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ПОЛИТИКА ДВОЙНЫХ СТАНДАРТОВ СМИ ПРИ ОСВЕЩЕНИИ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ КОНФЛИКТОВ (НА ПРИМЕРЕ СИРИЙСКОГО ВОПРОСА)

DOUBLE STANDARTS IN MASS MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS ON THE EXAMPLE OF SYRIAN CRISIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

[INTRODUCTION 3](#_Toc41529802)

[CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUALIZATION THE DOUBLE STANDARDS AND THE POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF THE MASS MEDIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS. 10](#_Toc41529803)

[1.1 Theoretical aspects of the mass media and double standards 10](#_Toc41529804)

[1.2 The political influence of the mass media 13](#_Toc41529805)

[1.3. Double standards and the conflict coverage of the mass media 17](#_Toc41529806)

[CHAPTER 2: THE MASS MEDIA AND THE USAGE OF DOUBLE STANDARDS IN THE SYRIAN CONFLICT COVERAGE 33](#_Toc41529807)

[2.1 The mass media’s perception of the international conflicts 33](#_Toc41529808)

[2.2 The reflection of the Syrian crisis by the mass media of Syria 36](#_Toc41529809)

[2.3. The Unites States’ mass media and their coverage of the Syrian crisis 48](#_Toc41529810)

[2.4 The Russian mass media, double standards, and the Syrian crisis 54](#_Toc41529811)

[**CONCLUSION** 63](#_Toc41529812)

[**List of sources** 66](#_Toc41529813)

**Appendix 1. The analysis of the mass media of Syria, the Unites States and Russia……...75**

# INTRODUCTION

The modern political process is almost impossible to imagine without communication, which is carried out through the mass media. The relationship between politics and the mass media has been known for a long time, and their communication reflects in various forms and manifestations. The importance of the mass media becomes obvious if we take into account the fact that the means of the mass communication could also be attributed to the institutions of power. With the help of the mass media, the perception and interpretation of the most important phenomena and events taking place in the world.

Today, the problem of mass media is that it adheres to the position of the state, the opinion of its own publication, TV channel, radio or a certain media group. In this regard, the problem is expressed in the distortion of information and in the fact that the audience might not objectively know about a certain event. The information is provided to the public directly by the way that is beneficial to the government, a certain social group, or any third person who has a major influence in the world.

Informative - communicative techniques, which have influenced on the globalization of modern mass media and information itself, allowed to form a huge media system from the end of XX century. The processes themselves have changed the original idea of providing information to the society. Today, the mass media has become the main channel for socio-political and international influence. The process of informative – communicative influence between political actors could be considered as a specific level of the international system, which reflects the basic principles of the «soft power» - that means, that the influence, which includes not a direct cruel impact on the opponent, but more gentle impact, that is based on the similarity of beliefs that are trying to impose on the society and form a certain vision of values, images and attitudes.

Due to this technique, the mass media representatives have the opportunity to influence on the process of international relations, particularly conflicts. By covering the international events, they could as contribute to the aggravation of the conflict and bring it to the level of open confrontation between opponents, or to the other side, the mass media might soften the conflict and create conditions for achieving mutually beneficial conditions in resolving a tense situation. The ability of the mass media to cover the agenda and influence on the result of an international conflict explains the research interest on this issue for several decades. Therefore, this work is aimed to update the study of the reflection of cooperative and conflict interaction of actors in international relations in the global media space.

Taking into account the specifics of the mass media in international politics, it is necessary to underline the reflection of international conflicts in the global mass media system as a subject of research, which requires a combination of both theoretical and empirical methods of analysis.

Due to the theoretical analysis of communication between political parties, we can assume a certain sequence of actions and their regularity in the global mass media space. The empirical method allows us to detect this relationship among the sources of the media space. The method of formalization, or rather content monitoring, which is aimed at a systematic study to show the dynamics and specific characteristics of conflict and cooperative interaction of actors by analyzing a huge number of media information. The relevance of such research is significant due to the current demand of the virtualization of information in politics and development of the global mass media space.

In the modern political practice of the international relations, the usage of double standards has become clearly noticeable. Their manifestation can be seen in both as in the domestic as in the international politics. When there is an analyzes of a certain event, we are faced with the fact that the mass media data often contains different information details. Somewhere, it is presented more negatively or positively, or perhaps it is completely omitted. On the other hand, we might argue that the mass media itself presupposes a source of the double standards, thereby it is influence on public opinion and, moreover, manipulate it. Often, we could observe such phenomenon when the term double standards is used during political discussions, as well as in the media, in different combinations, but reflecting the similar ideas.

As was mentioned before, the relevance of this study is due to a number of factors of current interests. The first thing that needs to be taken into account is the wide spreading of the term «double standards», which covers the most important areas of public relations and has a strong impact on the relationship between actors in the world. It should be noted that the position of countries that accuse their opponents is related to the ideas of democracy, which currently prevail in the practice of international politics. Any actor that is not support this policy or making actions that break certain values will be accuse of double standards usage.

The next factor is the complexity, or rather the inability to break one of the objective reasons, which is the basis of the term double standards. The model itself that divides actors into right and wrong exists in each actor and that is why it has such strong influence on decisions, approaches and actions.

The third reason is the democratic function, which is reflected in the mass media itself. On the one hand, the main goal of the mass media is to act as an independent object, the main action of which is the transmission of information, which stands on the side of humanity and the mass media is a fighter for fundamental rights and freedoms, and on the other hand, more realistic way, where the mass media is a representative of political or guiding forces.

The fourth reason is the negative consequences that appeared after the practice of the double standards in the international arena, so when the mass media covers global problems, such as environmental problems, terrorism, ethnic conflicts, a depletion of resource and etc. It is necessary to pay attention to the fact that the world needs a universal way to solve these problems and international partners should consolidate to cope with it. In nowadays world, the mass media is a tool that tries to confront global problems and get a response from the public and international actors in solving particular problems, and on the other hand, some mass media carry a negative urge and spread these problems in the world.

One of the main factor is the lack of qualitative information of the problem of double standards, as in the foreign as in Russian studies and by this reason it should be stress the lack of comprehensive analysis of «double standards» in the mass media during the coverage of current issues, that would be in my work.

In last two decades, the term «double standards» has become very common in the mass media space, it presented on the pages of publications and in the speeches of politicians, public figures, etc. However, if you want to know more about the study of this subject, find its features that will be justified in the scientific literature, you may unsatisfactory results here. Scientific literature that would justify a phenomenon as double standards is not enough. However, we could find some scientific literature, which will allow us to detect this phenomenon, determine its essence and identify its characteristics. We may divide literature into two groups. In the first group, we may include scientific works that will reveal the history of the phenomenon, its background and causes. Here we could distinguish literature from such fields as philosophy, political science, social psychology, theory of state management. We would like to note that the philosophical and specialized encyclopedias that allow you to look at the phenomenon of double standards through the prism of such philosophical categories such as: «morality», «ethics», «truth», «common good». You could also get an explanation of the nature of the unknown reasons of the existence of this phenomenon, as the internal mechanisms of the individuals and subconscious attitudes that have been learned by the society, affect on it as a whole. This process includes works of social psychology and personaly theory. The specificity of double standards in the international relations is based on the work of political scientists, as from the western, as from the eastern countries. We may pay attention to such figures as Albrow M., Castells M., Giddens A., who studied the formation of the global media space and its influence on the society through different media tools. One of the main representative of this direction is Herman E.S., McChesney. In his wok «Global media: missionaries of global capitalism» is update the date about the issue of the mass media space formation. Scholar noted that exist a particular media model according to which, even in the most developed society, for division of authorities in the society is responsible the sector of the mass media due to economic factors.[[1]](#footnote-1) A great input is done by scholars as: N. Chomsky[[2]](#footnote-2), A. I. Utkin[[3]](#footnote-3), and M.Y. Mead, who in the works used the analysis of the geopolitical strategy of the West and mostly focusing the attention on the United States’ policy, where attention is concentrated on the question of human rights violation and great attention is paid to the policies that is used by the United States’ government and the interconnection between it and the mass media that is used in political processes.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Among domestic researchers, we could distinguish such works as: "Globalization of politics and the evolution of political systems: Global social and political problems in the world"[[5]](#footnote-5), " Globalization. Contours of the whole world"[[6]](#footnote-6), "Internationalization and globalization of the mass media"[[7]](#footnote-7), "Global news networks in the information market"[[8]](#footnote-8), which are aimed at studying such a phenomenon as the globalization of mass media, together with the information society. These works make a significant contribution to the study of the phenomenon of double standards, explains its spread in the world and why this tool is so actively used by political figures.

The second group would include scientific works that will be directly used in the analysis of double standards in the information and communication process. The group should include works that is closely connected to communication theory, to political PR and communication, information wars, etc. Quite extensive research works on the topic of manipulations and its usage with double standards technologies presented in Gavra D. P.[[9]](#footnote-9), Kara-Murza S.[[10]](#footnote-10), Dozenko E.L.[[11]](#footnote-11). For example, in the work of Gavra D. P., you might get information about the main principles of the theory of communication and its stages of development, and at the same time, in the work of Kara-Murza S. presents manipulation techniques that are used by the media when they cover certain events. This group also includes works that are aimed at studying the relationship between the political sphere and the sphere of mass communications, the role of journalists in the current democratic world and the special relationship between government and society, and the role of the mass media as an intermediary in this communication. It is possible to distinguish such works as «Mass media and political communication in new democracies»[[12]](#footnote-12) or «Mass media, government and the public»[[13]](#footnote-13), and of course, it is impossible not to mention the work of Sidorova V.A. and his work "The political structure of the mass media"[[14]](#footnote-14).

The non-official division of scientific literature into 2 groups is due to the fact that for the theoretical base, there is not a lot of literature that is devoted to the topic of double standards. In this regard, the first group, as mentioned earlier, contains the literature of philosophical and political trends, and the second group covers more specific literature, that is related to the data and communication activities.

The problem of the research is the role of double standards in the mass media sphere and its influence on the modern world, because as we know, this term includes contradictory ideas. On the one hand, this phenomenon is very disapproving by public opinion, and on the other hand, they also use it as a mechanism that affects on the processes in the world. The object of research in this work is modern Western, Russian and Syrian mass media; materials of Western, Syrian and Russian magazines, electronic media channels and the data that is posted on official websites.

The goal of the study, which are set in this work would be viewed. The goal of this research is to identify the essence of the connection of the mass media and the double standards policy, its dissemination and its impact on the relationship between actors in the political process that is based on the analysis of information from Western, Russian and Syrian media. Based on the goal of the study, this paper presents the following tasks:

1. Identification of the nature of the emergence and impact of double standards on processes in the world.

2. Identify the relationship between double standards, media and political processes.

3. Study the relationship between political relations and the mass media and what role double standards play in their relations.

4. Identify the impact of the political mass media on international conflicts.

5. Make an analysis of the mass media sources to reflect the problems in the Eastern region (in particular Syria) and show how the usage of double standards through the mass media affect on the relations between countries in this region.

Since this topic is quite relevant, it should be indicate the time frame that will be shown in this work. The beginning of 2010, when the prerequisites of the Syrian issue start actively appear. This will allow us to make a full-fledged analysis of the media source and track changes in the broadcasting of information that have occurred over the years in various regions of the world through the mass media. Therefore, for the empirical analysis, this period was chosen directly, because many processes that occur at the moment and cover this period of time require earlier clarification of double standards and their influence on this conflict. The period would be viewed till 2020 and it would be given a prediction of the mass media actions on this issue in the future.

The scientific and practical significance of the work is that the work itself might be considered as an attempt to form a complete explanation of such phenomenon as double standards. To follow the changes in various spheres of political relations due to this phenomenon and try to systematize its characteristic features and methods that are inherent to it and to analyze the practice of double standards itself in the informative - communicative processes in order to get a first-hand idea of its usage in the mass media coverage of events and phenomena. It would also be based on the Syrian issue, where the practice of double standards is used and it is very relevant. This paper would present an analyze of various mass media sources in the West, Russia and Syria in the reason to identify it and make a conclusion about double standards impact on the international relationship between these countries in such conditions.

Draw your attention to the results that are obtained during the study. The theoretical and practical meaning might be useful for further scientific development of this phenomenon and its demonstration in the mass media in transmitting process of the events and their impact on the international conflicts between the countries that are involved. Also, the materials might be used for analytical articles and training materials, because in this work you may find are quite interesting examples that are related to various world mass media. It is shown how they display world events and what point of view they follow and how the information that they broadcast affects on the regulation or opposite influence on the international conflict’ situation. The analytical part of the work would be useful with practical significance of contemporary mass media practice. For example, the usage of such phenomenon as double standards that is connected to covering events during the Syrian issue allows us to assess the strength of the impact of information on the world community and how publications, presenting a different point of view, find a response from the society.

The structure of the scientific work is constructed in such way that it consists of an introduction, two chapters that contain three paragraphs, a conclusion and a bibliographic list of references.

# CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUALIZATION THE DOUBLE STANDARDS AND THE POLITICAL INFLUENCE OF THE MASS MEDIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS.

**1.1 Theoretical aspects of the mass media and double standards**

In modern environment, the mass media plays an important role in the functioning of a society, in the process of conflicts solving and variety of complex problems. It is obviously that nowadays the political process is impossible to imagine without the mass media. However, at the same time the mass media itself is a powerful means of political struggle. By creating and disseminating certain news, the mass media influences audiences, destroying established stereotypes and standards and develop the new idea.

The position, in which nowadays the mass media in situated in society and politics, the connection of their relations with various social and political actors is seen to be difficult. The mass media has had a very strong influence on political processes since its creation. During the time, when the role of the mass media has increased, the influence of it has also increased. The information’ relationship between politics and the mass media grew as new types of means of communication developed in the XX-ХХI century. These means include such transformation as a radio, television and the main tool of communication in the modern world – Internet.

First of all, the informative meaning of the concept of mass communication should be defined. Despite the frequent use of this definition, scholars do not give a proper description of the term, that would perfectly characterized the core.

The German sociologist – Niklas Luhmann was saying about the impact of mass media that the information that we know about our society or about the world where we live, is going through the mass media. He offered an idea with a question about our knowledge out the mass media and should we take it as a real source of trust information or suspect that there is also manipulation in their work present.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The identification of the concept of the mass media is require at first to make a distinction traditional and new mass media.

The traditional mass media, that include books, magazines, books etc, involve communication that is based on a direct process of producers which create information that is transmitted to the readers.

The new mass media involve different ways of transmission of information that are based on two-tree-four etc. way communication with participant as both producers and consumers of information. The new mass media might involve multi – way communication within a mass audience who are both: producers and customers.

In the work of Marschall Mcluhan - «Media: The extension of Man», is described the core of the «content» as something that might be very important that would distracted a reader from the real idea. By this message he focused on the obvious thing, that the content provides us by valuable information, but in the process of information obtaining we would miss the structural changes in our understanding that is introduced during particular time. There are norms, principles and values that are formed because of the mass media. By this, we may see the impact of social implication of the media.[[16]](#footnote-16)

The initial version of the mass media theory is the definition of the «mass media» itself. If we consider the point of view of Professor Kemerov V.E., then we will notice a progressive approach that is used to the concept of the mass media, unlike the one that was often applied during research in the Soviet Union times and defined mass media as a tool that was used for propaganda of leading political beliefs. The mass media, according to his theory is a process that affects on the creation and structuring of the media institutions, which through technical devices, produce and transmit messages to the audience.[[17]](#footnote-17) However, if we would pay attention to the classical source, it says that the media is a systematic straining of messages among audiences that has an aim of raising people 's attitude, opinions and behaviour. [[18]](#footnote-18)

Taking into account all notions that were mentioned before we might say that the mass media is an update technology that is intend to reach a majority of a society with the information that could not be objective. There are platforms that are used for the information widespread, like newspapers, magazines, television and internet. Due to that, the core of the mass media would be defined by functions.

The mass media has a variety of functions. In any modern society, they perform a number of general political iteams that are used.

The first is an information function. It is perhaps the most important function of the Mass Media. It consists of obtaining and disseminating information about the most important events in the world that for citizens and authorities. The information extracted and transmitted by mass media will include not only impartial, photographic coverage of certain facts, but also their commenting and evaluation.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Not all media information (such as weather forecasts, entertainment, sports and other similar messages) is political. Political information includes information that interconnected with public interest and requires or has an impact on public authorities. On the basis of the information received, citizens have an opinion on the activities of the Government, Parliament, parties and other political institutions, and on the economic, cultural and other life of society.

The next function might be education. This function is providing citizens with the knowledge through communication. It should adequately organize the receiving of information from the media and other sources. The mass media, accompanying a person throughout his life, including after graduation, significantly influence his perception of political and social information. At the same time, under the pretext of political education, people may also form pseudo-rational structures of consciousness that distort reality when it is perceived.[[20]](#footnote-20)

The third function that I may underline is socialization. The educational role of the mass media was closely linked to and essentially developed into socialization. However, if political development presupposes the systematic acquisition of knowledge and expands the cognitive and assessment capabilities of the individual, political socialization means internalization, human learning of political norms, values and patterns of command. It allows the individual to adapt to social reality.

Without the function of criticism is impossible to understand the whole area itself. This function in the political system is carried out not by the media, but also by the opposition, as well as by specialized institutions of prosecutorial, judicial and other control. However, criticism of the media is characterized by the breadth or even unlimited of its facility, which is made up of both the President, the Government, the Court, various areas of public policy, and the media itself.[[21]](#footnote-21)

The function of the control is based on the authority of public opinion. Despite of the fact that the Mass Media, unlike state and economic control bodies, cannot impose administrative or economic sanctions on violators, their control is sometimes more effective and stricter, as they provide not only legal but also moral assessment to certain events and persons.

The next function could be named as articulation and integration one. The mass media criticize not only policy and society, but also perform a constructive function of articulating various public interests, constituting and integrating political actors. They provide representatives of different social groups with the opportunity to express their opinions openly, to find and unite like-minded people, to unite them with a community of goals and beliefs, to clearly formulate and represent their interests in public opinion.

The range of political functions of the media is not exhausted by the above-mentioned ones. Some scholars, while addressing this issue from other perspectives, highlight media functions such as innovative, that is manifested in initiating political change by broadly and persistently raising certain important issues and drawing the attention of authorities and the public to them. This function is closely connected with operational function of the main aim of which is servicing the mass media policy of certain parties and associations.[[22]](#footnote-22)

All the political functions of the media discussed above are combined with or contribute directly or indirectly to the mobilization function. This function is expressed in encouraging people to engage in certain political actions (or deliberate inaction), in their involvement in politics. The mass media has great opportunities to influence people 's minds and feelings, their way of thinking, the ways and criteria of assessments, the style and specific motivation of political behavior. After all, without radio, television, newspapers and magazines, even a well-educated person will not be able to properly navigate the complex mosaic of contradictory political processes, make responsible decisions. The media allow him to go beyond the narrow limits of direct individual experience, make the whole world of politics foreseeable, but there is a huge minus in it, the vision of such policy goes through the prism of subjectivity of the mass media.

## **1.2 The political influence of the mass media**

Politics is always a struggle for position of the main actor among actors and nowadays one of the most powerful means of it is the mass media. At present, information and communication play a leading role in the life of a society and as a result - the interconnection, as demonstrated as a form of social communication between different segments of population, creates a specific situation of information exchange.

Since the end of the 20th century, many political figures have claimed that the society belongs to the mass media. If we turn to the statement of the famous French scientist, R. Debre, who introduced the statement about the mediaсracy, we might note that despite of time, the role of the church, that was significant in those times, currently is played by the mass media. [[23]](#footnote-23)

In fact, the first thing that a person does in the morning, regardless of age, is turn to a single source of information. It doesn't matter what it is: newspapers, magazines, TV or social networks. G. Hegel once noted that this procedure might be called as the «morning prayer», because the process of knowing what is happening in the world is important for a person as his faith.

The so-called «Agenda-setting theory» is announced directly through the media. This political model was developed by American sociopolitical figures - McCombs and Shaw. The clear message of the theory is that the media have a significant impact on the public directly by the news that they cover.[[24]](#footnote-24)

The media is one of the key institutions of the current society. They play an important role in the formation, functioning and evolution of social relations. Perception and display of phenomena and events that occur in the world, all this is carried out through the media. This significant factor affects the penetration of the media into the political sphere and creates all the conditions for turning the media into a means of implementing political ideas.

Mass media has a significant influence on the process of forming political preferences and it is acting as a coordinator of the stream of diverse information. Through the media, the main information policy of the state is reflected. They provide nationwide communication to individual segments of the population and professional groups, choosing the most important aspects.[[25]](#footnote-25)

Today, the role of the media is so important that real actions and events become important only when they are mentioned in the mass media. If we take into account the opinion of the Ukrainian journalist and writer G. Pocheptsov, we could see that he focuses on the fact that in the modern world all rounds to the rule: a real event becomes significant only when it is told to the audience by the mass media. If an event was omitted by the mass media, then we could say that perhaps it never existed.[[26]](#footnote-26) The fast development of the mass media formed the fact that today it is possible to attract the attention of anyone to a particular problem and build the necessary attitude of the reader to it.

Most political messages transmitted by different media sources and differ significantly by a content, by the form of providing facts and by the way of provided information to the audiences.

In all times the political aim of the mass media - to solve certain challenges with its help in the political system and society, in real life they are quite independent. Mostly, they have their own, often different goals of activity from the needs of society, and use various methods to achieve them. The influence on the policy of the mass media is exercised primarily through the influence on the information process, which allows to form the public opinion in a certain way. The main stages of the information process are the obtaining, selection, preparation, commenting and dissemination of the data. What information and in what form and with which comments actors receive information depends their further action according to the events.[[27]](#footnote-27)

Nowadays, the flow of information is so diverse and contradictory that neither an individual nor even a group of specialists could understand it on their own. Therefore, the selection of the most important data and its presentation is an important task of the entire mass media system, which naturally opens up more opportunities for manipulation of mass consciousness.

Thus, the awareness of citizens, including politicians, depends directly on how, for what purposes and by which criteria information is selected, how really it reflects the true to life facts after its preparation and correction carried out by newspapers, television and internet, etc.[[28]](#footnote-28)

The mass media has a tendency to use two main ways of disseminating information - consistent and fragmented. The first way is more often used by «print mass media», consistently and versatile covering in articles and other publications a particular political problem. The second method - fragmented information is particularly common on television/ internet sources and has a number of features, creating a number of difficulties for listeners or viewers in knowing the essence of an event or process.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Fragmentation of information creates its diversity and not completely full image of news, that influence on perception of unprofessional readers (the vast majority of citizens). They form a wrong idea of political phenomena or events. This gives communicators additional opportunities to manipulate the audience by focusing on some sides of the event and omit others. The fragmentation of reporting ultimately disorientates listeners and their interest in politics is getting less and causes political apathy, or they become to be dependent from the comments of the mass media’ production.

The mass media has a great potential for active influence not only on citizens 'perception of certain political phenomena and events, but also on their attitude towards politics as a whole. Both - the political passivity of the population on the particular political issue and activity are directly related to the position of the mass media on the issue. The role of the mass media plays an important role, especially in transitional periods of social development, since without their active work it is impossible to change the political consciousness, value orientation and goals of the general population and to achieve a huge support from the citizens for the policy of social transformation.[[30]](#footnote-30)

However, it is impossible to ignore the enormous opportunities of the media in the field of political manipulation and influence on mass consciousness through formation of a certain public opinion in the population about an event, a person or a phenomenon. This problem has become very important nowadays, especially in the countries, in which the literacy of the population in the field of mass communications is low, and the pace of development of information and political technologies is much faster than the development of the legislative framework in the field of information policy, which restricts the possibility of using the media for manipulative purposes.[[31]](#footnote-31)

The manipulative capabilities of the mass media are so great, and the methods and techniques of manipulation are so numerous and diverse that it is impossible to ignore.

The enormous potential for active mass media’ influence on the political consciousness and behavior of citizens testifies to the crucial role of the "fourth power" in modern society. Some researchers of mass communications talk even about the coming era of "media culture" - the authorities of the media, which are not so reflect and interpret reality as they should, but according to their own rules.[[32]](#footnote-32)

The growing influence of the mass media on politics and society are quite the opposite. Some scholars, for example O. Toffler, see in it the sprouts of a new, higher and humane civilization. The information society is seeing a real movement towards to heterogeneous, personal, thinking and creative state that is capable to resolve the most acute conflicts today.[[33]](#footnote-33)

Other thinkers, who are noting the devastating and destructive impact on the personality and culture of mass media, and especially social networking, they are saying about the increasing role of information power very pessimistically. Thus, the famous Italian film director F. Fellini believed that with the support of a hypnotic inspiring spectacle, both day and night comes to people non-stoppable in the house, due to the television we have the end not only of the cinema, but incorrect vision of people to reality. There are points of our life like nature, our friends, literature, women – is becoming less important for us in comparison with the influence of this small screen, which ideas to us becomes more valuable. It absorbed everything that touches - reality, ourselves and our attitude towards reality.[[34]](#footnote-34) The note of the film director is still popular nowadays, despite of the fact that for each period exist different means of the mass media.

## **1.3. Double standards and the conflict coverage of the mass media**

In the modern international relations, the common situation is when the mutual accusations from the states in double standards usage. It should be noted that at first we ought to define what does «double standard» mean, because due to the policy of every country it is obvious that they act in accordance with the national interests. The issue of «double standards» exists always, but it is getting quite popular in the middle of XX century, as a result of the bipolar system in the world, the next push was the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR. Due to that, the motives of international actors has changed, there are appeared a huge amount of «free territories», that should bу conquered. At first, before we will give the definition of the term “double standards”, we should overview the problem of unrecognized state that is seen as one of the reason of the creation of «double standards». By the «unrecognized state» means the governmental entities, which include in their system all signs of a state, but they do not have an international recognition and they could not represent themselves as a subject of international relations. For the last century, on the geopolitical map were serious changes and around 100 hundred unrecognized states appeared. Some of these “states” exists by the de-facto, but some of them still are not recognized (or partially) by the other states, a good example of this is Taiwan, that is situated in China. The another type is the «states» that are recognized, but actually they do not have sovereignty, for example, Palestine. It should be mentioned that the more correct term for them would be sound as «partially unrecognized states», that means that states are proved not by all actors, but some of them. [[35]](#footnote-35) The another question on this topic is that how the states supported by the states. For example, in the Kosovo recognition was taking a part around 97 states, but for the Republic of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states were only 4 actors supported. Any unrecognized state is a source of political instability.

At first, its always a separation from the another territory that belongs to particular state. It is obvious that the state would be always eager to keep the territory in its power be different possible tools, from the sanctions to military forces. Second is that unrecognized territory is always going to be a contentious issue between different states. The problematic question is that the new, sovereign state should find allies for help in territory protection and may be economic support. In such situation, the effect of double standards, the state would be recognized or not depending on the political interest about this question of all states.[[36]](#footnote-36) To show a vivid example we might look on the example of unrecognized states, that were created in Europe after the USSR collapsed and Yugoslavia was taking apart from it. Nowadays, the consequences from that period about states, is one of the main core of conflicts between the West and Russia. From that timeline all contentious issues that were closely connected to the theme of unrecognized states and it was and it is completely different perception of the West and the East.[[37]](#footnote-37)

The beginning of the problem of the unrecognized states should be viewed from the based principles of states of international law: the principle of self-identification and the principle of inviolability of state’s boarders. From the one side, the principle of self-identification according to the Charter of the United Nations is guarantee the safe environment: «Every State has the duty to refrain from any forcible action which deprives peoples referred to in the elaboration of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of their right to self- determination and freedom and independence[[38]](#footnote-38). From the another side, the principle of inviolability of state’s border saying that the territory of a colony or other Non-Self –Governing Territory has, under the Charter, a status separate and distinct from the territory of the State administering it; and such separate and distinct status under the Charter shall exist until the people of the colony or Non-Self-Governing Territory have exercised their right of self-determination in accordance with the Charter, and particularly its purposes and principles.[[39]](#footnote-39) Both this principles were set in the Declaration of the international law, in the chapter that is connected to the question of friendly relations and cooperation between states, in accordance with the Charter of United Nations, that was set on the 24th of October in 1970.

The problem with which we are facing on is the confrontation of the principles as it was mentioned above. There is no doubt that both of them are equitable, the legitimacy of the nation to the self-identification recognized in the whole world. This principle is getting more popular, when on the particular territory the policy of forcible assimilation, the denial of political right and other abuse of issue create a good background for that. In this reason, it is not difficult to make a conclusion that this confrontation of the principles of impetus to the development of double standards. In such circumstances it should develop universal objective criterions of the issue’ solving, but unfortunately, it is almost impossible because of political interests of the actors.

The phenomenon of the double standard might be consider as a trend in the modern international life. In the history of the international relations “double standards’ has been used before. A vivid example of this presented in the work of Nikolas Machiayavelli, where is shown the necessity for the power to understand how to rule by the nature of a human and a power. He underlined the attitude of the power, that power should be double-sides. All moral principles that should be in the core of the power’s behavior should be confirmed by the power and identify as good. [[40]](#footnote-40)

If we would refer to nowadays definition of the double standards we would find out that according to Collins dictionary, when someone accuses a person or institution of applying double standards in their treatment of different group of people, it means that they unfairly allow more freedom of behavior to one group than to another.[[41]](#footnote-41)

By this good example, we may say that nowadays, statements by various countries about the duplicity of some partners in international affairs are common. If we, for example, remember the case, when the Head of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, underlined that the government of the United States showed double standards in the situation when Saudi Arabia President Abdrabbu Mansour Hadi left the country and they supported him, but did completely opposite when the President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych did the same step. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also expresses interest in international organizations that should work without double standards. This position was stated, for example, with regard to the Council of Europe. Speaking about this, the official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry A.K. Lukashevich expressed the wish that "the activities of the COE implemented without double standards. [[42]](#footnote-42)

If we take a look from the opposite side, the United States and other Western countries accuse Russia of double standards too. For example, when in 2014 the license for broadcasting in our country by the U.S. radio station - Voice of America was not renewed, the representative of the U.S. State Department J. Psaki announced that the government of the United States urged Russia to end this apparent double standard and allow for the citizens to have the same access to information that they had before. [[43]](#footnote-43) There are also others examples of the citing of west countries that accusing Russia is using the method of double standards in domestic and foreign policy.

According to the notes that are mentioned above the policy of double standards, it used more often in the world politics. What does the term «double standards» mean? According to the definition of Merriam – Webster dictionary, the term double standards is a situation in which to two people, groups, etc. belong absolutely differently that is unfair to one (or some of them)[[44]](#footnote-44) If we look to the another definition from Collins dictionary, there is written that double standard is a set of norms, that provide more freedom to a person or groups than to another.[[45]](#footnote-45)

The classic definition from Oxford Dictionary is that the double standards are a rule, norm, judgment, etc., in framework of striker attitude to one group of people, events, etc. [[46]](#footnote-46) Double standards also called a situation where the evaluation of the same actors 'actions depending on the relationship in which each of these entities is with estimating.[[47]](#footnote-47)

From these definitions it becomes clear that the notion of double standards has not yet received adequate scientific elaboration. It includes the unclear, indistinct terms. The above-mentioned concepts of justice, freedoms and rigors are too indeterminate, they might not be comparable. There is an important aspect too, that in double standards present an assessment and the assessment is always carries a substantial subjective beginning of the news. These uncertainties and subjectivity are used by the states of the world in the realization of their national interests. Moreover, the definitions given are more applicable under an institutional environment, that are clearly defined rules of the game. In international relations, such an institutional environment, in particular the international law, in our view, plays not the main role and on the first place is the balance of forces and the policy of realization of own national interests. Therefore, different, sometimes opposite decisions could be made under the apparent similar conditions.

In the case of the difficult identification of a clear term of double standards, we will try to understand its essence by analysing the current manifestations, or versions of the double standards in the world according to the different situation. Usually, there are different approaches are used for two countries that are under the same conditions.

In the end of October in 2014 the representative of the European Union during the negotiation about the free trade area between Moldova and the EU pointed that Tiraspol must decide whether to follow the economic interests of the population and business in its policy or to get into an ideological pose.

Following the results of 2014, the EU accounted for about 44% of Pridnestrovian exports, about 37% of exports for Moldova and only about 14% for Russia. Although it should be not to forget that as early as the mid-2000s, Russia accounted for almost half of the Dnestr foreign trade. There are many reasons for this dynamics, including Ukraine 's blocking of transit between Russia and Poland.[[48]](#footnote-48)

If we will look from the ideal point that countries need actively to cooperate with key trading partners to improve not only economic possibility, but relations too, but why in this case the European Union itself does not wish to base this rule on its foreign policy, referring to all countries without exception? Why, in this case, Transnistria has special negative attitude of the EU, but from the opposite way the situation with Ukraine is different? In 2013 the volume of exports of Ukrainian goods to Europenean countries consist around 34.8% of total exports, including Russia - 23.8%, to Europe -27%, including European Union countries - 26, 5%. [[49]](#footnote-49)

So the largest trading Ukraine 's partner was Russia, but Brussels delayed Kiev into association, not taking into account Moscow 's interests.

The another good example of double standard might be viewed from the actions to actor or actors on the political arena depending on the different circumstances.

From the West point of view, in 2013 when Cyprus was trying to save its economic position, they announced that a big part of deposits, which belong to Russian citizens would be confiscated, because of the unstable situation. In that time, the President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin condemned this decision, proclaimed it unfair, nonprofessional and dangerous. Despite of that fact, that not so long time ago, when in Moscow, Russian President hosted the President of Cyprus – Nikos Anastasiades, «the smile didn 't get off from the president’ Putin face during the meeting [[50]](#footnote-50) On this meeting was even prolongated the credit for Cyprus on 2.5 billion dollars, that also include good conditions for state. The West politician were saying that by this step the president of Russia was trying to make an attempt to improve the attitude of the whole Cyprus to Crimean’ issue and to the conflict in Ukraine itself.

It is quite usually that double standards are used by actors of the whole world in particular conflict situations where there is a need to balance different, sometimes opposite, requirements of conflict participants interactions. For example, in 2015 in the interview with Sergey Lavrov was announced that the President of Ukraine P.A. Poroshenko couldn’t follow the country’s interest, to his partners from the West he says one, to the partners from the East he says another and practically he does nothing about what he was saying. [[51]](#footnote-51) The Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov called this situation sad, noting, however, that the president of Ukrainian should take into account the mood of the representatives of the Verkhovna Rada, coalition partners.

The literature pays considerable attention to the analysis of the causes of use the double standards in world politics. One main reason was announced by the former Commissioner of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, K.K. Dolgov.[[52]](#footnote-52) He writes that the United States behaves in the political arena as a teacher in the school of democracy, and Washington is thinking that on this right the teacher might have more than students, including Russia. Russian diplomat emphasizes futility of American attempts to use such double standards. How not to recall here the fundamental principle. In this situation it is almost impossible not to recall one of the main principle of the modern international law - the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

In the wide sence, the position of the United States as a teacher is based on attempts to pursue a policy of force on the international stage.

The USA was trying to show themselves as a leader in the world’ politics, that is spreading the notion of Americans as an exceptional country and its permissibility. However, the balance of power in the world is significantly has changed and continues to change in favour of states’ developing and today the former pupils are returning lessons to the teacher. It is seen that by this reason it is difficult not to take into account the foreseeable future, where not to see the changes of the balance of power in the world in international politics is becoming increasingly difficult for Americans and their allies. We might see that on different examples, like: in 2011 when American troops were leaving Iraq, because of the political tension from other countries or from Afghanistan in 2014 too.[[53]](#footnote-53)

The second reason for the increased usage of double standards is the new situation in the global governance. Not so long time ago, it seemed that the dissolution of nation states in a globalizing world was coming. Nowadays, however, the «Renaissance» trend of the role of nation states in the international community is noticeable. [[54]](#footnote-54)

It occurs in various forms. When the state is not satisfied with the activity of the international organization, it stops its participation in it as, for example, the U.S. did with UNESCO.

In another form, a state might establish an alternative organization, like China, which established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank due to non-formability of the International Monetary Fund. The solutions of the international bodies might simply not be implemented, as Russian government believes in the case regarding the verdicts of the European Court of Human Rights in case they do not comply with the domestic constitution. This trend, which creates a good platform for the active usage of double standards, might be expected to develop further.

The third reason of double standards’ widespread is in the opposition between politics and morality. To the term “double standards” is suitable another term - "dual morality", that define a core of it. About this topic – the relations between morality and foreign policy was written a huge amount of scientific literature. [[55]](#footnote-55) The states act on the international arena only according to their own important national interest and they would neglect countries if it would be needful for them. One of the brightest example of this behavior is the US and UK’ aggression in Iraq in 2003, when the states’ leaders took a wrong way and deceive people all over the world. They stated that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and thus posed a threat to humanity. And it wasn 't an accidental mistake. If we would look in the beginning of 2002, the advisor of British Prime Minister T. Blair, senior diplomat R. Cooper in his work wrote that the challenge to the post-modern world is to get used to the idea of double standards. [[56]](#footnote-56) His suggestion was to create a civilized world where the foreign policy would be a way of negotiation, but there is a huge but, not all countries would be included in this civilized circle, the states, that do not follow the idea of well-developed countries would be treated like strangers in international relations and means that should be used with them are like: force, pre-emptive attacks, deception. This reason for double standards if quite effective nowadays.

The another reason, that should be hightlighted here, for the use of double standards in world politics, according to many scholars, it is the inability of international law to respond to contemporary challenges and threats to humanity. Thus, L.A. Musaelyan considers double standards as the process of devaluation of international law. According to his idea, nowadays the international law is going through serious crisis, and it is therefore unable to adequately respond to contemporary challenges and ensure a stable world order.[[57]](#footnote-57)

L.A. Musaelyan identifies three groups of factors, that are leading to the devaluation of international law. There are doctrinal, civilizational and geopolitical factors. Among the doctrinal reasons, he noted the lack of clarity in the mechanisms for implementing the fundamental principles of international law and gaps in the law itself.

With regard to conflicts in international law, one example can be cited as the most frequently mentioned - the relationship of principle territorial integrity and self-identification of citizens. According to this point - such collision in international relations might influence of the decision of Kosovo recognition, but at the same time not Abkhazia and South Ossetia or in several month it might be opposite.[[58]](#footnote-58)

There are different opinions on the correlation of these principles. Thus, I.I. Lukashuk believes that the first principle is the most important, that is why it would have a large legal force. It should be noted that most of the scholars should be focus on this question in the interconnectedness of these pronciples and do not devide them to the main or secondary. The Declaration of Principles of International Law (1970) states that if in the situation of the interpretation and the application of the principles, it should be noted their interconnections, and very norm should be considered in the light of other principles. [[59]](#footnote-59)

From this point of view, the contradiction seems not so suitable to the real situations. If we will look to the example, the state does provide its territorial integrity, it does not raise the question of the right of any of its parts to self-identification in the form of separation. It is difficult to imagine, that in the modern political world in practice, the question of such self-identification of the people of Bavaria or Texas may arise, because Germany and the United States do ensure their territorial integrity, and these lands are strongly connected to the whole state’s systems. In such circumstances, self-identification may acquire forms that are not related to the withdrawal from the state but to the strengthening of its territorial integrity through the development of unity in diversity.

In the situation when a state does not ensure its territorial integrity, the question of self-identification of its parts inevitably arises. If we remember, for example, the UK’ experience, where Scots are seriously considering independence. [[60]](#footnote-60) This notion includes a second referendum that touches upon this question. To take this fact into consideration, London is thinking about how more effectively incorporate Scotland, not push back.

Another good political example is issue in Ukraine. The state did not respect its territorial integrity, so there were problems of self-identification of the citizens of Crimea in the form of reunification with Russia. If the government would not take this principle seriously and would continued their domestic and foreign policy in this direction, it couldn’t be excluded the collapse of the country. Ukraine's problem with self-identification creates favourable opportunities for double standards. [[61]](#footnote-61)

Going back to the unclear mechanism of the implementation of the principles of the international rights, at first it should be identify understanding of its causes. In our view, the basic processes are political processes, and the legal norms only reflect them, i.e. legal rules and norms should follow political needs, but the opposition. Therefore, at first it would more reasonable to examine the political trends in the development of contemporary international relations, and then trace the projection of these trends on the international right. One of such trend, in our view, is in the fast world’ development, the radical changes in the world and, therefore, the increase of the significance of soft forms of international law. These can include various codes of behavior, the general principles, etc. [[62]](#footnote-62) If we would take a general look to the legal systems, we might notice that it is used to be detailed and it is one of the reason why they quickly become outdated in the modern world, because as we now the political situation changes every day. This idea contributes to the spread of double standards too.

The fourth main reason for the use of double standards is the quick world’ development. While current trends are developing rapidly in the world, this tendency would be going further. This process was noted in the last century by prominent futurist E. Toffler.[[63]](#footnote-63)

He stressed that the world is becoming increasingly unstable, obscure, and this represents a horrifying future for the political world. Strength and integrity that were the main principles in the international relations now are in the past, today the demand for short-term benefits are increasing.

This substantive trend is also reflected in the modern forms of international interaction. The form of the interconnection becomes today more disposable. Whereas earlier international law could be seen as something stable and safe, states were always ready to use it in the situation where it was needed, consider nowadays’ situation it is difficult to imagine something reliable to the state that everyone would follow. It might be assumed that in the near future in international problems’ processes solving the number of fast decisions that probably might be as exception from the international law would be preferable. [[64]](#footnote-64) Even nowadays we might name such special cases in international life. For example, former General secretary of United Nations Ban Ki-moon said that Kosovo is extremely special situation.[[65]](#footnote-65) On this note the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia said the according to Ukraine issue the special Crimean case might be even more interesting. [[66]](#footnote-66) Such notes or expression are always individual and provide an opportunity to create the field for double standards. The same possibility arises when it is noticeable any contravention of international law. For example, is the bombing of Yemen by the armed forces of several Arab countries without the authorization of the United Nations Security Council not a violation of international law? How many such contraventions have been notice nowadays and how much would be in the future?

In the media community, the political role of means is constantly increasing mass information. By means of mass media the political community implements a number of tasks that are related to the process of cognition of citizens about the political norms and values. One of the means is the procedure of improving the communication system and information exchange with the mass media for political informing of the citizens.

The importance of the press in political processes has deep historical roots: in the XX century, for example, in the East part of the world there was an economic guide between capitalist enterprises, in the era of socialism it expressed the interests of economists and accountants, in the current time mass media it not only reflects the situation on the stock exchange, but also Influence on the behavior of its agents.

The media is an essential tool for the political process. Mass media has a serious influence on the process of formation political preferences, acting as a coordinator and organizer of information flows, through the mass media citizens are getting the information policy of the state. As an American political scientist, Doris Graber, is demonstrating the political importance of mass media, notes that they provide nationwide communication between individuals and groups by choosing for consideration the most important aspects. [[67]](#footnote-67)

Many political messages are transmitted by different types of the mass media. It differs significantly by the content, manner of presentation and by the ways of reaching different audiences.

Scholars underlined a number of the particular features of the political impact of the mass media in general and in the different sectors of political life. We may divide it to several significant ideas. The first is the indirect influence of the mass media and as a consequence, there is less resistance to it. The second is the globalization and the fast widespread of information, that is shown the influence of the ability to target any public or personal phenomenon. It could be not only political phenomena and processes, but also the privacy of politicians and public figures. [[68]](#footnote-68)

If we would have the opportunity to analyze the political behavior of people, we would notice that a modern person gets the political information most often through the mass media and on this basis it is formed a person’s own judgements, conclusions and his/her future behavior by which he/she is motivating. It creates a good background for political manipulations.

The political scholar A.P. Philipov emphasizes that the modern political process is mostly used in the sphere of political communication, where the mass media is playing a major role.

Readers are getting the information, by the forming their own vision of development in the political and economic spheres, create their own understanding that would be followed through particular media. This trend is characterized by inclusion of the type of the vision in this process in the sphere of political relations. [[69]](#footnote-69)

According to this we should made a note that all-Russian mass media act as an institution of public policies, that provide interconnections between particepants and information exchanges. This close connection might be notice among all actors of political system. Professor B.J. Misonzhnikov underlined that the specific political and economic content of publications that defines them plays a special role in the political communication.

Political communication is seen as the process of providing people with political ideas that is formulating the political activities and attaches new importance to it. It creates a public opinion and political socialization of citizens, taking into account their needs and interests. Modern scholars identify three main ways, which are used for performing the political communication. [[70]](#footnote-70) There are 3 main means like the information obtaining due to the mass media, due to organizations like political parties or governmental communities, and due to personal interconnection. As it might be noticable, mass media position itself as an equal partner of political power.

The double standards can be implemented due to an informative - communicative source by particular means of specific characteristics, which by their type may belong to various means, such as propaganda, manipulation, PR and etc. You could also identify various means of expression when the mass media is using double standards, such as psychological, lexical, visual, all those that would give a stronger emotional color to the message. If we consider the lexical way of implementing of «double standards», then we could distinguish the method of substitution of the concepts. It means if an informative message contains lexical units with a negative color, it would be replaced with those that change the essence of the message to a positive color and the opposite. For this purpose, there are special words, such as euphemisms or dysphemisms, that are responsible for the positive or negative tone of the information message.[[71]](#footnote-71)

As mentioned earlier, there is also the so-called manipulative aspect of the practice of double standards. It is expressed in the media not only by evaluating events, words and terms, but also by presenting and interpreting information. Here we could mention a technique as «a variation of a comment». The purpose of this technique is that the comment is created to an information message, which expresses a certain point of view and it could have an impact on the audience more than the information news itself. This technique could be referred to us as manipulative. Comments could contain not only emotional color, but also visual images as in the electronic as in the print media sources. But it should be noted that not all comments are used as a means of double standards, for example, those comments that are statements from the author according to particular topic, especially if it written in an analytical style. Often «a variation of a comment»’ technique is used during the conflict situations between states.[[72]](#footnote-72) A vivid example of lexical double standards is the political event, when people who hijacked airplanes and sent them to the world trade center were recognized as terrorists and the American military forces, who bombed Serbian hospitals, are not recognized as war criminals, and even more, in the most cases, they find the support of the world community.[[73]](#footnote-73)

The another technique of it is the «deliberate creating or ignoring a press event». This technique is characterized by focusing the public's attention on a certain information event that will distract from another event that may actually have a greater importance. So, for example, on the territory of the Russian Federation, in connection with the pandemic of coronavirus, the news about the Russian constitutional Referendum does not seem so relevant among citizens, because the economic conditions in which most countries are now, this has more significant resonance.[[74]](#footnote-74)

The next technique that should be highlighted is the «accusation of the double standards». The idea includes to use template lexical constructions of double standards for accusation of actors to the opponents. In recent years, this technique is very common among politicians and the media in various conflict situations and disagreements on problematic issues. The technique itself involves accusing the opponent and finding evidence on the controversial issue. While the actual problem remains on the sidelines, and states, instead of recognizing and solving it, accuse each other of political failure. This technique can be attributed to the so-called black PR technologies.

All these techniques could be attributed to the most common in the implementation of "double standards" in the mass media. However, it is worth noting that there are a huge number of other secret techniques that reflect the policy of double standards in the information and communication environment.[[75]](#footnote-75)

Now, we would take a look on the problem of identification of mass media as a partner in common frames. The first common feature is that for the political power that mass media is irreplaceable producer of necessary information, it is seen as a mechanism that select facts and report it to the readers, like a tool of political technology. Reviews on political events, analyzes of the economic market, interview with the members of governmental spheres allow us to obtain the new information, that is not always might be rates as realistic knowledge. The mass media demonstrates to the society, business community, authorities the condition of financial infrastructure, business climate, aspects that underline the situation in the regions, their weak and straight sides.

The second common feature might be named as a helpful signal. It is common that our world is changed and mass media is a tool who pay attention to the problems, that should be solved, that why the sector of mass media like preventive journalism underlines it and try to involve authorities in the process of problems’ resolution. For example, it could be pointed laws that are outdated, some difficulties with which citizens or organization are facing on because of the administrative issues. From the other side, the authorities express their own perspectives of different sectors’ development, direct in some way an attitude of people according to needful economic or political views. Due to mass media independence and their regular observation, it helps in statement of an important question and controlling the authorities’ steps of it solving.

The third features is that mass media is a proper way of interconnection between the authorities and citizens. Mass media helps in cooperation between, for example, government and business. The second one is not ready to accept the new law, that would restrict the rights of entrepreneur, in this situation mass media would explain the necessity of this law and what the image of economic is going to be without this law, in protection of entrepreneur the mass media also would pay attention to the difficulties with which they will face on, by this way the authorities has a public talk with differents representatives of the spheres and using the analytical methods they would try to deal with the issue and the “opponent” due to mass media would have an opportunity to criticize or agree on the specific suggestion.

The forth feature is that mass media represents itself as a coordinator in international conflicts. In a tense situation they form conditions that might create a peaceful atmosphere for conflict’s sides and it influence on the way in which the issue was solve.

The fifth feature of mass media as a tool of framing the political news in needful perspective and make it public. This will allow to make a process of creating a positive image of the authorities legitimate. In the case, when the information is purposeful transmitted by the authorities, we may say that in this way news should be delivered to the specific group of people and make a loyal attitude of this group to the authority.

The sixth feature of mass media is a channel of mobilization. The authorities due to mass media may organize the discussions club for representatives of particular circles to solve the problem fast. The political information that is transmitted by the mass media with the support of the authorities, might motivate people to particular actions or inaction, it depends from the way by which mass media transfer the information. [[76]](#footnote-76)

If we would combine the information above we will make a conclusion that the mass media act as a tool of political consolidation. Mass media preopen additional opportunity to control the authorities actions, in a way to allow citizens to obtain the information about the political processes and somehow to influence of it. Mass media as a form of communication exists as a unique system itself and as a system that is interconnected with all spheres of human’s life.

To consider mass media as a system, we imply, that self-independence reflects from its structure, principles and system of control. We should take into account that other systems are also included in another functional system. The famous sociologist, Niklas Luhmann, stressed that between the autonomic functional systems like – politics, science, economy and law, exist a connection through the code’ systems. In the system of mass media the code might be represented as formed and non-formed. Formed code of mass media allows to implement citizens the public control of the authorities’ actions, that sometimes is not profitable for the authorities. The important point is that from the side of the mass media some information could be omitted or ignored, it depends from the impact of the authorities on the mass media in the region. [[77]](#footnote-77)

Therefore, mass media take an active role in political decision-making procedures, have a great influence on the politic event’s perception. Frequently, the active role of mass media is not welcomed by the authorities, that is why the communication between them is going by the scenario that mass media reflects the ideas of the authorities or the struggle between them.

Summing up the chapter we could underline that the international relations in the modern world mostly depends on the mass media. The process of creating news by using the technique of double standards allows the mass media to create additional manipulations of public consciousness that affect on the process of forming views and political preferences in the society. Thus, the mass media plays an important role in the process of broadcasting political information. The mechanisms that are associated with the formation of a certain image of society should take into account the fact of the state of stability of the society, as far as it is ready to accept this stream of information. For example, if you recall the situation in Ukraine in 2014, it is necessary to pay attention to the transmission of the news in Ukraine with the double standards usage technique, but the main question is how the citizens in different regions of Ukraine perceived this information and did the news in such circumstances really had an influence.

In this chapter, we have considered the forms of double standard that differ in quality and time frame of their impact. The formation of public consciousness through the mass media is designed for as short and long term periods of time. The creation of news by using the technique of double standards and various forms affect on the perception of certain types of news. Despite of various mass media forms, they are united by one thing - the formation of political culture and public consciousness. Due to the mass media, national values, ideas and traditions of certain nations are introduced into society. Most citizens believed in the policy of their states, and they do not pay a lot of attention to the problems that are deliberately hidden or not so much published in the mass media sources. Without the perception that forms the mass media today, a society could not exist longer nowadays in our informative - communicative stage of the mass media’ development. The main question is only who will influence on the mass media.

# CHAPTER 2: THE MASS MEDIA AND THE USAGE OF DOUBLE STANDARDS IN THE SYRIAN CONFLICT COVERAGE

## **2.1 The mass media’s perception of the international conflicts**

Currently, the mass media is a powerful tool that affect on the subconscious of citizens of the particular countries and form their perception of certain events. The mass media is the most important institution of the modern society, which serves the role of informing a society about events that are happening in the world.

The mass media is used to perceive and interpret the most important actions and events that are taking place in the country or in the world as a whole. Today, almost all over the world, the mass media is taking into account the opinion of the state or the opinion of its owner. This is one of the main reasons why the data is either distorted or does not reach in the full form the public. Is Unfortunately, it is a typical situation when the data is presented to the society directly in the form that is beneficial to a particular country, according to its policies.

As was mentioned earlier, the policy of double standards itself is aimed in creating different evaluative opinions about one event that is important in international relations and the attitude to it will depend entirely on the political direction of actors. With the same significant content of the event, the vision of certain countries differs - some countries approve the event, while others disapprove and show the negative attitude to that. In international relations, the policy of double standards usually rounds about the form of accusations of violation of established principles, concepts, obligations, which usually relate to the issue of human rights violations or non-compliance with the norms of international law or its disregard of the same done actions or actions of actors-allies.

All countries without exception use a technique of double standards. All this is due to the fact that the national interests of the states usually do not coincide. In such circumstances, the typical attitude of the state to their allies is that the states are treated differently than to their opponents. Usually, in such situation, there is a scheme - the advantages of the enemy are not noticed, as well as the disadvantages of allies.

It is known, that modern conflicts have become one of the leading factors of instability in the world. There are impossible to manage and that is why we might see a tendency of their increasing and that they attract a large number of actors, which creates a serious threat not only to the parties of the conflict, but also to other countries that may eventually become involved in this conflict. In the modern world, this trend is very common, considering how regional conflicts have turned into major international ones over the past decades.

From the point of view of international relations, an international conflict is considered as a specific political relationship between two or more parties and it may also include nations, states, or even groups of states that directly exert pressure on each other due to the direct conflict of economic, socio-class, political, territorial, national, religious, or other interests. [[78]](#footnote-78)

Thus, international conflicts are a certain type of international relations in which different states connected with different national interests. It is worth noting that an international conflict is a special, not an ordinary political relationship, since it implies the resolution of a conflict situation as objectively as subjectively against the background of specific contradictions and related issues in a conflict form, which in a certain process may even provoke international crises or military conflict of states. The international conflict itself as a political relationship might reproduce not only objective contradictions, but also secondary, which might be seen as subjective contradictions that are caused by the specifics of their perceptions by the political actors and the procedures by which political decisions are made in a particular region.[[79]](#footnote-79)

It is worth taking into account that the factor of subjective contradictions might somehow affect on the creation and further development of the conflict, because the interests and goals of the actors, which in the most cases are personal and do not relate to real problems. Thus, the international conflict includes all areas (political, military-strategic, ideological, etc.) that influence on the development of this conflict. As we have already said, the international conflict acts as a special political association that acquires a certain independence, its own vector of development and therefore it is capable to develop itself independently and at the same time influence on other relationships that appeared in the framework of the same conflict, as well as on the main cause of the conflict and ways that could resolve it.[[80]](#footnote-80)

At the same time, international conflicts interact, in a certain way, with the system and structure and with a process of international relations as a whole, they arise and develop in accordance with established principles. Conditionally, conflicts might be divided into 2 groups, most of them were formed in certain historical periods and now in new conflicts with the same actors you might find the echoes of previous contradictions. The components of this structure in this international conflict includes a balance of power, a peaceful coexistence, etc. Other conflicts are a special type of conflict that has developed in a short historical period in international relations (Middle East, Balkan, etc.). Many of the conflicts, especially at the world level, move into the structure of international relations, that is characterized by complex actions that impose a certain character on the system and that make significant changes in the conflict processes.

In international conflicts, the mass media plays a certain role. Since political confrontations are dynamically developing in the changing of global information space, the data itself has always an influence on the mass media resources and even a minor conflict could be develop into an international one. The role of the mass media in this context is very important, because the content and quality of the transmitted information determines whether the society will notice the appearance of these contradictions, the presence of which could be seen from this conflict, or it would take an opposite direction and the mass media would allow them to turn into a permanent factor that will influence the creation of new conflict situations and international crises. [[81]](#footnote-81)

In the framework of an international conflict, the media's information capabilities are used by all actors. Opponents in the international conflict use the mass media channels to exchange their political positions on the safe phase of the conflict, in other words, widespread their positions on the most dispute issues and predict possible responses from their opponents according to the conflict. It is also should be noted that in this moment the role of the mass media in conflict resolution is increasing. The most influential political actors, who own their own media resources, are able to transmit the news and create a special media space in which participants would fight for the right to be the first in the information war and psychological battles. Thus, the mass media is a very important element of the political environment in which economic conflicts take place.[[82]](#footnote-82)

The fast development of informative - communicative technologies in the modern world, the mass media has become an integral element that touches upon all aspects of everyday and active life of a society. The mass media, as one of the subjects that generates the information space and has exceptional opportunities to influence, as well as to identify and form an idea of political direction and due to that form the preferences of a wide audience. If we take into account the volume of daily published data, then we could justify the public's critical perception of political relativity, which sets the model of political behavior and determine the high importance of the mass media in modern political processes. In the last decade, modern researchers have noted a trend of the influence of political and information spaces, the importance of the mass media in modern political processes, especially with such examples like Color revolution or the Arab spring.

On the one hand, having a large audience and technological capabilities to collect and distribute information, the mass media could influence on political processes through the formation of certain attitudes and preferences among readers. On the other hand, even the understanding of the influence of contemporary mass media on public’s opinion and the information space itself, most representatives of governmental structures noted the need to build a communication line with citizens and influence on the formation of the information agenda through the usage of information and communication technologies and the mass media.

## **2.2 The reflection of the Syrian crisis by the mass media of Syria**

This work is concentrated on covering the problem of the Syrian conflict, which is one of the most acute today, because in this case, the conflict affects on not only to political associations, but also terrorist organizations. We will look at an example of double standards in the mass media space, how they affect on relationship between states that are not directly involved in this conflict and how they reflect the conflict without taking part in it. The identification of the features of the coverage of the Syrian conflict by socio-political media is also relevant because global changes are taking place in the world, which are associated with the crisis of political spheres, that is a result of appearance of new conflicts in different parts of the world. [[83]](#footnote-83)

The differences in the coverage of the Syrian conflict by 3 regional media are very different, so, for example, we could notice completely varied information when the coverage of the data through American, Russian and Syrian mass media. The information support of armed international conflicts in the mass media is an integral part of the military action itself. This is an instrument that is not only influence on the country's domestic policy, but also of its foreign one. This process might influence on the actions of opponents through the conflict, so the role of the mass media and journalists in military confrontations is very important.

The information contradiction around the armed conflict in Syria might be called unique, because if we would pay attention to the background of military actions, another war is also being carried out, which is no less important in this conflict and it is an informational and psychological war that could influence on the public opinion, as in the United States, the Russian Federation, Syria and other countries at the same time. This war is reflected the events through the mass media. To provide evidence for this claim, an analysis of the coverage of the conflict in Syria by various media sources will be made. The first source we will focus on is the Syrian media.

It is known, that Syrian politics has been socially unstable for several decades. The two main conclusions that included the conflict environment were related to the country's position as a state that takes on one of the main blows in the Arab-Israeli conflict, where it acted as a bulkwark against Israel. And the second point was connected with the regime's development of the cult of personality itself of the political leader Hafez al-Assad and his family. [[84]](#footnote-84) These two factors are fundamental, and they are aimed at maintaining control over the political space. Based on these provisions, the country's media officially uses these directions in its news broadcasts, because due to the regime in Syria, the mass media has long been under the state's control. So it is considered that the mass media environment itself in Syria can be characterized as one that is under the complete control of the state. The popularization of the mass media becomes one of the key factors in broadcasting information, regardless of the state. It is worth to note that the majority of political scientists, sociologists and historians believed that independence from the politics of the state, whether it is democratic or authoritarian, still resort to the use the rhetorical of diversionary threat.[[85]](#footnote-85)

The strategy of autocrats usually consists of monopolization of political information, and as a result, statements about external threats and conspiracies could always be seen in open sources. At the moment, the existing literature is focused on subversive warfare that focus on the behavior of democratic states. The rhetorical diversionary of threats includes a diversionary strategy and a huge demand for the literature of authoritarian media. Since it has already been mentioned that the rhetorical diversionary of threat is more common than that of a subversive warfare, but it is also able to include an empirical method of research, which includes a non-automatic analysis of the text.

To do this, we study the materials of print and online news agencies of those countries that are directly involved in the conflict process, they are Syria, the United States and Russia. First, an analysis of the Syrian media will be made to show the difference in the materials that are broadcast by the media directly from one country. They represent completely different points of view of political parties and opposition movements.

Until 2011, the Syrian information space was focused on Israel's negative actions against Syria and its destructive policies. However, after the Arabic spring and the Syria issue, the vector shifted from non-governmental propaganda towards Israel and the discussions of its conspiracy theory is increased against the Syrian regime and Syria as a whole.

Based on this, we can conclude that external events of domestic political circumstances have a strong impact on changes in the flow of political ideas and, as a result, it displays in the media environment. For this, we will make a content analysis of several Syrian new agencies in the early years of the conflict, to track how the course of events in the country will change the political orientation towards a particular issue.

It is noteworthy that in the first months of the protests in Syria, citizens of the opposition movement were represented by the mass media as separatists, and that Syria is the country of a conspiracy theory that was developed by the United States, Israel and other states. For this statement we should recall Scheller's theory about the government activity and that it has always been paying attention to the other states that try to use the so-called Arab cause, which was put forward against external conspiracies, so it always appealed to large sections of the population. [[86]](#footnote-86)

As noted by Saudi respondents Nynah and Zeitzoff, the tendency to believe in anti-Western and anti-Jewish conspiracies is very common and more than 80% of population are approved 2 or 3 of them. [[87]](#footnote-87) These conclusions are shaped by the way how political parties form the public muslins political perceptions on certain issues. This technique is also very typical for those who want to express a supportive policy of the regime, through close connection to the national regime. Could we call a certain policy of building news related to the military conflict a maneuver that distracts from the political regime of Assad? The presentation of news through the mass media took place through religious cohesion, which was formed by the Assad dynasty during the years of its rule. The peculiarity of our approach is that we use mass media discourse as a method of strategic orientation of the regime and how external factors that are broadcast by the mass media can be used to strengthen their political position, even if we take into account the fact of significant internal problems. The essence of this approach is that a political leader focuses the public's attention on an external enemy through the mass media. In this case, the citizens overcome their internal differences and unite against a common enemy.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Similarly, the another alternative approach, which was highlighted by Morgan and Bickers in 1992, involves a distracting internal political strategy that aims to expand rather than use it in a limited space, which will involve events that led to the conflict and it is playing on the sense of historical events. It was found that the focus on the issue of the general enemy is an important political strategy, even if we take into account the fact that in all probability it will not distract citizens from internal political problems, it will still have a visible effect on the problem that will be broadcast by the state.[[89]](#footnote-89) For example, if you convince the citizens of Syria that the Arab spring and the opposition were caused by a number of countries that did not necessarily include the United States, it could be noted that most of the citizens who do not believe in this yet, for some years they will form a negative perception regarding to the policy of the United States and the country as a whole. Unfortunately, the evidence of the direct influence of such policy has not yet been studied on the example of the Syrian conflict, however, if we take into account the survey that took place among Syrian refugees in 2018, it should be noted that most of them adhere to the theory that certain countries conspired against Syria.[[90]](#footnote-90) Also, when it was asked whether they believe that the United States tried to secretly help the Islamic state in taking power in Syria and Iraq, about 70 percent gave a positive answer. The theory itself can be taken quite seriously, because the influence of state policy on the mass media can be seen only in the perception of citizens.

The development and functioning of the mass media in Syria and the entire middle East region is quite provocative topic. Due to the rapid development of information technology and the strong factor of ideology in this region, the mass media has become such a defining element of democratization in this region. With the development and improvement of the mass media, there was a division of the audience in terms of age, class and ideology. Due to the unstable political situation in this region, there is a need to study regional media and determine their influence in this region. In its development, the Syrian mass media has passed a significant stage of development, from small newspaper sheets to high-tech satellite channels, from the widespeding of propaganda to a more free style of reporting events. The entire family of Arabic mass media, including the Syrian media, aims to tell the public about certain political, economic, and social aspects of life in this region without defending the position of state leaders.

The Syrian crisis, which began in March 2011, eventually became one of the global conflicts, which reflects not only the interests of states that are regional centers, but also the political interests of powerful actors. It is also worth noting that the support of external forces for the armed Syrian opposition, which was represented mainly by Islamist groups and it is seen in their communities a huge number of jihadists, that are influenced on the process of creating a large public Islamist movement in Syria. On the other hand, this has affected on the formation of the Islamic state in Syria and Iraq and its expansion in this territory.[[91]](#footnote-91)

In this context, we would consider the Syrian issue as a component of the Arab spring. The public protest in Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen, etc., which appeared in the very beginning of the Arab spring, may be justified by socio-economic crises, disorder in the country, corruption, poverty of the state, the dominance of the state structure, and the main factor - the lack of any democratic freedoms, despite the authorities ' statement to the opposite. At the same time, in Syria, if we take into account the fact that the presence of small internal problems did not affect on the civil society as much as external factors, and if we look at it more detail, this includes some support of the armed opposition by external forces, whose main goal was to use the Syrian conflict to implement the deliberate strategic goals.

If you look at Syria, before the international conflict, you may see that the socio-economic situation according to many indicators were improved, if you compare it with the countries where the Arab spring took place too, such as Bahrain and Egypt, it is necessary to note that the internal situation in the country itself could not cause such strong internal public protest and, of course, the armed confrontation. If you look at the economic indicators, the same unemployment rate from 2010 to 2011 increased only for 6.6 % and in total it was 15%, it was registered as the lowest rate in the region, while in Egypt and Tunisia’ rate reached 50%. Again, for this period, inflation in this region was around 4%, while in Egypt, the income per person was $ 2 per day.[[92]](#footnote-92) One of the main indicators that we would like to display is that despite of the Arab spring, the level of the society itself was significantly different from the countries that were involved in this process too. The fact also should be underlined that after the Arab socialist revival party came to power in 1970, Syria positioned itself in the world as a democratic state.

Since 2000, the Syrian leadership has attempted to solve the significant problems that are raised in the society. First, we would like to mention the democratization of economic and socio-political life, which was called the "Syrian spring". At the initiative of Bashar al-Assad, who held the governmental position in 2000, a policy that was announced by him includes the principles of openness and transparency. They were also aimed at democratizing political life. Also, there was work that was directed to improve the financial and banking sector, which had a significant impact on the country's development in the early 2000s. At the same time, there was a strong development of the idea of a free market, which had a negative impact on the growth of unemployment, which affected on the growth of social tension among citizens. In addition, it was noted the creation of socio-political organizations, which were centered on the liberal-democratic positions. After that, other political associations appeared, which later did not allow the Syrian spring to be developed in this region. In addition, the state authorities in Syria were afraid that the rapid implementation of radical reforms would lead to destabilization of the situation in the region and could even affect on the collapse of the country, as was in the case with the USSR.[[93]](#footnote-93)

All actions that are above reflected in the mass media in a very revealing way. At first, it should be noted that directly the position of the Syrian mass media. If we would look to the very beginning of the conflict, the Syrian mass media found themselves in a rather anti-democratic position. The entire information space was completely monopolized by the state. Especially, the main political party – Ba’ath controlled almost all mass media sources at that time, such as: ORTAS - one of the first TV companies that was created in 1960, of course, Radio Damascus, the Voice of the People and the Voice of Youth, and the state news Agency - SANA. It should be noted that the Assad regime itself did not full interference in the policy of state mass media, in fact, this affected on the publication of news during the appearance and active phase of the development of this international conflict.

At the same time, other media - oppositional, acted as a political weapon of their founders, who criticized the ruling regime and actively used the religious component in order to call the population to a more active conflict confrontation - armed resistance.

The situation was influenced by the fact that the first large defeats of the government’ side appeared. The official mass media radically changed their approach to more patriotic one, which encouraged citizens to mobilize around the recognized authority for the good prosperity of the country and to avoid a global catastrophe. However, if we focus on the understanding of the society and its possibility to be subjected to a massive information impact from many sides, such as the opposition and external sources. Thus, the publications that were made at the very beginning of the Syrian conflict expressed a hope for a change of political power and regulation of the conflict in this region.

In the book «Inside Syria: The backstory of their civil war and what the world can expect», the author examines the civil war from many sides, from the Arab spring, which influenced on the formation of the conflict itself to a certain degree of influence of the cruel Assad regime. If we would look through the harsh and repressive system that was established in the middle of XX century, the crony capitalism that was at the core of the state, the dysfunctionality of the economy, poverty, lack of freedom of speech and religious and ethnic discrimination. All these conditions were named as one of the main reasons that led to the disillusionment of citizens in Syria with the Assad regime and directly to the Syrian conflict itself. The Reese Erlich focuses on an interview with Syrian demonstrators who were both supporters and opponents of the Assad regime. So one of the supporters claimed that the policy that led Assad was only at the very beginning of its formation. It should take years to fully implement it. Asada tried to combine not only the traditional structure of the national state, based on cultural and religious traditions, but also to modernize all areas of the state system, even in strict ways. An opponent, a geography teacher from a simple school in Damascus, claims that Bashar al-Assad himself is focused only on creating a cult of a statesman and about the creation of complete despotism in Syria. People can't have rights, every movement of a person will depend only from the words of the president. [[94]](#footnote-94)

An independent Syrian journalist who was an opponent of this regime stated that the problems of the regime itself in Syria did not begin in 2010, when the Arab spring was actively developing, but it all began more than half a century ago, since the country was ruled for a long time by the Assad dynasty, which turned this state from a Republic into a complete monarchy and established a strong relationship between the political leader and the country.

After that, any protests of citizens were perceived as the protests of people who do not recognize the ancient legal order of the political system should be destroyed, because they are not true citizens of Syria, they are traitors to the state. After all, the main function of this regime is the full power of the current dynasty, without any changes from internal and external sides. As the journalist says in his numerous articles for the new agency- Al-Jumhuriya, in Syria, under the Assad government, it was forbidden not only to talk about what people believed, but also forced to defend what they did not believe at all. Actions according to their beliefs were regarded as actions against the state, it was necessary to realize that the ruling dynasty does not do everything for the good of you, it is the citizens who should do everything to make the ruling branch satisfied, then it will make you live in good conditions.[[95]](#footnote-95) However, over time, an active resistance from Syrians began, when the regime of the ruling dynasty began to actively infringe on the rights and freedoms of citizens. Yassin al-Haj Saleh in his initial articles during the Syrian war expresses the hope that the active opposition of the citizens would put the end to the despotic regime of the Assad dynasty. He emphasizes that the citizens of Syria need freedom and rights to solve their own social, cultural and economic problems. Military action cannot solve this problem; it can only solve temporary political obstacles that have arisen in the state.[[96]](#footnote-96)

At the beginning of the Syrian military conflict, despite of the active work of the mass media, the activities of the opposition mass media were tightened, even try-to-life opposition publications were officially banned. The government of the state forbidden to impose the "opposition's" malicious propaganda in the mass media. But in this case, the activities of the opposition internet mass media with its influence on the public were difficult to regulate.

This influence was commented on in 2013 by the Syrian Ambassador R. Hadad. He stressed that the activity of internet mass media had a significant impact on the formation of world public opinion, which was expressed in a strong protest against the war and bloodshed. [[97]](#footnote-97)

The another group of the mass media that was present in this region reflected the point of view of the government itself. If we talk in general about the situation that developed in the very beginning of the Syrian conflict, then we could note that the information space was monopolized by officials government. Almost all information space in Syria was under the full control of the dominant BA'ath party, most of the print publishers, state-owned TV channels and broadcasts such as ORTAS, radio Damascus, the voice of the People and Youth. One of the most propagandizing or expressing the opinions of the state TV channels was and is the SANA, one of the most popular TV company. It is worth to note that under the regime in Syria, the Assad regime did not provide an active interference in the editorial policy of the state media, which was expressed in publications of the period of the origin and initial unfolding of the conflict. The main topics that connected to the covering of the events were concerns about the future of the country, possible forecasts of actions during the Syrian conflict in the world, and of course actions between the government and the opposition that they are going to take, starting from the actions that are related to the unexpected elections to discussions about granting certain territorial regions of Syria and about the right of the autonomy and freedom of action to the particular regions. If we recall the situation with the broadcasting of the news in 2011, it should be noted that the state TV maximally positive noted the course of the events in this region, despite of the obvious facts from friends, relatives, satellite channels and of course of the same internet media. [[98]](#footnote-98) So, in September 2011, Syrian television tried to refute the stories of the Arab news Agency - Al Jazeera, which directly raised the topic of protests in Syrian cities. Some of the news agencies in Syria claimed that the Qatari authorities deliberately built sceneries that were very similar to the main squares in Damascus and other cities. They used them for theatrical performances in the form of protest and filmed them in various foreign languages. Online publications from the internet - agencies such as Al-Thawrah or Al-BA'th played a significant role in the beginning of the Syrian conflict. [[99]](#footnote-99) At the very beginning, after the first large protest in Syria, in the city of Der'a, the first mention about this was mentioned only 7 days later in Al-BA'th and with a notion about commission that was created to investigate the incident of burned goods. This article was directly accompanied by a photo of a burned car, but the next day, to convinced citizens that everything is stable in the country, there were other photos that showed the regularity of life in the city, for example, a photo of a man who calmly walked down the street from a store. A few days later, Al-Thawrah published the first serous article that reflected the events that were going on under the title: «What is going on is an attemp to destabilize Syria and its national unity». The article focused on the fact that there are various conspiracies against the political system of state and these strikes directed to destabilize national unity, but they also speak only about strengthening of Syria as a state, due to the unity of the citizens.[[100]](#footnote-100) After that, a series of articles begins to appear in which stated that foreign actors are involved in a conspiracy against Syria. For example, the article " Lebanese personalities "says that the subversive actions that were committed in Syria were committed by the service of Israel, as a part of a project that directed to divide the Arab countries. The plan was called «Zionist enemy's project».[[101]](#footnote-101) At the same time, the article «the People Want Bashar al-Assad» is published in another new agency Al-BA'th, which talks about the triumph of the Syrian people over the conspiracies of foreign figures. The article is directly supported by a photo of citizens that proudly wave with Syrian flags under the huge flag of the president. [[102]](#footnote-102)

Several days later, the president himself made an official statement about the attempts of enemy states to carry out a conspiracy that would directly affect on the disintegration of the united Syrian people. After this announcement, during the whole April, there were statements from Alba'th about the activities of armed groups that shook Syria and about the activities of foreign actors who caused this and that they were the main engine of the conflict process. Almost daily articles about a foreign conspiracies and the unity of the Syrian people who fought with it would have been justified if there is no the news from the opposition media, which showed photos, videos with accompanying texts that show otherwise.

Further, new agencies began to publish articles of accusing the Israeli authorities of involvement in violence and, of course, the special role of the United States in the military conflict in Syria. After an article was published on February 2, in 2012 that stating that Qatar insists on shedding the blood of Syrians and intends to undermine stability in Iran. The article itself also mentions the policy of Qatar with sharp indignation, since it is true that Qatar has allowed American and Western aircraft to use its airspace to destroy Arab cities and destroy thousands of people. After that, the mass media began to build a strategy in which the main enemy was portrayed as the United States, which is involved in building a strategy for the fight between Arabia and Qatar. After that, the state media often published articles that expressed the political positions of Arab countries and often accused them of hostile policies.

Another case is directly related to the state-owned Syrian TV company SANA, which shows how the state is trying to stop military operations on the territory of Syria and at the same time, to have a significant impact on the fight against territorialism not only in their country, but also around the world. The case is connected to SANA, when it was covering the interview of the Syrian president Bashar al-Asada to the American journalist of Foreign Affairs in 2015, it reflected the main aspects that the Syrian authorities focus on and the «victories» that Syria has won in the last years of the confrontation. During the interview, the President mentioned the possibility of the Syrian army to capture any territory in Syria, but the ability of the Syrian army to stay in this region for a long time is impossible, because to capture and control the territory by military forces are different things.

Regarding the war itself, the President made a two-fold judgment that the war itself, if we take into account the progress of the Syrian army over the past 2 years, has gained a positive result, while in terms of moral actions, the war has brought a lot of losses and, most importantly, has spread the influence of terrorist groups. As for the overall victories, the President emphasized the unity of the Syrian people during the difficult war period and the conditional victory over terrorist groups. When he was asked about the possible termination of the struggle and finding a dialogue with the opposition movement group, Bashar al-Assad's replied that from the beginning of the crisis to this day, the Syrian government is ready for a dialogue with any opposition group, for the earliest settlement of the conflict. To do this, they even amended the Constitution of Syria, where it is noted that not only the state authorities and opposition movements should participate in the discussion of the Syrian conflict in the country, but also all national political parties and non-governmental organizations that are interested in an early solution of the Syrian issue. In addition, SANA focused on the expressed position of the President regarding the US policy on the Syrian issue. As you know, the United States is one of the main active forces that is on the side of the opposition movement in Syria, which helps not so much to the true Syrian oppositionists, who can be found among the national minority, but more stress was placed on helping the opposition movements that appeared from outside.[[103]](#footnote-103)

If you look at the same interview in the American magazine Foreign Affairs, you could see that there the journalist emphasis more on the conciliatory policy of the United States and how the authorities of this country are trying to help to resolve this military conflict. You could also notice the difference that is present in the interpretation of SANA’ interview, the mention of the United States causes negative emotions, such as the fact that the United States refuses to help third-party organizations and intervenes in the politics of another state, thereby affecting the aggravation of the conflict. While in Foreign Affairs, US troops are represented as a liberation group that aims to eliminate international conflict. The President's responses looked very strict. He presented as a negative character despite of the journalist's insistence. The journalist was asking him a provocative questions, for example it was known that in May 2015, the troops from the United States were expected to be reinforced in Syria to fight ISIS and the question was about the behavior of the Syrian government in this case. The President acutely stated that all troops that do not cooperate with the Syrian state troops will be counted as troops whose actions are directed against the state.[[104]](#footnote-104) Interestingly, that in the news agency SANA, this remark was not found at all. Based on the interpretation of this interview by two news agencies, you can notice a difference in the interpretation of the President's answers and the style of their writing. Similarly, omitting of certain aspects of the interview and reworking some of the answers and questions has a completely opposite effect on the reader.

After countless publications, the mass media as an important factor that is involved in the formation of consciousness and behavior of people, that is why it is one of the special elements of the confrontation between opponents. The wide spread of social networks, internet communities, and blogs provided new opportunities for creating news that often carried false information. Syria in this context plays the role of a significant information platform. The nature of the counteraction in the Syrian conflict is formed primarily because of the influential states that pursue most of their interests in the region and organizations, as well as new actors in the international arena who pursue their own goals without taking into account other influential players who appear on the international scene, in this case, there are numerous terrorist organizations.

The issue with the mass media, as we have already noticed, is very ambiguous. Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad accused the mass media in the thing that they do not respect the values and principles that they should be guided when they cover the Syrian conflict. He said that the mass media use double standards in news, which affects on the wrong perception of the international conflict among residents of various countries. But in defense of the mass media, we would like to say that despite this accusation that is made not only by the Syrian president, but also by other political figures, the events that broadcasting in journalists are one-sided.

Almost always in the context of military conflicts, special rules apply to the mass media, and when the coverage of the international conflicts is happening, the freedom of journalists and the openness of information in describing certain facts and events is significantly reduced. And the main factor that determines the nature of coverage of events is the interests and policies that the state chooses. As you know, in the most cases, in conflict confrontations, the sources of information are used to be interested states who provide the necessary information in advance. It is very often, when among this information, you can notice a deliberate distortion of facts and information that either exaggerate or downplay the value, as you can see in the content analysis of the Syrian mass media, this political information is used actively when the mass media is covering the Syrian conflict.

## **2.3. The Unites States’ mass media and their coverage of the Syrian crisis**

In the history of American foreign policy, there are many examples of the government who used a policy of double standards in international relations, especially that were related to the observance of human rights and the use of military force. This policy is applied by the United States in relation to anti-state protest movements or in the independent detection of restrictions on the rights of citizens in certain countries.

It should be noted, that the United States’ government actively supports these actions with various movements, but does not notice or severely restricts these impulses on the territory of its own country. To have a possibility for the United States’ government to interfere in the policies of other sovereign States, concepts such as "responsibility to protect" and "humanitarian intervention" were invented.[[105]](#footnote-105) By using these political techniques, the United States could use military force under the guise of protecting civilians and their rights. The implementation of this policy influence on the ability to become possible to realize one's political interests. At first, we should consider the statement that is connected to the protection of human rights and whose interests were protected by the United States by it. If we remember the examples of this protection in the international relations we would see that it brings to the tragic events in Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, where, as it is known, the United States’ military forces caused more harm to at least hundred civilians, which could be seen as a direct violation of international law. [[106]](#footnote-106) We should pay attention to the fact that among the publications of the Western mass media, the question of the inequality of the United States actions does not arise.

The policy of «double standards» of the United States consist of the exerting pressure on the governments of the necessary countries that these countries adhere the necessary political thought. In essence, this means softening of the actions and policies of a state to the western countries.

Let's consider the regions of the Middle East, or rather their political significance in international relations. They include one of the priority directions in the foreign policy of the United States. This region remained relevant even after the end of the Cold War, which had a significant impact on the formation of the political concept, it also determined the importance of the United States, in particular in the area that would concern the security of the state itself. The main issues that are used for the western policy formation are the threats that are seen from the other states to the United States as for the political leader and its key allies. The threat to the country's main economic interests, and the danger in terms of the nuclear threat. It is also necessary to mention the regional strategy, which was developed and aimed to be ensured that all national components of the United States should be subordinated to a single strategic goal in the region. We are talking about the possibility of using military and economic instruments of pressure to the potential regional opponents.

The concept itself was actively developed during the Cold War. The question about the Middle East and Eastern region, its strategy began to develop actively since 1993, when the representative of the United States’ president’s administration who was respond of the Middle East and South Asian Affairs, Martin Indyk, noted that the Unites States from that moment needs to take an element of projection and not an element of global rivalry with the regions. They should take a position of keeping their national values in this region.[[107]](#footnote-107)

Syria is a very ambiguous actor, because the situation between the Arab States that is now is quite difficult. That is why, the strategy of the Unites States is in this situation to keep territorial borders from the wide spreading or limitation and to influence on the Syrian conflict directly and through the dialogue with the states, also they should have an impact on the Syrian regime by the common rules, which were established by international law and adopted by all states. The use of this political concept could be seen against the political regime in Syria. For example, in 2016, John Kirby, a representative of the United States’ Department said that the military operations conducted by Syrian troops with the support of Russian troops can be counted as illegitimate, because of the death of civilians, the destruction of vital objects of the country are basically an international suppression, and even the reason that these military operations were directed against terrorist groups do not change this fact.[[108]](#footnote-108) However, if we pay attention to the military operations of the western coalition and to the military army of Iraqi, its actions are legitimate and they are carried out with "special care" to the region, especially to the civilian population.[[109]](#footnote-109) It is impossible not to recall the United States’ accusations that were connected to the international arms trade. In this situation, again, the supply of weapons to Syria by other states, such as the Russia Federation, is criticized by the West, while again, if we take into account the fact that the Russian Federation is the second state in terms of supplies, while the United States takes a leading position.

All these statements made by the mass media from the Western side fit perfectly into the political orientation of the policy of the double standards in the United States. At the moment, this trend is particularly noticeable in international relations. Its main concept is that political direction of the mass media supports or condemns certain trends that depend on the direction of the United States political ideas.

The special attention should be paid to the Unites States’ public diplomacy in the Middle East. We should also take into account the fact that the United States’ policy on the most issues is supported directly by the Western world, that means, that the policy is not conducted within one country. All policy of the Unites States towards other countries is focused on such aspects as the usage of certain resources of other countries for the benefit of their own country. The main focus directs on the development of the economy, political and military capabilities that will have a beneficial impact on the future stability of the country. The main provider who has contributed to the implementation of this strategy in the past and today is the mass media. This tool was the main engine of a foreign policy, that spread the necessary information to all states in the world. [[110]](#footnote-110)

As you know, in the broadcasting of information by the western mass media there is often build such arguments that are based on unknown but reliable sources of information from the opposition group and from the Unites States’ intelligence services and their allies. It is worth to note that the western news agencies do not conduct official cooperation with Syrian government bodies and organizations. A good example of this is the data in which is written the usage of chemical weapons in Syria in 2013, you could read an article in the Washington Post about how the Syrian government used chemical weapons on its territory, and how the government of Russian Federation helped in it by all means. The motive for this attack was by the idea of the Unites States’ government justified by the fact that it was a scattered attempt of separatist from several areas of Syria in the densely populated eastern part and suburbs of the capital. After this chemical attack, the United States authorities, based on reliable sources, as noted by a representative of the United States’ administration, tried to hide the fact of a chemical attack on civilians, but after a huge number of victims, it became impossible to did so. This fact was confirmed by the Unites States’ representative, according to him, a message was overheard with the participation of a high-ranking official. Proof of this message was not registered.[[111]](#footnote-111) This trend of the western authorities could be seen not only in the minority of the mass media news agencies, but in almost all influential news feeds of the western information spaces. For example, in the article in BBC news there is not directly evidence that Syria attacked the controlled territories by oppositions parties with the chemical weapons. The article gives certain arguments that could be turn into facts. So, the journalist says that the opposition’ movement could not use M-14s, due to the fact that, again, according to reliable sources, the separatists did not have this type of weapon. Also, Human Rights Watch stressed that the mechanism itself includes 333 mm missiles that are combined with the Falaq-2 launcher, about which a lot of countries knew and in particular time this weapon was available in the Syrian government and it could be used to launch chemical weapons. However, again, no reliable sources of information were found. [[112]](#footnote-112)

The Syrian’ government, through the mass media, deny these accusations of the Western countries, they call them false and completely unfounded. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad accused opposition groups of this chemical attack, which were supported by countries such as the United States, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, because the use of such weapons will affect on the results of the battles of opposition groups.

This western mass media policy that use double standards on a daily basis and has a significant large-scale impact is widely approved around the world. We would also like to note the fact that such coverage of the Syrian conflict has prompted the creation of a new phenomenon in the information space, when an actor is trying to accuse an opponent that is taking a part in a military conflict in the illegal actions. The another point is that instead of providing real evidence, an actor turns to the data that is presented in the mass media, paying attention even into social networks, while the mass media itself do not have an objective information’ base and could not give serious arguments about a particular event.[[113]](#footnote-113)

One of the most influential electronic news agencies in the Unites States is CNN. The specifics of the news coverage by this agency is such that a huge stress is made on the events that taking place in the world, while there is not so much attention paid to domestic politics. With regard to the conflict in Syria, the channel's strategy has been developed in such way that a data is aimed to make a negative description of the actions of the Syrian’ government and the regime of Bashir al-Assad. If you do analysis of the news that are published by CNN, you might notice that the picture is displayed in a way that describes a few key elements of the conflict such as: the opposition group, that is consists of civilians, who opposed against the regime in Syria, even despite the fact that sometimes from this group may occur representatives of the terroristic groups and of course the Syrian government, headed by a president - Bashar al-Assad, who is doing everything possible to destroy the opposition group, despite the fact that it consists of civilians, of course it is supported by Russian president - Vladimir Putin. We could give an example of the political situation in Idlib, which took a place in 2018. According to the news agency of the Unites States Donald Trump warned Syria, Russia and Iran against attacking an opposition group in Idlib. After the president expressed great hope on Twitter that the governments of these countries will not commit this «serious humanitarian mistake» that will take the lives of hundreds of people. After this statement, on the next day Russian troops attacked the parts of Idlib, according to the active media groups and a group of The White Helmets. After that, the US government again expressed concern about the use of chemical weapons on the territory of the city. While from the Russian side, a day before the event, the representative of the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs -Sergey Lavrov clarified that the use of chemical weapons in this region is possible by the group the White Helmets, which could accuse the Syrian government of this incident. The United States reaction was ambiguously, the accusation of incorrect providing of information from the Russian side and the rapid response of the Unites States to the attack as a response to the Syrian troops in the case of the use of chemical weapons, because as it is known, only it has the necessary chemical weapon. [[114]](#footnote-114)

As you know, for the Unites States’ media to show the difficulties of the Syrian people is one of the main aim. It is necessary for them to focus on the brutal tyranny of the Assad regime and its ally - Vladimir Putin. The description of the policy of the presidents is always carried out in parallel, based on this, we could conclude that in this way the CNN reflects the direction of Unites States’ political thought not only in relation to Syria, but also Russia. Since the news agency itself is very democratic, it is often worth mentioning that the opinion of the journalist who is expressed in this article may be subjective. But as you know, based on the majority of the data, there is a tendency to display the Western political model of perception in everything. The main focus of almost all modern publications in the United States is based on the most important moral quality - social well-being. In the texts, you could see the accusations of the Syrian president in the troubles of the citizens, the use of harsh measures in relation to them, in addition, there is an accusation of countries-States that support the Syrian regime. To convince the reader of this fact, correspondents use various means of expression, such as describing the lives of civilians during the war years and how they view the situation in fear of their president and his allies. It is also necessary to note the technique of hypertextuality, which affects on the reader very vividly. For example, most people were impressed by the story of a refugee from Syria who was forced to leave his country because of the civil war. Against the background of these stories, the Syrian government is personified in a very negative light and again it emphasizes the brutal regime of Bashar al-Assad in this state. Most often, the western media use an approach in their reporting that shifts the semantic emphasis and replaces the argument itself. This approach tries to show the justification of phenomena that are not supported by any facts and act only as an axiom. In this case, the audience focuses not on a reliable fact, but on the assessment of this event by the media, which is displayed in the reader's perception properly. The peculiarity of the coverage of this conflict is that that not all media highlight certain topics, there is a method of keeping silence, that is used by all media in the world. In the United States, this approach is used in the form of focusing on predetermined events, without mentioning others facts that are not less important. For example, in 2013, the BBC broadcast a report that said that because of the Syrian war, the number of starving civilians in Eastern Ghouta is increased. It was also noted that the difficult conditions of the population living there could be regarded as a war crime.[[115]](#footnote-115) Another example shows that the article «In besieged Syria, one wasting death: just start of a tragedy», which was published in The Washington Post, is negative about what is happening in Syria, but at the same time, the article focuses on the fact that the military forces of the state, for a long time, tried to restore order in areas where there were opposition uprisings, which as a result led to a tragedy with starving and dying children. [[116]](#footnote-116) This article did not mention that the opposition groups and terrorist were responsible for this incident too, all responsibility was assigned to the government of Syria and its president. When we compared the data of news events, it is possible to determine the obvious fact that the news is aimed at forming a negative information background around the government forces of Syria. Among the various news publications that can be viewed on the topic of the Syrian conflict, the US occupies a leading position. These examples show that the political orientation of the United States not only condemns the Assad regime in Syria, but also completely supersedes the non-state policy towards this state, while on the other hand, this system shows a positive image of American politicians who emphasize that the United States’ government always takes are about Syrian citizens and the Syrian conflict and its consequences as a whole. It is important to note that this construction of the information space is the most important task of the state.

In the twenty-first century, the United States has developed an effective media management system. It can be divided into 2 groups. The first is related to the coverage of the role and participation of the United States in events on the world stage. When the coverage of international politics is happening by the mass media and it is managed through formal institutions, such as the Unites States news agencies. The second group includes the management of information flows in the coverage of domestic political events. The United States’ media is known for its democracy, and as a matter of fact, in such democratic country, the manifestation of censorship is strange, so in the United States was developed a system that would allow setting the media agenda, which is reflected in the modern world when events are sanctified by the United States’ news agencies

## **2.4 The Russian mass media, double standards, and the Syrian crisis**

The situation that has developed today with the Russian media is quite contradictory. The Russian news agencies position themselves as an impartial observer who objectively make reports on the events, that are free from any political assessments and trends.

This formalization of Russian media has developed because of the existing law in the Russian Federation, which openly states that censorship of mass media by officials, state bodies, organizations, institutions or other public associations and a ban on the distribution of messages and materials is not allowed. [[117]](#footnote-117) In this regard, we could consider Russian mass media quite free and open. But is this really try? To consider this, we will make an analysis of the Russian media new agencies to show their dependence on a state policy on the example of the Syrian conflict and its reflection on the international policy with other states in general.

The Syrian issue for a long time is one of the most acute problems of modern international relations. The position of Russia about this topic is quite clear, the state tries to be involved in a solving procedure of the Syrian conflict. Moscow's position itself is based on the understanding that this problem might only be solved through political negotiations. To solve the international conflict Russia is working in several areas, such as diplomatic support for the state structures of the Syrian government and attempts to maintain its position without third intervention by external forces. To its actions also might be included active participation in the negotiations in the Syrian process, the purpose of which is to resolve the conflict situation with a satisfactory solution for the opponents in Syria. In addition, this includes steps that are aimed at establishing international relations for resolving the conflict not only between the opponents of the conflict, but also with the other participants in the international process. And of course, we should mention the military operation, which is aimed to resolve the difficult situation in Syria between the parties and attempts to lead to a peaceful dialogue between the state authorities and the opposition group.

This position can be considered quite judgmental if we take into account Russia's interests in this region, as in terms of cultural, political and economic interaction with Arab countries. For centuries, Russia and Syria have developed a strong partnership, that is why it could be a reason by which we could explain Russia's intervention in the Syrian conflict. But the main reason for this was the Middle East’ policy of Western countries, which led to the almost lost of statehood in a number of Arab countries and the activation of terrorist groups.[[118]](#footnote-118)

In the modern world, Russia is one of the few countries that are able to defend the interests of its own state and other countries, while maintaining its sovereignty in domestic and international affairs. Interesting that in the Syrian conflict involved not only state representatives of Syria and the opposition group that consist of citizens, but also between states that support the policy of these groups. In such way, we might note the conflict between Russia and the United States, which is developing in the information sphere.

It should be stressed that the fact that particular regulation of the sphere of information in the Russian domestic political process are happening, that are usually perceived not in a very positive way by the western media. There is a different approach to the regulation of information, which usually led to controversial issues in its implementation. Under the influence of the information revolution, the Russian political leadership is gradually increasing state’ control over the mass media sphere. Russian information policy itself is mainly focused on ensuring that the content of an information message that would be transmitted through the mass media corresponds to the real events.

At the moment, a policy is being implemented at the legislative level, which is going to develop state’ standards that must be observed when the transmitting of the information by Russian information channels would be. Characteristic of the Russian political system, the values of conservative ideas that imply broad powers of state’ bodies, including the information environment.

The use of certain methods of transmitting information in Russia in order to protect the sovereign nature of the state is very common, but it has a completely different nature than in the United States and Europe, that is why there is a huge amount of political controversy and because of it, it could be as a reason by which it is more difficult for Russian news agencies to take an objective point during the event’s publications.

Let’s remember the beginning of the Syrian conflict, when the Russian media initially broadcast information with a certain wait-and-see point, but still, even during first passive steps they tried to put forward some forecasts about the conflict itself and try not to focus on it, but also they tried to conduct an information policy in the same way as with other countries where the Arab spring was. However, it is possible to notice more active manifestation of the mass media with the time of Russia's active intervention in the politics of Syria. If initially, Russia defended the issues of the world order, with the prospect of regional development, taking into account the benefits and problems of the Russian government in connection with the participation of the conflict, then further, against the background of awareness of the seriousness of Russia's intentions in the Syrian conflict, the positions that were chosen by us for analysis of the Russian media began to display more patriotic spirit.[[119]](#footnote-119)

If you observe the chronological sequence of publications by Russian media, it is worth noting that when was the data publishing, the information sources usually refer to the state sources like the Ministry of defense of the Russian Federation, the Russian Foreign Ministry or Syrian, the official Syrian news agency that we already know - SANA. After analyzing Russian information sources, we could determine the clear position of the Russian Federation on the Syrian issue, which contains of fully support of the regime of Bashar al-Assad and from the Russian position, the opposition group is a stopping component that is trying to regulate the conflict. [[120]](#footnote-120)

Several well-known Russian news agencies were used for the case-analysis. First of all, we would like to draw your attention to the Central Information Russian Agency - TASS, which is one of the main information agencies in Russia. This news Agency shows the world community news reports about the Syrian conflict and shows the determined strategies of the heads of the state and politicians according to this issue. When Russia first began to take more active part in the Syrian issue, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov said that Russia's position on this issue remains unshakeable, the people who should solve the conflict in Syria should be involved in this process directly, that is why it should be Syrian people and the government of Syria, that is why Russia is ready to protect the regime, for the sake of justice and the sovereign right of Syrian citizens to make a democratic choice. Russia's readiness to help to end the military conflict and to provide with the humanitarian supply the civilian population, indicates that the country is ready to provide any accompanying assistance that Syria needs.[[121]](#footnote-121) This was one of the first interviews where Russia clearly outlined its position on the Syrian issue. Sergey Lavrov also made a statement that the intervention of external actors or a forceful approach with their participation is unacceptable, because it will lead to a terrible civil war. As we could see today, the Minister of Foreign Affairs’ warning was very prescient.[[122]](#footnote-122)

The West's response to such statements was very provocative and claimed that Russia supports the cruel Assad’ regime, which does not support the democratic freedoms that should be. Further, the news agency in its reports touched upon a very hot topic of the use of chemical weapons on the territory of Syria. As we remember, the United States news agencies followed the policy that representatives of the Syrian government used chemical weapons with Russian support. However, the Russian side expressed a different opinion about this. So the permanent representative of the Russian Federation - Vitaly Churkin, in 2013, said that the use of chemical weapons was detected by the opposition forces, and the accusation of the Syrian government in this incident testifies as provocation by Western’ side. It is worth to note a case that was revealed in the press in 2014, in which was said that an opposition group used weapons in the vicinity of the Khan al-Asal area, in the province of Aleppo. For greater effect on the reader, the author describes in detail the deaths of civilians and the torment of the military, who tried to defend their ideology.[[123]](#footnote-123)

With the development of terrorist groups, Russia began to take a more active part in this conflict, which provided a strong support to the Syrian government. We could pay attention to an article from 2015, in which Bashar al-Assad spoke about the success of the Russian army in the international fight against terrorism. The President noted that despite of the strong influence of the Syrian troops in the fight against terrorism, the situation has improved significantly in recent years due to the assistance of Russian troops. For example, if you would compare the activities of the Russian Federation and the United States, you could see that Russia's actions in 2 months were more effective then actions of the United States in this issue for a year. [[124]](#footnote-124)

As well known, the Russian government is actively involved in negotiations on the Syrian issue with other countries, and also acts as one of the key figures in the United States - Syria dialogue. As reported by TASS in 2016, the representative of the Unites State’ government proposed to arrange a dialogue between the Russian Federation and the Unites States on the Syrian issue. During the conversation between Vladimir Putin and Barack Obama, the presidents agreed on the issue that this conflict should be ended, but for this purpose it is first necessary to create certain peaceful conditions that require the settlement of the military confrontation. The US authorities expressed hope that Russia will significantly influence on the president of Syria on this issue. After this dialogue, the representative of the Russian press- secretary announced that Russia will try its best to help to resolve the military confrontation and the Syrian conflict, but the United States’ authorities should also understand that Russia still holds the position that this conflict should be resolved between the Syrian government and opposition groups, and Russia, like other countries, could influence only to the settlement of the armed confrontation and assist in the fight against terrorist groups.[[125]](#footnote-125) As you can see, the position of the news channel – TASS is fully adheres to the political point of view of Russia on this issue. Condemnation of the actions of the opposition, the military conflict itself. However, if we take into account the opinions of politicians, we could conclude that Russia still holds the view that the conflict should be directly resolved by the Syrian government and the opposition group, which consists of representatives of the citizens.

The another very popular news source in Russia - RIA-Novosti. The main principles that are laid in the foundation of this company, as it glosses, are: efficiency, objectivity, independence from the political conjuncture.[[126]](#footnote-126) In should be noted that in 2013, the channel was liquidated, after which it was reclassified as a brand from a well - known news company - Russia Today. The focus of the articles on the Syrian issue changed its vector, after the channel officially became the information representative of Russia.

To track this trend, we would consider a few articles that were published before the channel was liquidated and after. In one of the first articles of RIA-Novosti, which concerned the position of the Russian Federation on the Syrian issue, the Headquarters expressed the opinion that the intervention of third parties in this conflict is unacceptable and the confrontation itself should be resolved between the opponents. [[127]](#footnote-127)

This statement was made after it became clear that NATO began to deploy missile systems on the territory of Turkey. The essence of this message was that the Russian mission as for other foreign states, should not interfere in the course of this conflict, as this could influence on the negative way to the attempt of its peaceful solving. [[128]](#footnote-128) This is one of the few articles that conveys the political orientation of the publication. It addresses the issues of intervention, terrorism, and the direct use of chemical weapons in the Syrian conflict. It should be noted that RIA-Novosti also adhered to the political orientation of the state, but the articles were mostly purely descriptive. After rebranding of RIA-Novosti to Russia Today, you could see the strong involvement of this news agency with an undisguised political character, which not only reflects the point of view of the state, but also presents Russia as an ideal participant that contributes to the settlement of this conflict. The fact that chemical weapons were used on the territory of Syria is a vivid example. As we already know, the position of the West and the United States was unanimous on this issue, they accused the government of Syria in its use and noted the illegal actions of Russia, which assisted Bashar al-Assad in this case. However, as could be seen in the publications of RIA-Novosti (Russia Today), the observer of political events, Konstantin Bogdanov, expressed the view that the fault of this action is laid on the opposition groups, and the Syrian government itself, although could be seen as cruel, is not so light-minded that use this type of weapon on its civilians and military forces.[[129]](#footnote-129)

Thus, the agency expresses the position of complete non-involvement of the Russian government in this chemical attack, justifying its illogical actions. The news agency itself, as we have already noted, is not only trying to prove that Russian government is not involved in any negative actions that occur on the territory of Syria, but also emphasizes that Russia is trying to end the Syrian conflict in various ways. Thus, we could say that in this media source, which is directly subordinate to Russia Today, Russia acts as the main assistant of Syria in resolving the conflict. All destructive activities are transferred to the opposition groups, not to the government, and of course, a dialogue between the Syrian government and its opponents is possible if the Western authorities do not interfere in their policies.

In addition to government news agencies, we would like to address those that allegedly express freedom of action. The new news agency - Medusa was chosen for this purpose. This international Russian-language publication appeared in 2014 and immediately established itself as a publication that displays events from an objective point of view, without any political overtones. Despite the fact that this publication is quite young, it has established itself as a high-quality content among the majority of Russian readers. Let's look at the article that deals with the bombing in Eastern Ghouta. The core of the message is that for 2 days there has been a bombing on this territory, which caused a huge number of victims. First, the author of the article cites the United States’ position on this issue with links to various western publications that accuse the Syrian government of attacking civilians, and the Russian government of assisting in this. According to the international organization - Syrian Observatory for Human Right, the attack in Eastern Ghouta killed about 250 people,[[130]](#footnote-130) and the responsibility for this crime laid on the Syrian troops and helicopters, as well as the Russian aviation. After that, the government of many western countries blamed Syria and Russia for what they had done. Russia's response to this accusation was very terse and it expressed a unified position that the Russian government did not participate in this attack.[[131]](#footnote-131) However, we should stress that even if we compare this news agency with RIA-Novosti or TASS, we could see that the information that is presented, it is quite democratic or at least without positioning Russia as the main good actor in the Syrian conflict.

The publication tries to convey the news as objectively as possible, but still, there is a certain political position of Russia in relation to the conflict. If the comments of the Western Media are presented by the correspondent a little negatively and untruthfully, then the Russian authorities statements are seen as facts and do not require persuasion.

Another article that would be consider is related to the topic of the capture of Syrian troops by Islamists and that is connected to the interests of countries such as Russia, the United States and Turkey in this issue. As you know, the situation in the province of Idlib has remained difficult for many years. First, the direct confrontation of the Syrian military forces with the opposition forces, then the intervention of terrorist groups only worsened the situation. At the moment, the situation has developed in such way that the interests of the countries that participate in this process affect on the process of regulation the situation in this province. [[132]](#footnote-132)

Thus, Turkey's interests could be attributed to the control over the near border of Syria, where the Kurdish communities as known are concentrated. Over a long period of war, there was created more than one independent areas in the region and independent army with American weapons. Ankara suggests that this combat army is a terrorist organization that has been fighting with the Turkish government for a long time. [[133]](#footnote-133)

The interests of the United States are connected with the fact that if Idlib is captured by Syrian troops, the Syrian government will have the opportunity to regain its oil and gas territories. Despite the reluctance of the United States’ government to withdraw troops from Syria, it is still possible to notice how the policy is being implemented with regard to the mixing of the United States’ military strategic reserves of Europe. [[134]](#footnote-134)

The interests of Russia, almost fully coincide with the interests of the government of Syria. For them, the priority is to preserve the power of the president of the regime of the president Assad (you could see the difference with other sources of Russian news agencies that saying about Russian position on the issue that only the people of Syria could solve the issue of the Assad regime) and the creation of safe conditions for the Russian military to protect the Western Mediterranean coast from the unexpected militant attacks.[[135]](#footnote-135)

If you analyze the information that is provided by this news agencies, you could find that the position of it is quite democratic displays the events that are happening, if you compare it with other news publications.

If we make a general description of the Russian media, we can conclude that most of the attention in their news reports paid to the attention of the relationship between Moscow, the Syrian government and the United States and their confrontation in the region. After analyzing the Russian articles, we could identify Moscow's clear position that reflects the support of the Bashar regime, arguing that this is not only a desire to help in regulating the international conflict, but also a need to fight with the terrorist groups. Russia's position against intervention and military intervention is quite noticeable. Today, we could see articles that express the idea that Russia has had a favorable impact on the Middle East region. It should be stressed that the trend of negotiations between Russia and the United States on the Syrian issue and the fight against terrorist groups, now is more popular than it was a few years ago among the mass media.

**CONCLUSION**

During the Syrian conflict, Syrian, American, Russian mass media covered all events that are directly related to this topic. Summing up the results of the work that are related to the all aspects of the Syrian conflict, that are connected to the Syrian, American and Russian information space, it could be concluded that contemporary

mass media in these countries have their own distinctive features and they influence on the foreign policy of different states and play an important role in the Syrian conflict.

To consider our goals, we outlined the nature of the emergence of double standards in the world process and identified its impact, as well as the interaction between the policy of double standards and the mass media itself and how it is used in international politics in the sphere of international conflicts. Due to this, we have identified some of the main causes of information wars and how they are used today in international relations. The theoretical study has allowed us to conclude that the mass media’ coverage of events in each country is practically the same and it is shown to the readers according to the state’s policy. Despite of the fact that in the XXI century there is a talk about the openness of information and the democratic nature of the mass media, we would like to note that there is evidence that the mass media provide the readers with the information in limited frames and with a certain political idea, in addition, it could be noted that there are still tense relations between the government and the mass media in some states, because the news agencies are not always ready to broadcast information according to a political idea.

**This argument leads to the fact that the state is trying to create a certain policy of influence, in which any information news will be used to support the idea of a political orientation. This already shows that politics has a significant influence on the formation of certain ideas among the public. We have considered certain forms and methods of providing information about a phenomenon that have the maximum effect on the image of the opponent. Usually, a governmental policy is aimed in creating a specific information policy plan to determine which information should be present in the sources and which should be omitted.**

**Among the main factors that are present in the mass media, several could be distinguish as factors that are influence on the reader’s perception. There are a certain attractiveness of the main topic for the people, the originality of the events that are covered and the emotional tone of the data. All these factors have a strong influence on the reader's perception of information.**

**The reflection of the news itself in the public mind is created on the basis of a public opinion. The study of its psychological aspects helps in the future to build the necessary strategy of information warfare in the mass media and also it allows to notice minor political processes in the society, which later would play a significant role. The study of the dynamics of public opinion allows us to correctly form the concept of political informative direction.**

**The possibility of instantaneous cross-border information exchange involves the mass media in the social and managerial processes of modernity, which need to be given sufficient attention in modern political processes. In general, this may be due to the decentralization of the existing mass media and political system, which appeared after the formation of a polycentric world’ order and led to a change on the balance of power on the world stage. Traditional methods of negotiation have undergone a certain modification, which can be determined by the intensive development of information technologies and their direct impact on world politics and international relations.**

**We came to the conclusion that the influence of the media can be characterized as a factor of the power of the political processes of the state in the international arena. It was shown that today, the political agenda is formed by the world's media, which perform the function of social construction of reality for citizens. Therefore, the researchers demonstrated the actual role of mass media in creating a common political culture, broadcasting common values, universal models that allow form a holistic idea in society, which affects on its cohesion.**

**The analysis of the specifics of the global mass media of the three states has shown that their importance lies in coordinating and orienting collective efforts to detect and prevent further escalations and future resolution of international conflicts, or to create a certain political orientation that will guide states according to a certain political thought to achieve the interests of a particular state. Within the framework of the conducted research, the features of the ideological confrontation of states that participated in the armed conflict not only on the battlefield, but also in the international media space were studied.**

**As we can see from the analysis of the data, the outcome of the information confrontation is more important than the armed conflict itself on the territory of Syria. The study substantiates the mutual influence of political and media space. We used a systematic method that showed exactly how one environment acts on another and demonstrated that how the mass media can exert information pressure, force government representatives to make certain decisions, make certain statements and how the information agenda can be formed as a result of influence on it by representatives of government structures. Besides, due to the system approach, you can see the essential changes in the modern communication process, which have determined the transformation of the political and information spaces. As a result of the made analysis of publications on the Syrian issue, we have found that the modern information space has the specifics of providing serious information coverage due to a variety of sources of information and the number of daily published news.**

**Modern media significantly influence on the political attitudes and preferences of other states. During the analysis of the Syrian, American and Russian media, it was found that the mechanisms for forming the media agenda are quite simple and effective methods of presenting information. Such methods include stereotyping, highlighting of pros and cons, generalization of an event, misinterpretation of events, substitution of cause-and-effect relationships, creation of false messages that simplify and emotionally interpret events and possible consequences. The practice of using these techniques in the media is demonstrated by examples of coverage of events at the international level. According to the results of media analysis Syria, USA and Russia we can conclude that despite claims to news agencies about objectivity, impartiality, fairness publications, you will notice that in international policy of Syria, the United States and the Russian Federation the mass media adhere to political priorities, purposes and actions of their own government. The conflict is resolved subjectively, in some cases there is an unintentional distortion of information, exaggeration or omitting of the size of the tragedy. It can be assumed that in the following years, the interpretation of political processes in this direction of the information space will continue. During the data publications, journalists will use the methods that we have discussed earlier and will form an information space based on the political motives of the states.**

**The formation of a certain political idea through the media is a very laborious process that requires a well-developed information strategy and a certain political thought. That is why the media uses a very specific model of public perception. So, as we have already seen, the actions of the Assad regime are actively condemned by the western media, in order to form a certain negative image for the reader, various techniques and means are used that will exert strong emotional pressure on the reader. As in the Russian mass media, where positive opinions are expressed about the regime, again trying to form a positive image of the Syrian government. In this regard it should be noted that despite of the active cooperation of the countries on the Syrian issue and their struggle, the military conflict itself continues for many years and does include only negative consequences.**

**According to this study, we could define an instrument of political warfare in the Syrian issue, and in international conflicts in general. Through this, we might highlight the fact that the mass media is not a resource that provides information about world’ events objectively, but that it is a subject of propaganda in the international relations and a means of a political soft power.**

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| **Appendix 1.**  **The analysis of the mass media of Syria, the Unites States and Russia.** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The data** | **The Mass Media of Syria** | **The Mass Media of the United States** | **The Mass Media of the Russian Federation** | **The news agency** |
| The troops of the Unites States would leave Syria in 2019. | Officials at US Administration insist on keeping illegitimate military presence in Syria.  *The core of the message:*  For the Unites States  it is necessary to keep the illegal military presence and violate the terms of the international law. | U.S. Troops Leaving Syria, but Some May Stay Longer Than Expected  *The core of the message:*  The troops will continue to train, advise, assist for the Kurdish partners on the ground. | The US troops will leave the country, but small group will stay.  *The core of the message:*  Not all troops will leave the Syria. US presence is still in Syia. | SANA, 09.01.2019. |
| The New York Times, 29.03.2019 |
| Interfax, 22.02.2019 |
| The agreement between Russia and Turkey about the end of the fire in the north of Syria. | Statement on the Recent Military Escalations in Northern Syria.  *The core of the message:*  Russia tries to stop the military operation with Turkey in the North of Syria | Russia, Turkey Agree to Cease-Fire in Northwest Syria.  *The core of the message:*  The agreement between Russia and Turkey does not work. | Russia and Turkey announced a ceasefire in Idlib  *The core of the message:*  After the dialogue between Russian and Turkey, the end of the fire in Idlib would be. | The Syrian Observer, 13.03.2019 |
| National Review, 06.03.2020 |
| Izvestia,  05.03.2020 |
| The Israel’s Autority ver Golan Heights | Syrians protest Trump's decision on Golan Heights  *The core of the message:*  The decision of D. Trump is not supported and not approved by Syrians. | Trump, With Netanyahu, Formally Recognizes Israel’s Authority Over Golan Heights  *The core of the message:*  The decision of D. Trump positively influence on the situation in the Middle East and on the U.S.-Israel relations. | Donald trump recognized the Golan heights in Syria as Israel's territory  *The core of the message:*  The decision of D. Trump could influence negatively on the situation in the Middle East. | The Arab Weekly, 25.03.2019 |
| The New York Times, 25.03.2019 |
| EurasiaDaily, 25.03.2019 |
| France send the weapon to Syria | France to hold Syria, Russia responsible for any further chemical attacks  *The core of the message:*  France help to protects the territories form the Assad’ chemical weapon usage. | France says signs of Syria chemical attack, but still checking  *The core of the message:*  The explanation of France’ help with the chemical weapon. | French security services delivered toxic substances to Idlib, Syria44  *The core of the message:*  The negative reaction of Russia to France weapon supports to the opposition. | Caravanserai(non-governmental journal), 29.03.2019 |
| Reuter 29.03.2019 |
| Izvestia, 29.03.2019 |
| The situation with Rukban camp. | Tens of thousands of displaced Syrians stuck in Rukban camp  *The core of the message:*  The are a lot of people who needs a help, and only Russia provide them with it. | The Rukban refugee camp  *The core of the message:*  Russia follows its own interest inn Rukban process. | The US refused to help with refugees from the Rukban camp  *The core of the message:*  U.S. policy directed only on its own interest and this country would not help refugees. | Al Jazeera's, 12.04.2019 |
| Middle East Institution, 10.04.2019 |
| Regnum, 26.03.2019 |
| The attack on the Aleppo by Isralian. | Syrian military: Israeli air attack targeted Aleppo  *The core of the message:*  The aggression of Isralian was directed not only to the Iranian stores, but to Syrian too. | Syrian army says Israeli strikes hit northern Aleppo city, damages materials only  *The core of the message:*  Israil did not make an attack in Syria, its goal was to hit Iranian ammunitions stores and a military airport. | Syria's air defenses repel Israel's attack on Aleppo.  *The core of the message:*  Syria protect the territories of Aleppo, but Israil and U.S. do not follow the international humanitarian law. | Al Jazeera's, 28.03.2019 |
| Reuter, 28.03.2019 |
| Izvestia, 13.04.2019 |
| The victims of U.S. during its attack in Syria, Iraq and Afganistan. | US – led coalition killed 1,600 civilians in Syria’s Raqqa  *The core of the message:*  Syria stress attention to the situation of U.S.’ attack and as a consequences the death of civilians not only in Raqqa, but during the last 2 years. | Trump rolls back transparency on civilian drone death  *The core of the message:*  The United States would not publish the death of civilians in Syria, because it is not a main goal there. | The Pentagon recognized the death of 120 civilians from US military actions.  *The core of the message:*  The United States announced the incorrect death’ data. | Al Jazeera's, 25.03.2019 |
| The Bureau of investigative journalism, 07.05.2019 |
| Izvestia, 02.05.2019 |
| The policy of Unites States to Sydan, after Syrian case. | The United States Must Not Repeat Its Syria Mistakes in Sudan  *The core of the message:*  Syria criticize the policy in the case with Sudan there is a huge possibility of the repetition of the Syria’ scenario. | US appoints special envoy for Sudan amid ongoing turmoil  *The core of the message:*  The administration of the President would take care of Sudan better then with Syria. | The U.S. sent its representative to Sudan to reconcile the government and the opposition.  *The core of the message:*  The U.S. tried to solve the conflict in Sydan, but the policy that was used for Syria is still going on. | The Syrian Observer, 4.07.2019 |
| CNN, 12.06.2019 |
| Information agency 112.ua.,13.06.2019. |
| The Unites States offer Germany to take a part in war in Syria. | Germany rejects US call for sending ground troops to Syria  The core of the message:  Germany would not take the U.S. responsibility of the military actions. | USA demands deployment of German ground troops in Syria  *The core of the message:*  The U.S. give an offer to Germany to replace the half of the soldiers in Syria | The U.S. has offered to send German troops to Syria  *The core of the message:*  The United States could not fight without the support of the partner-state. | SANA, 09.06.2019 |
| Welt an, 07.07.2019 |
| Izvestia, 07.07.2019. |
| The attack of Turkey in Syria | Turkey – Syria border: All the latest updates’  *The core of the message:*  Turkey attacks Syria without the support of U.S. | Turkey unleashes airstrikes against Kurds in north-east Syria  *The core of the message:*  Turkey tried to protect its territory from the terrorists, do not pay attention to the civilians, the U.S. would not be involved. | Erdogan announced the beginning of the Turkish military operation in Syria  *The core of the message:*  Turkey starts its own operation without the support of the United States. | Al Jazeera's, 10.10.2019 |
| The Guardian, 09.10.2019 |
| Ria news, 09.10.2019 |

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