

Szymon Żyliński

Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie

TRADITIONAL BHUTANESE MEDIA ON SOCIAL MEDIA

BHUTAŃSKIE MEDIA TRADYCYJNE W MEDIACH SPOŁECZNOŚCIOWYCH

Introduction

Bhutan – small Himalayan kingdom, had remained for centuries in self-imposed isolation from the outside world. It is wedged between two most populated countries on Earth: China and India and was forced in the 1960's by geopolitical tensions to step on the path of unhurried and thoughtful modernisation, in which media have played a crucial role. That Buddhist country had decades for the process that took some other nations centuries¹. Press developed from a government bulletin *Kuensel*, founded in 1965, radio beginnings reach 1973. Television and Internet were introduced simultaneously in 1999, as one of the last countries in the world². Sigme Singye Wangchuck, so-called Fourth King, abdicated in favour of his son Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck in 2006. At that year private media were allowed to be created and two years later – in 2008, after over a century of being an absolute monarchy, Bhutan transitioned to a constitutional monarchy and held its first public election³.

In modern, global and connected world social media play a crucial role in many aspects of human communication. Not only they provide entertainment, which is one of its least interesting aspects, but they are a powerful tool to reach billions of people globally⁴. Brands and media conglomerates from all over the world engage in electronic communication to convey their message⁵. Bhutanese embrace social

¹ B. Shaw, *Bhutan*, in: J. Love (Ed.), *South Asia 2013* (10th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge, 2012, pp. 201–237

² C. J. Conlon, *Bhutan*, in: S.A. Gunaratne (Ed.), *Handbook of the media in Asia* (2nd ed.). New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, CA, London, UK: Sage Publications, 2002, pp. 67–83.

³ S.R. Muppidi, *Bhutan (.bt)*, in: S.R. Muppidi (Ed.), *Asian communication handbook* (6th ed.). Singapore: Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) and Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University (WKWSC-NTU) 2012, pp. 172–184.

⁴ R. Hanna, A. Rohm, V.L. Crittenden, *We're all connected: the power of the social media ecosystem*, "Business Horizons" 2010, vol. 54, issue 3, pp. 265–273.

⁵ A.M. Kaplan, M. Haenlein, *Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media*, "Business Horizons" 2010, vol. 53, issue 1, pp. 59–68.

media eagerly⁶, and as a society they made a huge leap from oral culture, as defined by Walter Ong⁷, bypassing traditional literacy, to modern digital literateness⁸. I can even try a hypothesis that if one wants to reach Bhutanese, one has to use social media to do so.

Bhutanese media landscape is new, already with quite a few players, Tshering Wangchuck⁹, BBS director stresses that with even too many. All of them want to fulfil their role in providing society with news however in modern times not only the print or broadcast version of their message is needed. Traditional media need to be on social media. This paper shows how traditional media such as newspaper, radio, and television present themselves on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others.

There is very little research done on Bhutanese media by foreign scholars, and since this paper presents “outsider’s perspective” those works are detailed below. However, there are Bhutanese scholars that write about media, for example, Kinley Dorji¹⁰, Siok Sian Pek¹¹, Karma Ura¹², and much more whose works are archived on the website of Centre for Bhutan Studies & GNH Research and in the Journal of Bhutan Studies.

The most extensive work on Bhutanese media is work by Bunty Avieson “The Dragon’s Voice: How Modern Media Found Bhutan”¹³ which is a book version Avieson’s Ph.D. thesis¹⁴. Part of this work titled “From Mani Stones to Twitter:

⁶ B. Josephi, *Journalists for a young democracy*, “Journalism Studies” 2017, vol. 18, issue 4, pp. 495–510.

⁷ W. J. Ong, *Orality and literacy: The technologizing of the world* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge, 2002.

⁸ B. Avieson, *The dragon’s voice: how modern media found Bhutan*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2015.

⁹ T. Wangchuck, personal communication, 12.11.2015.

¹⁰ K. Dorji, Media in Bhutan: Now and then. “Journal of Bhutan Studies” 2006, vol. 14, Retrieved from http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/publicationFiles/JBS/JBS_Vol14/14-2.pdf (access: 29.03.2017).

¹¹ Siok Sian Pek, *Opening the gates in Bhutan: media gatekeepers and the agenda of change, Towards global transformation*. Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Gross National Happiness Thimphu 2008, <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/publicationFiles/ConferenceProceedings/3rdGNH/7.3rdGNH.pdf> (access: 28.03.2017).

¹² K. Ura, *Culture, liberty and happiness*, in: Media and public culture. Proceedings of the Second International Seminar on Bhutan Studies, Thimphu 2006, <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/publicationFiles/ConferenceProceedings/MediaAndPublicCulture/M-5.pdf> (access: 23.10.2017).

¹³ B. Avieson, *The dragon’s voice: how modern media found Bhutan*, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press 2015.

¹⁴ B. Avieson, *The voice of the dragon: The emerging media in the new democracy of Bhutan* (Doctoral dissertation), <http://www.researchonline.mq.edu.au> (access: 23.03.2017).

Bhutan Creates a Unique Media Matrix for a 21st-Century Democracy”¹⁵ was published in prestigious International Journal of Communication. All above texts present holistic approach in describing Bhutanese mediascape.

Another paper “Journalists for a Young Democracy” written by Beate Josephi¹⁶, is a comprehensive survey of Bhutanese journalists and their understanding of the role of media. The latest 2015 GNH Conference that took place in Paro yield a paper on GNH and social media¹⁷. In most of the scientific papers that concern Bhutanese media social media are excluded from a discourse, therefore this writing fulfils the gap.

Methods

Names of all Bhutanese media were taken from Bhutan Media Foundation website¹⁸ which is the trustworthy source for media related material. There is a total of 20 media titles in Bhutan. One daily newspaper – *Kuensel*, printed in English and in Dzongkha, three in Dzongkha (*Druk Neytshuel*, *Druk Yoedzer*, *Gyalchi Sarshog*), and five in English (*Bhutan Times*, *Bhutan Today*, *Business Bhutan*, *The Bhutanese*, *The Journalist*). Except for public radio – *BBS Radio*, that belongs to Bhutan Broadcasting Service and broadcasts on both shortwave and FM frequency, and online there are 4 other radio stations (*Centennial Radio* 101FM, *Kuzoo FM*, *Radio Valley* 99.9FM, and *Yiga Radio* 94.7FM). Only *BBS Radio* and *Kuzoo FM* reach all districts in the country. There are also two television channels – *BBS* and *BBS 2* that also belong to the Bhutan Broadcasting Services.

First, I looked manually for Bhutanese traditional media websites typing each name into Google search engine. When a website has been found I searched for social media links which usually are put in a prominent place and followed to their profile. In most cases, a website could not be located therefore I manually typed each name of a certain Bhutanese medium into Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. After locating it I put all information into a table and counted most important factors such as the number of subscriptions, likes or followers.

When social media platforms have been described quantitatively I moved into qualitative research and skimmed the content of social media platforms taking notes, when stumbled upon an interesting part. In gathering and analysing all the material I consulted John Lovett’s book *Social media metrics secrets*¹⁹.

¹⁵ B. Avieson, *From Mani Stones to Twitter: Bhutan creates a unique media matrix for 21st-century Democracy*, “International Journal of Communication” 2015, no. 9, pp. 2487 – 2506.

¹⁶ B. Josephi, *Journalists for a young democracy*, op. cit.

¹⁷ S. Zylinski, Gross National Happiness (GNH) on social media platforms. Papers presented at the 2015 GNH Conference in Paro, <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/2015GNHConference/Paperfor2015GNHConference/21.%20GNH%20on%20Social%20Media%20Platforms.pdf> (access: 24.10.2017).

¹⁸ Bhutan Media Foundation website, <http://www.bmf.bt/> (access: 23.04.2017).

¹⁹ J. Lovett, *Social media metrics secrets*. Indianapolis, IN: Wiley Publishing, 2010.

Results

To analyse the presence of traditional media in social media, research outcome was divided into applicable groups such as website, Facebook, Twitter, other social media. Each of them consists of quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Websites

Out of 20 analysed media only *Kuensel* and *BBS* (*BBS*, *BBS 2*, *BBS Radio*) have stable, up to date, and working website. *Kuensel's* website²⁰ is clean looking, functional and well thought out. When one clicks on *BBS Radio* icon on the official website of *BBS* one is redirected to page with a “Program schedule”²¹ however on their Facebook page they provide different website name²², which does not work. The similar situation repeats itself with *BBS 2*, which on the website redirects the viewer to a proper website²³ whereas FB fanpage provides another, not working website²⁴.

When describing *Bhutan Broadcasting Service* media channels, it's difficult to tell which website belongs to which medium. The website that hides under <http://www.bbs.bt/news/>²⁵ reminds a portal with news and editorial messages. It is also a forefront of *BBS Radio*. When one clicks the icon *Radio* one is redirected to the page with the weekly schedule of all radio programs and the icon on top of the page remains the same. Only when clicked on *BBS 2* icon one is redirected to a totally different looking website. All *BBS* channels blend into one.

Some titles struggle financially and are unable to keep their website up for the whole month when the bandwidth limit is exceeded the site becomes inaccessible. When accessing *Business Bhutan's* website on 27.08.2016 the following message was displayed: „Bandwidth Limit Exceeded. The server is temporarily unable to service your request due to the site owner reaching his/her bandwidth limit. Please try again later”²⁶. However, when I visited the same website a few days later, but in a new month, I was able to access all its information without any problems²⁷. Aesthetically *Business' Bhutan* website is one of the best mentioned here. Its clean design on white background with company's logotype sends a positive and professional message however, the website is slightly outdated. When browsing it on 02.09. last posts were from 03.08.2016. Moreover, rarely any post is commented by readers, which mean the website is not frequented by users.

On *Business Bhutan* website there is an advertisement for *Kuzuzangpola* – and in-flight magazine for *Druk Air* – Bhutanese airlines. The website on the first sight

²⁰ Kuensel website, <http://www.kuenselonline.com/> (access: 23.04.2017).

²¹ BBS Radio, http://www.bbs.bt/news/?page_id=51531(access: 23.08.2016).

²² BBS Radio, <http://www.englishradio.bbs.bt> (access: 23.08.2016).

²³ BBS 2, <http://bbs.bt/news/bbs2/> (access: 24.08.2016).

²⁴ BBS 2, <http://www.bbs.bt/bbs2> (access: 24.08.2016).

²⁵ BBS, <http://www.bbs.bt/news/> (access: 24.08.2016).

²⁶ Business Bhutan, <http://businessbhutan.bt/> (access: 27.08.2016).

²⁷ Ibidem, (access: 2.09.2016).

looks professional but when dug deeper some texts did not have a picture which looks unprofessional²⁸ or the pictures are pixelated.

Facebook

Facebook is the most popular platform where almost all the media are present. Facebook is a must, and even if other social channels may sometimes be omitted in public communication, the portal of Mark Zuckerberg cannot be overlooked²⁹.

The most popular traditional medium on Facebook in Bhutan is *Radio Valley* that only broadcasts in and around Thimphu, their fanpage has 75 278 likes³⁰. The second is *Kuensel* – 47 292³¹, and *Yeewong* – 12 461³² ex aequo with *The Bhutanese* – 12 273³³. The rest of the media are less active.

Radio Valley's channel is very active and quite often even a dozen posts is published every day. They range from local news, global fun-facts to advertisements, that exquisitely blend in with other messages, that don't even pass as a sponsored material. Bhutan's adoption of English a few decades back put the country in the privileged position in which its citizens may consume global texts, that is utilized superbly by *Radio Valley*.

Kuensel besides its main fanpage, also has *K2 – Kuensel weekend magazine*, with 4 092 likes³⁴ and *Kuensel Corporation* fanpage with 4 157 likes³⁵. *Kuensel Corporation* fanpage originally published pictures of first pages of newspaper in poor quality – it seems the channel since 2010 has been suspended. Both *Kuensel* and *K2* fanpages are active, and mostly publish links to a text published on their website, that is the almost exact replica of those printed in the traditional newspaper. The only exemption from this rule are texts that are branded with the

²⁸ Business Bhutan, <http://businessbhutan.bt/category/columns/> (access: 2.09.2016).

²⁹ S. Hille & P. Bakker, I like news. Searching for the 'Holy Grail' of social media: The use of Facebook by Dutch news media and their audiences, "European Journal of Communication" 2013, vol. 28, no. 6; A. Lipsman, G. Mudd, M. Rich, S. Bruich, The power of „Like". How brands reach (and influence) fans through social-media marketing, "Journal of Advertising Research" 2012, vol. 52, issue. 1; G. Khim-Yong, H. Cheng-Suang, L. Zhijie, Social media brand community and consumer behaviour: quantifying the relative impact of user- and marketer-generated content. "Informations systems research" 2013, vol. 24, pp. 88–107.

³⁰ Radio Valley Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/radiovalleybhutan/?fref=ts> (access: 1.09.2016).

³¹ Kuensel Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/Kuensel> (access: 1.09.2016).

³² Yeewong Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/yeewongmagazine/?fref=ts> (access: 1.09.2016).

³³ The Bhutanese Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/TheBhutaneseNewspaper/?fref=ts> (access: 1.09.2016).

³⁴ K2 Facebook fanpage, https://www.facebook.com/Kuensel2/?ref=timeline_chaining (access: 10.09.2016).

³⁵ Kuensel Corporation Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/Kuensel-Corporation-371382270761/> (access: 10.09.2016).

word “breaking”, that are important news. Kuensel also rarely presents its text with a picture (around one in ten posts have a picture).

Yeewong, being “Bhutan’s only women & lifestyle magazine” out of definition, stands out from the other media outlets that focus on the news. Here one can find posts about fashion photo-shoots, cosmetics giveaways, invitations to various events (exhibitions, meetings), pictures and occasional commercials. Posts are not frequent, one in every couple of days; more often when news issue of the magazine is printed.

Very interesting approach to publishing news picked investigative newspaper *The Bhutanese*, that had posted on their Facebook profile whole texts that appear in their printed edition. Only recently they started publishing material that redirects users to their newly opened website. That approach very closely reminds of *Kuensel’s* strategy.

Other media even though are present on Facebook their reach and frequency of published material is not high, as it is with *Yiga Radio*³⁶. *Kuzoo FM*, should reactivate their Facebook profile³⁷, on which the last post is from 2013. Business Bhutan should unify their Facebook communication. It has two fanpages (one with more actual content³⁸ and another one with slightly outdated information³⁹).

Twitter

Globally that social media channel is used keenly by journalists⁴⁰. Out of all 20 Bhutanese media, 11 have Twitter accounts, and only six are active, which means they published something in the last month. The important factor of Twitter is the number of followers, and the highest amount has *BBS* – 26 000, then *Kuensel* – 23 200 and on the third position is *The Bhutanese* – 9 547. *BBS’s* Twitter channel publishes content on behalf of all its channels: *BBS 1*, *BBS 2*, and *BBS Radio*.

The number of followers on Twitter is crucial, however, to reach the audience with the message, one has to actively publish. The media with the most tweets are *Kuensel* – 14 700, *BBS* – 12 700, and *The Bhutanese* – 3 561.

The number of followers is correlated with a number of tweets. *BBS*, *Kuensel* and *The Bhutanese* publish a lot of posts which could be seen in their followers’ numbers. Just below the podium *Business Bhutan* is placed with 6 298 followers and 3 561 tweets.

³⁶ Yiga Radio Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/yigaradio94.7/> (access: 1.09.2016).

³⁷ Kuzoo Fm Facebook profile, <https://www.facebook.com/Kuzoo-FM-249766201715133/?fref=ts> (access: 1.09.2016).

³⁸ Business Bhutan Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/businessbhutanpvt.ltd> (access: 1.09.2016).

³⁹ Business Bhutan Facebook fanpage, <https://www.facebook.com/Business-Bhutan-1659008391037706/> (access: 1.09.2016).

⁴⁰ A. N. Ahmad, *Is Twitter a useful tool for journalists?*, “Journal of Media Practice” 2014, vol. 11, issue 2, pp. 145–155.

The majority of Twitter accounts were created in 2010, with *Yeewong* in 2009, and last by *Kuzoo FM* and *Bhutan Times* in May 2013. Some other media had had potential and were active in the past when the new titles tried to establish themselves.

Some posts from *BBS's* Twitter have been redirected automatically from Facebook using certain programme – it does not send professional feedback to the audience. Similarly does *Radio Valley* or *The Bhutanese*. *Kuensel* and *Business Bhutan* publish all their posts manually without the help of other programmes.

Business Bhutan among all the other media uses retweets the most however, their feed is quite often polluted with government tenders. The same goes for *The Bhutanese* of which certain posts government tenders. *Kuensel* redirects readers to their website, and their Twitter plays only a role of a signpost.

Even though *Yeewong* is included in the active section of Bhutanese media on Twitter because it had published a post during last month it should not be there because there was a really long break between posts: the last was published on 08.08.2016 whereas the previous one on 28.02.2013, and the one before that on 03.12.2012. Such low publication rate does not profit.

To sum up Bhutanese media presence on Twitter I can say that *Kuensel* has the best policy of presence in Twittersverse. Almost all media limit themselves to publish titles or lead of their content and rarely get interactive with readers, almost never in their posts use “@” symbol to reply publically to someone’s remark and to interact with other media. Social media are by definition interactive, whereas traditional Bhutanese media use it as a traditional tool of mass communication “one to many”. That approach shall be changed.

Other social media

Out of all 20 media outlets that were included in this research nine are present on other social media channels, whereas three belong to *Bhutan Broadcasting Service: BBS1, BBS 2, and BBS Radio* have YouTube channel, with respectively 4 653, 2 693, and 187 subscribers.

Yeewong besides being present on Facebook and Twitter has also channels on Instagram and YouTube. *Yeewong* on YouTube has an insignificant number of 43 subscribers and only seven videos⁴¹. Much more active than women magazine is on Instagram⁴², where pictures of beauty products, takes from the photo session, and ads are blended with other content of office work and fronts of the magazine.

On Instagram are also present *Radio Valley* and *Kuensel*, however, they are not active there. *Radio Valley* published their last post in June 2016⁴³ and *Kuensel* in

⁴¹ Yeewong YouTube channel, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC38dHkNs-Or2xslIRxW_mfQ/videos (access: 9.09.2016).

⁴² Yeewong Instagram account, https://www.instagram.com/yeewong_magazine/ (access: 9.09.2016).

⁴³ Radio Valley Instagram account, <https://www.instagram.com/p/BHlewFYgMCr/> (access: 9.09.2016).

April 2015⁴⁴. Also, *Business Bhutan* is on Instagram⁴⁵ however, they only publish government tenders there, that would be much more suitable in some other place, such as advertisement section on their section. *Yiga Radio* is rarely mentioned in this research, because they do not provide enough information on social media to be looked into, for example on Instagram it only has two posts with the last one published in the beginning of 2015⁴⁶.

Both *Radio Valley* and *Centennial Radio* use Soundcloud – “world’s leading social sound platform”⁴⁷, however only *Radio Valley* is an active user, with 3 020 followers and 743 track audio materials uploaded⁴⁸. Besides publishing songs of local artists and whole programmes such as “Good evening Tasho Benji”, *Radio Valley* also presents ads that they air. The situation with *Centennial Radio* seems to be much poorer. Their Soundcloud channel looks like it has had been created just to publish five government-sponsored ads that concern media literacy⁴⁹.

Discussion

The government subsidised media such as *BBS* and *Kuensel* are best represented on social media and have the most of followers/likes, and what is even more important, they are the most active. It’s surprising because the activity on social media platforms does not need a lot of financial input and as well might be used by other, private media outlets. On the other hand, without sufficient funds, it is difficult to delegate and send reporters to gather material, and the social media needs quality content. However, in the lack of journalistic content from its own reporters, one might reach for borrowed content just like *Radio Valley* does, which content is obtained from other global media players. It is not a deception – it’s playing by the rules of new media setting where “remix culture” is thriving⁵⁰. And when speaking about borrowed/reposted/remixed content Bhutanese media are in an ideal situation language wise because English is widely used in Bhutan, and therefore the pool from which to borrow is vast and deep in terms of content.

Even though *BBS* is doing well, there is a space for improvement, for example instead of just one Twitter account for *BBS*, *BBS 2*, and *BBS Radio*, there should be three different accounts, each with its own style, just like it’s done with YouTube,

⁴⁴ Kuensel Instagram account,

<https://www.instagram.com/p/1h3oNZGhns/?taken-by=kuenselonline> (access: 9.09.2016).

⁴⁵ Business Bhutan Instagram account,

<https://www.instagram.com/businessbhutan/> (access: 9.09.2016).

⁴⁶ Yiga Radio Instagram account,

<https://www.instagram.com/yigaradio/> (access: 9.09.2016).

⁴⁷ Soundcloud, About Soundcloud,

<https://soundcloud.com/pages/contact> (access: 9.09.2016).

⁴⁸ Radio Valley Soundcloud channel,

<https://soundcloud.com/radiovalley> (access: 9.09.2016).

⁴⁹ Centennial Radio Soundcloud page,

<https://soundcloud.com/centennialradio> (access: 9.09.2016).

⁵⁰ L. Lessig, *Remix. Making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy*. Penguin Press, New York, NY 2008.

where there are three different channels, each with different content and peculiarity. Also, Facebook fanpage for *BBS Radio* seems to be missing. When one looks at the leading, global media players such as *The New York Times* or *The Guardian*, they both take advantage of newest and most popular among youth social media applications such as Instagram and Snapchat. Bhutanese media should embrace new ways communication and reach for young recipients through those new platforms.

A surprise among all the well-established media in Bhutan is a women magazine – *Yeewong*, that incorporates the most social media channels, however, they are not as active as other prominent Bhutanese media, which in a way is understandable because *Yeewong* is quarterly.

It seems that all Bhutanese media that accept government tenders also publish them on social media. That kind of serious information is not popular among the global audience. On the other hand, Bhutan is a unique country, with its lack of well-developed advertising sector, in which government tenders play the role of advertising revenue. I may speculate that those posts may be perceived as neutral by Bhutanese. On the other hand, even for a well-accustomed media user situation, where on social media channels are mostly published government tenders or government-sponsored materials seem suspicious and discouraging. When speaking about commercials, it is worth noting that they often blend in with other contents and may be difficult to distinguish from other material.

The biggest issue of all analysed profiles is the lack of regularity of posts on social media channels. *Radio Valley* huge popularity might be attributed to a number of practices that other traditional media don't bother exercising, such as regular publications (sometimes even a few times a day) or a custom of accompanying each post with a picture. Interestingly *Radio Valley* such a giant on Facebook is only a small player on Twitter.

Speaking of Twitter, all Bhutanese media treat it without enough attention, quite often reposting their own posts from Facebook, using a special programme. It is visible, and outputting for the reader. Again, the global media outlets such as do not do it.

In almost all messages transmitted by Bhutanese media, there is very little news coverage from around the world. Mostly it's local information with some fun-facts from English speaking countries, mostly US, UK, and Australia.

It is worth stressing that most of the analysed social media channels are strongly tied with Bhutanese visual imagery, either in a form of a traditional symbol (*Yeewong*, *Kuensel*), or pictures depicting Royal Family (*Radio Valley*). One of the few exceptions is *The Bhutanese's* Facebook page background picture which presents a billboard with the name of the newspaper, delivery van, and stairs to the building that holds their offices. It evokes the sense of professionalism.

Bhutanese media are in the state of constant change and I could observe those changes even during the period of writing this article, for example when gathering the data at the end of August 2016 *The Bhutanese's* website was not operational, whereas at the beginning of September it was up and updated regularly. This paper is only a snippet of the constantly shifting media landscape that will take years to

stabilise and resurface key players. We can see already see the main ones on the public media side (*Kuensel* and *BBS*) and they will stand their ground but we still need to wait for the private media houses to establish themselves more strongly both in the traditional news reporting and on social media. Social platforms and apps are prognostic of the future situation of traditional media, and one can assume that if a certain radio station or newspaper title does well on social media, their operation has a big chance to stay in business. There is a potential to build big, strong and influential private medium. One of the contestants closest to achieving that status is *Radio Valley* and *The Bhutanese*. Those two players should invest in their websites (in the case of *Radio Valley* to open one) and expand to new social media channels. Only the future will bring definitive outcome, but social media is good prognostic of the situation to come.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ahmad A. N. 2014.** *Is Twitter a useful tool for journalists?* *Journal of Media Practice* (vol. 11, issue 2, pp. 145–155).
- Avieson B. 2013.** *The voice of the dragon: The emerging media in the new democracy of Bhutan* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from: <http://www.researchonline.mq.edu.au>.
- Avieson B. 2015.** *From Mani Stones to Twitter: Bhutan creates a unique media matrix for 21st-century Democracy.* *International Journal of Communication* (no. 9), pp. 2487 – 2506.
- Avieson B. 2015.** *The dragon's voice: how modern media found Bhutan.* Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.
- BBS 2 website. Retrieved 24.08.2016 from <http://bbs.bt/news/bbs2/>.
- BBS 2 website. Retrieved 24.08.2016 from <http://www.bbs.bt/bbs2>.
- BBS Radio website, Retrieved 23.08.2016 from <http://www.englishradio.bbs.bt>.
- BBS Radio website. Retrieved 23.08.2016 from http://www.bbs.bt/news/?page_id=51531.
- BBS website. Retrieved 24.08.2016 from <http://www.bbs.bt/news/>.
- Bhutan Media Foundation. *Media in Bhutan.* Retrieved 20.09.2016 from <http://www.bmf.bt/media-in-bhutan/>.
- Broersma M., Graham T. 2013.** *Twitter as a news source.* “Journalism Practice” vol. 7, issue 4, pp. 446–464.
- Business Bhutan Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 01.09.2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/businessbhutanpvt.ltd>.
- Business Bhutan Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 01.09.2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/Business-Bhutan-1659008391037706/>.
- Business Bhutan Instagram account. Retrieved 09.09.2016 from <https://www.instagram.com/businessbhutan/>.
- Business Bhutan website. Retrieved 02.09.2016 from <http://businessbhutan.bt/>.
- Business Bhutan website. Retrieved 02.09.2016 from <http://businessbhutan.bt/category/columns/>.

- Business Bhutan website. Retrieved 27.08.2016 from <http://businessbhutan.bt/>.
- Centennial Radio Soundcloud channel. Retrieved 09.09.2016 from <https://soundcloud.com/centennialradio>.
- Centennial Radio Soundcloud page. Retrieved 08.09.2016, from <https://soundcloud.com/centennialradio>.
- Conlon C. J. 2002.** *Bhutan*. In: S.A. Gunaratne (Ed.), *Handbook of the media in Asia* (2nd ed., pp. 67–83). New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, CA, London, UK: Sage Publications.
- Hanna R., Rohm A., Crittenden V.L. 2010.** *We're all connected: the power of the social media ecosystem*. "Business Horizons" vol. 54, issue 3, pp. 265–273.
- Hille S. & Bakker P. 2013.** *I like news. Searching for the 'Holy Grail' of social media: The use of Facebook by Dutch news media and their audiences*, "European Journal of Communication" vol. 28, no. 6.
- Joseph B. 2015.** *Journalists for a young democracy*, "Journalism Studies" 2017, vol. 18, issue 4, pp. 495–510.
- K2 Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 10.09.2016 from https://www.facebook.com/Kuensel2/?ref=timeline_chaining.
- Kaplan A.M., & Haenlein M. 2010.** *Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media*. "Business Horizons" vol. 53, issue 1.
- Karma Ura. 2006.** *Culture, liberty and happiness*, in: Media and public culture. Proceedings of the Second International Seminar on Bhutan Studies. Retrieved from <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/publicationFiles/ConferenceProceedings/MediaAndPublicCulture/M-5.pdf>.
- Khim-Yong G., Cheng-Suang H., Zhijie L. 2013.** *Social media brand community and consumer behaviour: quantifying the relative impact of user- and marketer-generated content*. "Informations systems research" vol. 24, pp. 88–107.
- Kinley Dorji. 2006.** *Media in Bhutan: Now and then*. "Journal of Bhutan Studies" vol. 14. Retrieved from http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/publicationFiles/JBS/JBS_Vol14/14-2.pdf.
- Kuensel Corporation Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 10.09.2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/Kuensel-Corporation-371382270761/>.
- Kuensel Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 01.09.2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/Kuensel>.
- Kuensel Instagram account. Retrieved 09.09.2016 from <https://www.instagram.com/p/1h3oNZGhns/?taken-by=kuenselonline>.
- Kuensel website. Retrieved 01.09.2016 from <http://www.kuenselonline.com/>.
- Kuzoo Fm Facebook profile. Retrieved 01.09.2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/Kuzoo-FM-249766201715133/?fref=ts>.
- Lessig L. 2008.** *Remix. Making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy*. New York, NY: Penguin Press.

- Lipsman A., Mudd G., Rich M., Bruich S. 2012.** *The power of „Like”. How brands reach (and influence) fans through social-media marketing.* “Journal of Advertising Research” vol. 52, issue. 1.
- Lovett J. 2010.** *Social media metrics secrets.* Indianapolis, IN: Wiley Publishing.
- Muppidi S.R. 2012.** *Bhutan (.bt)*, in: S.R. Muppidi (Ed.), *Asian communication handbook* (6th ed., Singapore: Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) and Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University (WKWSCI-NTU), pp. 172–184.
- Ong W. J. 2002.** *Orality and literacy: The technologizing of the world (2nd ed.).* New York, NY: Routledge.
- Radio Valley Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 01.09.2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/radiovalleybhutan/?fref=ts>.
- Radio Valley Instagram account. Retrieved 09.09. 2016 from <https://www.instagram.com/p/BHlEwFYgMCr/>.
- Radio Valley Soundcloud channel. Retrieved 09.09. 2016 from <https://soundcloud.com/radiovalley>.
- Shaw B. 2012.** *Bhutan*, in: J. Love (Ed.), *South Asia 2013* (10th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 201–237.
- Siok Sian Pek. 2008.** *Opening the gates in Bhutan: media gatekeepers and the agenda of change, Towards global transformation. Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Gross National Happiness Thimphu 2008.* Retrieved from <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/publicationFiles/ConferenceProceedings/3rdGNH/7.3rdGNH.pdf>
- Soundcloud. About Soundcloud. Retrieved 09.09. pp. 201–237 from <https://soundcloud.com/pages/contact>.
- The Bhutanese website. Retrieved 01.09.2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/TheBhutaneseNewspaper/?fref=ts>.
- Yeewong Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 01.09. 2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/yeewongmagazine/?fref=ts>.
- Yeewong Instagram account. Retrieved 09.09. 2016 from https://www.instagram.com/yeewong_magazine/.
- Yeewong YouTube channel. Retrieved 09.09. 2016 from https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC38dHkNs-Or2xslIRxW_mfQ/videos.
- Yiga Radio Facebook fanpage. Retrieved 01.09. 2016 from <https://www.facebook.com/yigaradio94.7/>.
- Yiga Radio Instagram account. Retrieved 09.09. 2016 from <https://www.instagram.com/yigaradio/>
- Zyliński S. 2015.** *Gross National Happiness (GNH) on social media platforms*, in: Papers presented at the 2015 GNH Conference in Paro. Retrieved from <http://www.bhutanstudies.org.bt/2015GNHConference/Paperfor2015GNHConference/21.%20GNH%20on%20Social%20Media%20Platforms.pdf>.

SUMMARY

Bhutan for centuries has remained in a self-imposed isolation that enabled development of customs and traditions that influence all aspects of life. However, the geopolitical tensions in the middle of the 20th century forced this little Himalayan country to open up and embark upon modernisation effort, that culminated in the change of political system from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy. Also, in the effort to strengthen democracy, private media were allowed to be created in 2006. This paper tries to take a closer look at the way the traditional media (newspaper, television, radio) in Bhutan represent themselves on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube etc. The qualitative and quantitative analysis will help to answer questions how they convey messages to their recipients and why some of the titles abandoned websites in favour of social media accounts. From the European perspective having a working website is necessary for all businesses (that is not a case in Bhutan). This paper will also try to answer the question if the original social media strategy is an outcome of a unique media system or simply a situation when lack of funds forces editors to abandon websites. Perhaps it is readers that prefer to access information on active social media platform than on static websites.

STRESZCZENIE

Bhutan przez wieki istniał w narzuconej sobie izolacji umożliwiającej rozwój zachowań i tradycji, które wpłynęły na wszystkie aspekty życia. Jednak geopolityczne napięcia w połowie XX wieku zmusiły to małe himalajskie królestwo do otwarcia się na świat oraz wprowadzenia reform modernizacyjnych, które miały kulminację w postaci zmiany systemu politycznego z absolutnej monarchii na monarchię konstytucyjną. Również w celu wzmocnienia demokracji w 2006 roku umożliwiono stworzenie prywatnych mediów. Autor niniejszego tekstu stara się przyjrzeć, jak media tradycyjne (prasa, telewizja, radio) w Bhutanie są reprezentowane w mediach społecznościowych, np. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube itd. Dzięki jakościowej i ilościowej analizie jesteśmy w stanie stwierdzić, jak przekazywane są wiadomości do odbiorców i dlaczego niektóre tytuły zrezygnowały z korzystania ze stron internetowych na korzyść mediów społecznościowych. W przypadku europejskich mediów, posiadanie strony internetowej jest niezbędne, ale to nie zawsze sprawdza się w Bhutanie. Autor również stara się odpowiedzieć na pytanie, czy ta dość oryginalna medialna strategia jest skutkiem unikalnego systemu medialnego, czy po prostu główną rolę odgrywa tutaj brak finansów umożliwiających posiadania stron www. Być może ci właśnie użytkownicy preferują dostęp do informacji poprzez media społecznościowe, a nie przez statyczne strony.

Key words: Bhutan, media, old media, new media, social media.

Słowa kluczowe: Bhutan, media, stare media, nowe media, media społecznościowe.

