

The Portrayal of Russia in US Media  
Following the  
2016 Election Hacking Scandal

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*by*

**Maike Verlaat**

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**Saint Petersburg State University**

*School of Journalism and Mass Communications*

*Scientific advisor: Prof. Dr. Ilya Anatolyevich Bykov*

*Associate Professor of the Department of Public Relations*

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## Introduction

‘The U.S. media has followed the story of Russia’s interference in the 2016 Presidential election - and the question of possible collusion between figures close to Donald Trump and the Kremlin - with vigor, intensity, and the deployment of an extraordinary amount of newsroom resources.’<sup>1</sup>

On Friday 22 July 2016, Wikileaks published more than 18,000 emails from the hacked servers of the Democratic National Committee on its website. What followed was a series of events and scandals - some of them still unfolding today. The media was always there, trying to cover each and every angle of increasingly twisted parallel storylines.

One of the major topics up for debate was twofold: Russia’s involvement in the hacking of several US government servers on the one hand, and on the other the secret cooperation or collusion of the Russian government with the Trump campaign team and, later, his administration. The findings of US intelligence agencies and other informants did not shed a positive light on the Kremlin or the Trump administration. Moscow has repeatedly denied being responsible, complaining of ‘poisonous anti-Russian rhetoric’ coming out of Washington.<sup>2</sup>

The hacking scandal seemed to widen the mistrust both countries had had of each other and worsened already tense relations. ‘Russian-American relations are struggling through their most difficult period since the end of the Cold war’<sup>3</sup> is the statement that can currently be found on the website of the Embassy of the Russian

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<sup>1</sup> Yaffa, J. (2017). The U.S. Media's Murky Coverage of Putin and Trump. *The New Yorker*. P. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Inkster, N. (2016). Information Warfare and the US Presidential Election. *Survival*, 58(5), p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Government of the Russian Federation | Embassy of the Russian Federation to the United States of America. (2018). *Russian-American Relations*. P. 1.

Federation to the United States. If a diplomatic mission states the gravity of the situation at the very top of its section on Russian-American relations, there is indeed reason to worry.

While this research does not aim to elaborate on all of the various reasons for the deterioration of US-Russian relations, it strives to highlight the media's role in spreading stereotypes which govern the perception process and thus influence the way both countries see each other. Due to the rise of technology and the internet people hear and see more media messages today than ever before. If the images portrayed in the media increasingly fall back to old association, those images are likely to manifest themselves and complicate the outlook of future trust and cooperation. Globalisation, however, has led to an increasing need of international cooperation on a number of economic and social issues. Moreover, international security might be at risk if the relationship between the two large powers worsens.

Existing research on Russia's image in US media mainly focuses on the American film industry<sup>456</sup>. While there are some recent efforts on framing of Russia in US print and/or online media<sup>78</sup>, the majority of work centers around general foreign policy relations between the United States and Russia and the historical roots thereof.<sup>91011121314</sup> Moreover, there is a clear gap on research focusing on stereotypes

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<sup>4</sup> See Heller, D. (2005). A Passion for extremes. Hollywood's Cold War Romance with Russia. *Comparative American Studies*, 3(1), 89–110.

<sup>5</sup> See Katchanovski, I. (2007). *Politically Correct Incorrectness: Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine In Hollywood Films*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Hyatt Regency Chicago and the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, Chicago, IL.

<sup>6</sup> See Goehring, E., Krause, A. (2006). Still Enemies at the Gate?: The Changing Iconography of Russia and Russians in Hollywood Films. *International Journal of the Humanities* 3(7), 13-19.

<sup>7</sup> See Tsygankov, A. (2017). The dark double: The American media perception of Russia as a neo-Soviet autocracy, 2008–2014. *Politics*, 37(1), 19-35.

<sup>8</sup> See Bolshakova, A. (2016). Russia as the other: Corpus investigation of Olympic host construction in The New York Times. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 15(4), 446-467.

<sup>9</sup> See Fuller, W. (1992) *Strategy and Power in Russia 1600 -1914*. New York: Free Press.

<sup>10</sup> See Snyder, J. (1994). Russian Backwardness and the Future of Europe. *Daedalus*, 123(2), 179-201.

connected to Russia in American news media. The 2016 election hacking scandal as a recent and even current event has not been thoroughly researched when it comes to framing along established stereotypes. Judging from the scale and prominence of the event in the media and its relevance to the already strained relations between the United States and Russia, it is a worthy research topic.

Since the nature of stereotypes is that of the established image, it is unlikely that they represent a novel finding when appearing in media coverage. Furthermore, US-Russian relations have been tense before the scandal and therefore the results from this time frame alone would not give very meaningful insights concerning the question of whether the framing along stereotypes was due to the hacking scandal or not. What is more compelling to find out is whether the coverage after the hacking scandal changed over time. Hence, the question arose whether the 2016 US election hacking scandal can be seen as a key event in the mass media framing towards Russia by leading American newspapers. A key event after Denis McQuail is a story that did not only get a lot of coverage due to its being newsworthy, but because it stands for some 'deeper public crisis or anxiety.'<sup>15</sup> If an increasing amount of stereotypes towards Russia appear after the scandal, especially those connected to the Cold War, it is fair to assume that the fears connected to Russia resurfaced and that the hacking scandal was indeed a key event.

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<sup>11</sup> See Leichtova, M. (2014). *Misunderstanding Russia: Russian foreign policy and the West*. London: Routledge.

<sup>12</sup> See Ringmar, E. (2002). The Recognition Game: Soviet Russia Against The West. In: *Cooperation and Conflict*. 37(2), 115-136.

<sup>13</sup> See Trenin, D. (2016). *Should we fear Russia?*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

<sup>14</sup> See Tsygankov, A. (2009). *Russophobia: Anti-Russian Lobby and American Foreign Policy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>15</sup> McQuail, D. (2010). McQuail's mass communication theory. *Mass communication theory* (6.th ed.). Los Angeles [u.a.]: Sage. P. 317.

To answer this question, New York Times, New York Post and USA Today articles related to Russia from six months before the first public release connected to the hacking scandal as well as from several time frames during the scandal were analyzed towards possible recurring frames, including manifested stereotypes. To understand the nature of stereotypes and what functions they serve, section 1.1 explains different theories related to stereotype research and which approaches are the most appropriate when it comes to nation stereotypes in the media. For this line of thought, Lippmann's book 'Public Opinion', which served as a foundation for the later developed social cognition approach, proved to be very useful.<sup>16</sup> The sociological approach, however, was also important for the analysis of nation stereotypes in the media because it links stereotypes to prejudice and thus bridges the connection towards a possible negative impact of stereotypes. Section 1.2 further outlines the process and relevance of media in the spreading of stereotypes. To understand how something is presented in the media and what influences the media creation process is subject to, the theory of framing is explained in section 1.3. Furthermore, the framing definition of Robert Entman, one of the most prominent researchers in this field, will later be operationalized when it comes to the analysis of frames in the US coverage before and after the hacking scandal.

Section 2.1 of the first chapter gives an important overview of the history of political relations between the United States and Russia in order to later understand the meaning of the content analysis results in geopolitical terms. Additionally, this review of historical and current events puts the outcomes from the summary on the state of research on US stereotypes of Russia into perspective. To find categories which can be used as a foundation for the content analysis, the works of other

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<sup>16</sup> See Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public opinion*. New York: Macmillan.

researchers on stereotypes in US literature, film, and news media were examined (section 2.2). Information on stereotypes in American films was included because the research on stereotypes of Russia in US news media was rather limited. Instead of expanding the review to stereotypes prominent in other countries' media, it was decided that a review on American stereotypes in film would bring more fruitful results when it comes to understanding Russian-American relations and finding stereotypes relevant to these relations in the US news media.

Chapter 2 includes the methodology as well as the analysis of the newspaper articles. After elaborating on media and data sample selection (section 3.1), the methodology of quantitative content analysis used to analyze a large amount of documents will be presented. Such a method is applicable to this work, having a significantly large total of 401 publications analyzed. Furthermore, the research model by Matthes and Kohring will be introduced which serves to determine frames through hierarchical cluster analysis with the data generated from quantitative content analysis (section 3.2). This model was developed to increase reliability of studies using framing theory and will be followed when looking at the coverage of US news media outlets in connection to Russia.

Driven by the aforementioned research question, section 4.1 will present the results of the quantitative content analysis as well as the hierarchical cluster analysis before (section 4.2) and after the hacking scandal (section 4.3). Based on the knowledge gained in chapter 1, the results will show whether the mass media framing along stereotypes after the hacking scandal was a sign of some deep-lying fear related to Russia. The results are not only relevant to the field of mass media studies, but also to the field of international relations since an understanding of

countries' stereotypes towards each other can help in pointing out shortcomings in the representation.

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## Chapter I

### Stereotypes in US Media towards Russia

#### § 1 Theory Base

##### 1.1. Stereotype Research

At first sight, the concept of stereotypes seems to need no explanation. Most people have faced or talked about stereotypes in their life and thus have an idea of the concept. Definitions, however, vary largely. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a stereotype as a ‘widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.’<sup>17</sup> Even though it will be argued that stereotypes do not necessarily have to be fixed, this definition includes the important idea of generalizing or simplifying a more complex matter or character and was thus chosen among many others.

The word itself comes from the Greek *stereo*, meaning ‘solid’, and *typos*, meaning ‘mark of a blow’ or ‘impression’ and was used to describe a metal plate used for printing in the late eighteenth century. It passed into abstract use in the later nineteenth century.<sup>1819</sup>

There are three broad approaches in social science to stereotyping: The economical approach (‘the rational formation of beliefs about a group member in terms of the aggregate beliefs about that group’), the social cognition approach and the sociological approach.<sup>20</sup> This chapter will focus on the two latter approaches, as

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<sup>17</sup> Stereotype: A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing. *Oxford Dictionaries | English*. (2018).

<sup>18</sup> See Gilman, S. (1985). *Difference and pathology: stereotypes of sexuality, race, and madness*. 1. publ., Ithaca, NY [u.a.]: Cornell Univ. Press.

<sup>19</sup> See Amossy, R. et al. (1991). *Les idées reçues: sémiologie du stéréotype*. Paris: Nathan.

<sup>20</sup> Bordalo, P. et al. (2016). Stereotypes. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 131(4), p. 1754.

they are both important in understanding the frames and images regarding nations in the media.

While the social cognition approach was not fully developed at the time, Lippmann already laid the groundwork for it in 1922. He was also the first to use the term stereotyping in its familiar sense in which characteristics are applied to others (or copied upon them to stay with the initial printing imagery of the eighteenth century) on the basis of their ethnic, national, or gender group.<sup>21</sup> For Lippmann, stereotypes are derived culturally and help us to make sense of the world.

‘In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture.’<sup>22</sup>

Stereotypes are therefore not primarily based on personal experience, but serve as a simplification of a complex matter. ‘We notice a trait which marks a well-known type, and fill in the rest of the picture by means of the stereotypes we carry about in our heads.’<sup>23</sup> Lippmann furthermore states that stereotypes are driven by social, political, and economic motivations, and are often passed from one generation to the next.<sup>24</sup>

The other approach which will be mentioned here is the sociological approach. It pertains only to social groups and focuses on the derogatory aspect of stereotyping.

<sup>25</sup> Inspired by the increasing recognition of social prejudice in the 1930s, the

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<sup>21</sup> Schneider, D. (2004). *The psychology of stereotyping*. New York [u.a.]: Guilford Press, p. 8.

<sup>22</sup> Lippmann, W. (1922). Op.Cit. P. 81.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. P. 89.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. P. 93.

<sup>25</sup> Bordalo, P. et al. (2016). Op. Cit. P. 1754.

researchers Katz and Braly performed a famous study in which undergraduate students at Princeton University in the USA were asked to list traits of ten nations or ethnic groups. They were given a list of 84 personality traits and were then asked to select the five traits ‘that seem the most typical of the race in question.’<sup>26</sup> Since few of the students had had previous contact with the members of those ethnic groups, the degree of agreement which resulted from the questionnaire confirmed the assumption that ethnic stereotypes were widespread, shared and not necessarily based on personal experience. Katz and Braly therefore concluded that stereotypes are about ‘defining first’ and ‘observing second’<sup>27</sup> and that culture had an effect on prejudices and discrimination.

Their research inspired further work on stereotyping related to prejudices. While Adorno’s and Allport’s work also focused on the discriminative and inaccurate aspect of stereotyping, they saw stereotyping less as a product of the culture than of individual dynamics.<sup>28,29</sup> According to Adorno et al. stereotypes were especially likely among people with prejudiced personalities.<sup>30</sup> Overall, the sociological approach argues that stereotypes are inaccurate, negative, can be shared, and are fixed (because they are rooted in the past).

In the past few decades stereotype research has focussed on the social cognition approach for which Lippmann was a forerunner. It thus shifted from studying the content of stereotypes through trait ascription, as done, for example, by Katz and

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<sup>26</sup> Katz, D. & Braly, K. (1933). Racial stereotypes of one hundred college students. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 28(3), p. 282.

<sup>27</sup> Katz, D., & Braly, K. (1935). Racial prejudice and racial stereotypes. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 30(2), p. 181.

<sup>28</sup> See Adorno, T. et al. (1950). *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

<sup>29</sup> See Allport, G. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. 1. ed., 2. print., Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press.

<sup>30</sup> Schneider, D. (2004). Op. Cit. P. 10.

Braly, to focusing more on the cognitive processes involved in stereotyping.<sup>31</sup> In the social cognition approach it is less important what a stereotype is but how someone arrived at forming it. Stereotypes are seen as cognitive theories or intuitive generalizations that individuals naturally use to save cognitive resources.<sup>32</sup>

Although the social cognition approach is still popular, Schneider criticizes the way it does not answer the important controversial questions the research field has faced in the past: whether stereotypes are accurate, whether they are negative - in consequences and in their reasoning process - whether they are shared and whether they are fixed.<sup>33</sup>

However, both approaches - the social cognition approach and the sociological approach - are important for this research and have their limitations, which is why a mixed approach is recommended when it comes to the analysis of nation stereotypes in the media. The sociological approach alone would leave out the fact that some stereotypes contain truth, even if it is a generalized truth, for example 'the Dutch are tall.'<sup>34</sup> In the social cognition approach stereotypes can be based on real differences, as long as they help the efficient processing of information. However, the social cognition approach has its limitations in the way it does not clearly recognize the restrictions and partiality of stereotypes.

To combine both approaches for a definition, it can be said that stereotypes in the media about nation groups are mostly negative and inaccurate, but they do not have to be since a generalization can still contain some truth, even if it is by chance.

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<sup>31</sup> Schneider, D. (2004). Op. Cit. P. 12.

<sup>32</sup> Bordalo, P. et al. (2016). Op. Cit. P. 1755.

<sup>33</sup> Schneider, D. (2004). Op. Cit. P. 13.

<sup>34</sup> Bordalo, P. et al. (2016). Op. Cit. P. 1753.

Furthermore, they are as prevalent as they are not only because people are ignorant and prejudiced, but also because they are trying to make sense of the world and are willing to accept easy, clear simplifications. Furthermore, it has been argued that stereotypes are not necessarily fixed, but evolve over time - just like language does - when they are passed on.<sup>35</sup> If we speak of stereotypes towards nations, ‘they take the form of opinions or judgments concerning the character of the Germans, the French, the Russians, the Americans, etc.’<sup>36</sup>

## 1.2. Stereotypes in the Media

‘The subtlest and most pervasive form of all influences are those which create and maintain the repertory of stereotypes. We are told about the world before we see it. We imagine most things before we experience them. And those preconceptions, unless education has made us acutely aware, govern deeply the whole process of perception.’<sup>37</sup>

When Lippmann wrote his analysis on stereotypes almost a century ago he did not speak about the news media directly. Regarding the vast amount of studies on the news media’s role in spreading stereotypes which have been published since then<sup>38</sup><sup>394041</sup>, it seems as if these lines could have been written today. It does not matter whether we get our stereotypes or the images in our heads from a fairy tale, school book, novel, play, phrase or picture, as Lippmann put it at the time<sup>42</sup>, or from a

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<sup>35</sup> Martin, D. et al. (2017). How societal stereotypes might form and evolve via cumulative cultural evolution. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 11(9), p.n/a.

<sup>36</sup> Klineberg, O. (1951). The scientific study of national stereotypes. *International Social Science Bulletin* 3, p. 505.

<sup>37</sup> Lippmann, W. (1922). Op. Cit. P. 90.

<sup>38</sup> See Campbell, C. (1995). *Race, myth and the news*. Thousand Oaks [u.a.]: Sage Publ.

<sup>39</sup> See Entman, R. (1992). Blacks in the news: Television, modern racism and cultural change. (Special Emphasis: America in a Visual Century). *Journalism Quarterly*, 69(2), 341-361.

<sup>40</sup> See Parisi, P. (1998). The New York Times looks at one block in Harlem: Narratives of race in journalism. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 15(3), 236-254.

<sup>41</sup> See Shah, H., & Thornton, M. (1994). Racial ideology in US mainstream news magazine coverage of black-Latino interaction, 1980–1992. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 11(2), 141-161.

<sup>42</sup> Lippmann, W. (1922). Op. Cit. P. 91.

newspaper. Media are very much part of our everyday life and the stereotypes we come to hold are the products of our social interactions and other information gaining processes. The information we receive in the media is thus especially significant for issues, groups or people that we know little about in the first place. If we have our own experiences with, for example, various individuals from a nation group, we are likely to compare this information from our personal experience with the second-hand information from the mass media. Research on intergroup relations undermines this by revealing that under certain conditions, contact can reduce the bias and prejudice that people have towards other groups.<sup>43444546</sup> However, if we do not have such experiences, we are more likely to take the information presented to us for granted, because as stated in the social cognition approach, it helps us to simplify complex matters and saves us cognitive resources.

This idea goes hand in hand with the assumption that the media do not only reinforce existing stereotypes, but also create and change stereotypes over time. Journalists working for the media might rely on historically rooted information when it comes to stereotypes, but they might also include their own personal knowledge in writing about a certain topic which then influences the stereotype and this modified stereotype is most likely to be accepted by a person with limited personal information about the topic. Especially when it comes to news involving a foreign country, many people rely on the media for information. ‘The public generally lacks interest in or access to information on international events, which by their very nature are very complex. As such, people take their cues from the

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<sup>43</sup> See Dovidio, J., Gaertner, S., Kawakami, K. (2003). Intergroup contact: The past, present, and the future. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 6, 5–21.

<sup>44</sup> See Allport, G. (1954). Op Cit.

<sup>45</sup> See Pettigrew T. (1997). Generalized intergroup contact effects on prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23, 173-185.

<sup>46</sup> See Pettigrew, T. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49, 65-85.

media in formulating their opinion of the other side. The media plays a key role in interpreting such events for the broader public.<sup>47</sup>

According to Luhmann, society is regarded as reproducing itself on the operational basis of communication processes because the media creates a collective memory of social principles that strengthen the cohesion of society.<sup>48</sup> Whatever image is portrayed in the media, whether it derives from objective facts and/or underlying historical, political or cultural circumstances, influences how a society sees itself and other societies. As stated in the book ‘Orientalism’ by Palestinian-American critical theorist Edward Said, this process “involves establishing opposites and ‘others’ whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from ‘us’. Each age and society re-creates its ‘Others’. Far from a static thing then, identity of self and of ‘other’ is a much worked over historical, social and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies.”<sup>49</sup>

Said furthermore argues that media coverage is limited due to the fact that it is subject to several directives:

‘All modes of communication, television, radio, and newspapers observe certain rules and conventions to get things across intelligibly, and it is these, often more than the reality being conveyed, that shape the material delivered by the media.’<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Bayulgen, O. & Arbatli, E. (2013). Cold War redux in US–Russia relations? The effects of US media framing and public opinion of the 2008 Russia–Georgia war. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 46(4), p. 513-514.

<sup>48</sup> Luhmann, N. (1996). *Die Realität der Massenmedien*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, p.120-121.

<sup>49</sup> Said, E. (1995). *Orientalism. Western conceptions of the Orient*. London: Penguin Books, p. 332.

<sup>50</sup> Said, E. (1997). *Covering Islam. How the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world*. New York: Vintage Books. P. 48-49.

Said argues that the journalist needs to transfer knowledge in an understandable manner to the recipient. Stereotypes can be very useful to achieve this because they put things in predefined categories. Without questioning the intention of objectivity and accuracy in the media, Said states that the media as a perceived reality underlies frames in the form of social, political and historical circumstances.<sup>51</sup> The decision on how a topic will be covered or how an actor or a country will be portrayed is likely to be based on former frames or how similar events have been covered in the past, which reflects the social and political development of a society.

Another reason why stereotypes are repeated in the media relates to journalistic routines or the ‘patterned, routinized, repeated practices and forms that media workers use to do their jobs’<sup>52</sup>. One of the factors influencing journalistic routines are news deadlines which can push journalists into publishing before they spend enough time on verification, analysis and interpretation.<sup>53</sup> This means that they might also not have the time to think about the fact that they are framing a story along the lines of established stereotypes.

The concept of framing will be explained in detail further below, but for now it is important to state that although frames may contain stereotypes, they do not necessarily always have to. If a particular stereotype is so manifested in society that journalists consciously or unconsciously repeat it to organize their own or the recipient’s belief system, it can happen that this stereotype appears in the media. As

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<sup>51</sup> Said, E. (1997). Op. Cit. P. 49-50.

<sup>52</sup> Shoemaker, P., & Reese, S. (1996). *Mediating the message: Theories of influences on mass media content* (2.nd ed.). White Plains, NY [u.a.]: Longman. P. 105.

<sup>53</sup> Tandoc, E., Hellmueller, L., & Vos, T. (2013). MIND THE GAP. *Journalism Practice*, 7(5), p. 542-543.



Behm-Morawitz and Ortiz have stated, ‘mass media, as cultural storytellers, serve as widely available and shared sources of stereotype information’.<sup>54</sup>

When we speak of stereotypes in the media, the terms stereotype and narrative are often used interchangeably. To clarify the use of the concept of stereotyping in this research, it must be contrasted with the term narrative. The Oxford Dictionary defines narrative as a ‘representation of a particular situation or process in such a way as to reflect or conform to an overarching set of aims or values.’<sup>55</sup>

Similar to the concept of stereotyping, the study of narrative was introduced to understand cognition, but focuses more on memory and identity. Narrative templates thus emphasize shared understandings and memories of events and outcomes.<sup>56</sup> To understand where narratives are rooted, the definition of public memory by Bodnar is helpful.

‘Public memory is a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future. It is fashioned ideally in a public sphere in which various parts of the social structure exchange views. The major focus of this communicative and cognitive process is not the past, however, but serious matters in the present such as the nature of power and the question of loyalty to both official and vernacular cultures.’<sup>57</sup>

The focus here lies on the society itself and not outside actors. Since this research is aimed at looking at national images portrayed in a foreign media, the concept of

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<sup>54</sup> Behm-Morawitz, E., Ortiz, M. (2013). Race, ethnicity, and the media. In Dill, K. (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of media psychology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, p. 252.

<sup>55</sup> Narrative: A representation of a particular situation or process in such a way as to reflect or conform to an overarching set of aims or values. *Oxford Dictionaries* | English. (2018).

<sup>56</sup> Stapleton, K. & Wilson, J. (2017). Telling the story: Meaning making in a community narrative. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 108(C), p. 60.

<sup>57</sup> Bodnar, J. (1992). *Remaking America: Public memory, commemoration, and patriotism in the twentieth century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 15.

stereotypes is more suitable. Furthermore, stereotypes are characterized by the need to reduce complex matters to simple ones or - in terms of the recipient - to take simple explanation of complex matters for granted, especially if the recipient has a limited knowledge about the complexity of the subject in the first place. If this research was looking at the narratives the Russian government is trying to convey in its own, state-sponsored media, we could speak about strategic narratives. However, in the case of the US media's image of Russia, stereotypes are more prevalent.

## 1.2. Framing

The second theoretical foundation for this analysis will be the notion of framing. It helps us to understand the way the media includes and excludes certain aspects of a topic. According to Reese, sociologist Erving Goffman<sup>58</sup> is often credited with presenting the framing approach first, whereas anthropologist and psychologist Gregory Bateson<sup>59</sup> is recognized as introducing the metaphor.<sup>60</sup>

A variety of scholars have included different aspects of framing in their research such as the origin of frames, their manifestation in texts, or the influence of frames on the receiver. While it will be briefly touched upon where frames come from and what influence they have on the audience, the focus will be put on their manifestation in texts. For this reason, Robert Entman's approach towards framing is of utmost importance. Entman is one of the most cited researchers when it comes

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<sup>58</sup> See Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. New York u.a.: Harper & Row.

<sup>59</sup> See Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an ecology of mind: Collected essays in anthropology, psychology, evolution and epistemology*. San Francisco, CA: Chandler.

<sup>60</sup> Reese, S. (2001). Prologue - Framing Public Life: A Bridging Model for Media Research. In: Stephen Reese, Oscar Gandy, August Grant (eds.), *Framing Public Life: Perspectives on Media and Our Understanding of the Social World*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, p.7.

to framing, because his work provides a comprehensive overview of the highlighting nature of framing in a text:

‘To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.’<sup>61</sup>

According to Entman, the problems are ‘usually measured in terms of common cultural values’, the causes refer to ‘the forces creating the problem’, moral judgements ‘evaluate causal agents and their effects’ and the treatment recommendations ‘offer and justify treatments for the problems and predict their likely effects.’<sup>62</sup> He furthermore states that there might be several of the four framing functions - or frame elements - in one sentence or in the whole text and that it is also possible that there are none at all. Moreover, it is common that the frame elements appear independently from each other.<sup>63</sup>

Due to the possibility of highlighting problems and emphasizing attributes in a text, framing can be seen as a more precise, second-level form of agenda setting for it is not only selecting and carrying information of an issue but also influencing the way this information is portrayed. ‘Both the selection of objects for attention and the selection of frames for thinking about these objects are powerful agenda-setting roles’.<sup>64</sup> The agenda setting theory argues that if the media do not tell people what to think, they are ‘stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.’<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Entman, R. (1993). Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), p. 52.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. P. 52.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. P. 52.

<sup>64</sup> McCombs, M.; Shaw, D. (1993). The evolution of agenda-setting research: Twenty-five years in the marketplace of ideas. *Journal of Communication*, 43 (2), p. 62.

<sup>65</sup> Cohen, B. (1963). *The press and foreign policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton. P. 13.

More precisely, the more frequently and prominently certain topics are covered, the more the audience is inclined to think that the issue is relevant. The agenda of the media and the agenda of the public thus have a strong correlation. Agenda setting and framing theory are therefore related, but instead of focusing on a particular topic, framing highlights the essence of the issue.

To specify the possible content of frames, Entman names ‘the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments.’<sup>66</sup> Entman thus clearly links the concepts of stereotyping and framing. This undermines the notion that frames can contain stereotypes, but they do not have to. When it comes to textual frames, they present a setting that something is mentioned in. Whether this setting is an oversimplified one as it is with stereotypes, depends on the content. Stereotypes are likely to appear in media texts when it comes to nation states though, since they present complex entities. When a single aspect connected to this web of language, territory, economic life, ethnicity, culture and many other areas making up a nation state is highlighted, it often involves an increased amount of interpretations and generalizations. This is why both frames and stereotypes work together as a theoretical foundation in this research for analyzing the media image of Russia in US media.

Nacos and Torres-Reyna emphasize the danger in repeating underlying stereotypes in the media: ‘By framing the news along the lines of the traditional attitudes and prejudices of society's predominant groups, the news media convey stereotypes that affect a broad range of public perceptions, among them how people think about

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<sup>66</sup> Entman, R. (1993). *Op. Cit.* P. 52.

race, ethnicity, and religion.’<sup>67</sup> However, it can also be argued that by making a certain issue more salient or memorable to the audience - even if this is achieved by using stereotypes - the journalist ‘enhances the probability that receivers will perceive the information, discern meaning and thus process it [...]’.<sup>68</sup> In this way, there is also an underlying pressure on the communicator to use popular frames to make an issue clear for his or her audience. The reputation and credibility of the journalist is hereby at stake, because once certain frames and terms are manifested and accepted by the audience, the recipient might be confused when the communicator uses other frames and this might even lead to the recipient questioning the journalist’s qualifications.<sup>69</sup>

Frames are apparent in at least four places in the communication process: ‘the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture’.<sup>70</sup> Since the receiver is likely to bring his very own framework of knowledge into reading a text, the text itself or the communicator/journalist does not have complete power in transferring the framed content on to the receivers. For example, a reader's framework can depend on his experiences, social background, or level of education. Stuart Hall claimed in his Encoding/Decoding model that there can be three hypothetical positions from which meaning might be constructed: The ‘dominant-hegemonic position’, a full and straight acceptance of the built frames and connotations; the above mentioned ‘negotiated position’ where the ‘legitimacy’ of the message and meaning is acknowledged but adapted in terms of one's own situation and the ‘oppositional position’ which means that the message is decoded contrary from what was

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<sup>67</sup> Nacos, B.; Torres-Reyna, O. (2005). Framing Muslim-Americans Before and After 9/11. In: P. Norris, M. Kern, M. Just (eds.), *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government and the Public*. New York, London: Routledge, p. 136.

<sup>68</sup> Entman, R. (1993). Op. Cit. P. 53.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. P. 55.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. P. 52.

intended.<sup>71</sup> This is why Reese praises the notion of framing for adding critical elements to the media effects approach and softening the media hegemony belief.<sup>72</sup> It has widely been discussed and argued how the method of presenting a story affects the audience's response. In the end, the used frames in the media might not reach an entire audience, but certainly shape the public discourse and the opinions of some readers, which is why the representation of a country in the media is important to its overall perception. In times of political tensions between two countries, it is evident that if one country is framed in a negative way in the other country's media, some of the recipients will have an increased negative opinion about this country. This process can happen both consciously and unconsciously on the sides of the sender and receiver. This is why framing is also connected to power and influence. It plays 'a major role in the exertion of political power, and the frame in a news text is really the imprint of power - it registers the identity of actors or interests that competed to dominate the text.'<sup>73</sup>

Summing up, framing places issues within a field of meaning. While there are different frameworks at work in the communication process, such as on the side of the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture, the frames in a text usually present the setting something is mentioned in. This setting can contain stereotypes, but it does not have to.

Since the origin of frames depends on social, political and historical circumstances, a brief look at US-Russian history is necessary to further understand where the

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<sup>71</sup> Hall, S. (1999). *Kodieren/ Dekodieren*. In: Roger Bromley, Udo Göttlich, Carsten Winter (eds.), *Cultural Studies. Grundlagentexte zur Einführung*. Lüneburg: Zu Klampen, p. 101.

<sup>72</sup> Reese, S. (2007). The Framing Project: A Bridging Model for Media Research Revisited. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), p. 149.

<sup>73</sup> Entman, R. (1993). *Op. Cit.* P. 55.

frames regarding Russia in US media came from. For the purpose of not missing out on deeply rooted stereotypes and images, the historical review will start at the very beginning of Russian-American relations. Moreover, this section will give insight into possible rooted fears and other associations connected to Russia.

## § 2 Context

### 2.1. Overview of Political Relations Between the United States and Russia

‘The United States is struggling to hold on to the position of sole superpower, and is hesitant to accept a rapidly rising multipolar world order. Russia, on the other hand, is still reeling from the abrupt demise of the Soviet Union, seeking restoration of its regional power and demanding recognition as an actor of global significance with legitimate interests that others should respect. While there are concrete economic and security interests at stake, perceptions play an equally important part in shaping the distrust and tensions plaguing the relationship between the two former superpowers.’<sup>74</sup>

Over the past centuries, the relationship between Russia and the United States has been characterized by cycles of détente and disintegration.<sup>75</sup> Relations between the Russian Empire and the USA started right after the Declaration of Independence in 1776. During the War of Independence, Catherine the Great had been torn between supporting Britain and establishing good future trade relations with the likely to emerge new government.<sup>76</sup> The Empress knew that once the colonies were independent, Britain could no longer forbid them to trade with anyone else than the colonizer. Although Britain repeatedly asked for military assistance, Russia remained neutral during the American Revolution.<sup>77</sup> The new US government was also eager to convince Russia to take sides in their favor. They sent Francis Dana as minister to St. Petersburg at the end of 1780 to seek formal recognition from the Russians. Although Catherine II personally thought the colonies deserved to be

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<sup>74</sup> Osipova, Y. (2015). US-Russia Relations in the Context of Cold War 2.0: Attitudes, Approaches, and the Potential of Public Diplomacy’, in Albright, A., Bachiyska, K., Martin, L. & Osipova, Y., eds., *Beyond Cold-War Thinking: Young Perspectives on US-Russia Relations*, Washington, DC: Centre on Global Interests, p. 41-42.

<sup>75</sup> Nation, R. (2012). Reset or rerun? Sources of discord in Russian–American relations. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 45, nos. 3–4, p. 2.

<sup>76</sup> Golder, F. (1915). Catherine II. and The American Revolution. *The American Historical Review*, 21(1), p. 93.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* P. 92.



independent, the mission was not successful due to Russia's diplomatic ties to Britain.<sup>78</sup> The first American envoy to Russia was John Quincy Adams in 1809 who would later become the sixth president of the United States. He was especially eager to secure the Russian Empire as a future trade partner.<sup>79</sup>

Russia and the United States were allies in World War I, but the US did not recognize the Soviet government after the Russian revolution in 1917.<sup>80</sup> The US embassy in Russia was consequently closed in 1919 and the two countries did not have diplomatic relations until 1933 when the pressure from business circles eventually led to the establishment of trade relationships.<sup>81</sup> When the Soviet Union was invaded by Germany in 1941, the United States offered a substantial amount of Lend-Lease aid. The countries were two of the four major Allies in World War II controlling German, Japanese and Italian aggression which led to the improvement of relations and increased mutual recognition.<sup>82</sup>

When the war had ended, many countries in Europe were destroyed and vulnerable to external influences. To assure that they could be defended against threats such as a resurgent Germany or the spreading of communism from the side of the Soviet Union, the United States regarded an armed and economically strong Europe as invaluable.<sup>83</sup> To increase economic power, the Marshall Plan was created which suggested economic aid to Europe and called for further cooperation between the United States and Europe. First signs of the Cold War appeared when the Soviet

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<sup>78</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Aa). *United States Relations with Russia: Establishment of Relations to World War Two*. P. 1.

<sup>79</sup> Presidential Library (2017). *Russia Established Diplomatic Relations with USA*. P. 1.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* P. 1.

<sup>81</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Aa). *Op Cit.* P.1

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* P. 1.

<sup>83</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ab). *North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1949*. P.1.

Union refused to take part in the initiative and furthermore prohibited its satellite states in Eastern Europe to benefit from the economic assistance.<sup>84</sup>

In terms of military aid, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was created in 1949. The political security of Europe was viewed as especially threatened by communism when a ‘Soviet-sponsored coup in Czechoslovakia led in a communist government coming to power on the borders of Germany’, as well as when the Soviet Union carried out a blockade of West Berlin.<sup>85</sup>

The outbreak of the Korean War marked another important event expanding conflict. After World War II the Soviet Union had established a communist government in its Korean zone of occupation. The attack by North Korea on its southern neighbor in 1950 was seen by the US government as communist aggression coming from Moscow.<sup>86</sup> In the following year, both countries spent large amounts of money and resources on the increase of nuclear arsenals. The closest the Cold War ever came to transforming into a nuclear war was during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 when the Soviet Union deployed ballistic missiles in communist Cuba as a response to American nuclear missile deployment in Turkey and Italy. President Kennedy established a naval blockade to avoid further missiles being shipped to Cuba. After a series of negotiations and concessions from both sides, the blockade was lifted and an escalation could be prevented. During negotiations both leaders realized that they did not have sufficient means to

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<sup>84</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ab). Op Cit. P. 1.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. P. 1.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. P. 1.

communicate in a crisis situation. As a result, a direct hotline was established between Moscow and Washington D.C. in August 1963.<sup>87</sup>

In the early 1970s, relations improved and the United States was considering recognizing the political boundaries in Eastern Europe which were established after the Second World War. When the US signed the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 alongside a multitude of other countries, it thus recognized the Soviet dominance in the area and the annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.<sup>88</sup> A series of arms control treaties were signed around the same time which further improved relations.

The very beginning of the 1980s, however, marked the worsening of US-Russian relations again. The Soviet Union had invaded Afghanistan in 1979 which led to the withdrawal of an important strategic arms limitation treaty - SALT II - from Senate ratification.<sup>89</sup> President Ronald Reagan who took office in 1981 pushed towards a hard line against communism - especially in Africa, South America and South Asia.<sup>90</sup> His rhetoric grew especially harsh. “The President spoke of leaving ‘Marxism-Leninism on the ash-heap of history;’” labeled the Soviet Union an ‘evil empire’ and introduced the Strategic Defense Initiative (‘Star Wars’), which Soviet leaders found highly threatening.”<sup>91</sup> In 1983, Korean Airlines Flight 007 was shot down by the Soviet Union, causing NATO to deploy nuclear missiles in Western Europe.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ball, D. (1991). Improving Communications Links Between Moscow and Washington. *Journal of Peace Research*, 8 (2), p. 135.

<sup>88</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ac). *Helsinki Final Act, 1975*. P. 1.

<sup>89</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ad). *U.S.-Soviet Relations, 1981–1991*. P. 1.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* P. 1.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* P. 1.

<sup>92</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ad). *Op Cit.* P. 1.

One outcome positive for the relationship was that Reagan developed a good relationship with Mikhail Gorbachev in the following years, who was appointed as General Secretary of the Communist party in 1985. Several negotiations between them led to a decrease in nuclear missiles and a revised rhetoric on the side of the US president. In the 1980s the Communist Party of the Soviet Union furthermore realized that they needed a reformation that would restructure the political and economic system. For this reason, the policy of ‘perestroika’ was introduced, which in Russian literally means ‘restructuring’.<sup>93</sup> Gorbachev also pushed for ‘glasnost’ which in Russian literally means “‘the fact of being public’, from glasnyy ‘public, open’ + -nost’ ‘-ness’”.<sup>94</sup> Openness and transparency was promised regarding the governmental system and actions as well as the media output. According to Hunt, Glasnost was also supposed to motivate Soviet citizens to talk in public about the problems of the system and to find solutions together.<sup>95</sup> Reagan was pleased with Gorbachev’s political agenda of Glasnost and Perestroika<sup>96</sup>. The end of the Cold War seemed near, but in 1989 the president following Reagan, George H.W. Bush, was still skeptical towards the reforms and reassessed the United States’ objectives toward the Soviet Union.<sup>97</sup> After the revolutions occurring in Central and Eastern Europe, Gorbachev collaborated with the Americans on a number of pressing issues ‘to enable the transition to democratically-elected governments in countries emerging from Communist rule.’<sup>98</sup> At the Malta Summit in 1989 the Cold War was officially declared over.

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<sup>93</sup> Perestroika: Russian, literally ‘restructuring’. *Oxford Dictionaries* | English. (2018).

<sup>94</sup> Glasnost: From Russian glasnost’, literally ‘the fact of being public’, from glasnyy ‘public, open’ + -nost’ ‘-ness’. *Oxford Dictionaries* | English. (2018).

<sup>95</sup> Hunt, M. (2015). *The World Transformed: 1945 to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press. P. 315.

<sup>96</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ad). Op Cit. P. 1.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. P. 1.

<sup>98</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ad). Op Cit. P. 1.

While the period of Glasnost and Perestroika is seen as favorable in the United States, the end of communism was actually a dark time for many Russians. Despite the fact that the openness connected to these reforms partly paved the way for a new system, it did ‘not produce much gratitude among the mass of Soviet citizens because it was overshadowed by a period of political disintegration, economic crisis, falling living standards and declining public morale.’<sup>99</sup> Gorbachev grew increasingly unpopular, his economic reforms were not as successful as he had hoped. Boris Yeltsin took over before the Soviet Union officially ceased to exist in December 1991. During the 1990s’s George H. W. Bush and the following US president Bill Clinton had relatively good relations with Yeltsin.<sup>100</sup>

The US’ relationship with Russia was significantly strained when NATO prepared to absorb the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic region, thus moving closer into Russia’s sphere of influence.<sup>101</sup> The same was true for the beginning of the 2000s when Vladimir Putin took office. ‘The Russian government has blamed Mrs. Clinton, along with the C.I.A. and other American officials, for encouraging anti-Russian revolts during the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia and the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine.’<sup>102</sup>

Around 2005, Russia returned to a strategy of assertiveness by signaling ‘that it sought greater stakes in the international system and would no longer accept the status of junior partner to the West that it had during the 1990s.’<sup>103</sup> According to

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<sup>99</sup> Benn, D. (1992) Glasnost’ and the Media. In: White S., Pravda A., Gitelman Z. (eds), *Developments In Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics*. Palgrave, London, p. 174.

<sup>100</sup> Office of the Historian, U.S Department of State (N/Ad). Op Cit. P. 1.

<sup>101</sup> Nikolin, B. (1998). NATO’s Eastward Expansion. *Russian Politics and Law*, 36(4), p. 39.

<sup>102</sup> Mazzetti, M., Lichtblau, R. (2016). C.I.A. Judgement on Russia Built on Swell of Evidence. *The New York Times*. P. 1.

<sup>103</sup> Tsygankov, A. (2012). Russia’s Relations with the West. In *Russia and the West from Alexander to Putin: Honor in International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 48.

Sergunin et al. Putin's second term from 2004-2008 also marked the beginning of the leadership's use of soft power with which Moscow hoped to grow influence and positive attitudes towards Russia in the post-Soviet space.<sup>104</sup> Soft power refers to 'the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes one wants through attraction rather than coercion or payment'<sup>105</sup>.

What furthermore affected the relationship in a negative way was that the United States launched a plan to deploy an anti-missile system in Poland and a radar station in the Czech Republic in 2007 to counter the threat of a ballistic missile-equipped Iran.<sup>106</sup> For Russia, it was hardly convincing that Iran's ballistic missiles posed a real threat to the United States and instead, Moscow saw it as an action directed at Russia.<sup>107</sup> A further point of contention brought the war with Georgia in 2008 over the Russian-backed self-proclaimed republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The fresh start or reset concerning the relationship which was promised by the new presidents Obama and Medvedev in 2009 did not last long. The United States joined a number of countries and non-state actors in accusing Russia of fraud at the 2011 parliamentary elections which were also accompanied by mass protests in Russia. Remarks by Hillary Clinton - then Secretary of State - especially caused outrage for Putin<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>104</sup> Sergunin, A., & Karabeshkin, L. (2015). Understanding Russia's Soft Power Strategy. *Politics*, 35(3-4), p. 349.

<sup>105</sup> Nye, J. (2008). Public Diplomacy and Soft Power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), p. 94.

<sup>106</sup> Ganxiang, W. (2008). What's Next for Russia? *Beijing Review*, 51(27), p. 14.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. p. 14.

<sup>108</sup> Herszenhorn, D.; Barry, E. (2011). Putin Contends Clinton Incited Unrest Over Vote. *The New York Times*. P.1.

Russia realized that it did not only need to improve its image in the post-Soviet space, but also in the Western world and “launched a massive propaganda campaign to downplay Russia’s image of an ‘aggressive’ and ‘undemocratic’ country.”<sup>109</sup> Since Russia’s image abroad was not favorable, the government needed to develop media to communicate its foreign policy message successfully and invested a significant amount of time and resources to develop its international broadcasting channels such as Russia Today. ‘These assets are intended to rectify what are deemed as being informational distortions, but increasingly as a means to expose those weak points in the West (in terms of issues and policies).’<sup>110</sup>

Interestingly, this can be seen as a reaction to the long-standing soft power strategy of the United States. Already in 1998 the Russian foreign minister of the time, Igor Ivanov, voiced his concerns in a letter to the UN secretary-general about ‘the creation of information weapons and the threat of information wars, which we understand as actions taken by one country to damage the information resources.’<sup>111</sup> However, Sergunin and Karabeshkin argue that Russia’s reactional soft power strategy is not well received in the West, because rather than taking into account the interest of the target nations, Moscow clearly shows what it wants to achieve for itself which is met with ‘suspicion or even hostility.’<sup>112</sup> Greg Simons argues that instead of focussing on the effectivity of communication efforts, experts and researchers in the field of public diplomacy have a strong desire to label the other side’s communication strategy in an attempt to shape public opinion. According to him there is in this sense more attention paid to ‘weaponized information’,

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<sup>109</sup> Sergunin, A., Karabeshkin, L. (2015). Op. Cit. P. 349.

<sup>110</sup> Simons, G. (2018a). Media & Public Diplomacy. In Tsygankov, A. (ed). *Routledge Handbook of Russian Foreign Policy*. Abingdon: Routledge, p. 201.

<sup>111</sup> Inkster, N. (2016). Information Warfare and the US Presidential Election. *Survival*, 58(5), p. 27.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. P. 349.

‘propaganda’, a ‘firehood of falsehood’ and the ‘use of disinformation and conspiracy theories’ than to ‘public diplomacy and international broadcasting.’<sup>113</sup>

Russia’s heightened use of soft power goes hand in hand with an increased significance of information warfare and cyber conflicts. For the purpose of understanding the importance of and reasons for hacking incidents such as the 2016 US election scandal, the two terms will be defined. But before that, it has to be made clear what is meant by this change in warfare strategy. In February 2013 General Valery Gerasimov, Russia’s Chief of the General Staff laid out a new theory of modern warfare arguing that ‘The very rules of war have changed. [...] The focus of applied methods of conflict has altered in the direction of the broad use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian and other non-military measures – applied in coordination with the protest potential of the population.’<sup>114</sup> In a post-Cold War era, non-military tactics are thus likely to be more successful to achieve one’s goal due to the significance of the internet and its power to reach and influence a large amount of people. This became especially clear during the Arab Spring which began in 2010 when people connected over the internet - especially social media - to inform and motivate each other to protest against their respective government in various states across North Africa and the Middle East. This immense power to support a collective action could no longer be ignored.

Not only could the spreading of information be used to achieve a specific goal, but also the stealing or hacking of secret information. Information warfare is defined by Dan Kuehl of the National Defence University as the ‘conflict or struggle between

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<sup>113</sup> Simons, G. (2018a). Op Cit. P. 200.

<sup>114</sup> Inkster, N. (2016). Op. Cit. P. 28.



two or more groups in the information environment.<sup>115</sup> Nation actors also share an information environment since the free flow of information is usually essential to business, international relations, the prosperity of society and the military, and relies heavily on the internet.<sup>116</sup> This makes them vulnerable to cyber attacks.

The term cyber conflict is related to information warfare and is defined as a real world conflict ‘spilling over to cyberspace. Typical of cyberattacks is the use by opposing parties of either Information Technology as such or IT as a weapon.’<sup>117</sup> Examples of cyber conflicts in Russia’s sphere of interest are when the Estonian government, media and bank sites were hacked in 2007 as well as when virtual infrastructures of various South Ossetian, Russian and Georgian organisations were attacked shortly before the armed conflict in August 2008 between Georgia and Russia. Although attribution is difficult when it comes to cyber conflicts, the Russian security services were suspected to have been involved.<sup>118</sup>

To come back to the events which further affected Russian-American relations, Russia granting asylum to Edward Snowden in 2013 increased tensions. Snowden is wanted by U.S. prosecutors for releasing secret American government documents.

The worst phase since the Cold War arguably started with the Ukraine crisis and the secession of Crimea in 2014. From the very beginning Washington D.C. deemed Russia’s actions ‘unacceptable both to the rules of the international order

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<sup>115</sup> Stupples, D. (2015). *What Is Information Warfare?*. World Economic Forum. P. 1.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. P. 1.

<sup>117</sup> Karatzogianni, A. (2004). The Politics of 'Cyberconflict'. *Politics*, 24(1), p. 46.

<sup>118</sup> Karatzogianni, A. (2012). Blame it on the Russians: Tracking the portrayal of Russians during cyberconflict incidents. In A. Karatzogianni (Ed.), *Violence and war in culture and the media: Five disciplinary lenses*. London and New York: Routledge. P. 129.

and to the hopes and aspirations of the Ukrainian people.’<sup>119</sup> As a consequence, the US and the EU have imposed six rounds of sanctions on Russia.<sup>120</sup> The sanctions, combined with falling oil prices, impacted Russia’s economy in a negative way. Many scholars argue that the Ukraine crisis was a turning point when it comes to US-Russian relations. Robert Legvold has stated that it was also the start of a ‘new Cold War’, because it ‘created a Western perception that Moscow wants not merely influence but also control over old Soviet territory.’<sup>121</sup> He warns that the United States and Russia will further invest in destabilizing technologies ‘including advanced precision-guided conventional weapons and cyberwarfare tools.’<sup>122</sup> Although not all scholars have a specific starting point in mind when it comes to the new Cold War, the term’s usage increased significantly over the past couple of years.<sup>123</sup><sup>124</sup><sup>125</sup> Simons argues that even if this new Cold War is not realistic at this stage, it does serve the purpose of recreating ‘a familiar narrative, together with the associated struggle, values, villains and heroes.’<sup>126</sup> Two major reasons why the conflict is different today are because the actors are not equal in their military budget anymore - the United States military budget is approximately seven times as high as that of the Russian Federation - and because the current crisis is not a purely ideological one.<sup>127</sup> Simons believes that if one would speak of an ideological conflict today it would not be between communism and capitalism, but between ‘cultural liberal’- the current global political hegemony of liberal democracy and

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<sup>119</sup> Woźniak, M. (2016). The Ukraine Crisis and Shift in US Foreign Policy. *International Studies: Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal*, 18(2), p. 93.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. P. 93.

<sup>121</sup> Legvold, R. (2014). Managing the new cold war what Moscow and Washington can learn from the last one. *Foreign Affairs*, 93(4), p. n/a.

<sup>122</sup> Legvold, R. (2014). Op Cit. P. N/a.

<sup>123</sup> See Lucas, E. (2014). *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

<sup>124</sup> See Osipova, Y. (2015) Op. Cit.

<sup>125</sup> See Legvold, R. (2014). Op Cit.

<sup>126</sup> Simons, G. (2018a). Op Cit. P. 200.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. P. 200.

‘cultural conservative’ - political forces opposing key aspects of liberalism and challenging this hegemony.<sup>128</sup>

In 2015 another major issue between the two nations started when the Russian government began its military intervention in the Syrian Civil War to support its long-standing ally Bashar al-Assad in the fight against rebels who are partly supported by the US. President Obama repeatedly called upon Assad to leave power.<sup>129</sup> Although there are some common goals such as the fight against ISIS, the differences in Syria prevail.

In the midst of these tensions, the US election hacking scandal emerged in 2016. For the purpose of understanding the main events during this rather complex string of sub scandals, the happenings will be described in more detail than the previously mentioned milestones in Russian-American relations. However, instead of listing all the revelations regarding the hacking scandal, this review aims at giving a general overview of the most important events in connection to Russia.

In June 2016 first reports emerged that the Democratic Party had been targeted by hackers and that these violations were traced back to Russia. As mentioned before, it was on July 22, 2016 that WikiLeaks released more than 18,000 emails from members of the Democratic National Committee which were stolen by hackers. On July 25, 2016, the DNC and the Clinton campaign stated that Russian intelligence operators were behind the attack. One day later, on July 26th, US intelligence officials said that they believed with ‘high confidence’ that Russia was behind the

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<sup>128</sup> Simons, G. (2018b). Shaping of Cold War 2.0: The Role of Information and Identity. *Small Wars Journal*. P. N/A.

<sup>129</sup> Cooper, H.; Gordon, M; MacFarquhar, N. (2015). Russians Strike Targets in Syria, but Not ISIS Areas. *The New York Times*. P. 1.

operation. However, the Trump campaign publicly denied these findings.<sup>130</sup> Around this time, the first allegations against Donald Trump's campaign manager Paul Manafort appeared. He was supposed to have had accepted a large amount of money for supporting Russian interests in Ukraine and in the United States, which he denied.<sup>131</sup> In October 2016, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the United States Department of Homeland Security released a joint statement reinforcing the claim that Russia was behind the hacking of the DNC. In the same month, WikiLeaks published more hacked emails from Clinton's campaign manager John Podesta.<sup>132</sup> In December 2016, the CIA stated that Russia had hacked the emails with the goal of helping Donald Trump become president. As a response, the Obama administration expelled 35 Russian diplomats, but the Russian government did not retaliate.<sup>133</sup> The Steele dossier, named after the former British intelligence official who compiled the information, was published on Buzzfeed.com in January 2017. It suggested inter alia that Russia had material on the newly elected president Trump with which he could be blackmailed.<sup>134</sup> Trump's National Security Advisor, Michael Flynn, was fired from office in February 2017 due to recorded proof of him discussing lifting sanctions with the Russian ambassador Sergei Kislyak, which he previously lied about in an interview with the FBI. In May 2017, Robert Mueller was appointed special counsel to lead the law enforcement investigation into the Russian interference in the 2016 election and possible collusion between the Trump team and the Russian government. Around the same time, Trump fired the FBI Director James Comey who one month later testified before a Senate panel that he was asked by Donald Trump to drop the

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<sup>130</sup> Sanger, D., Schmitt, E. (2016). Spy Agency Consensus Grows That Russia Hacked D.N.C.. *The New York Times*. P. 1.

<sup>131</sup> Russia: The 'cloud' over the Trump White House. (2017). *The BBC*. P. 1.

<sup>132</sup> Russia: The 'cloud' over the Trump White House. (2017). Op Cit. P. 1.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. P. 1.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. P. 1.

investigation into Flynn.<sup>135</sup> In July 2017, it came to the news that members of the Trump team had met with a Russian lawyer to discuss possible compromising information from the Russian government on Hillary Clinton which could be useful to harm her during the election campaign. The New York Times had access to emails of Trump Jr. which included the incentive of the meeting and the apparent involvement of the Russian government.<sup>136</sup> A social media scandal unfolded in September 2017 when Facebook admitted selling politically charged advertisements targeted at US voters to Russian companies who according to the social network were linked to the Russian government.<sup>137</sup> According to the Washington Post Twitter also reported finding accounts linked to the Russian government's Internet Research Agency.<sup>138</sup> The Special Counsel investigation is currently still in operation.

After having looked at the different phases of US-Russian relations and the major events of the 2016 election hacking scandal, the state of research on American stereotypes connected with Russia will be analyzed in the following section in order to find the framing elements which shall be used in the content analysis.

## **2.2. State of Research on Stereotypes of Russia in US Media**

While there is some recent research on Russian stereotypes in US print and/or online news media, the majority of research centers around general foreign policy relations between the United States and Russia and its historical roots manifested in literature. This chapter will therefore start with research of an historical character,

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<sup>135</sup> Russia: The 'cloud' over the Trump White House. (2017). Op Cit. P. 1.

<sup>136</sup> Savage, C. (2017). Donald Trump Jr. and Russia: What the Law Says. *The New York Times*. P. 1.

<sup>137</sup> Russia: The 'cloud' over the Trump White House. (2017). Op Cit. P. 1.

<sup>138</sup> Rosenberg, E. (2018). Twitter to tell 677,000 users they were had by the Russians. Some signs show the problem continues. *The Washington Post*. P. 1.

followed by some studies on stereotypes in US film and will end with a review on content analyses of the US news media.

‘Before World War I most critics of Russia's condition, particularly Marxists and liberal Westernizers, held in varying degrees four propositions: (1) their country was backward; (2) while the West was advancing in seven-league boots, Russia remained stagnant; (3) her progress was blocked by removable obstacles; (4) once these were removed, Russia would follow the path already traversed by the West.’<sup>139</sup>

Similarly to Western European discourses about the Middle East and the North African region which Edward Said later marked as ‘orientalist’<sup>140</sup>, reporters, authors, and travelers painted a picture of Russia as culturally behind and underdeveloped compared to Western Europe. According to Wolfe, Russia was perceived as being ruled under “supercentralized ‘Oriental despotism’” which was ‘built on a foundation of a dispersed and backward agriculture and village handicraft in isolated and powerless villages, each self-sufficient and each lacking connection with the others - in their economy, in awareness of common interests, or in the physical connection of a network of roads.’<sup>141</sup> This concept of backwardness assumes that throughout the last centuries Russia has been competing with other Western states which outstripped it in material, technological, financial, organizational, and intellectual resources.<sup>142</sup> Since the United States of America is a relatively young country, the stereotypes held by Europeans also transferred over to the US which was also due to the large amount of European settlers. Wolfe argues that Russia was indeed industrially backward from 1885 to 1916, but that its

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<sup>139</sup> Wolfe, B. (1967). Backwardness and Industrialization in Russian History and Thought. *Slavic Review*, 26(2), p. 177.

<sup>140</sup> See Said, E. (1995). *Orientalism. Western conceptions of the Orient*. London: Penguin Books.

<sup>141</sup> Wolfe, B. (1967). Op. Cit. P. 181.

<sup>142</sup> Fuller, W. (1992). Op Cit. P. xvii-xviii.

industry, in ‘terms of percentage of increase per annum, grew faster than that of any other great power.’<sup>143</sup> In the first half of the 20th century Soviet Russia transformed into a major industrial state.<sup>144</sup> However, the image of Russia as backward still stayed in the Western perception and lingered on as a stereotype. Since the Soviet Union was ideologically very different from the United States, it served as ‘the other’ - a place that cannot get the recognition it deserves, because this would mean that America would have to look at their own country in a critical way. “On the one hand Russia is classified as non-West and denied of its ‘Westernness’, on the other hand the standards applied to Russia are as high as those applied to any ‘purely’ Western country.”<sup>145</sup> Thus, when the Soviet Union ceased to exist the othering of Russia by Americans was not appropriate anymore, but it was difficult to erase due to decades and even centuries of comparing themselves with the Eastern nation.

As mentioned earlier, the body of research on stereotypes of Russia in the American film industry was added to keep the focus on specifically American perceptions of Russia. In this body of research, Hollywood has been found to be the mirror of the political relation the two countries had at a respective time. Heller argues that ‘just as quickly as Hollywood signed on to the project of defending the Soviet Union as our ally, producing propaganda films such as Warner Brothers’ controversial *Mission to Moscow*, a feature based on former Soviet Ambassador Joseph Davies’ 1941 book about his experiences in Russia, it signed on to the project of demonizing Soviets when the Cold War began in the latter part of the decade.’<sup>146</sup> The time of détente during the Second World War as described in the

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<sup>143</sup> Wolfe, B. (1967). Op. Cit. P. 199.

<sup>144</sup> Davies, R. (1998). *Soviet economic development from Lenin to Khrushchev*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. P. 1.

<sup>145</sup> Armeyskov, S. (2015). Russian Stereotypes: Western Perception of Russia as Seen through Russian Eyes. Part I. *Russian Universe*. P. 1.

<sup>146</sup> Heller, D. (2005). Op. Cit. P. 92.

earlier section was thus reflected to familiarize the American public with the key ally Soviet Union. Once this time was over and communism was perceived as a threat, the Hollywood image of Russia adjusted as well.

Although not all films that came out of Hollywood in the almost half a century long Cold War period were propaganda films supported by the US government, there were recurrent themes in all movies dealing with the Soviet Union. They portrayed the country along extremes such as a ‘nation of spies, drunks, humorless bureaucrats, dangerous femme fatales, terrorists, ballet dancers, and mad government agents ruthlessly obsessed with expansionism.’<sup>147</sup> As Goering et al. note, Hollywood offered a “particularly powerful sphere of discourse contributing to the construction of cultural perceptions.”<sup>148</sup>

The next major time of détente was the end of the Cold War. The ‘evil empire’ had ceased to exist and relations with Gorbachev before and Yeltsin after the collapse were good. Filmmakers realized that they could not continue using the familiar image of Russians as villains in their movies. ‘The icons that had served Hollywood well for over 50 years - providing both a convenient narrative structure and socio-politically reinforcing dominant political “realities” were no longer appropriate.’<sup>149</sup>

How much the film depiction has really changed since the 1990s and the emergence of a new Russia is debatable. Saunders argues that American depictions of Russians in film continue to fall victim to many of the old representations. He

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<sup>147</sup> Heller, D. (2005). Op Cit. P. 99.

<sup>148</sup> Goehring, E., Krause, A. (2006). Op. Cit. P. 13.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid, P. 16.



analyzed about a dozen popular films and one series which have been released after the collapse of the Soviet Union and have Russians as villains in the plot structure.<sup>150</sup> Through his analysis, Saunders defined five separate, but often linked, archetypes for the ‘post-soviet bogeyman’: ‘gangsters, mercenaries, revanchists, terrorists, and mad scientists.’<sup>151</sup> Gangster refers to the “‘Biznezman’ or oligarch gaming the new (post-Soviet) system and openness of globalisation” who wants to ‘win at all costs.’<sup>152</sup> The openness for globalisation also refers to Russia’s new presence in international business through which influence is increased by making important connections. Mercenary refers to a ‘thrill-seeking moral free agent without loyalty or ethics’ who wants to ‘benefit from the chaos of post-Soviet space’, revanchist applies to ‘a serving or former military officer (including KGB)’ whose goal is the “the restoration of Soviet Union’s ‘glory days’”, the terrorist is the ‘disaffected, unstable and wild-eyed misfit set adrift by the dissolution of the USSR’ who want to “make others ‘pay’ for their loss and pain” and the mad scientist is a ‘brilliant but unscrupulous seeker of knowledge and power who takes (Soviet) science to extremes’<sup>153</sup>. The latter also refers to talented hackers who have regularly been portrayed in American popular culture since the mid-1990s as ‘disgruntled and tech-savvy Russians turning their ire on the West, wreaking havoc on computer systems, databanks and sensitive network architectures of all types.’<sup>154</sup>

Goehring et al. argue that one of the major differences in the film depiction since the collapse of the Soviet Union is that “Russia itself is no longer the ‘enemy;’ the newly defined ‘enemy’ is the traitor to Russia and its fledgling capitalist

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<sup>150</sup> Saunders, R. (2016). *Popular Geopolitics and Nation Branding in the Post-Soviet Realm*. Milton Park: Taylor and Francis. P. 134.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. P. 134.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid. P. 135.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid. P. 135.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. P. 151.

democracy.”<sup>155</sup> In this way, Russians can be depicted in a positive way as long as they support the Western idea of democracy.

An analysis of more than 100 movies released between 1992 and 2007 with a focus on Kazakhstan, Russia, and Ukraine furthermore shows that differences between these Post-Soviet countries are often overlooked<sup>156</sup>. They are represented as “extremely anti-American and anti-Semitic, and as economically and technologically backward countries with pervasive ‘Russian’ mafia, international terrorism, and widespread female prostitution.”<sup>157</sup>

There is significantly less research available on Russia’s image in US news media. Pippa Norris found that there was a positive development concerning the coverage of Russia in a sample of routine network news from 1973 to 1995. She concluded that ‘despite the significance of the Cold War frame as a way of understanding American foreign policy in the 1970s and early 1980s, [...] network news adapted fairly rapidly to the new geopolitical realities.’<sup>158</sup> However, as pointed out in the previous chapter, Russian-American relations worsened in the mid-1990s when Russia returned to a strategy of assertiveness.

In the 2007 study of Western media agency news stories, Moscovici identifies “‘rising threat’, ‘Cold War’, ‘troubled democracy’ and ‘partnership’” as dominant topics (2008:iv) when it comes to the coverage of Russia.<sup>159</sup> The results are not

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<sup>155</sup> Goehring, E., Krause, A. (2006). Op Cit. P. 17.

<sup>156</sup> Katchanovski, I. (2007). Op. Cit. P. 26.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid. P. 26.

<sup>158</sup> Norris, P. (1995). The restless searchlight: Network news framing of the post-Cold War world. *Political Communication*, 12(4), p. 367.

<sup>159</sup> Moscovici, M. (2008). *Russia's Portrayal in the Western Media: A Quantitative Analysis of Leading Media Agency News Stories in 2007*, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. P. IV..

surprising considering the tensions during that year due to the US plan to station missiles in Poland.

In ‘the effects of US media framing and public opinion of the 2008 Russia–Georgia War’ Bayulgen and Arbatli analyze the New York Times and Wall Street Journal framing ‘in terms of aggression, justification and victimization on both sides, and the type of sources used.’<sup>160</sup> The authors find out that the framing was anti-Russian, especially in the initial stages of the conflict and that both papers had a significant amount of articles which referred directly to the Cold War. In addition, they carried out a survey demonstrating that an ‘increase in the media exposure of US respondents increased the likelihood of blaming Russia exclusively in the conflict.’

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The renowned researcher Andrei P. Tsygankov performed a textual analysis of editorials published in three leading American newspapers – the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post from 2008 to 2014. He found that the image of Russia was ‘overwhelmingly negative’ and that it was described as ‘an autocratic, abusive, and revisionist power.’<sup>162</sup> Positive or at least more neutral frames such as the country’s progress or ‘objective difficulties faced in its development’ were hardly mentioned.<sup>163</sup>

A rather recent study is the comparative content analysis by Bolshakova (2016) of the portrayal of Russia and the UK as host nations for two different Olympic Games in The New York Times. Bolshakova concludes that ‘London and Sochi

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<sup>160</sup> Bayulgen, O. & Arbatli, E. (2013). Op. Cit. P. 518.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid. P. 513

<sup>162</sup> Tsygankov, A. (2017). Op. Cit. P. 31.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. P. 31.

hosting preparations are constructed in binary opposition.’<sup>164</sup> While ‘both countries faced similar challenges of hosting the Games in times of sagging economies and elevated security threats’, the negative aspects about the Russian preparations prevail in the New York Times.<sup>165</sup> Sochi’s security measures come off as a ‘threat in itself’, the construction is ‘presented as an economic drain fraught with various problems’ and ‘protests are brought to the frontline of the Olympic discourse.’<sup>166</sup>

To sum up, the following stereotypes prevalent in the United States could be drawn from the previous literature review of US-Russian relations and the state of research on stereotypes:

Originating from Tsarist Russia, the idea has lingered on that the West outstripped Russia in material, technological, financial, organizational, and intellectual resources. This concept of backwardness is still prominent, especially because once Russia was significantly different from the West due to communist rule, the stereotype was convenient to distinguish oneself from ‘the other’.

Derived from Cold War times, Russia is perceived as a threat, is still having the same internal structures as during Soviet times, is constantly reacting to American behavior and craves recognition, wants to get back to the old strength it used to have during the Soviet Union, still has the goal to weaken the West, is spying on the West in KGB manner and uses the same propaganda machine as during the Soviet Union to achieve its goals.

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<sup>164</sup> Bolshakova, A. (2016). Op. Cit. P. 461.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. P. 461.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid. P. 461.

Originating from the 1990s when the Russian Federation emerged from the Soviet Union, Russia is perceived as a land full of gangster, oligarchs and political thugs. While criminality was indeed high right after the collapse of the Soviet Union, this image is still popular even though criminality rates went down. Furthermore, the idea is that there is immense talent in Russia in terms of science and technology which cannot achieve its full potential due to governmental restrictions who instead turn their high-quality work into criminal actions.

Highlighted after Putin's second term which began in 2004 and marking the time when his foreign policy strategy became more assertive, the propaganda stereotype reached a new level and was instead labeled as the weaponizing of intelligence findings which includes both elements - threat and propaganda - in one. While a military doctrine of disinformation is not necessarily a stereotype, it is a deeply rooted concept from the 1920s which came back to light in the past decade, especially after the Ukraine crisis and refers to the usage of false information as a weapon and strategy<sup>167</sup>. Furthermore, Russia's new strategy after the mid-2000s and the increased pressure on opposition parties and critical media have led to the perception in America that the country is not on the path to democracy - which was the case in the beginning of the 1990s, but on the path towards an authoritarian state and a dictatorship under Putin, full of corruption and with a rigged election system. Additionally, Russia is perceived as increasingly using its international connections gained through business relations to influence dominant elites abroad. Finally, the Ukraine crisis and other tensions mentioned have led to an increased believe in a 'new Cold War', clearly emphasizing the insurmountable differences between Russia and the United States.

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<sup>167</sup> Moeller, J. (2014). Maskirovka: Russia's Masterful Use of Deception in Ukraine. *The Huffington Post*. P. 1.

Although the above listed examples show that there are a few content analyses performed on stereotypes in US news media towards Russia, this area is still highly under-researched, especially compared to Arab stereotypes in US news media. The increased tensions since the Ukraine crisis, however, point towards a growing need of studies that focus on the media's influence in improving and worsening the image the two countries have of each other. The election hacking scandal is an ideal period for a content analysis aiming to fill this research gap, because it spanned over several months. The coverage is thus likely to reflect the recent strained relations. Moreover, the results from the content analysis can also serve as a foundation for the analysis of more recent events such as the Salisbury attack. Together these events paint a bigger picture emphasizing the need of further research on how the US media portrays Russia.

From the overview of political relations between the two countries and the state of research on US stereotypes about Russia it became clear that the 2016 hacking scandal can not be seen as an isolated event and that stereotyping towards Russia has existed before the election hacking. This leads to the assumption that the framing of Russia in the New York Times, the New York Post and USA Today before the hacking scandal will show some similarities to the coverage after. The first hypothesis for the content analysis is therefore the following:

H1: The framing elements derived from previous literature and research also appear before the hacking scandal.

However, considering the significance of the election hacking and the previously

mentioned increase in coverage about Russia in connection with it, it can be assumed that there was an increase in framing after the first scandal. The second hypothesis is thus:

H2: The amount of framing elements increased in the sample after the hacking scandal.

Since this research is going to use hierarchical cluster analysis as a second step data analysis tool to cluster the framing elements of the coverage to find the complete frames, it can also be assumed that the clusters after the scandal will have changed compared to the ones before. The third hypothesis will consequently be:

H3: The clustering in the time frame after the scandal shows significant differences compared to the clustering before the scandal.

## **Chapter II**

### **Content Analysis of Russia in US Media**

#### **§ 3 Methodology**

##### **3.1. Media and Data Sample Selection**

The media selection for this content analysis was based on circulation numbers. The reason for this is that a larger circulation of a newspaper means that it reaches more people and is thus likely to have more of an impact. To find the most recent circulation statistics, the Alliance of Audited Media was contacted. This established North American non-profit industry organization annually releases audited newspaper circulation data. The table which is taken from the Alliance of Audited Media website (appendix 2, table 1) shows the average circulation for the print and digital version of US daily newspapers from the last annual reports, ordered by highest weekday circulation. According to the statistics presented by the Alliance of Audited Media, USA Today has the largest reach. As can be seen in the table, the next in line is the Wall Street Journal. This paper was not analyzed due to the fact that it was not available in the research service tool used. Instead, USA Today, The New York Times and The New York Post were chosen from this list. The first reason for this is that they were all available in the same research service provider. Secondly, they represent slightly different political orientations which is another interesting factor for the analysis of frames used. According to the media bias/fact check website, USA today has no clear political orientation, the New York Times is slightly left and the New York Post has a slightly to moderately conservative



orientation. Media bias/fact check is an independent outlet which tries to inform the public about media bias and deceptive news practices.<sup>168</sup>

Since the research aim of this paper is to find out whether the 2016 US election hacking scandal can be seen as a key event in the framing towards Russia by leading US-American newspapers, the period before the scandal has to be compared to the period after. According to McQuail, a key event is the 'kind of event that becomes a big news story not only because of its scale, unexpectedness and dramatic quality, but because of some unusual degree of public resonance and significance in symbolizing some deeper public crisis or anxiety.'<sup>169</sup> This deeper anxiety mentioned will be interpreted by the amount and type of frames used by the media after the scandal.

The time frames chosen for the analysis correspond to major sub scandals happening in connection to the US election hacking. Since many relevant news pieces about the election hacking were published, it makes sense to look at the coverage after several important weeks.

As stated earlier, WikiLeaks published more than 18,000 emails from key Democratic National Committee officials on July 22, 2016. The emails showed bias against the Bernie Sanders campaign and favoring of Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential primaries<sup>170</sup>. Three days later on July 25, 2016, the DNC and the Clinton campaign stated that Russian intelligence operators hacked their emails and forwarded them to WikiLeaks which was based on the assessments from

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<sup>168</sup> For further information, please see <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/frequently-asked-questions/>.

<sup>169</sup> McQuail, D. (2010). Op. Cit. P. 317.

<sup>170</sup> Banks, W. (2017). State responsibility and attribution of cyber intrusions after Tallinn 2.0. *Texas Law Review*, 95(7), p. 1487.

cybersecurity firms. Since this day marks the beginning of a clear mention of Russia being involved in the email scandal, the week following July 25, 2016 was chosen as the first time frame.

The second time frame was chosen after December 9, 2016 when the CIA concluded that individuals linked to the Russian government had provided WikiLeaks with confidential emails with the goal of helping Donald Trump. The statement was dismissed by the Trump transition team. This seven day sample is also interesting, because Trump chose Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State during the week analyzed which received praise from Russian officials and scrutiny from several US politicians due to Tillerson's business connections to Russia.

The third seven day sample was chosen after July 11, 2017 when Trump Jr. tweeted his emails about the Veselnitskaya meeting before The New York Times published them. This was a very relevant event concerning US-Russian relations, because one of the emails Trump Jr. received from an intermediary the year before clearly stated that a 'Russian government attorney' would provide 'very high level' dirt on Mrs. Clinton as 'part of Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump.'<sup>171</sup> The fact that Trump Jr. and a couple others from the Trump campaign met with the lawyer was a big scandal even if they claimed that nothing came out of the meeting.

Whether these three events are the most significant in the row of scandals emerging over the past two years connected with the hacking is arguable. However, they are definitely three of the largest sub scandals in connection with Russia and allow for

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<sup>171</sup> Savage, C. (2017). Op. Cit. P. 1.

a glimpse at the development over time since they are all roughly six months apart and thus span over almost a full year.

A fourth time frame was chosen to compare the results of the above mentioned three time frames with a period before the first scandal. For this, a random sample of 100 New York Times, New York Post and USA Today articles was assembled. To make sure that no articles about the hacking scandal would appear in the before data set, the six months before June 14th, 2016 were chosen as a period. This was the first time the DNC officials and security experts voiced concern that they were targeted by Russian hackers. However, as mentioned earlier, July 25th, 2016 was the first date that received more public attention, because the accusations had further backing from cybersecurity firms and was thus chosen as the first 'after the scandal' time frame. To rule out any mentions of the hacking scandal, the six months time frame before June 14th, 2016 had to be taken as an analysis basis for the 'before the scandal' period.

To access the articles in each of the four time frames, the data base of the research tool LexisNexis was used. The search term was 'Russia\*' for each time frame selecting the New York Times, New York Post and USA Today as a source filter. Noteworthy is that LexisNexis does not carry the same service for every news outlet. For the New York Times, for example, the service carries the final city edition as well as the New York Times on the web online articles and blogs. For the New York Post and USA Today the online offer is more limited. However, for the analysis itself it is not important, since a good overview of the coverage of each newspaper is still achieved. The '\*' in the article was necessary to not only include the country, but also for example 'Russian' as an adjective. The articles were not

filtered by type of article, meaning that initially all types of articles were looked at. However, LexisNexis filters the articles by relevance which meant that articles which had very few mentions of Russia showed up at the bottom of the document list. This way it was possible to easily detect when the selection stopped being relevant for the analysis. Articles that only had a reference to a Russian actor or did not deal with Russia at all except for a short mention, for example of a person coming from a small town in Russia, were deleted. Also omitted were articles where Russia was only mentioned in a listing (e.g. he became ambassador to Botswana, Russia and South Africa) and in which it was not further relevant for the topic of the story. Moreover, some articles appeared double in a sample although the option to eliminate doubles in LexisNexis was used. This might be due to some error in the algorithm that it does delete the same article if it was republished, but not if it was shown in the web version of the respective paper. Also manually taken out were briefings, single quotes, news agency statements, and book reviews which also showed up as articles. After these steps, the sample of the first time frame consisted of 87 articles, the second of 109, and the third of 105 articles. The before time frame consisted of a random sample of exactly 100 articles taken from the first 500 articles showing up in LexisNexis for this six month period. This way it could be made sure that only relevant articles showed up. Overall, 401 articles were analyzed.

### **3.2. Determining frames through hierarchical cluster analysis**

For the analysis of the coverage of Russia in leading US media, the method of quantitative content analysis will be applied. The first textbook about content analysis as a method was published by Berelson in 1952. According to Berelson content analysis is ‘a research technique for the objective, systematic and

quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.<sup>172</sup> A structured, systematic coding scheme is used to classify text in order to be able to draw conclusions about the content. Since the coding is performed in a systematic manner, it should be replicable by other researchers. The manifest content described by Berelson refers to obvious, countable parts of the message which is why quantitative content analysis focuses on the manifest and qualitative content analysis more on the latent or hidden content of a message. However, both approaches can be combined to extract the maximum amount of meaning from a text.

Since media frames are quite abstract concepts even if they are coded as variables, Matthes and Kohring have looked at different methods of content analysis which are used in connection with framing theory and evaluated them in terms of quality. This review will briefly be repeated to understand why Matthes and Kohring came up with a different model for analyzing frames in the media.

The hermeneutic approach tries to describe frames extensively by ‘providing an interpretative account of media texts linking up frames with broader cultural elements.’<sup>173</sup> This rather qualitative approach might be useful when it comes to in-depth descriptions, but it lacks traceability when it comes to finding out where the frames came from since they are largely based on personal interpretation. Consequently, this approach may lack reliability.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Berelson, B. (1952). *Content analysis in communication research*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press. P. 18.

<sup>173</sup> Matthes, J., Kohring, M. (2008). The Content Analysis of Media Frames: Toward Improving Reliability and Validity. *Journal of Communication*, 58(2), p. 259.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid. P. 259.

In the linguistic approach frames are established by ‘analyzing the selection, placement, and structure of specific words and sentences in a text.’<sup>175</sup> Although similar to the hermeneutic process, the researchers here determine linguistic elements for a frame, e.g. syntax, script, theme, and rhetoric. Matthes and Kohring criticize that due to the complex nature of the linguistic analysis it is difficult to analyze large data sets or to comprehend how all these various linguistic elements make up a frame.<sup>176</sup>

Another rather qualitative approach is the manual holistic one. The first step of this is discovering frames by the means of a qualitative analysis of some news texts. As a second step those are then coded as holistic or complete variables in a manual analysis. According to Matthes and Kohring this approach is problematic, because there might be cases when an article is pressed into an already existing frame category even though the article does not fit the whole frame.<sup>177</sup>

To increase reliability when it comes to framing analysis, the computer based approach was introduced. It assumes that frames can be found in specific combination of words which occur together in some texts, but do not appear together in other texts. These combinations are found with the help of cluster algorithms. Although reliability is indeed stronger than in the other approaches, it bears the problem that the computer skips contexts and nuances which would be seen by a human coder. Since words do not always have only one meaning in every context, the approach is not ideal either.

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<sup>175</sup> Matthes, J., Kohring, M. (2008). Op. Cit. P. 260.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. P. 260.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. P. 261.

The deductive approach does not look for frames in the text, but derives them previously from literature. Matthes and Kohring argue that researchers following this method limit their work to already established frames and thus might miss other important frames.<sup>178</sup>

After considering the different content analysis methods when it comes to framing, Matthes and Kohring still saw limitations regarding validity and reliability and therefore developed their very own method. They define a frame as a certain pattern in a text that is composed of previously defined components or elements of frames.<sup>179</sup> This means that instead of coding the whole frame, they suggest splitting it up into separate elements to facilitate the coding process. In a second step, these elements will then be grouped together systematically by using a hierarchical cluster analysis in order to find the complete frame. Frames are thus clusters of frame elements.

To carry out their new method Matthes and Kohring needed a ‘concept that provides a clear operational definition of frame elements’<sup>180</sup>. They therefore chose Entman’s definition which states that one frame is made up of a problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation and decided to code them separately as variables in a quantitative content analysis. If the frame element exists in the text it receives the value 1, and if it does not exist the value 0. The reason for this method is that the reliability is likely to be higher than if holistic frames were coded, because whole frames are usually more abstract. Frame elements, in contrast, directly refer to a problem, cause, moral evaluation or

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<sup>178</sup> Matthes, J., Kohring, M. (2008). Op Cit. P. 262.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid. P. 263.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid. P. 264.

treatment recommendations separately and are thus relatively easy to code. Furthermore, if holistic frames are coded, researchers are inclined to assign frames to sections in a text which do not make up a complete frame. The problem of reliability concerning frame analysis is not completely resolved, but it is reduced.<sup>181</sup> Matthes and Kohring analyzed the coverage of biotechnology in The New York Times in this way.

To find the frames in the portrayal of Russia in US media following the 2016 election hacking scandal, this analysis was modeled after Matthes and Kohring's approach. Variables for the categories problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation were created deductively from relevant literature and research on stereotypes mentioned in chapter 1. In a pretest of 30 articles a few variables were added which did not match any of the previously defined frame element categories. If other frame elements appeared after the pretest, they were put in the 'other' category. There was an 'other' category for three of the four parts of the frame, meaning there was an 'other' problem frame, 'other' causal interpretation, and an 'other' treatment recommendation category. The moral evaluation category did not need an 'other' element, because in this case there is no other coding possibility besides positive, negative, neutral or no moral evaluation.

For the problem frame, the coder was supposed to answer the question of which problem(s) is mentioned in connection with Russia. Since the frame elements are coded separately, there can be more than one frame element in the text and also more than one frame element of each category. However, if the very same frame

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<sup>181</sup> Matthes, J., Kohring, M. (2008). *Op Cit.* P. 264.



element appears more than once in the text, it is still coded as 1 since the question is whether it appears or not. The predefined categories for the problem frame elements which derived from the stereotype and history review in the previous chapter were ‘Russia as a (rising) threat’, ‘Russia's military doctrine of disinformation’, ‘Russia has a troubled democracy’, ‘Russia's criminal activities’, ‘Russia is influencing dominant elites abroad’, ‘Russia's actions are leading to a new Cold War’, ‘Russia's weak economic situation’ and ‘other’ for all other problems. After a pretest it seemed necessary to add the problem frame element ‘Russia as a troublemaker’ to the list, because this was sometimes mentioned in connection with the hacking scandal and was different than, for example, the threat category.

To give some of the examples of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs that led to the positive coding of a frame element variable for the whole article, some examples which showed up in the texts will be mentioned here to better understand the actual coverage as well as the process of coding. This is by no means an exhaustive list since 401 articles were coded overall. These expressions were not defined before the coding, but appeared in the coding process and after some time it became clear that some associations appeared more than others. Instead of doing another qualitative analysis of a couple articles, it was decided to simply repeat some of the most common associations with Russia for each frame element to give a general overview.

Starting with the problem elements, the variable ‘Russia as a (rising) threat’ was naturally coded when there was a direct mention of the word ‘threat’ in connection with Russia, but also when Russia was mentioned as being an adversary of the

United States, when it was labeled as behaving aggressively, when there was the mention of Russia attacking the West, etc.

The variable 'Russia's military doctrine of disinformation' directly refers to the usage of false information for a strategic gain. It was positively coded when it was inter alia mentioned that there exists an information war, an information-warfare campaign, that the Kremlin is managing a propaganda machine, that Russia is weaponizing information, that it is using false information, fake news etc.

The variable 'Russia as a troublemaker' which was not derived from literature but was added inductively during a pretest, was coded when there was the problem mentioned that Russian leaders like catching others off guard, that they like to stir trouble, that they have a talent for disruption, that they like to bully others, etc.

'Russia has a troubled democracy' was positively coded when Russia was mentioned having an authoritarian, autocratic, corrupt or unscrupulous government, or that it is under a dictatorship, etc.

'Russia's criminal activities' was marked when there was talk of Russia being run by thieves and thugs, or when problems were mentioned related to lawlessness, mafia, criminal hackers, money laundering, or other highly organized crime for example the illegal management of migration to Europe through Russia or the description of violent debt collectors in Russia who are reminiscent of the Al Capone-like excesses of the chaotic 1990s.

The variable ‘Russia is influencing dominant elites abroad’ was coded when the article referred to the problem of US business dealings in Russia that have influenced American politics in some way. Often this was mentioned connected to the Trump administration or the Republican party in general which used to have a rather harsh stance towards Russia during Cold War times. Furthermore, this appeared a lot at the time of Rex Tillerson’s nomination as Secretary of State whose stake in Russia's energy industry was often judged as creating a blurry line between his interests as an oilman and his role as an American diplomat.

‘Russia's actions are leading to a new Cold War’ was naturally coded when there was the direct mention of a new Cold War, but also when there was a reference to the need of the United States to defend its principles from times after the Second World War or when it was alluded to the United States and Russia having the worst relations since the Cold War. Often this new Cold War was defined as a 21st century war and juxtaposed the actual Cold War. In this respect it was frequently stated that hacks, leaks and fake news are taking the place of planes, bombs and missiles.

The problem variable Russia's weak economic situation is not necessarily a stereotype, but it can mark the country along the lines of the concept of backwardness. It was coded whenever Russia’s economic problems were highlighted.

To find the causal interpretation elements, the question was posed of what is mentioned in the article as a cause for the problems or as the reason for Russia's behavior. Here the categories were ‘internal structures taken from the Soviet

Union’, ‘reaction to American behavior’, ‘desire to get back to old strength’, ‘weak economic power’, ‘Russia wants to weaken NATO/ the West/ the EU/ the US’, ‘dominant elites, ‘corruption’ and ‘other’ causes.

The variable ‘internal structures taken from the Soviet Union’ was marked when it was suggested that the reason for Russia’s problems is the little change in the way things are done in the country since Soviet Union times. This could be in reference to KGB-like behavior of the FSB or a comparison to the Stalin-era, etc.

The causal interpretation ‘reaction to American behavior’ was coded when it was mentioned that Russia is acting the way it is because of an American action that happened beforehand. Derived from Cold War times, it alludes to the idea that the Russians, for example, see conspiracies in every move of the United States and fear a goal of Russia’s destruction which is why they have to retaliate in some way.

The ‘desire to get back to old strength’ was listed as the reason for Russia’s behavior in terms of a goal to achieve past glory. It appeared either in reference to the communist era or czarist times. The idea is that Russia wants to be seen as a great power, coequal with the United States or that it is nostalgic for its superpower status and thus stresses the glories of the Soviet past. Another more specific example is that Russia wants to increase its territory, hegemony and influence with the goal to get back to that status, etc.

The causal interpretation ‘weak economic power’ was coded when Russia’s troubled economic situation was not stated as a problem but as a reason for its behavior. As mentioned before, this is not necessarily a stereotype, but it can be

seen as a generalization if it is not based on facts. This variable ended up not appearing very frequently during the coding process.

‘Russia wants to weaken NATO/ the West/ the EU/ the US’ often appeared quite literally as the reason for Russia’s behavior. Examples are the weakening of pro-American political parties in Europe, or the fomenting of a degree of instability that weakens adversaries.

The cause ‘dominant elites’ was coded when the inequality between the poor and rich was listed as the reason for Russia’s problems or when the fact was mentioned that only a few people in the country have power and influence resulting in a negative effect.

‘Corruption’ is not a stereotype, unless it is generalized for all of Russia, e.g. ‘all of Russia is corrupt’. This variable was positively coded when corruption was listed as the reason for a problem related to Russia.

The moral evaluation category referred to a ‘positive’ evaluation of Russia’s behavior, a ‘neutral’ evaluation - meaning Russia's behavior is evaluated from both sides - and a ‘negative’ evaluation. If there was no moral evaluation in the article, the value coded was 0.

Examples for a positive moral evaluation were not found in any of the texts. To name nonetheless an example of what would have been a positive evaluation, any statements containing the evaluation of an action as fair, just, good, protective, honest or loyal would have inter alia been coded.

A neutral moral evaluation meant that Russia was evaluated from both sides or compared to the moral behavior of others. Examples included statements such as ‘we have no moral high ground here’ or that both sides have failed in maintaining the relationship or that even though Russia’s action were not right, the government still had a good reason for behaving the way it did due to something America did.

The negative moral evaluation variable was coded when the Russian government itself was labeled as being uncivilized, vile or bad. Moreover, it was marked when an action or behavior of Russia was labeled as self-defeating or when it was stated that it is treating others badly, that it is feared, and that its negative actions such as the snatching of land from other nations, scaring neighbors and destabilizing business and political rivals are policies which will come back haunting Moscow, etc.

In the treatment recommendation category the question was posed of what is recommended in the articles to respond to Russia’s actions or what is advised to the Russian government. The possible categories were ‘rapprochement with the West’, ‘rapprochement with Russia’, ‘harder stance on Russia’ and ‘other’ for any other treatment recommendation when it comes to Russia.

The recommendation variable ‘rapprochement with the West’ was not found in any of the texts. The initial idea was that someone in the article would recommend to Russia to do something to improve the relationship with the United States, Europe, the EU, etc.

‘Rapprochement with Russia’ was coded when it was recommended to some other actor to make a step towards Russia in the sense of negotiations or otherwise, or that it is a necessity to have good relations with Russia.

The treatment recommendation variable ‘harder stance on Russia’ referred to some sort of punishment towards Russia being put forward or that the course should be confrontation rather than compromise. In terms of the hacking scandal those were sanctions or travel bans for some Russian citizens or in terms of the doping scandal, it was often recommended that Russia should be withdrawn from the games.

Only the elements which appeared in more than 5% of the total number of articles were part of the cluster analysis. This is done for statistical reasons, because the ones that show up in less than 5% are ‘likely to have a very low frequency in every single cluster.’<sup>182</sup> The goal of this analysis is the grouping of articles to specific clusters with ‘high differences between the clusters and low differences within a cluster.’<sup>183</sup> It is thus not the coder himself who detects the complete frames, but the algorithm. The cluster analysis was performed in the programming language ‘R’. Since the coding results of the frame elements which made it into the cluster analysis are made up of binary variables, a hierarchical cluster analysis was chosen which is usually depicted by a tree. Following Matthes and Kohring’s research design, the Ward method was used, because it is ‘considered a good technique for identifying suitable cluster solutions.’<sup>184</sup> Matthes and Kohring used the statistics software SPSS to perform their cluster analysis, but the same hierarchical cluster analysis using the Ward method is also possible in R. To find out the distance

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<sup>182</sup> Matthes, J., Kohring, M. (2008). Op Cit. P. 268.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid. P. 264.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid. P. 269.

between two clusters, the Ward method assumes that the distance between two clusters is how much the sum of squares will increase when they are merged. The distance from any point in a collection of data, to the mean of the data, is called deviation. If all deviations are squared, we have the sum of squares for these data.

The sum of squares is thus the sum of the squared differences of each observation from the overall mean. Articles are then grouped whose squared euclidean distance is very close. With the help of the Elbow criterion the number of clusters can be determined. “A clear ‘elbow’ in the plot of the heterogeneity measure signifies that fusing these two clusters would result in a cluster that is too heterogeneous.”<sup>185</sup> Overall, two hierarchical cluster analyses were performed: one for the time frame before the start of the election hacking scandal and one for the three after the scandal time frames combined. This way, it was easier to compare the overall differences.

Expanding on the research design of Matthes and Kohring, this research also looked at who mentioned the frame element in an article. This could be the journalist or the editorial board - meaning the author mentioned the frame element without quoting anyone, an expert - referring to people that have relevant knowledge about the topic due to their profession, a civil society source - which refers to the origin of individuals or organizational entities representative for the civil society which is the aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens, a governmental source - an individual or governmental organizational entity, a private source - referring to the average citizen’s opinion who does not have obvious expert knowledge about the

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<sup>185</sup> Matthes, J., Kohring, M. (2008). Op Cit. P. 269.



topic, and other for any other possible source that does not fit in the above mentioned categories.

Besides the framing analysis, the coding of the articles also included formal categories such as the media outlet, the type of article or the general topic which was inductively coded as the main reported upon news. A general topic would for example be hacking scandal, doping scandal, or Syria.

For the reliability test a second coder coded 30 articles which were chosen randomly from the four time frames. For every article the coder had to decide on 27 variables. 24 of those were part of the frame element analysis and had the binary format yes ('1')/ no ('0'). Furthermore, the coder had to add 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E' or 'F' to each binary variable to show who mentioned the frame element in the text. The variables for the date, the name of the author or the title of the article were not taken into the reliability test. Holsti's method was used to find the coherence between the two coders.<sup>186</sup> For the 27 variables the coherence was 92.95%. Although some time was needed to familiarize the second coder with the content of the codebook, the result is high and supports Matthes and Kohring's approach to code the framing elements separately.

While the limitations of this work will be mentioned at the very end of this study, one limitation which applies directly to Matthes and Kohring's approach has to be mentioned already at this point. If a researcher decides to use their model, it has to be apparent to him or her that the coding only includes specific frame elements. A definition of frame elements such as the one provided by Entman on the one hand

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<sup>186</sup> Raupp, J., & Vogelgesang, J. (2009). *Medienresonanzanalyse*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, p. xv (ff.).

helps the operationalization of the quantitative content analysis process along clearly defined categories, but on the other hand it might leave out other evaluations or meanings in the text which are not clearly stated as problems, causes, moral evaluations or treatment recommendations.

## **§ 4 Results Before and After the 2016 Election Hacking Scandal**

### **4.1. General Results of the Quantitative Content Analysis**

When it comes to the formal characteristics of the articles analyzed, the four samples all consisted of a large amount of New York Times articles (appendix 1, chart 1). This is firstly due to the large data set available for the New York Times in LexisNexis compared to the other two newspapers. Secondly, the New York Times has a large international focus and is thus more likely to contain news about Russia. However, it is visible that in the three after the scandal time frames, the coverage about Russia of the New York Post and USA Today increased significantly. This shows that media outlets which do not frequently cover topics related to Russia such as the New York Post and USA Today deemed articles related to Russia more relevant to their readers after the hacking scandal.

The type of articles during each time frame also shows interesting results. The category ‘opinion’ which included opinion pieces, columns, op-eds and letters to the editor as well as the category ‘editorial’ which refers to articles containing the official position of the newspaper appeared much more in the three time frames after the scandal than before (appendix 1, chart 2). Since each of the sub scandals after the first allegations in July 2016 was largely debated among politicians and citizens, the newspaper editorial boards decided to publish a lot of opinionated articles as well to show different positions and arguments to their readers. The large

amount of articles belonging to the category ‘other’ six months before the hacking scandal is due to the coverage of the doping allegations against Russia which largely appeared in the sport sections of the newspapers. A lot of articles published in this section were not easy to classify and thus were labeled as ‘other’.

When comparing the top five general categories of the before time frame (appendix 1, chart 3) to the after time frame which contains all three ‘after’ the scandal periods (appendix 1, chart 4), it becomes clear that the hacking scandal overshadowed all other topics related to Russia. Even if we consider that the coverage during the after time frames naturally focussed more on the hacking scandal due to the fact that these samples were all taken a week after a big revelation, the results are still strong. A topic such as Russia’s involvement in the Syrian civil war which dominated the six months before the hacking scandal, was reported upon significantly less afterwards even though this topic did not stop being newsworthy. This demonstrates the expelling quality of the hacking scandal when it comes to other topics related to Russia. Moreover, less articles with the label ‘Russian policy’ focussing on general decisions and policies by the Russian government were written afterwards, for example reports about its relation to other countries or domestic political issues. This is not the case when it comes to the label ‘US policy’, because a lot of internal discussions started after the hacking scandal which did not deal with the hacking scandal directly, but were a result of the distrust it caused among the political elites in the United States.

Looking at the amount of frame elements in each time frame, the numbers are very even (appendix 1, chart 5). The stereotypes connected to Russia which were analyzed in chapter 2 and taken as a basis for some of the frame elements in the

content analysis, were thus present at all times analyzed. Hypothesis 1 - that framing elements derived from previous literature and research also appear before the hacking scandal - was therefore confirmed.

However, hypothesis 2, - that the amount of framing elements increased in the sample after the hacking scandal - was not confirmed, because all time frames show an almost equal amount of coded frame elements. This statistic does not reveal the type of frame element mentioned most in each period, because these results should be taken from the complete frames which were formed after the hierarchical cluster analysis. Since all frame elements were counted including the ones which were labeled in the 'other' categories, these numbers reveal little about the question of whether the manifested stereotypes and fears - meaning those frame elements which derived from the state of research - increased after the hacking scandal.

The type of sources of frame elements show very little variations between each time frame (Appendix 1, chart 6). The most striking result is that the stereotypes connected to these variables were mostly stated by the journalist himself. This points towards the previously mentioned journalistic routine of consciously or unconsciously repeating phrases, expressions and interpretations of other journalists or public figures who have interpreted and categorized the issue before. The second strongest source for framing elements and therefore also stereotypes are governmental ones. A likely explanation for the fact that they included more stereotypes than expert sources is the sharp polarization of US politics. American politicians from the Democratic or Republican side could be more inclined to voice rather harsh statements as long as they fall into the general attitude of their party towards an issue. The slight increase of governmental sources in the time frame

December 9 - 15, 2016 is due to the fact that in this period more governmental sources were used overall, because the news that Trump dismissed findings by a body of his own government - the CIA - called for more assessments stemming from Washington D.C. Furthermore, the nomination of Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State also called for a lot of sources coming from the US government.

#### **4.2. Results of the Cluster Analysis Before the Scandal**

As mentioned earlier, only the frame elements which appeared in more than 5% of the articles were taken into account for the cluster analysis. In the case of the six months before the hacking scandal time frame the most frequently used problem frame elements were 'Russia as a (rising) threat', 'Russia's military doctrine of disinformation', 'Russia as a troublemaker', 'Russia's troubled democracy', 'Russia's criminal activities' and 'other' problems mentioned related to Russia. For the causal frame elements those which went into the analysis were 'desire to get back to old strength' and 'weaken Nato/West/EU'. For the moral evaluation only the 'negative' variable made it into the cluster analysis and for the treatment recommendation only the 'other' recommendation variable was included.

To determine the appropriate amount of clusters in the dataset, the elbow method was used. This method directs that the number of clusters should be chosen, which gives the best modeling of the data. To achieve this, the total within sum of squares which describes the variance is plotted against the number of clusters. The first clusters are likely to add a lot of information, because they have a lot of variance, but at some point the marginal gain will drop which is what can be seen as an angle in the graph. This point is called the 'elbow criterion' which dictates the amount of clusters chosen. Sometimes this angle is less pronounced than other times resulting

in a not so clear choice of numbers of clusters. For the before the scandal time frame, the most pronounced angle is at cluster number four (appendix 1, chart 7).

By using the hierarchical clustering algorithm ‘hclust’ in R, a dendrogram or cluster tree can be generated (appendix 1, chart 8). ‘Hclust’ requires us to provide the data in the form of a distance matrix which is achieved by using ‘ward.d2’ which implements the Ward method and unlike ‘ward.d1’, it already squares the Euclidean distances. As explained in the method's section, the Ward method assumes that the distance between two clusters is how much the sum of squares will increase when they are merged. The values in the four clusters shown in the dendrogram are very different between each cluster but very similar within each cluster.

When looking at the corresponding table of the percentage of each frame element in the amount of articles ‘N’ in each of the four clusters, one is able to determine which frame elements were grouped together (appendix 2, table 2). The added number of all articles in each cluster results in the total number of articles analyzed in this time frame, which was exactly 100 for the before the scandal time frame. The clusters which include a lot of different values in the table (appendix 2, table 2) are also the ones which have a lot of branches in each cluster when we look at the clustering tree chart (appendix 1, chart 8).

Cluster 1 consists of 19 articles (appendix 2, table 2). The most dominant element in this cluster is the problem frame element ‘criminal activities’ whose percentage is highlighted in green. 80% of the 19 articles thus referred to the gangster image of Russia which included mentions of criminal hackers, money laundering, the

Russian mafia, political thugs, etc. Following Matthes and Kohring's approach, the frames resulting from each cluster are named after the most dominant frame element within it. Thus the first frame is named 'criminal frame'. The second and third strongest values are each highlighted in yellow. The second strongest value in this cluster is the inductively coded 'Russia as a troublemaker' problem frame element which appeared in 37.5%. This element alluded to the idea that Russia is some sort of bully that constantly wants to stir up trouble for no particular reason. While this stereotype was more expected to appear in the after the hacking scandal timeframe, the results show that this image was in use beforehand. Another 37.5% of the articles show a recommendation to these problems mentioned in connection with Russia. However, these recommendations were labeled as 'other', because they did not fit the predefined categories of recommendations. Causes and Moral evaluations were not very dominant in this cluster.

Cluster 2 consists of only 8 articles. 42.1% of these had a negative moral evaluation when it comes to Russia's actions. The second frame is therefore the 'negative' frame. 37.5% of the articles mention problems connected with Russia's actions which did not match any of the predefined categories and were thus labeled as 'other' in the problem category. In 20% of the articles in this cluster Russia's desire to get back to old strength was mentioned as the reason for its behavior. A treatment recommendation is not included in this frame.

Cluster 3 has 10 articles and shows the threat frame element as the strongest value with 52.6%. For this reason, the third frame in the before the hacking scandal period is the 'threat' frame. 25% of the articles hint towards the idea that Russia's goal in acting a certain way is to weaken the West. This can be mentioned as an

attack on NATO or the EU or more generally on the US or Europe. In 12.5% ‘other’ recommendations are given to Russia or are given to other actors to deal with Russia’s behavior. Moral evaluations were not strong in this cluster.

Cluster 4 is the largest cluster with 63 articles. The ‘other’ problem frame is very strong with 62.5% of articles which is why the frame in this grouping is named after it. This leads to the conclusion that before the scandal many different problems were mentioned in connection to Russia that were not identified beforehand from the literature review and state of research on US stereotypes of Russia. The second and third strongest values in this cluster are very weak with only 1.6% each. In these texts, Russia’s goal to weaken the West is mentioned as well as ‘other’ recommendations on how to deal with a situation connected to Russia. The small percentages for the second and third value mean that articles in which the ‘other’ problem frame element was coded have little in common with those articles grouped in the other clusters. It is therefore likely that very few of the other problem articles contained many of the predefined framing categories based on common stereotypes towards Russia.

### **4.3. Results of the Cluster Analysis After the Scandal**

To get the most meaningful results from the cluster analysis of the after the election hacking scandal period, the three after timeframes were merged into one large after time frame consisting of 301 articles. The frame elements which appeared in more than 5% of this large data set were ‘Russia as a (rising) threat’, ‘Russia's military doctrine of disinformation’, ‘Russia's troubled democracy’, ‘Russia's criminal activities’, and ‘Russia is influencing dominant elites abroad’ for the problem elements. When it comes to causal elements, only ‘Russia wants to weaken the



West' made it into the analysis. Likewise, only one element appeared more than 5% in the moral section which was the 'negative' evaluation of Russia's behavior. As a treatment recommendation, a 'harder stance against Russia' was proposed most often and was the only element in this section that was included in the cluster analysis.

Using the elbow method for the after the scandal time frame, the most pronounced angle is at a cluster number of two (appendix 1, chart 9). By using the hierarchical clustering algorithm 'hclust' in R, a dendrogram or cluster tree was formed for this period as well (appendix 1, chart 10). If we look at the corresponding table (appendix 2, table 3) we see the grouping of the frame elements.

Cluster 1 shows that the 'Russia as a threat' element was also very dominant after the scandal. In 55.9% of the total amount of 111 articles in this cluster, Russia was perceived as a threat. Therefore the complete frame in this cluster is named the 'threat' frame. It refers to Russia being an adversary of the United States, as behaving aggressively or of Russia attacking the West through cyber attacks. As a reason for this danger Russia is supposedly posing, 18.9% of articles in cluster 1 mention the country's desire to weaken the West. According to the cluster analysis this reasoning therefore appeared frequently together with the labeling of Russia as a threat. In another 18% of the articles it is stated that Russia's problem is its troubled democracy which shows a tendency to mark Russia as the 'other' concerning democratic values, because it labels the Russian government as authoritarian, autocratic, corrupt or unscrupulous.

There are a lot of variables in this cluster and thus a lot of branches in the clustering tree. Therefore, it cannot be said that moral evaluations and treatment recommendations did not appear in this cluster, even though they do not make up any of the three strongest values. A harder stance against Russia, for example, is recommended as a treatment of the situation in 12.1%. The ‘negative’ moral evaluation of Russia’s behavior appeared in 11.1%.

Cluster 2, which consists of 190 articles, only has two percentage values, the strongest being the problem frame ‘Russia is influencing dominant elites abroad’. This frame is thus named the ‘influence’ frame. Even though this is the strongest element, it appeared in only 9.5% of the amount of articles in this cluster. The problem element ‘Russia’s criminal activities’ appeared in 8.1% which is the only other value in this frame. Compared to cluster 1, cluster 2 is a rather ‘empty’ cluster with very few coded frame elements.

Looking at the results of the quantitative content analysis and the following two cluster analyses, it becomes clear that a large percentage of the frame elements which derived from research on stereotypes against Russia did exist before the hacking scandal as well. However, the clustering showed that after the hacking scandal the framing was a lot more focused on the same stereotypes. While before the scandal one of the strongest frames was the ‘other’ problem frame, alluding to various problems connected to Russia which could not be identified beforehand through the literature review, the after the scandal period almost exclusively focused on the ‘threat’ frame. Hypothesis 3 - that the clustering in the time frame after the scandal shows significant differences compared to the clustering before the scandal - was thus confirmed.

#### **4.4. Limitations of the Research and Outlook**

For this analysis, articles from three leading US newspapers were chosen which are likely to influence other American media outlets in their coverage. However, it would be inaccurate to assume that the results from this study refer to the image of Russia in all of the US news media outlets. For future research on the same event, it would be interesting to enlarge the number of media outlets analyzed and also to compare the news media with other tabloid media as well as media that are only published online.

Further limitations refer to the implementation of the content analysis. The method suggested by Matthes and Kohring of coding Entman's frame elements separately did indeed result in a high reliability. However, since the frames connected to Russia are more abstract than the framing of biotechnology as done in the example work of Matthes and Kohring, the second coder had to be trained on the codebook beforehand.

Due to the nature of the topic of stereotypes, it was impossible to define all the variables before doing the actual analysis which is why an 'other' category had to be added in connection with every frame element category proposed by Entman. On the one hand, it can be deemed a limitation that the content of these 'other' categories was not revealed. On the other hand, the impact of this limitation was not very large on this study, because through the cluster analysis it was still evident that the coverage after the hacking scandal changed significantly. The 'other' category was therefore quite useful in demonstrating that after the hacking scandal, the predefined elements which were connected to deeply rooted stereotypes appeared more frequently and that the 'other' category was used less often.

In addition, coding Entman's framing elements when it comes to stereotypes connected to Russia resulted in a larger amount of problem variables than of causal interpretations, moral evaluations and treatment recommendations. The results of the cluster analysis therefore rarely grouped complete frames in the sense that one frame had all of the four different elements.

Considering the fact that Russian-American relations have been further strained since the election hacking scandal, it would be interesting to perform further studies on the framing of more recent events such as the Salisbury poisoning incident of March 2018 and to compare them to the results of this study. Moreover, a comparison to the coverage of other incidents would be interesting in order to see whether the hacking scandal was perceived as such a threat in the media due to it having had affected the United States directly. In other words, even if the Ukraine crisis, for example, can be seen as a turning point in the US-Russian relationship, it was despite all not an incident happening at home, threatening to affect the outcome of the United States' very own democratic election system.

## **Conclusion**

In the course of this work, it was demonstrated that the media coverage of the New York Times, the New York Post and USA Today after the 2016 election hacking scandal showed an increased framing along predefined categories of stereotypes towards Russia. To build the theoretical foundation for this media analysis, the research field of stereotypes was introduced. Elements of the social cognition approach and the sociological approach were combined to understand stereotypes connected to nation groups. It was stated that they are mostly negative and inaccurate, but they do not have to be since a generalization can still contain some truth. Stereotypes are as prevalent as they are not only because people are ignorant and prejudiced, but also because they are trying to make sense of the world and are willing to take easy, clear simplifications.

It was shown that mass media rely on culturally and otherwise historically rooted information and often serve as a shared source of stereotype information. The theoretical concept of framing proved relevant for understanding how the media places issues within a field of meaning and highlights some aspects more than others. This setting laid out for a certain topic can contain stereotypes, but it does not have to.

Through a brief summary of the history of Russian-American relations it was shown that the relationship between Russia and the United States over the past centuries has been characterized by the easing and tightening of tensions. The hacking scandal was thus put in context and it was demonstrated that the relationship between the United States and Russia worsened in the past 15 years - especially after the Ukraine crisis. The hacking scandal can therefore not be seen as

an isolated event when it comes to its impact on Russian-American relations. Furthermore, this history review provided a deeper understanding of the stereotypes towards Russia described in prominent literature and content analyses of US films and news media.

Based on the theoretical foundation of framing and following the research model proposed by Matthes and Kohring, Robert Entman's framing elements were operationalized in the analysis of 401 newspaper articles. These problem definitions, causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and treatment recommendations were then predefined with the help of the literature review on American stereotypes towards Russia.

The results from the quantitative content analysis showed that some of the stereotypes derived from the literature were also present before the hacking scandal. Hypothesis 1 was therefore confirmed.

The 100 articles analyzed before the scandal and the 301 articles from three time frames after the scandal showed that framing elements existed in all time frames in almost equal amounts. Hypothesis 2 - that the amount of framing elements increased in the sample after the hacking scandal - was not confirmed. This was due to the use of the 'other' category which also registered problems, causes, moral evaluations and recommendations which were not predefined with the help of stereotypes.

By performing two hierarchical cluster analyses in the programming language 'R', the complete frames were revealed which provided more insight into the

differences in types of frames before and after the scandal. Articles were hereby grouped which contained a similar pattern of frame elements. It was demonstrated that after the hacking scandal, the frames used most in the US media were those connected to stereotypes derived from previous literature. Hypothesis 3 - that the clustering in the time frame after the scandal shows significant differences compared to the clustering before the scandal - was thus confirmed.

With regard to the overall research aim - to find out whether the 2016 US election hacking scandal can be seen as a key event in the framing towards Russia by leading US-American newspapers - it can be concluded that the hacking scandal was indeed a key event following McQuail's definition of it being an event that had an 'unusual degree of public resonance and significance in symbolizing some deeper public crisis or anxiety'<sup>187</sup>.

Firstly, the degree of public resonance was confirmed due to the amount of articles which dealt with this topic (appendix 1, chart 4) compared to the prominence of other topics before the scandal which was much lower (appendix 1, chart 3).

Secondly, we can assume that the hacking scandal did indeed bring up underlying fears connected to Russia, because the cluster analysis showed that the US news media coverage after the hacking scandal showed less variance in the frames used to depict Russia and furthermore, those frames were made up of more elements that were previously found in the literature review of US stereotypes about Russia. The most common frame Russia was associated with was the threat frame. Since the hacking scandal Russia is thus increasingly perceived as a threat, a country which

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<sup>187</sup> McQuail, D. (2010). *Op. Cit.* P. 317.

wants to destabilize the West, whose actions are perceived as morally questionable and against which a harder stance should be taken. The 2016 US election hacking scandal therefore served as a sort of spotlight which highlighted the stereotypes Russia was already connected with.



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## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### Charts

Chart 1. Number of Articles From Each Media Outlet

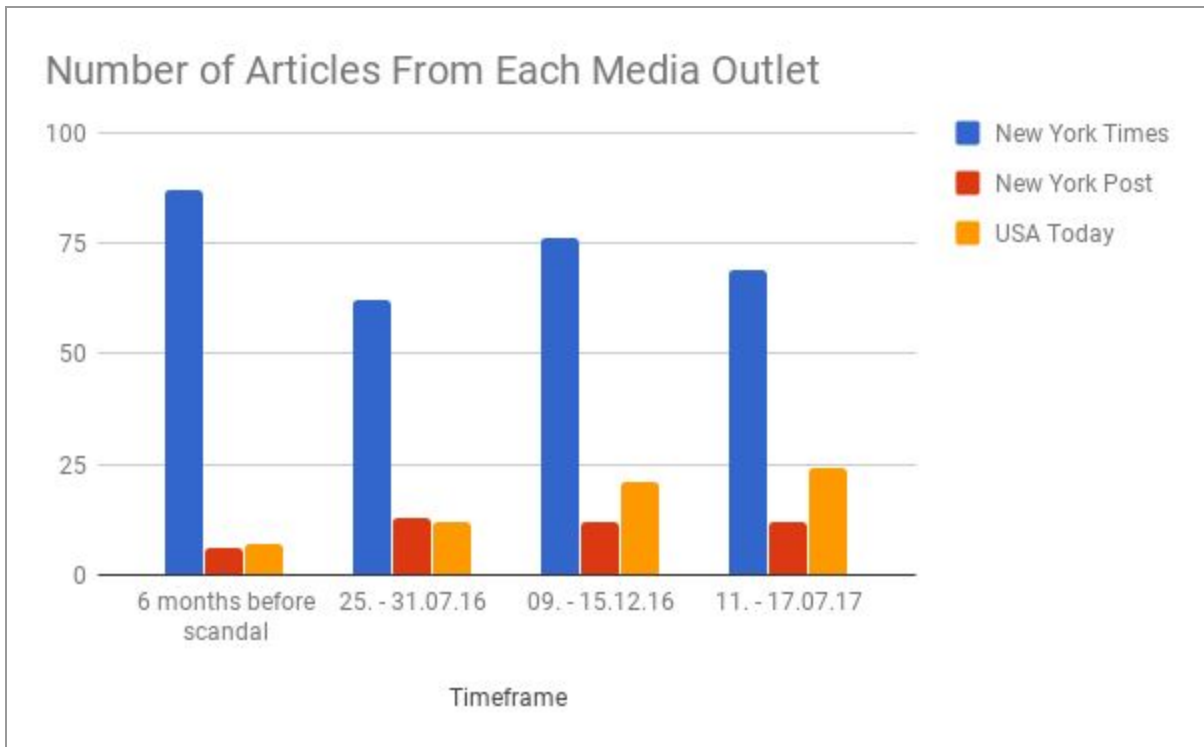


Chart 2. Type of Articles in All Time Frames

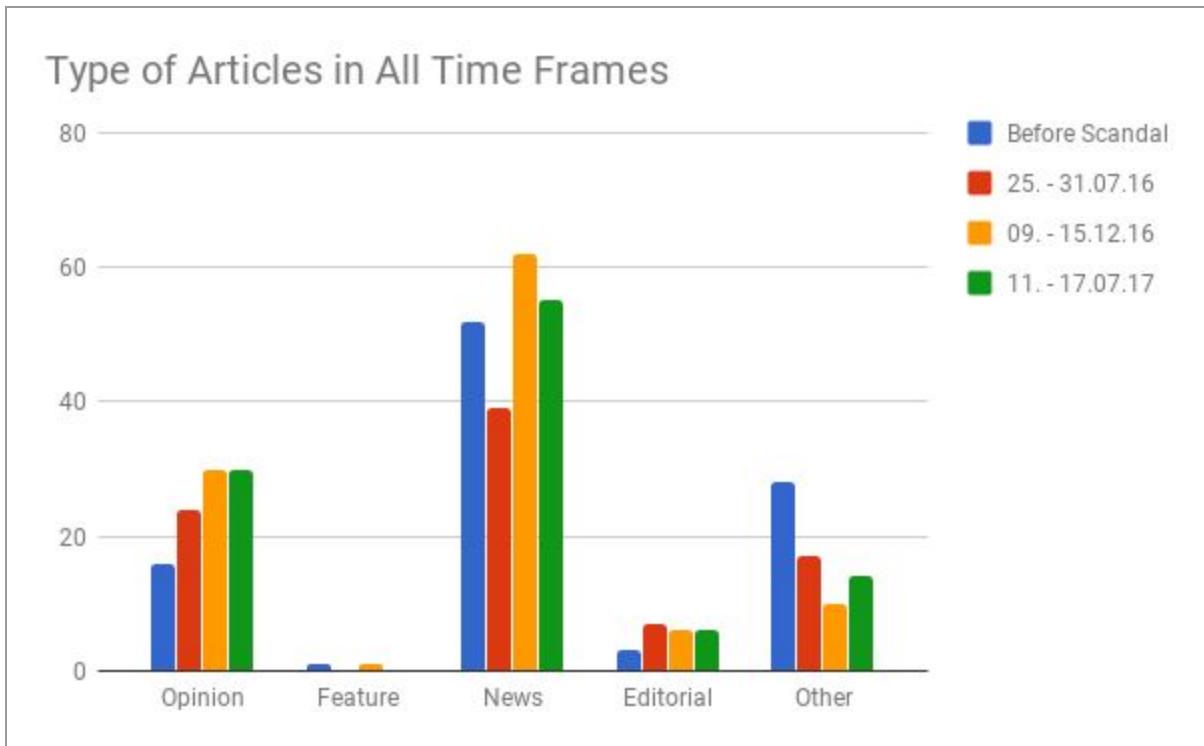


Chart 3. Top 5 General Topics Before the Scandal

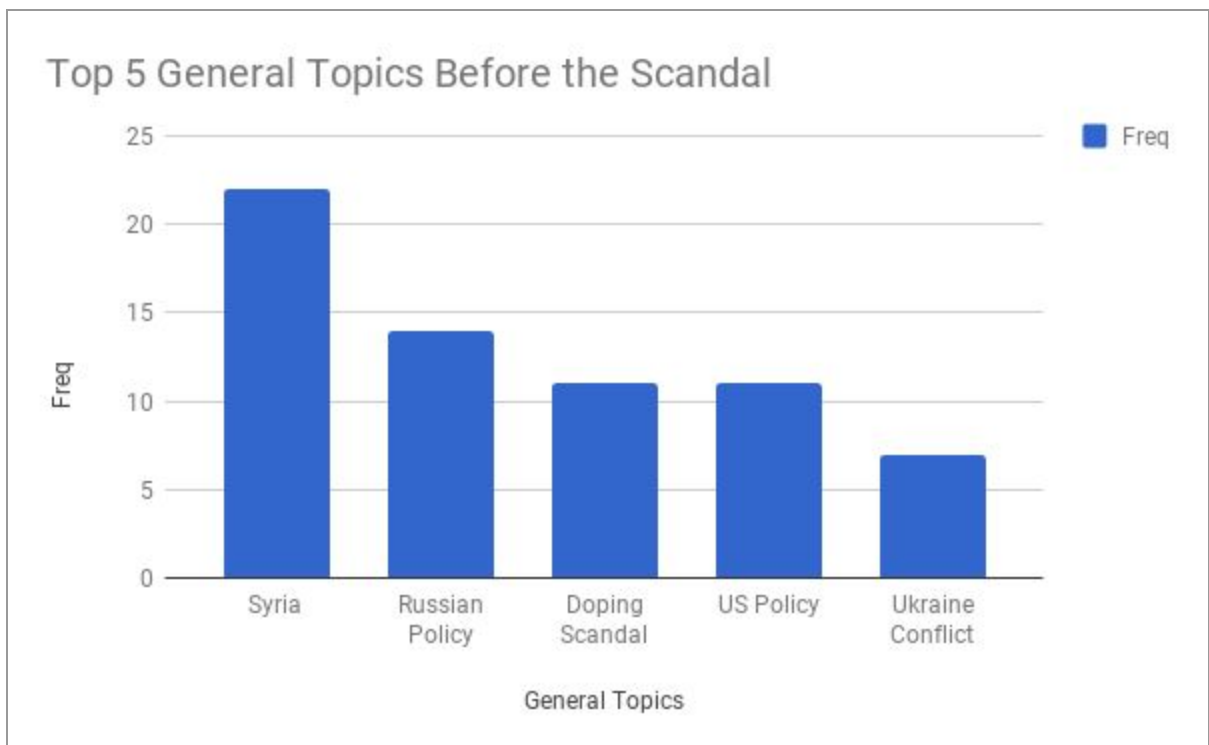


Chart 4. Top 5 General Topics After the Scandal (all 'after' time frames combined)

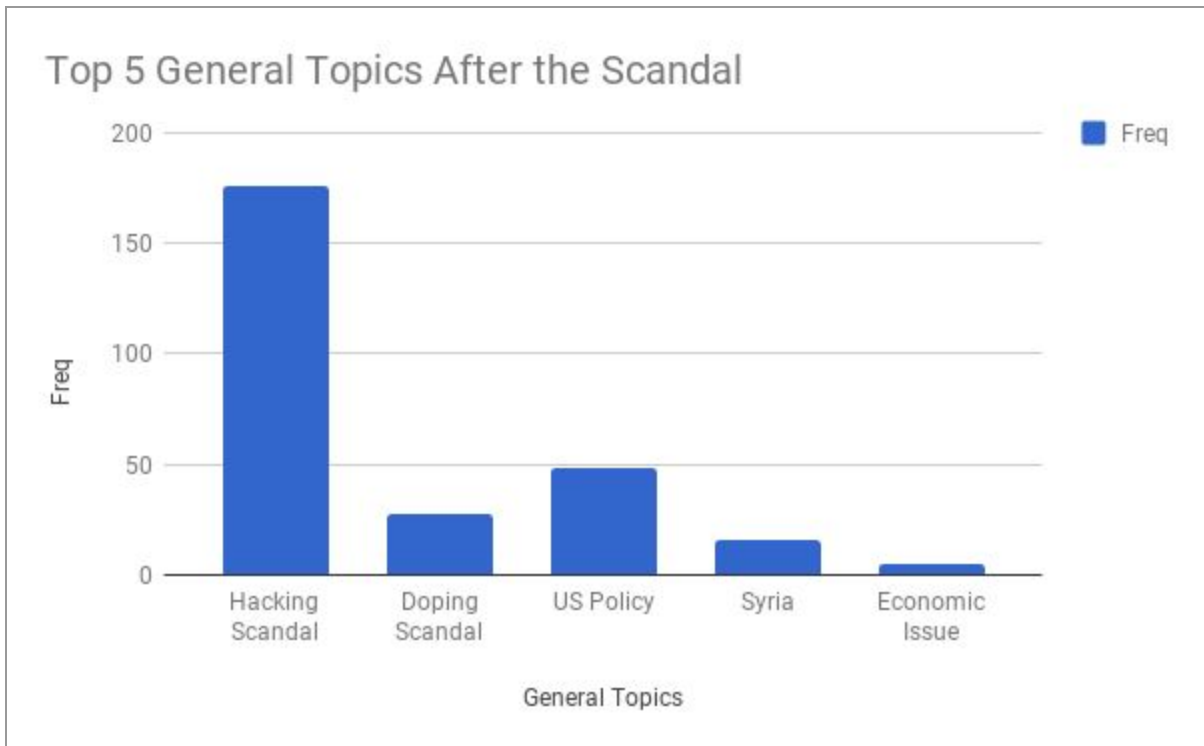


Chart 5. Amount of Framing Elements in All Time Frames

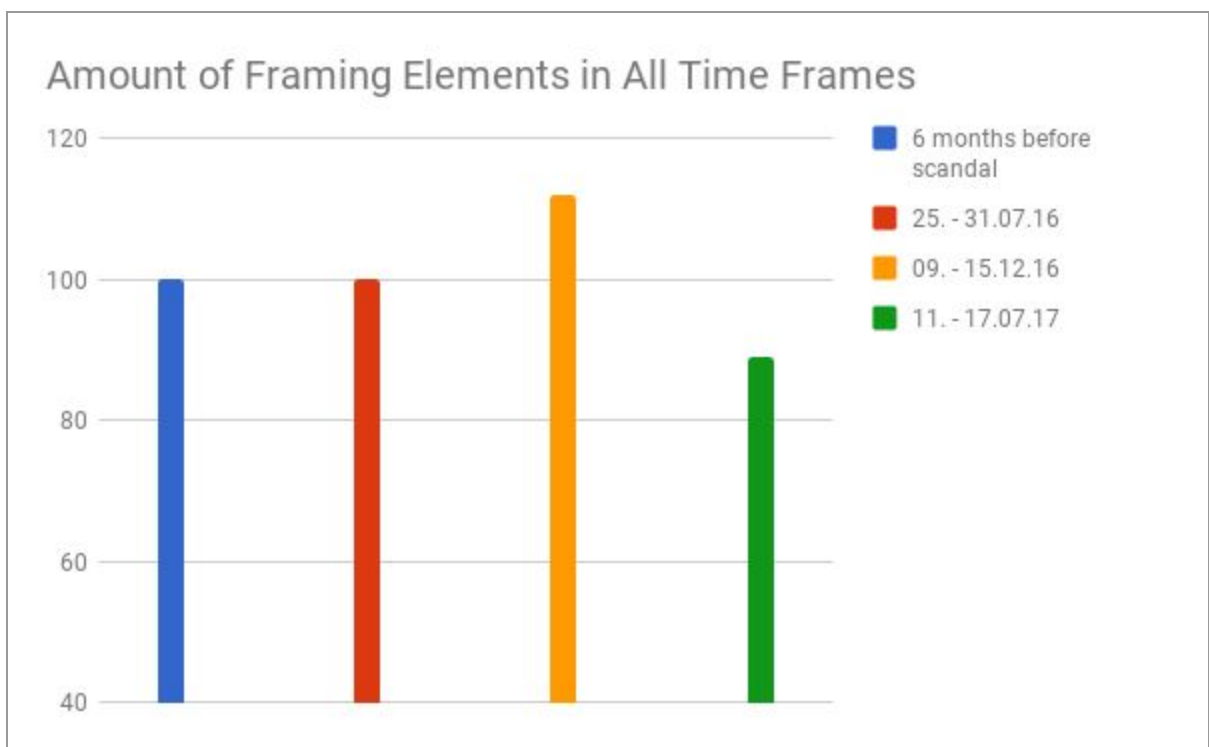




Chart 6. Type of Sources of Frame Elements in All Time Frames

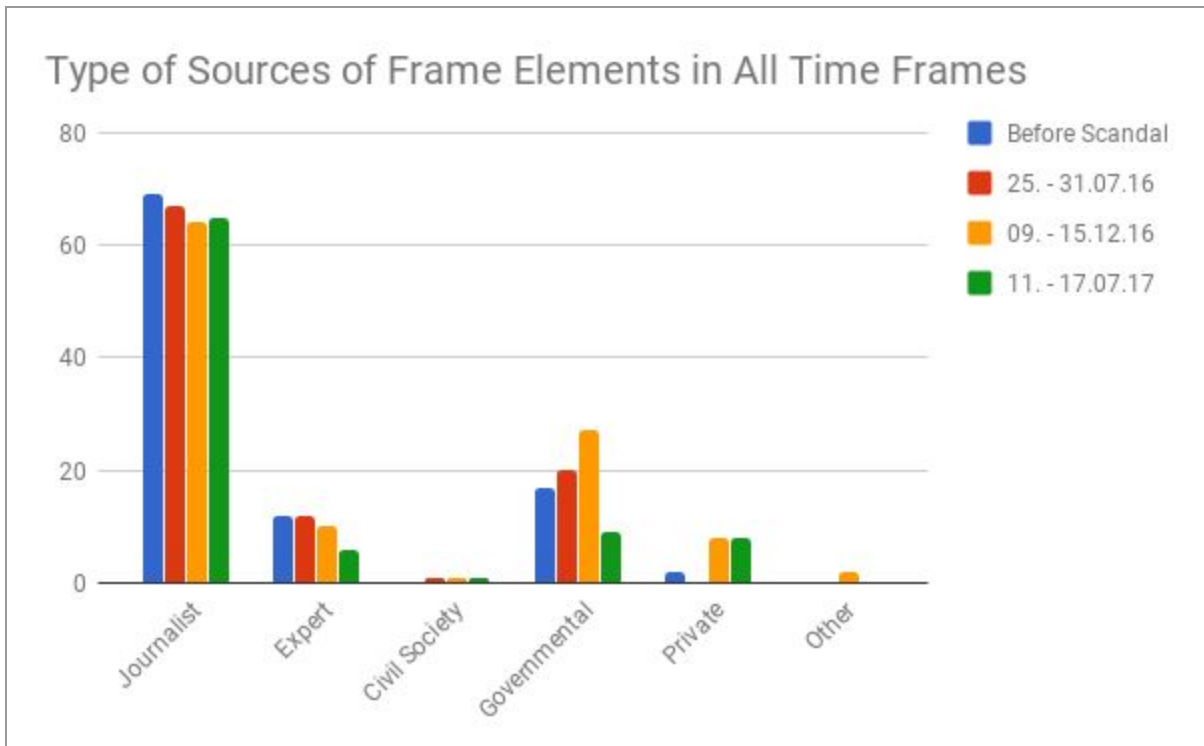


Chart 7. Elbow Method for the Before Scandal Time Frame

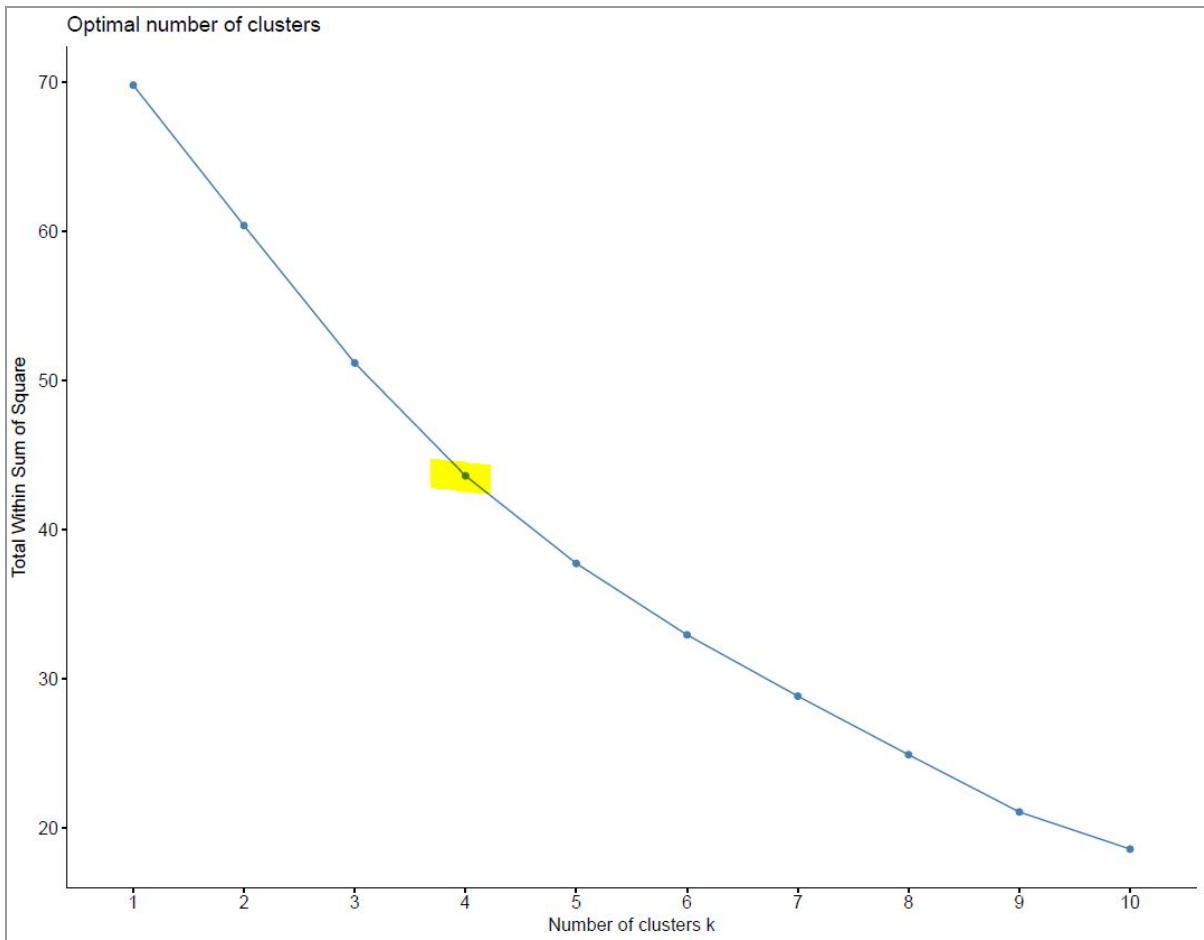


Chart 8. Clustering Tree for the Before Scandal Time Frame

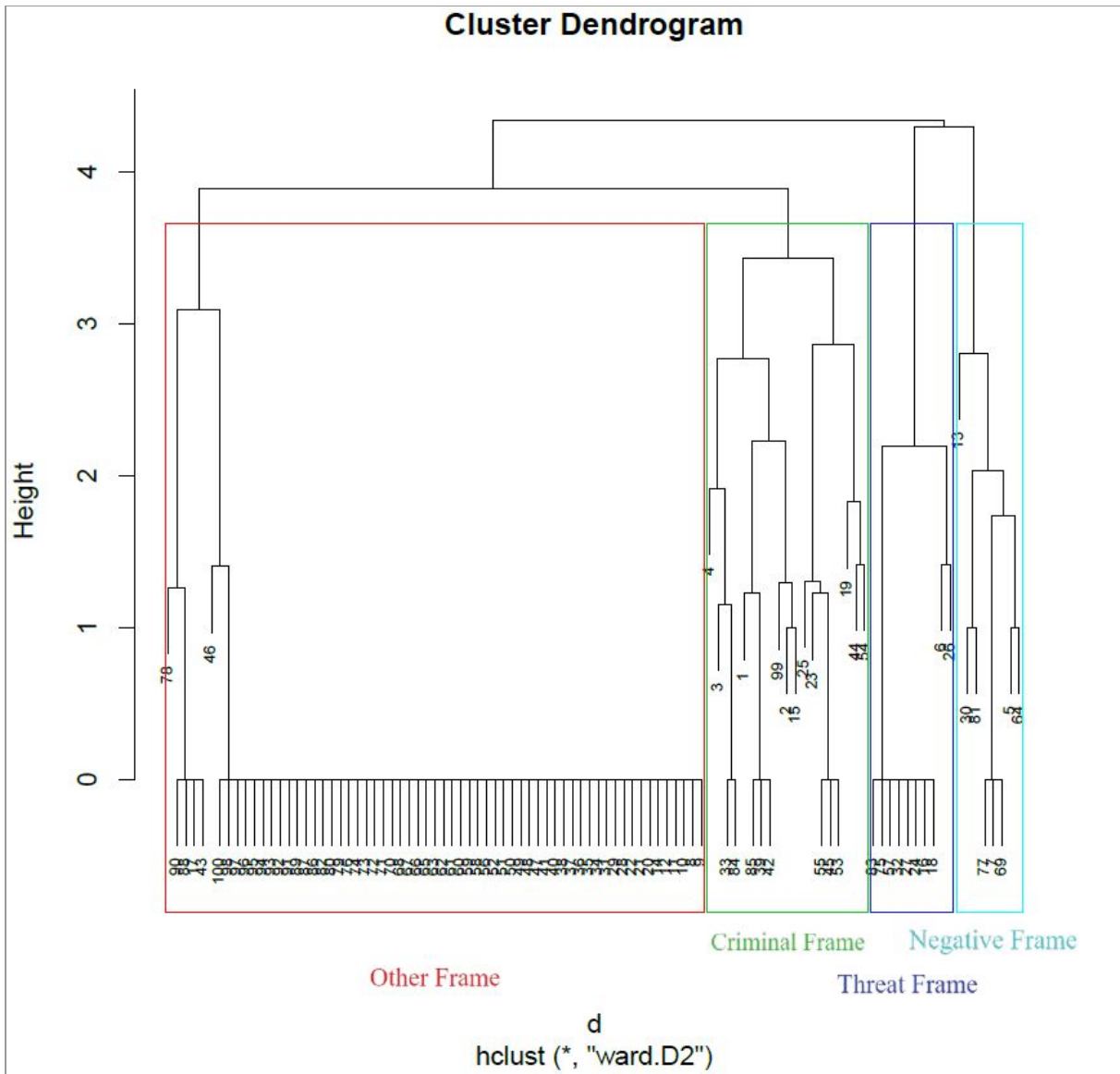


Chart 9. Elbow Method for the After Scandal Time Frame (all 'after' time frames combined)

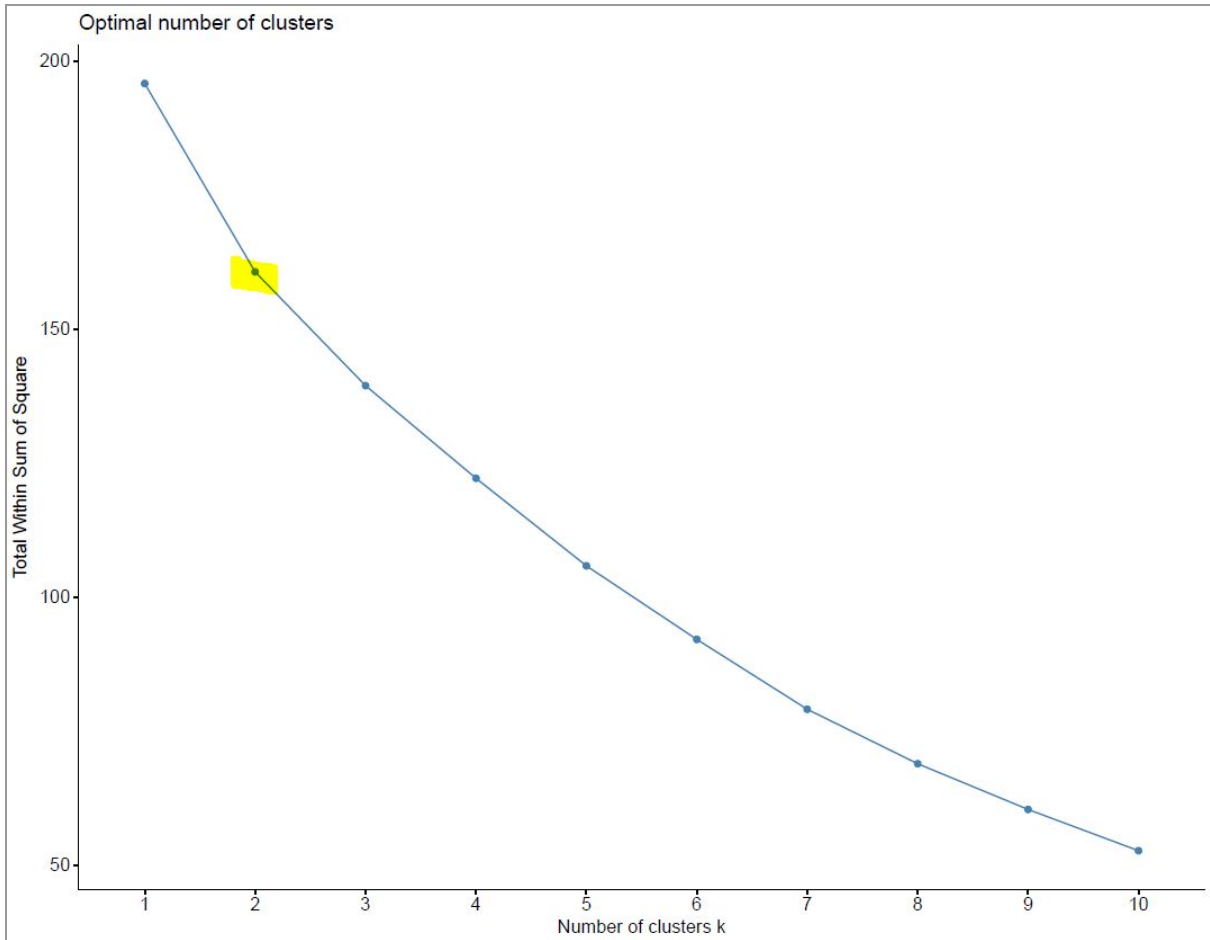
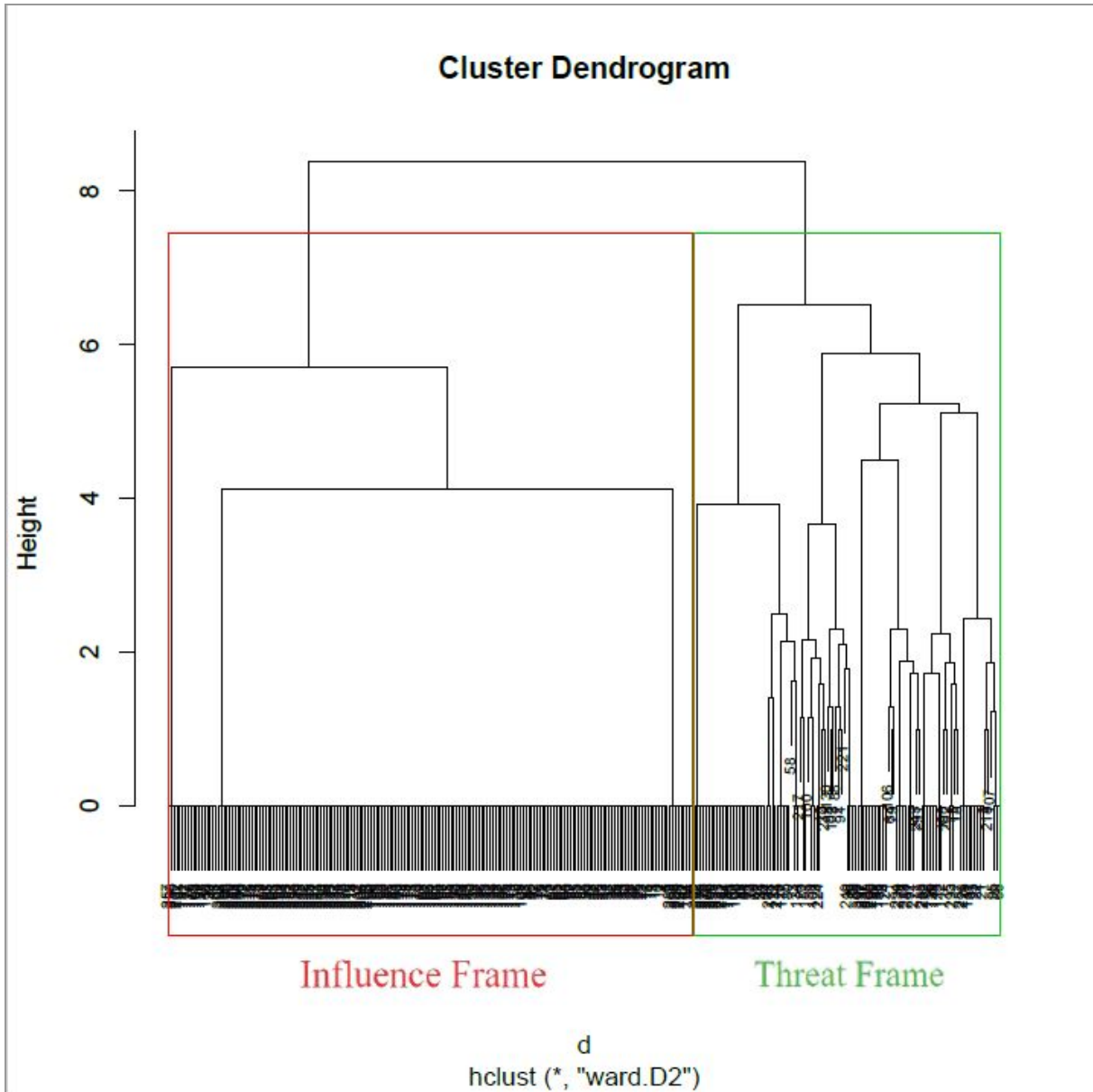


Chart 10. Clustering Tree for the After Scandal Time Frame (all 'after' time frames combined)



## Appendix II

### Tables

Table 1. US Newspapers Listed by Weekday Circulation

<input type="checkbox"/>	Publication Name	Parent Company	City	State	Type	Audit Source	Report Date	Sun/Sat	Wkdy ▲
<input type="checkbox"/>	USA Today	Gannett Company Inc.	Washington	DC	DLY	AAM	12/2016-AR	1,113,840	2,140,525
<input type="checkbox"/>	USA Today-Usa Today Local/Life	Gannett Company Inc.	Washington	DC	AP	AAM	12/2016-AR	2,248,472	1,676,398
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wall Street Journal Eastern Central Western	Dow Jones/A News Corporation Co.	New York	NY	DLY	AAM	09/2017-AR	1,169,402	1,152,553
<input type="checkbox"/>	Newsday-Hometown Shopper	Newsday LLC	Long Island	NY	AP	AAM	09/2016-AR		951,993
<input type="checkbox"/>	Austin American-Statesman-Statesman Tmc/Red Plum	Cox Media Group	Austin	TX	AP	AAM	12/2016-AR		704,300
<input type="checkbox"/>	New York Times	New York Times Company	New York	NY	DLY	AAM	09/2016-AR	1,096,866	694,912
<input type="checkbox"/>	Los Angeles Times	tronc, Inc.	Los Angeles	CA	DLY	AAM	03/2017-AR	792,673	477,778
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chicago Tribune	tronc, Inc.	Chicago	IL	DLY	AAM	03/2016-AR	720,669	476,549
<input type="checkbox"/>	Las Vegas Review-Journal-View	Las Vegas Review-Journal, Inc.	Las Vegas	NV	AP	AAM	06/2016-AR		474,661
<input type="checkbox"/>	Orange County Register-O C Saver	Digital First Media	Santa Ana	CA	AP	AAM	03/2017-AR		469,933
<input type="checkbox"/>	Charlotte Observer-Observers Values Wednesday	McClatchy Company	Charlotte	NC	AP	AAM	12/2016-AR		458,993
<input type="checkbox"/>	New York Post	News Corporation	New York	NY	DLY	AAM	09/2016-AR	387,112	433,606
<input type="checkbox"/>	Atlanta Journal-Constitution-Evening Edge	Cox Media Group	Atlanta	GA	AP	AAM	09/2016-AR		367,428
<input type="checkbox"/>	Washington Post	Nash Holdings, LLC	Washington	DC	DLY	AAM	09/2016-AR	522,055	350,859
<input type="checkbox"/>	Newsday	Newsday LLC	Long Island	NY	DLY	AAM	09/2016-AR	345,925	312,158

Source: Alliance for Audited Media

URL: <https://auditedmedia.com/>

Table 2. Cluster Analysis Results of Before Scandal Time Frame

	1 Criminal Frame N=19	2 Negative Frame N=8	3 Threat Frame N=10	4 Other Problem Frame N=63
C. - Back To Old Strength	26.3%	20%	0%	0%
C. - Weaken US/ NATO/ West/ EU	12.5%	4.8%	25%	1.6%
M. - Negative	20%	42.1%	0%	0%
P. - Other	0%	37.5%	0%	62.5%
P. - Threat	5.3%	10%	52.6%	0%
P. - Troublemaker	37.5%	3.2%	0%	0%
P. - Criminal Activities	80%	0%	0%	0%
P. - Disinformation	7.9%	12.5%	1.6%	0%
P. - Troubled Democracy	36.8%	0%	0%	0%
R. - Other	37.5%	0%	12.5%	1.6%

Table 3. Cluster Analysis Results of After Scandal Time Frame (all 'after' time frames combined)

	1 Threat Frame N=111	2 Influence Frame N=190
C. - Weaken US/ NATO/ West/ EU	18.9%	0%
M. - Negative	11.1%	0%
P. - Threat	55.9%	0%
P. - Influence on Elites	7.9%	9.5%
P. - Criminal Activities	9%	8.1%
P. - Disinformation	11.6%	0%
P. - Troubled Democracy	18%	0%
R. - Harder Stance	12.1%	0%

Table 4. Codebook

Variable	Format
Day	TT, e.g. 24
Month	January=1, February=2, etc.
Year	JJJJ, e.g. 2003
Media outlet	New York Times=1, New York Post=2, or USA Today=3
Type of article	1 = opinion/column/op-ed/letters to the editor 2 = feature 3 = news 4 = editorial (position of the newspaper) 5 = other
General Topics	Inductive
<p>Problem definition</p> <p>→ Which problem(s) is mentioned concerning Russia?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Russia as a (rising) threat (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia's military doctrine of disinformation (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia as a troublemaker (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia has a troubled democracy (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia's criminal activities (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia is influencing dominant elites abroad (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia's actions are leading to a new Cold War (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia's weak economic situation (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Other (yes=1/no=0)</li> </ul>
<p>Causal interpretation</p> <p>→ What is mentioned as a cause for the problems or as reasons for Russia's behavior?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Internal Structures taken from the Soviet Union (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Reaction to American behavior</li> <li>● Desire to get back to old strength (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Weak economic power (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Russia wants to weaken NATO/West/EU/US (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Dominant elites (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Corruption (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>● Other (yes=1/no=0)</li> </ul>
Moral evaluation of Russia's behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Positive (yes=1/no=0)</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neutral (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>• Negative (yes=1/no=0)</li> </ul>
<p>Treatment recommendation</p> <p>→ What is recommended in the articles to respond to Russia's actions or what is advised to the Russian government?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapprochement with the West (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>• Rapprochement with Russia (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>• Harder stance on Russia (yes=1/no=0)</li> <li>• Other (yes=1/no=0)</li> </ul>
<p>Type of Source of Frame Element</p> <p>→ Did the frame element appear as part of something the journalist wrote (1A) or as part of a direct or indirect quote of someone else (1B-F)?</p>	<p>1A= Journalist or Editorial board</p> <p>1B= Expert</p> <p>1C= Civil Society</p> <p>1D= Governmental</p> <p>1E= Private</p> <p>1F= Other Source</p>
<b>Coding Unit</b>	<b>Whole Text</b>