted orally or in writing.

The question of the accuracy of the methodology today is one of the central ones in the study of both traditional and modern China. Sinology, as well as all Oriental studies, was born centuries ago out of a certain “applied curiosity” of Western culture in front of the east and was represented not only by armchair scientists, but also by diplomats, travelers, translators, merchants. And the most interesting thing in the West’s view of the East was precisely the differences in cultures: in language, religion, management methods, organization of everyday life. In this regard, the first Sinologists were primarily “information collectors”, and only then — analytical researchers. However, gradually Sinology has gone far beyond retelling events, listing some characters and figures of economic development (although, we admit, this can still be found today). From a purely narrative, it has turned into a systemically and methodologically determined branch of science and expertise. And this can be considered the design of Sinology as a professional scientific direction. And here it is precisely a clearly formulated methodology that makes it possible to double-check (and sometimes reformulate) our ideas about Chinese reality.

Welcome to the first issue of the magazine “China: Society and Culture”! And we are always open to interesting and promising scientific articles.

Alexey Maslov
Editor-in-Chief