

REVIEW

by **research supervisor** of the graduate qualification paper submitted by the second-year student of the “International Relations (in English)” master’s program at SPbSU **Anna SHIKULYA** titled *THE INFORMATION WARFARE ASPECT OF THE SYRIAN CONFLICT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE U.S.-RUSSIA POWER STRUGGLE IN THE MIDDLE EAST*

ОТЗЫВ

научного руководителя о выпускной квалификационной работе обучающегося 2 курса основной образовательной программы МАГИСТРАТУРЫ СПбГУ по направлению «Международные отношения»

ШИКУЛИ Анны Александровны

на тему: *ИНФОРМАЦИОННОЕ ИЗМЕРЕНИЕ СИРИЙСКОГО КОНФЛИКТА В КОНТЕКСТЕ АМЕРИКАНО-РОССИЙСКОГО ПРОТИВОСТОЯНИЯ НА БЛИЖНЕМ ВОСТОКЕ*

1. Оценка качества работы:

№ п. п.	Критерии оценки (модель магистратуры: проверяемые компетенции)	Баллы оценки: • отлично (5) • хорошо (4) • удовлетворительно (3) • неудовлетворительно (2) ¹	Комментарии к оценке
1.	Актуальность проблематики (АОМ: ОКМ-13, 22; АМ: ОКМ-8,16, ПК-36; ПОМ: ПК-6)	excellent (5)	The information warfare aspect of the Syrian war has been on the forefront of international agenda due to enormous systemic relevance of this conflict for the entire international community. Deconstructed narratives, general media strategies and specific propagandistic tools involved with the coverage of the Syrian war can be regarded as an extraordinary relevant subject of academic research that needs to be addressed to foster genuine understanding of what we know about this war and why we know this.
2.	Научная новизна (АОМ: ОКМ-13, 22; АМ: ОКМ-8,16, ПК-36; ПОМ: ПК-6)	excellent (5)	The results of this study and their interpretation offer invaluable scholarly contribution to the body of research on the Syrian conflict and information dimension of internationalized armed conflicts in such fields as Political Studies and IR, conflict studies, media studies, strategic communication and propaganda studies. Deconstruction of key narratives of the Syrian war over the entire period of 2011-2017 offers some novel conceptual perspectives for approaching the problem of how contemporary conflicts are waged including in the

¹ Выставление оценки «неудовлетворительно» по одному из критериев автоматически означает рекомендацию оценки «неудовлетворительно» за работу в целом. В этом случае рецензент подробно обосновывает собственное мнение в *Комментариях к оценке и п.2. Заключение/рекомендации членам ГЭК.*

			informational domain.
3.	<p>Корректность постановки цели, взаимосвязанность цели и задач (АОМ: ОКМ- 9, 13, 32; АМ: ПК-10, 11; ПОМ: ОКМ-12)</p>	excellent (5)	The aim of the research and its objectives are properly formulated and refined. The logic of the research process starting from collecting and sorting relevant news articles and finishing with identifying media strategies and tools of information warfare makes perfect sense in view of the main research question.
4.	<p>Степень разработанности источниковой базы и качество критики источников (АОМ: ПК-17; АМ: ОКМ- 24; ПОМ: ОКМ-18, ПК-13)</p>	excellent (5)	The author’s handling of primary sources, in this particular research – media articles, is exemplary. Anna invested significant effort to establishing criteria for choosing among the major U.S. and Russian media as well as to sorting and collecting media texts through the manually controlled procedure. Some aspects of the resulted selection may be regarded as biased but this bias is inevitable and fully justified considering the total population size of units of analysis under consideration.
5.	<p>Полнота и разнообразие списка использованной литературы (АОМ: ПК-17; АМ: ОКМ- 24; ПОМ: ОКМ-18, ПК-13)</p>	good (4)	The paper covers a decent range of secondary sources and academic literature on various aspects of propaganda, media coverage of armed conflicts, sort power and the role of the information factor in policy-making. There is, however, a certain lack of literature on how propaganda has been used on all sides of the Syrian conflict and on the Syrian conflict in general.
6.	<p>Соответствие методов исследования поставленной цели и задачам (АОМ: ОКМ-2; АМ: ОКМ- 10, ПК-26; ПОМ: ОКМ-11, 14)</p>	excellent (5)	The methodological research design chosen by Anna reflects the nature of research objectives set for this study. It is based on the content analysis and involves refining conceptual framework, setting criteria for selection, applying the quota sampling based on the selected criteria and a number of adjustments, manual sorting of articles that conform to the criteria, automated semantic analysis assisted by the NVIVO software, processing and interpreting the results.
7.	<p>Соответствие результатов ВКР поставленной цели и задачам (АОМ: ОКМ-1,7, ПК-33; АМ: ОКМ-17, ПК-12, 37; ПОМ: ОКМ-14, ПК-14, 17)</p>	excellent (5)	All the research objectives were properly achieved. The paper draws specific and grounded images of how the four main aspects of the Syrian war (causes of the crisis, attitude to the Assad presidency and the opposition, and contemporary peace initiatives) are covered separately in Russian and American media, offering at the same time the answers as to what media tools and strategies have been employed by respective media outlets.
8.	<p>Качество оформления текста (АОМ: ОКМ-1; АМ: ОКМ-8; ПОМ: ОКМ-7)</p>	excellent (5)	The quality of text formatting conforms to all main requirements stipulated for graduate qualification papers at the master’s level.
9.	<p>Ответственность и основательность студента в период работы над ВКР (АОМ: ОКМ-23; АМ: ОКМ-19; ПОМ:</p>	excellent (5)	Over the entire period of working on the thesis, Anna demonstrated genuine academic interest, responsiveness and responsibility. Her workflow was well-paced, collaborative and reflective.

	ОКМ-13, 23, 27)		The effort put into this research deserves high credit.
Средняя оценка:		Excellent (5)	

2. Заключение/рекомендации членам ГЭК: Overall, the master's dissertation of Anna Shilulya is a piece of high-quality academic work – thoughtful, ambitious, methodologically refined and stylistically mature. It conforms to all major requirements associated with graduate master's papers and deserves to be evaluated with the highest grade. The author, in turn, deserves to be conferred on with the master's degree in International Relations.

3. Рекомендованная оценка: excellent (5)

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