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Russian anti-Americanism, public opinion and the impact of the state-controlled mass media

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Russian anti-Americanism, public opinion and the impact of the state-
controlled mass media

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Natalie Manaeva Rice
December 2015

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To my beloved husband Dean,
Because without his unconditional love, support and encouragement
I would not be where I am now.

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Abstract

From 2011 to 2015, a rise in anti-Americanism was strongly reflected in Russian public opinion during President Vladimir Putin's third term. The study examined the phenomenon of anti-Americanism in Russia and the role of state-controlled mass media in promoting anti-American attitudes. Statistical analysis of polls conducted in Russia by the Pew Research Center in 2012 demonstrated that anti-Americanism in Russian society should not be treated as a monolithic phenomenon. A segment of the Russian populace held a strong and deep-seated anti-American ideological bias that affected its perception of everything related to the United States. Other sentiments, however, fit a more complex structure congruent with Chiozza's dimensions of America theory. These respondents simultaneously held different opinions towards aspects of the United States and its influence. The data indicated that in Russia, at least on the level of the mass public, American soft power did not promote a positive attitude towards the United States. Analysis of polls conducted by the independent Levada Center in Moscow from 2011 to 2015 provided additional insights into the relationship between Russian mass media and anti-Americanism. The rise of anti-Americanism was detected across the audiences of various mass news media. Respondents who preferred different sources of information showed similar patterns in their shifting attitudes towards the United States. Major increases in anti-Americanism among all of the respondents occurred when Putin intensified his anti-western and anti-American rhetoric, and when the Russian mass media launched an aggressive anti-American propaganda campaign.

Preface

“I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key.”

Winston Churchill, 1939.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The morning of January 31, 1990, was cold in Moscow. Regardless, thousands of people gathered outside a small building with golden arches above the entrance (Kushelevich, 2014a). They were waiting for the moment when McDonald's staff, wearing green uniforms, would open the doors and let them, for the first time, step into the world-famous restaurant that had just opened in the Soviet Union. Photos of that event show thousands of Soviet citizens waiting in anticipation. One of the photos pictured a man who had tucked several colorful paper flags with McDonald's arches on them into his traditional Russian fur hat.

For the people waiting that day, McDonald's was more than a diner serving hamburgers and fries. It was the symbol of the West, of the United States, and the American way of life. Mitya Kushelevich, one of the first customers of the fast-food restaurant, described the symbolic meaning of the opening of McDonald's in the Soviet Union:

Everything about this particular branch of the American fast-food giant was iconic for a person born in Soviet Russia. Just as St Petersburg was once considered our 'window to Europe,' this restaurant was our 'window to the world.' Opened on the last day of 1990, the last New Year's eve of the U.S.S.R.'s existence, for a symbolic yearly rent of one ruble, the McDonald's represented the change that we'd all been waiting for.... Everybody wanted to try it, from the janitor to the professor. The queues were long, forming rings around the square like a gargantuan python trying to squeeze the life out of the trees and the fountains within. We didn't know what fast food was. We thought McDonald's was a proper restaurant serving American cuisine; it probably tasted like freedom and we wanted to sample it (Kushelevich, 2014b).

The Soviet people who lined up in long queues were eagerly awaiting more than a Big Mac and their appetite was for more than fries. These Soviets were awaiting the Western free market and the economic prosperity they saw it brought to the U.S. Their appetite was for all things Western.

Twenty five years later, the values and systems once so hungered for now repulse. The appeal of the West has waned, and the love affair with all things Western has ended. The attitudes of the Russian people and the Russian authorities towards the United States and the West have dramatically shifted. In a move that can be interpreted as a symbolic gesture, a number of McDonald's restaurants were shut down by the Russian authorities in the fall of 2014 including the very first location on the Pushkin square. According to Birnbaum (2015), after reopening "McDonald's started an advertising campaign emphasizing its local ties and its 25-year history in Russia, playing down the Golden Arches' global significance as a bright beacon of America." The new McDonald's billboards simply read, "Made in Russia, for Russians."

In recent years, rampant anti-Americanism has consumed Russian society, from the rhetoric of public officials, to hard newscasts, to the attitudes of ordinary people in the streets. According to a survey conducted by the Levada Center (Vasiliev, 2015), an independent Russian polling organization, by the fall of 2015 a majority of Russians believed that U.S.-Russia relations were either "tense" (45%) or "hostile" (29%). A similar survey by Levada showed that almost 80% of the Russian public held negative views toward the United States.

This dramatic rise of anti-Americanism in modern Russia presents a number of fundamental questions. What factors made possible such a dramatic shift of attitudes and opinions? How persistent are the anti-American attitudes, and what are the main aspects of the United States, its soft power and policies that are viewed negatively by the Russian public? What other aspects of public opinion influence anti-Americanism? And finally, what was the role of state-controlled mass media in planting and cultivating this degree of anti-Americanism in Russia in 2015? This dissertation is an attempt to address these questions by conducting an in-depth examination of the seemingly entrenched level of anti-Americanism in Russia.

Growing anti-Americanism is by no means a uniquely Russian matter. Negative sentiments towards the United States steadily rose around much of the globe during the early twenty-first century (Chiozza, 2010). Public opinion polls conducted in a wide range of countries demonstrated rising levels of anti-American attitudes across countries and cultures, even in countries traditionally viewed as allies of the United States (Pew Research Center, 2012). On some occasions, severe anti-Americanism transmitted from mindset and rhetoric into violence and terrorist acts against the United States and its citizens.

There are, however, unique elements and trends of anti-Americanism as examined in the context of Russia, and although not overtly violent possibly more troubling in terms of America's long-term standing on the geopolitical world stage. From 2011 to 2015, tensions and animosity between the two countries were reminiscent of the worst years of the Cold War, with even the extreme example of a state-controlled Russian news outlet ominously threatening to "turn the United States into rubble of radio-active ashes"

(Birnbaum, 2015). Possibly, however, the most bothersome aspect of this rise in anti-Americanism for some observers of international relations was that the hostility of the Kremlin was so strongly reflected by and supported within the general Russian public (Fisher, 2015). Various public opinion polls conducted in Russia showed the negative attitudes of the Russian public towards the United States reached a peak not seen since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Spinella, 2015).

Michael Birnbaum, the *Washington Post* correspondent in Moscow, described the current rise of anti-Americanism in Russia in 2015:

After a year in which furious rhetoric has been pumped across Russian airwaves, anger toward the United States is at its worst since opinion polls began tracking it. From ordinary street vendors all the way up to the Kremlin, a wave of anti-U.S. bile has swept the country, surpassing any time since the Stalin era The indignation peaked after the assassination of Kremlin critic Boris Nemtsov, as conspiracy theories started to swirl — just a few hours after he was killed — that his death was a CIA plot to discredit Russia. There are drives to exchange Western-branded clothing for Russia’s red, blue and white. Efforts to replace Coke with Russian-made soft drinks. Fury over U.S. sanctions. And a passionate, conspiracy-laden fascination with the methods that Washington is supposedly using to foment unrest in Ukraine and Russia” (Birnbaum, 2015).

According to the survey data collected by the Levada Center, in January 2015, 81% of Russians held negative attitudes towards the United States (Levada Center, 2015a). Anti-American attitudes in Russia reached the highest level since the beginning of surveying public opinion surveys in Russia in 1988 (see Figure 1).

Even though public opinion in Russia turned against the United States on several occasions from 1995 to 2015, including spikes during and directly following the U.S. lead NATO military campaign in Serbia in 1999, the Iraq invasion in 2003/2004 and the Russia-

Georgia military conflict of 2008, never had the negative attitudes towards the U.S. reached such intensity.

The number of respondents who said they had a “very negative” opinion about the United States tripled between 2013 and 2015 (see Figure 2). The rising hostility between the two nations also was reflected in the opinion of Americans about Russia. According to Gallup (Jones, 2015) in February 2015 Russia outranked North Korea as a country that Americans consider to be the United States’ greatest enemy today. The abrupt and unexpected negative shift in the relations between two countries was reflected in the dramatic changes in public opinion: as recently as 2012 only 2% of Americans perceived Russia to be primary enemy (see Figure 3).

The sudden and persistent rise of anti-Americanism in Russia puzzled scholars of international relations and decision makers in the United States. Various scholars of anti-Americanism proposed looking for the root of the phenomenon in the reaction of international publics to the actions and policies of the United States in the international arena (Nye, 2002, 2004; Chiozza, 2010).

This logic seems to be grounded both in common sense and in public opinion data. For example, the decision of the Reagan administration in early 1980s to place mid-range tactical nuclear weapons in Western Europe was met with great animosity by the Western European publics (Nye, 2002). In a similar example, the seemingly unilateral actions taken by the United States in the War on Terror in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2003-2005 were extremely unpopular across the globe (Pew Research Center, 2003, 2007).

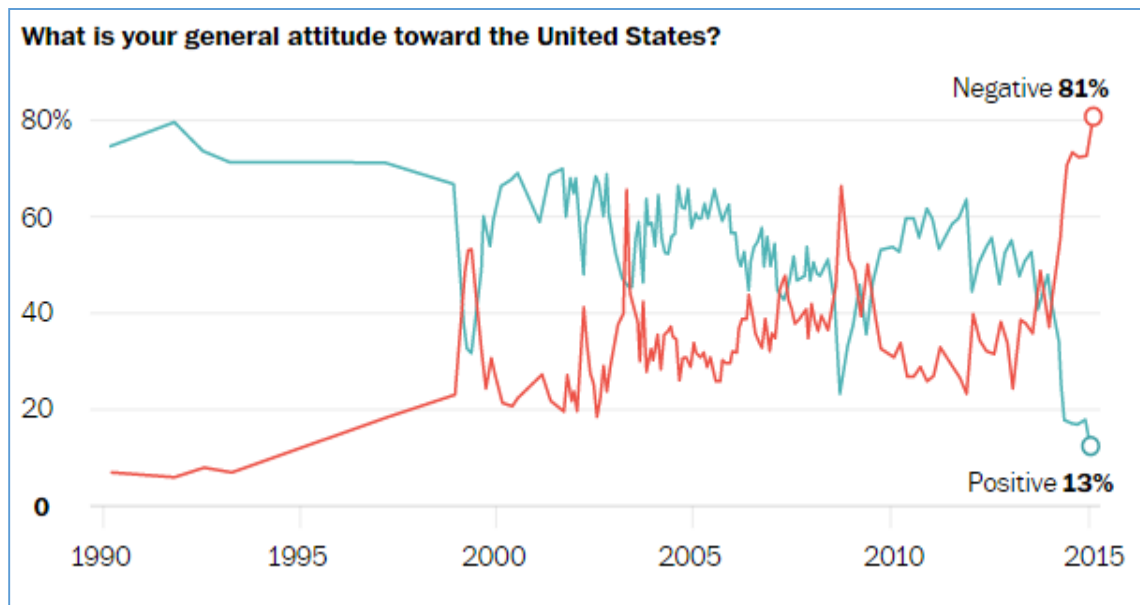


Figure 1. Levada Center. Distribution of answers to question “What is your general attitude toward the United States?” 1990-2015

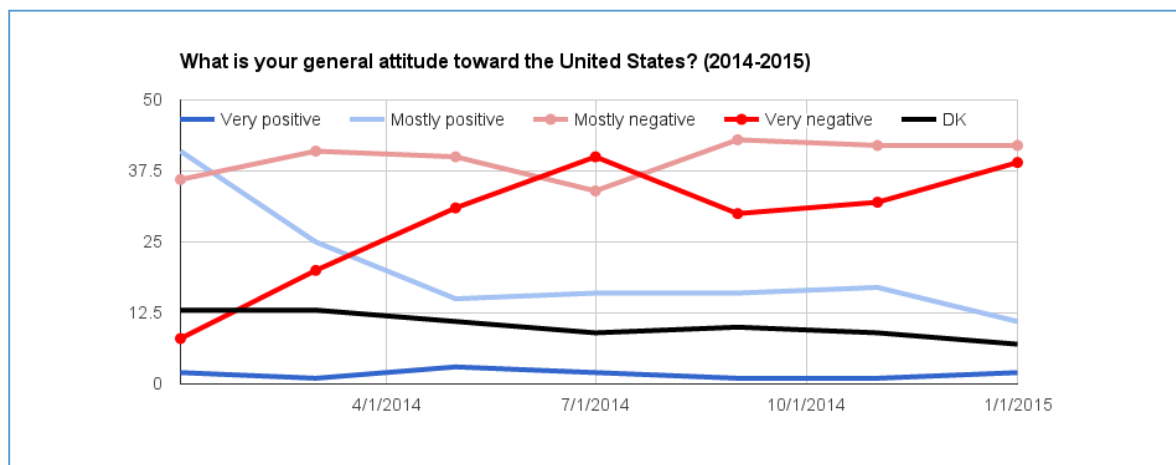


Figure 2. Levada Center. Distribution of answers to question “What is your general attitude toward the United States?” 2013-2015

What one country anywhere in the world do you consider to be the United States' greatest enemy today? [OPEN-ENDED]

Recent trend

	2011	2012	2014	2015
	%	%	%	%
Russia	3	2	9	18
North Korea/Korea (nonspecific)	16	10	16	15
China	16	23	20	12
Iran	25	32	16	9
Iraq	7	5	7	8
Countries in which ISIS operates	--	--	--	4
Middle East (nonspecific)	--	--	2	4
Syria	--	*	3	4
Afghanistan	9	7	5	3
United States itself	2	1	2	2
Japan	*	1	*	1
Saudi Arabia	1	1	1	1
Pakistan	2	2	1	*
Other	9	3	7	7
None/No opinion	10	12	11	13

* Less than 0.5%

GALLUP

Figure 3. Gallup. "What one country anywhere in the world do you consider to be United States' greatest enemy today?" 2011 - 2015

The rise of anti-Americanism in Russia on both levels of mass public opinion and state actions and rhetoric, however, cannot be explained by the same logic. In 2008-2009 relations between the two countries seemed to be cooperative and productive. In 2008, at the beginning of first term of President Barack Obama, his administration announced the “reset” of the relations between the two countries (Remnick, 2014), calling for a “fresh start” with a goal of “engaging the Russian government to pursue foreign policy goals of common interest – win-win outcomes – for the American and Russian people” (White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2009). In 2009, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov symbolically pressed a “reset” button at a widely heralded press conference (Dougherty, 2009). One of the main architects and advocates of the reset policy, Michael McFaul, was appointed U.S. Ambassador to Russia in 2011.

After the initial successes of the reset policy, however, cooperation between the two countries failed, and for reasons unclear to, and unexpected by, the U.S. government (Remnick, 2014). McFaul, who resigned as ambassador after the Olympic Games in Sochi in late 2014, commented on an unprecedented rise of anti-Americanism both in Russian policy and public opinion, calling relations between the United States and Russia as being, “at its lowest point since the post-Soviet period began, in 1991” (Remnick, 2014).

Lev Gudkov, director of the Levada Center, attributed the unprecedented rise of anti-Americanism in Russia to a combination of state-propaganda, strong governmental control over mass media in the country and an anti-American predisposition within the Russian mindset (Vasiliev, 2015). Maria Lipman, a Moscow-based political analyst,

1991	U.S.S.R collapses; Russian Federation is established; U.S. supports Boris Yeltsin
1992	The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction, securing nuclear materials in Russia; Yeltsin's visit to the United States
1993	Constitutional crisis in Russia; U.S. announces \$1.8 billion aid program for former U.S.S.R.
1994	Russia joins Nato's Partnership for Peace; first Chechen war; first joint U.S.-Russian space shuttle mission
1996	Yeltsin reelected, Russia is admitted the G-7 group
1997	Nato-Russia Founding Act
1998	Financial crisis in Russia; launch of the International Space Station
1999	Russia strongly opposes Nato's campaign against Yugoslavia; Putin becomes prime minister
2001	9/11, Putin supports Bush in the war on terror
2002	Bush and Putin sign Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty; the NATO-Russia Council is created
2003	Russia strongly opposes invasion of Iraq
2004	Baltic states join NATO, Russia strongly opposes
2005	Russia blames U.S. for supporting Ukrainian Orange Revolution
2006	Putin hosts G8 summit in St. Petersburg
2008	Russia-Georgia conflict; U.S. blames Russia for initiating violence; increasing public hostility between Russia and U.S.
2009	"Reset" between Russia and the U.S., increasing cooperation
2010	New START treaty signed by Obama and Medvedev
2011	Russia and the U.S. clash over the Syrian war; mass protests in Russia
2012	Putin's reelection; increasing hostility between Russia and the U.S.; foreign agents laws introduced in Russia; U.S. <u>Magnitsky Act</u> ; ban on adoption for Americans
2014	Ukrainian events; Russia's annexation of Crimea; U.S. condemns Russian aggression; conflict in Eastern Ukraine; U.S.-backed sanctions against Russia
2015	Further tension between U.S. and Russia; Russia's involvement in Syria

Figure 4. Timeline of U.S.-Russian relations (Plumer, 2013; Porter, 2008)

explained the success of state-run anti-American propaganda by pointing out pre-existing anti-American and anti-Western sentiments within the Russian public: “What the government knew was that it was very easy to cultivate anti-Western sentiments, and it was easy to consolidate Russian society around this propaganda” (Birnbaum, 2015).

The goal of this dissertation was to conduct an empirical investigation of the phenomenon of anti-Americanism in early 21st century Russia. The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the character, the sources, and the persistence of Russian attitudes towards the United States, with a focus on examining the role that Russian state-controlled media play in shaping and fostering these attitudes. To achieve that goal, this dissertation included an empirical investigation of the specific features of popular perceptions of Russians about the United States, and an examination of various characteristics of the anti-American sentiments and the persistence of such attitudes among different socio-demographic groups within the Russian public.

The study employed various methods of statistical analysis to survey data conducted in Russia by the Pew Research Center in 2012 and the Levada Center in 2011-2015. In addition, the project included an investigation of the possible sources of popular anti-American views among Russians, focusing on the role of state-controlled Russian mass media in promoting and enhancing anti-American attitudes.

The project was guided by the following questions: What aspects, policies, actions, or values associated with the United States are repellent or attractive to the Russian public? Which publics express negative or positive opinion, and what was the common ground for those who express such opinions? What are the sources of such high levels of negativity

towards the United States in Russia, and specifically what role do state-controlled mass media play in fostering those attitudes?

This dissertation employed several theoretical frameworks that were developed in the field of anti-Americanism studies worldwide, including the “Dimensions of America” theory developed by Chiozza (2010), and Nye’s (1990, 2002, 2004) Soft Power theory. Those theories helped explain the phenomenon of Russian anti-Americanism, but also enabled the researcher to empirically test the persistence of attitudinal trends. An in-depth analysis of public opinion polling data covering various aspects of attitudes toward the United States allowed the researcher to examine the content and sources of these shifting attitudes.

Investigation of the role of media in promoting anti-Americanism in Russia was especially important. Previous research showed that Russian state-controlled media, which were engaged in anti-Western and anti-American propaganda campaign, was the primary source of news and was mostly trusted and viewed as objective by the Russian public (Volkov & Goncharov, 2014). Incorporating an analysis of the influence of mass media in promoting and fostering anti-American attitudes enhanced the understanding of the relationship between mass media and public opinion in a country with an authoritarian media system where the state has strong control over editorial policies of mass media and uses the media coverage to foster popular support for its policies. The mass media element of the study is especially important since the role of mass media in promoting anti-American attitudes in other regions of the world has been studied and proved to be significant (Nisbet & Myers, 2011).

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

A number of definitions of anti-Americanism have been proposed by scholars. Most describe anti-Americanism as “some sort of opposition to America” (Chiozza, 2010), but there is little agreement as to what else defines anti-Americanism. As Crockatt (2003) explained, part of the reason for the difficulties producing an all-inclusive definition is because “like all essentially political terms, [anti-Americanism] proves difficult to define once you start peeling back the layers of meaning.”

Chiozza (2010) suggested using a different approach focused on the study of anti-Americanism “as the analysis of the popular sentiment towards the United States” (p. 36). In this approach, which is used in the dissertation, the term “popular” indicates opinions expressing beliefs about the United States as reported through public opinion polls. “Sentiment” implies that the views do not necessarily have to be a part of an encompassing ideology or mindset, but rather reflect the general mood people have towards the U.S. in a given moment.

In order to measure such attitudes, well-designed public opinion polls are the most appropriate tool, since they, according to Verba, “offer the closest approximation to an unbiased representation of the public” (1996, p. 1). In his Dimensions of America theory, Chiozza suggested using Zaller’s (1992) and Alvarez and Brehm’s (2002) theories on mass public opinion as a theoretical framework for studying popular anti-Americanism. Public opinion theory provides an opportunity to analyze public opinion towards the United States as a cluster of issues (the multi-dimensional nature of public attitudes towards the United

States), and allows the researcher to test various theories that are presented in the literature on the nature of anti-American attitudes.

In addition, combining public opinion polls on anti-American attitudes with media use/media credibility data allows for an exploration of the relations between attitudes and media coverage. This approach to investigating the peculiarities of public opinion towards the United States incorporates foreign public's attitudes towards U.S. foreign policy with other dimensions of the United States and was based on the theoretical framework suggested by Chiozza (2010), and the Soft Power Theories conceptualized by Nye (1990, 2002, 2004).

A review of the literature on anti-Americanism brings to light two primary alternative views on the matter. The first can be called anti-Americanism as a syndrome and is represented in the works of such authors as Hollander (1995), Revel (2003) and Reuben and Reuben (2004). In this body of work, anti-Americanism is viewed as a pervasive cultural trait that "both frames the intellectual world view of ordinary people and dictates their basic political attitudes" (Chiozza, 2010). It is seen as a deeply rooted ideological construct that filters all opinion, attitudes and perceptions toward the United States, its policies and its people. As to the sources of anti-Americanism under this theory, scholars suggest explanations ranging from culture to ideology to specific relationships between certain countries and the United States.

In this interpretation of the phenomenon, the foundation of anti-Americanism is not based on the reality of the United States and its foreign policy, but rather on the perception of that reality by foreign publics. As Hollander (1995) explained, "The concept of anti-

Americanism implies more than a critical disposition: it refers to critiques which are less than fully rational and not necessarily well founded. It usually alludes to a predisposition, a free-floating hostility or aversion that feeds on sources besides the discernable shortcomings of the United States” (1995, p. 7).

Dimensions of America theory

According to Chiozza (2010), the second theoretical approach to anti-Americanism views the phenomenon as an open cognitive structure that is the result of the “aggregation of considerations, predispositions and information.” An example of this open cognitive structure approach is the so-called “Dimensions of America” theory (Chiozza, 2010). According to Chiozza, popular anti-Americanism is mostly benign and shallow, and is far from being a prejudice or a deeply-integrated ideological opposition. Analysis of public opinion data from around the globe provided by Pew Research Center demonstrated that particular policy changes and actions by the United States can produce a shift between positive and negative attitudes and create a wave of dissatisfaction with the United States among foreign publics, but the data also shows that those negative trends are context-driven and tend to reverse with time.

Chiozza (2010) acknowledged that “a deep-seated ideological opposition to the United States certainly exists.... But it is usually the aberration of a minority of people in few quarters of the world” (p. 4). This optimistic view, according to Chiozza, is explained by the fact that foreign publics form their opinion of the United States based on more than one aspect of America. Thus, the temporary disappointment some foreign publics may have

due to the actions of the United States (such as, for example, a unilateral foreign policy) seen periodically in the public opinion polls worldwide is balanced by the foreign public's positive views of other things about the United States, such as American popular culture, science and technology, and business initiatives. As Chiozza (2010) explained, the Dimensions of America theory "provides a theoretical account – grounded in a theory of public opinion – of the individual level processes that lead to the articulation of negative opinion of the United States in a specific political and cultural locale" (p. 5).

This approach comes from the theoretical perspective that points to the multi-faceted nature of anti-Americanism. Other examples of this approach include Katzenstein and Keohane's typology of anti-Americanism (2007), and Meunier's (2007), as well as Bow's, Katzenstein's and Santa-Cruz's (2007) attempts to identify types of anti-Americanism world-wide. These studies are similar to the extent that they reject the view that anti-Americanism is a uniform opposition to the United States.

Several studies of anti-Americanism in Russia followed a similar approach to the explanation of the phenomenon. Shlapentokh (2001; 2007, 2011), for example, argued against presenting anti-Americanism in modern Russia as a phenomenon deeply rooted in the Russian mentality. Rather, he suggested that the high levels of anti-American sentiments among Russians were superficial, and stimulated by the anti-American stand of the Russian elites and the resulting state-sponsored propaganda. According to Shlapentokh, "anti-Americanism in Russia, as well as in most other countries, does not come from below, from general populations, but rather from above, from the elites. It is the elite class, through

its ability to control and manipulate the media, education and literature, that has the power to either foster or stifle xenophobia” (Shlapentokh, 2001, p. 878).

Cole (2006) attributed the global rise of anti-American sentiments not to the intrinsic anti-American biases of the foreign publics, but to American actions in the international arena. Unilateral actions of the United States in foreign affairs, according to Cole, fuel global anti-Americanism.

The Dimensions of America theory provided both the overarching theoretical framework and methodology to examine the popular anti-Americanism in Russia. This theory, together with Nye’s Soft Power theory (1990, 2004), guided an empirical investigation of the phenomenon of anti-Americanism in modern Russia, with the focus on the dimensions of Anti-Americanism in Russia, profiles of anti-American opinion, and the role of mass media in shaping public attitudes and opinions about the U.S.

In order to conduct an in-depth analysis of the attitudes of the Russian public towards the United States, it is imperative to go beyond simply summarizing the positive or negative attitudes. Questions must be considered beyond those of the survey. What was it about the United States that made 81% of the Russian public in 2015 express negative attitudes towards the country? What was it about the behavior, culture or values of the United States that repelled the Russian public? And, on the other hand, what were the dimensions of the United States that even in the hostile environment that existed between the two countries still looked appealing to the Russian public?

Soft power thesis

The concept of soft power was developed in the early 1990s by Nye (1990, 2004), a theorist of international relations and a U.S. diplomat. He defined power as the ability to get outcomes one wants, or more specifically the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the desired outcome. In a geopolitical context, a country's power rests in its ability to make others act in accordance with its preferences. This power comes from two sources: hard power (military and economic might), and soft power (getting other countries and groups to want to achieve the same outcomes through other means). Thus, Nye defined soft power as the ability to get the desired outcome through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideas and policies, and rests in its ability to influence preferences of others. Assets such as attractive values, culture, institutions and policies make a country's foreign policy seem more legitimate, and carrying moral authority. As Nye stated, if a leader represents values that others want to follow, it will cost less to lead.

The soft power of a country rests primarily of three resources: its culture (aspects attractive to others), its political values (what the country lives up to at home and abroad) and its foreign policy (when it is seen as legitimate and having moral authority). Various sources help produce soft power, such as governmental policies at home and abroad. Some of those sources are outside governmental control, such as popular culture and various non-governmental organizations that act independently. The attractiveness of the culture, values and the institutions of the United States, according to Nye, enhances the ability of the

United States to shape preferences of foreign publics and helps lower the level of negative attitudes towards the U.S.

According to Nye, the United States has a deep reservoir of soft power, which enhances its ability for leadership. Testing of the soft power thesis on global public opinion polling data by Chiozza (2010) has been partially supported empirically. Indeed, there were various traits of the U.S. that foreign publics admire across the globe: American popular culture, business practices, technological achievements, and basic democratic values were perceived positively by majority of foreign publics. However, Chiozza stated that on the micro level, where popular attitudes about the United States are formed, “soft power is hardly a fungible political resource. Approval of U.S. cultural norms and values does not necessarily ameliorate popular views about U.S. diplomatic and international behavior” (p. 5).

This dissertation was designed to put both the Dimensions of American theory and the Soft Power theory to the test by conducting statistical analysis of the Pew Global Attitudes survey that was conducted in Russia in 2012. The following set of questions focused on respondents’ attitudes towards various aspects of the United States were used in the statistical analysis:

- Attitudes towards the U.S;
- Attitudes towards the American people;
- Attitudes towards U.S. democracy;
- Attitudes towards U.S. businesses practices;
- Attitudes towards American popular culture;

- Attitudes towards U.S. science and technology;
- Attitudes towards the spread of U.S. customs in Russia

The detailed description of the Pew survey, as well as descriptions and explanations of the statistical methods of analysis are provided in the Results chapter of this dissertation.

Profiles of anti-American opinion in Russia

In order to investigate and understand the peculiarities of the anti-American sentiments in Russia, it is important to analyze the individual profiles of two groups of respondents: the groups that we can call “anti-American,” i.e. those that express overall negative views about the United States, and the “pro-Americans,” those who express favorable opinion about the United States. Looking into individual characteristics of respondents, according to Chiozza, “allow[s] to show how anti-American sentiments are anchored in specific personal and political contexts” (2010, p. 6).

In Chiozza’s (2010) research on popular anti-Americanism world-wide, none of the specific factors gained pre-eminence at the aggregate levels, and no single overarching demographic or attitudinal factor influencing the respondents position about the United States was found. This research project incorporated data analysis that allowed the identification of socio-demographic factors and attitudes towards foreign and domestic affairs that were associated with pro- or anti-American views.

Taking into consideration a tendency among some experts and academics to assume that Russian anti-Americanism is nothing more than a continuation of the old Soviet anti-

American mentality, it was especially interesting to test the relationship between age and the attitudes towards the United States.

The methodology of the data analysis was partly based on Chiozza's (2010) research on global anti-Americanism, but incorporated additional methods of statistical analysis. In order to investigate peculiarities of public attitudes held by the Russian public towards various aspects of the United States, this analysis incorporated various statistical methods aimed at detecting structural patterns and evaluating relationships between variables. The statistical methods included factor analysis, regression modeling, and cluster analysis, and use of descriptive statistics.

Sources of Anti-Americanism in Russia: the influence of mass media

In the introduction to his Dimensions of America theory, Chiozza (2010) stressed that popular views about the United States are a combination of considerations, predispositions and information available to the foreign publics. Based on Zaller's (1992) theory of public opinion, this approach interprets anti-Americanism as a "mental construct and a result of aggregation of considerations, cues, bits of information, [and] emotions" (Chiozza, 2010, p. 37).

Both definitions stressed that the foreign publics are formulating their opinion about the United States based on the information immediately available to them, in other words on the bits and pieces of knowledge and interpretations they have stored in their minds. Previous research on public opinion, foreign policy and mass media demonstrated that the general public usually gets its information about foreign affairs from mass media (Entman,

2003, 2004, 2008). Thus, various elite groups who have an influence on how mass media outlets cover foreign issues have an influence on the popular views about those issues.

The relationship between public opinion on foreign policy, mass media coverage and elites was well explained by Entman's Cascading Activation Model, an attempt, on a theoretical level, to connect policy, mass media and public opinion in a single model. The original framework was developed by Entman to explain the spread and dominance of different framings of U.S. foreign policy in American media. In the book "Projections of Power" (2004), Entman conceptualized the model to explain how "framing fighting" was conducted between various actors and levels, and who was likely to win the battle of framing and why, based on various examples from American foreign policy, domestic media coverage and public opinion.

Entman's model consisted of a hierarchy of networks through which mental associations on foreign policy activate and spread. It traced the diffusion of frames from the U.S. president through networks of elites outside of the administration who also serve as media sources. Next, he looked at the diffusion of frames as they moved through the networks of journalists and media organizations, both within and across them. Then to the textual and visual network of connected and repeated keywords, themes and visual images. And, finally, to the network of associations activated within audiences. The model was not strictly a top-bottom approach, since it took into consideration how self-reinforcing feedback from all levels frequently influenced framing. It also included four factors that influence the success of framing, including motivations of various actors and cultural congruence, elite power and elite strategy.

As Entman described it, in framing foreign policy in the United States the White House is usually the most powerful player. Whatever the U.S. president does or says becomes news instantly. Journalists look to the White House as a major (and sometimes the most influential) source of news on foreign policy. The presidential press corps makes it less important to seek attention of the media, since both official and off-the-record messages from the White House are valued by the news media. According to Entman, White House framing efforts will be effective in manipulating both media coverage and public opinion if the framing corresponds to widely spread pre-existing schemata. Entman listed several examples from U.S. foreign policy, such as the shooting down of the Korean airplane by the Soviets in 1983 and the decision of the Bush Administration to engage in a military operation in Afghanistan after 9/11, as events where the framing by the White House was successful because it corresponded so well with pre-existing schemas in the minds of both journalists and the American public.

Due to the nature of foreign affairs and international events (that the general public is not directly engaged in or closely following various policy implementation), the influence of the elites on the framing of foreign affairs issues in popular opinion is strong, even in countries where mass media enjoy a far greater degree of freedom and autonomy than their Russian counterparts. In Russia, where most popular mass media outlets are under state control, the authorities have the upper hand in framing political issues for the general public.

As discussed in details in the chapter on the Russian political-media system, the media landscape in Russian in 2015 was heavily dominated by the state-controlled media

outlets. As the Freedom House Freedom of the Press 2014 report indicated, the Russian authorities set the editorial policies for the broadcasting outlets and the majority of print outlets, and used the state-controlled mass media outlets as vehicles for propaganda:

The government sets editorial policy at state-run television stations, which dominate the media sector. The country's more than 400 daily newspapers offer content for a wide range of interests but rarely challenge the Kremlin line on important issues such as corruption or ongoing tensions in the North Caucasus. Meaningful political debate is mostly limited to weekly magazines, news websites, some radio programs, and a handful of newspapers such as *Novaya Gazeta* or *Vedomosti*, all of which are aimed at urban, educated, and relatively well-off Russians. Although these independent outlets are tolerated to some extent, the main national news agenda is firmly controlled by the Kremlin (Freedom House, 2014).

The Reporters Without Borders report placed Russia near the bottom of its 2015 World Press Freedom Index, positioning it at #152 out of 180 countries. The Index outlines the extent of governmental control over mass media content in Russia: “[In 2014] While Russia’s leading TV channels continue to inundate viewers with propaganda, the Ukrainian crisis led to an increase in pressure on independent media, with a string of draconian laws, website blocking and leading independent news outlets either being brought under control or throttled out of existence. The climate has become very oppressive for those who question the new patriotic and neo-conservative discourse...” (Reporters Without Borders, 2015).

Kratasyuk (2006) noted additional distinctive features of the Russian media landscape, (i.e. the popularity and role of television). She stated that television in Russian had an “integral, out-look forming role... vital for community” (Kratasyuk, 2006, p. 34). She also argued that in the context of the high degree of social uncertainty that Russian society was experiencing after the collapse of the Soviet Union, broadcast media play an

integral role in the construction of society and nation-building, creating national identity and transmitting meanings and interpretations imposed by dominant elites. During the Putin era, according to Kratasyuk, the state-run mass media were actively working on the recreation of a pan-Russian identity centered in the idea of a single strong state:

Television is used in order to search for and construct the values ‘that unite all’. It is a ‘monolithic’ system of historical norms and political preferences, sanctioned by the state.... The absence of public opinion shaping mechanisms, combined with an acutely felt desire for self-identification, for the creation of an ‘image of Russia’ (i.e. search for identity) leads to the development, whereby simultaneous watching of TV programmers becomes, for the majority of Russians, the only mechanism holding society together (Kratasyuk, 2006, p. 37-38).

Kratasyuk argued that experience with the “monolithic” and homogeneous Soviet mass media, with all its ideological zeal, has made the Russian audience omnivorous and manipulable. In addition, she described the “primitive” and “simplistic” means of influencing the audience that are used by state-run television networks in Russia, and explained the use of such techniques by the media via Soviet-inherited traditions and mentality. She postulated there is a tendency among Russian journalists and editors (as there is among all people) to follow previously established patterns of behavior within their profession. These legacy patterns, established under the Soviet system, Kratasyuk argued, continue to frame the approach to journalism in post-Soviet Russia.

In addition, the public follows its own set of previously established patterns (i.e. high degree of trust for information presented by the media and official sources even if it does not correspond with their own life experience). Kratasyuk argued that the use of crude propaganda by the state-run TV channels can be explained by the combination of a low-level of critical thinking within the audience, the public’s desire to get simple and

understandable messages from mass media and by the role of state-run mass media in the creation of a national identity built around the notion of a strong state.

Various studies and reports focused on the content of news relating to the United States in state-controlled mass media demonstrated the rise of the anti-American coverage by the state-controlled mass media outlets. Led Guvkov, the director of the Levada Center, told the *Washington Post* in an interview: “This [state-controlled mass media] anti-Western propaganda radically changed the atmosphere in the society (Birnbbaum, 2015).”

According to the Levada Center, 93% of respondents in a nation-wide representative poll in 2014 said that television news was their number one source of domestic and foreign news (Volkov & Goncharov, 2014).

According to the same survey, almost half of all Russians used only one information source, and 85% watched only television. Television news broadcasts that the surveyed Russians watched were primarily from three state-controlled channels: “1st”, “Russia-1” and “NTV”. The combined audience of the relatively independent TV stations, such as “Ren-TV”, Euronews and “TVRain” did not exceed 17-18% (Volkov & Goncharov, 2014).

Most Russians trusted television, according to the March 2014 Levada report on media consumption. Not everyone who watched television news believed in ITS objectivity, but around 50% nationwide and 65% of respondents in Moscow trusted it

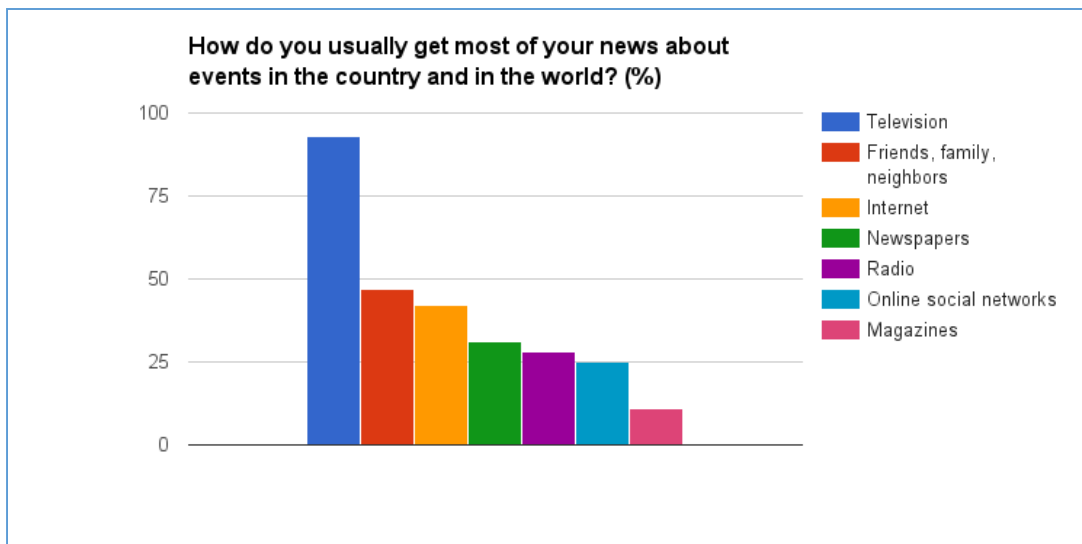


Figure 5. Levada Center. Distribution of answers to the question “How do you usually get most of your news about events in the country and in the world?” March 2014

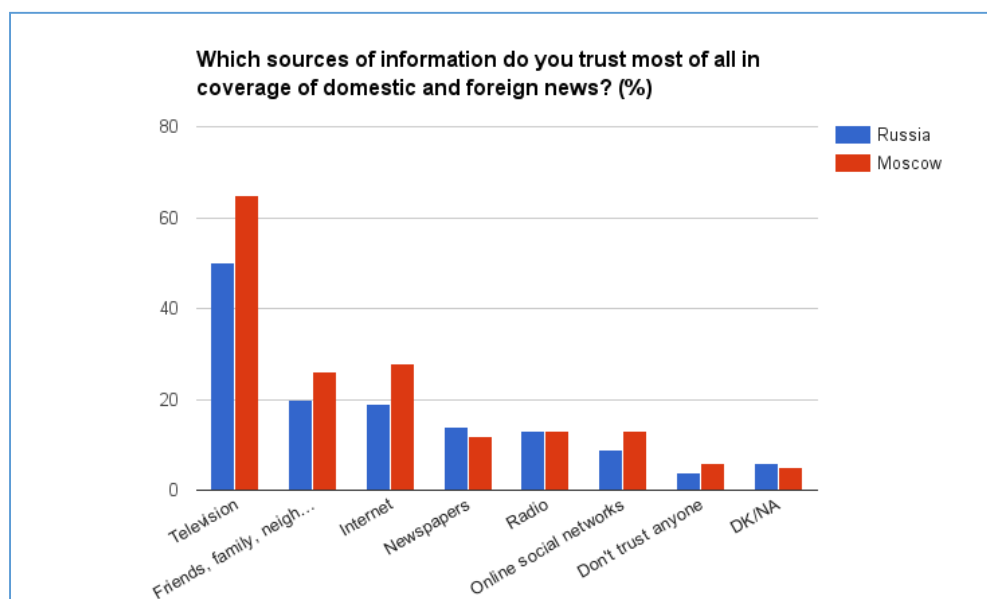


Figure 6. Levada Center. Distribution of answers to the question “Which sources of information do you trust most of all in coverage of domestic and foreign news?” March 2014

2014

nonetheless. Doubts about the objectivity of the television news, according to Levada, did not affect the consumption: it was still the main source of information for those who trusted TV (for 92% in this group), and for those who did not trust it (88% respectively).

Hypothesis

As stated above, state-run mass media outlets in Russia are under complete governmental control, and state-controlled television channels are the main source of information for the majority of Russians. Based on this information, this dissertation tested the following set of hypotheses about the relations between media use/trust and attitudes towards the United States:

Hypothesis 1A: “Use of state-controlled mass media outlets as the primary source of news among the Russian public was associated with higher levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.”

Hypothesis 1B: “Use of independent mass media outlets as the primary source of news among the Russian public was associated with lower levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.”

Hypothesis 2: “Use of television as a primary source of news among the Russian public was associated with higher levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.”

Hypothesis 3: “Trust for mass media outlets in their coverage of domestic and foreign news was associated with the higher levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.”

These hypotheses were tested with data provided by the Levada Center based on the following questions that have been repeatedly included into Levada surveys in Russia in 2011-2015:

- What is your main news source about the events in the country? (The answers included Russian state-controlled TV stations, Russian independent TV stations, Internet, foreign news sources, Russian state-controlled newspapers, Russian independent newspapers, radio, friends/family/colleagues)
- What is your general attitude toward the United States? (The answers include very positive, mostly positive, mostly negative and very negative)
- To what extent do you trust mass media? (Trust completely, mostly trust, mostly distrust, distrust completely).

Data sources: Pew and Levada datasets

Unfortunately, a single and all-inclusive database of public opinion polls conducted in Russia in 2011-2015 that would include all the questions needed for a comprehensive examination of popular attitudes towards the United States did not exist.

Instead, this research incorporated data analysis using two separate sources of public opinion polls from the Pew Research Center and the Levada Center (Russia). The author believes that despite the lack of an all-inclusive dataset, the data available provided ample insight into the topic of in this dissertation.

The Pew Research Center, a non-partisan think-tank based in Washington, D.C., annually conducts a series of international public opinion polls as a part of the “Pew Global

Attitudes Project” (Pew Research Center, 2012). The surveys have been conducted on a regular basis since 2002, and are administered in a number of countries, including Russia. Access to the yearly database is free and open to public, and the SPSS files are available for download from the Pew Research Center website. The database includes a variety of questions, as well as, detailed demographic information.

The dataset from the 2012 survey wave was chosen for analysis because it was the only recent survey that allows comparison with research conducted by Chiozza (2010). Both Pew surveys included a number of questions on the different aspects of public attitudes towards the U.S., its foreign policy, actions, culture, and other aspects.

Even though public opinion polls showed that the peak of anti-American attitudes in Russia was reached in 2013-2014 (see Levada data presented in the introduction), multi-faceted and in-depth analysis of anti-American attitudes in Russia in 2012 allowed for an investigation of the preconditions within public mass opinion that led to an explosion of negativity towards the United States.

The Pew Research Center’s report “Russians Back Protests, Political Freedoms And Putin, Too” provided details on the methodology used in the survey conducted in Russia in 2012:

The survey in Russia is part of the larger Spring 2012 Pew Global Attitudes survey conducted in 21 countries under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International.

Results for the survey in Russia are based on 1,000 face-to-face interviews conducted March 19 to April 4, 2012. The survey is representative of the country’s adult population. It uses a multi-stage cluster sample stratified by Russia’s eight regions and proportional to population size, excluding a few remote areas in the northern and eastern parts of the country and Chechnya. All interviews were conducted in Russian.

The margin of sampling error is ± 3.6 percentage points. For the results based on the full sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus the margin of error. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls (Pew, 2012).

The Levada Center, headquartered in Moscow, is one of Russia's largest and oldest independent research centers. The Levada Center has been monitoring public opinion in Russia on a number of topics since 1988. The Center regularly conducts nationwide non-state funded representative surveys and publishes the surveys on its website. Survey results from the Levada Center are the most longitudinal study of Russian public opinion about the United States, covering the past 27 years.

The details of the survey methodology used by the Levada Center can be found on its website. Apart from monitoring changes in the attitudes towards the United States, the Levada Center, throughout the years, has asked the Russian public a number of other questions related to the U.S. image, leadership and policies, as well as questions about relations between the two countries. In addition to the data on attitudes towards the United States, other questions included in Levada surveys were used in this dissertation, specifically questions on mass media use, mass media credibility and the socio-demographic information about the respondents.

The author has a professional relationship with the Levada Center staff through her long-term work for the Independent Institute for Socio-Economic and Political Studies (Minsk, Belarus). Researchers from the Levada Center agreed to provide survey data for this dissertation. This data analysis allowed for testing of hypothesis about relations

between exposure and trust of state-controlled mass media and rising anti-Americanism in Russia.

Due to ownership of the database the researcher was unable to work with the data personally, but used the cross-tabs that were provided by researchers from the Levada Center. Lack of complete control of the data is not ideal, but given the fact that no other source of the necessary data existed, the author felt it was appropriate to proceed with the research in this manner given the goals of the project. Working with the Levada Center provided a unique access to survey data collected in Russia on specific questions related to both anti-American attitudes and media use/credibility. The Levada Center is the only research organization that was conducting polls on those two topics in Russia, and has an internationally-recognized reputation of high academic integrity.

Chapter 3

Anti-Americanism in Russia: Historical Framework

In order to discuss the phenomenon of anti-Americanism in Russia during Putin's third presidential term, it is imperative to trace changes in public attitudes towards the United States from the yearly Soviet years to collapse of the Soviet Union, and from the birth on the new Russian state to the latest developments in the Russian Federation in 2010s. Most experts who have studied public opinion and anti-Americanism in Russia have argued that at least to some extent the roots of 2015 negativity towards United States can be traced back to the Soviet Union and the dramatic developments of 1990s (Shiraev and Zubok, 2000; Shlapentokh, 1988; 2001; 2011; Trilupaityte, 2008).

While attitudes towards the United States held by the Russian people in the 1990s and the early 2000s were systematically traced by the Levada Center, Gallup and other organizations through public opinion polling, there is no reliable survey data from the Soviet Union prior to 1989. The communist party claimed it expressed the voice and mindset of the people. This assumption was expressed as the "designated majority." There was, therefore, no need to study actual attitudes of the people through surveys (Gasparishvili, 1990).

Some scholars (Gasparishvili, 1990) have argued that the term "public opinion" was not even applicable as a concept in the Soviet Union. The phenomenon of public opinion, they reason, can only exist in a democratic society. According to this logic, since the freedom of expression was severely limited in the Soviet Union, there was no such phenomenon as public opinion in its contemporary understanding.

Regardless of the academic debate as to the proper terminology, the Soviet people did indeed hold opinions about the United States and Americans. These attitudes were expressed outside the scope of opinion surveys through folklore and samizdat (the clandestine publishing and copying of materials that were banned by the Soviet state), and were reflected in the popular youth counter-culture via music, art and other visual expression. The views of the Soviet people were demonstrated publicly through their participation in state-sponsored rallies, as well as “kitchen talks” in which hushed, forbidden debates were muffled by the sound of running faucets to insure privacy of conversations. These attitudes were studied by various scholars using historical method, interviews, textual analysis and various other techniques.

Russia and the United States: from the Russian Empire to World War II

A brief overview of the history of the attitudes of the Soviet (and later Russian) people towards the United States is not only a story of anti-Americanism, but also a story of a complicated relationship between two nations that resented, feared, fascinated, and even admired each other. For most of the 20th century and through the years of the Cold War, the Soviet and Russian people had strong feelings towards the United States. Attitudes fluctuated between admiration and resentment, love and hatred, and sometimes all of those complex and conflicting emotions were experienced simultaneously.

Such an important but ambiguous relationship with a strong Western nation was not the first such encounter in Russian history. Shiraev and Zubok (2000) noted that Russia throughout its history had complicated and ambivalent views about the West. Since the

time of tsars, Russian elites struggled to define the place and role of their country in the context of Eastern or Western cultures. Determining the best way to move the country forward without losing its cultural identity split the Russian elites into two camps: the so-called Westernizers and the Slavophiles. According to Shlapentokh (1988), the struggle between the Westernizers, who viewed Russia as a part of the Western civilization and regarded the West as a model for Russia, and the Slavophiles, who praised Russian exceptionalism, has been one of the defining factors in Russian history.

As Shiraev and Zubok (2000) explained, both camps shared an ambiguous response towards the West. This simultaneous admiration and attraction to the Western way of life and its culture was juxtaposed with resentment to everything Western throughout the Russian history. In different periods of Russian history, according to Shlapentokh (1988), Russia chose one or more Western countries to compare itself against. During the 18th and 19th centuries Russia compared itself to various Western nations including England, France, Germany and the Netherlands. Russian elites singled out these countries as examples of Western modernization and progress. They were imitated and accepted by some Russians while rejected by others.

Shlapentokh (1988) noted that after the Second World War, the United States became the country against which the Soviet people and the Soviet authorities measured themselves. The United States “captured the imagination of the Soviet people and that has become the symbol of the West in the Soviet mind.... the images of the United States and the attitudes towards this country in the U.S.S.R. represent the stance of the Soviet people toward the West in general (p. 159).” (Shlapentokh, 1988, p. 158-159).”

In the 55 years of Soviet history that followed, the image of the United States in the Soviet mind fluctuated significantly. Shlapentokh (1988) noted that the pendulum of public attitudes of the Soviet people has gone from highly positive to highly negative within one generation. Such swings in public attitudes, according to the author, depended on internal factors, such as social, political and economic developments within the Soviet Union. Each major phase of the political development of the Soviet Union (and the Russian Federation after the collapse of the U.S.S.R.) created its own dominant image of the United States. Those images were influenced to some extent by the relations between two countries and the developments within American society, but even more so they were shaped by social and political trends in the Soviet Union.

Shlapentokh (1988) pointed out that in the period from the birth of the Soviet Union until the death of Joseph Stalin (with a brief exception during World War II) the official anti-American propaganda-driven image of the United States prevailed among the Soviet people. Anti-Western hysteria reached its peak in the late 1930s during Stalin's infamous purges, when a positive reference about the U.S., England, France or other Western country made in a private conversation could lead to arrest, imprisonment and even a death sentence for espionage or being considered a "foreign provocateur" (Shlapentokh, 1988).

Shirayev and Zubok (2000) described the peculiarities of the image of the United States that was presented to the Soviet public by the government and state-controlled mass media during that time. Traditions of the communist ideology viewed societal development as a class struggle between progressive elements and the proletariat vs. the capitalist exploiters. Such ideological views prevented the Soviet state from portraying all of the

United States as the enemy. Instead, according to the Soviet propaganda, the innocent citizens of the U.S. were struggling under the exploitation of capitalists. The enemy in the Soviet press and official statements was not the American people, but the CIA, right-wing politicians, Wall Street, the Pentagon and others. Such coverage produced an interesting effect on the perception of the U.S. by the Soviet people: “for the Russian individuals, the enemy was not all ‘Americans’, but specific groups and manipulated by ‘bad’ Americans” (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000, p. 14).

During the Second World War, the intensity of anti-American propaganda faded slightly (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000). Soviet propaganda acknowledged the role of the United States as an ally against Nazi Germany and became slightly more neutral in its coverage. As for the people of the Soviet Union, the role of Americans in defeating Germany, and the lend-lease program, which provided aid for the Soviet Union, contributed to the public view of the U.S. as a strong and wealthy country.

The Cold War: 1949 - 1985

After the end of the war, the Soviet Union used its position as an allied victor to extend its sphere of influence in Central and Eastern Europe and the Far East. By the end of 1940s, according to Shirayev and Zubok, Stalin began to see the United States as the main adversary of the Soviet Union. The Soviet propaganda machine was restructured to create the image of the U.S. as the main ideological enemy: “Stalin began to promote a two-fold image of America. It was an image of a great and powerful nation that was ruled by short

sighted billionaires from Wall Street; it was the power that could not match its economic might by the valor on the battlefield” (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000, p. 11).

The death of Joseph Stalin and the subsequent “Thaw” initiated by Nikita Khrushchev brought tremendous changes to the Soviet Union. The policies of de-Stalinization, lessening of repression and censorship, economic reforms, and the new doctrine of peaceful co-existence with other countries transformed Soviet society and had an effect on the image of the U.S. and the West (Shlapentokh, 1988).

The prominence of the United States in the mindset of the Soviet leadership was demonstrated by the slogan that Nikita Khrushchev proposed to the Soviet people: “[to] Catch up to and surpass America.” Shirayev and Zubok (2000) noted that Khrushchev’s position led to a fundamental change in the perceptions of the world by an average Soviet citizen: for the first time since the birth of the Soviet state, the communist system was allowed to be compared with the capitalist system on an ideological level. As a result, the Soviet people became used to comparing their lives with standards of living in the U.S. Gorbachev and Mlynar (2013) pointed out that this constant comparison eventually undermined the faith of the Soviet people in their underlying economic and political system.

Gradual democratization of Soviet society and changes on the official ideological level led to a transformation of the image of the United States in the minds of the Soviet people. While the nuclear arms race and the ideological confrontation between the communist and the capitalist systems became the main topics in relations between the two

countries, official anti-American propaganda became significantly less effective in promoting a negative image of the U.S.

Also following World War II, the Soviet people were exposed to some extent to American culture as the Soviet government allowed the dissemination of various books by American authors and the screening of popular American movies. Some Soviet people were exposed to additional alternative sources of information about the United States, such as British BBC and American Radio Liberty and the Voice of America. These factors, combined with the repeated usage stereotypes (such as American imperialism, racial problems and labor unrest) by the Soviet mass media, led to the relative ineffectiveness of the Soviet anti-American propaganda.

Shlapentokh (1988) explained that Soviet elites and intelligentsia in the 1960s formed a very different image of the United States and the West. The levels of technological and scientific progress, combined with impressive economic development in the U.S., were attributed to the democratic system. Such events as the moon landing made a strong impression on the Soviet public. While the official state propaganda continued to cover social problems in the U.S., the well-educated Soviet citizens were charmed and even inspired by the idea of America. In addition, the young generation born after the war (the so-called “shestidesyatniki”) were forming their own counter-culture, and were fascinated with everything American, from jazz music to fashion.

The 1970s brought yet another swing of the pendulum. Under Leonid Brezhnev’s leadership, the somewhat positive image of the United States was replaced in the minds of both Soviet intellectuals and the general public with “mostly negative pictures”

(Shlapentokh, 1988). Official anti-American propaganda changed gears and incorporated some of elements of the Russophile ideology that holds a sense of the moral superiority of the Russian culture and the Russian people over anything Western.

This possibly was seen most clearly during the period known as *détente* (1969-1979). During this time the Soviet anti-American propaganda focused heavily on the superiority of Soviet culture, way of life and society over American. Shlapentokh (1988) suggested the Soviet leadership realized it was impossible for the U.S.S.R. to catch up with the United States economically or technologically. This inferiority was unsettling for the Kremlin, as well as many Soviet intellectuals, and their response was to insist on the moral and cultural superiority of the U.S.S.R.

Perestroika and the Collapse of the U.S.S.R.: infatuation with the West and the U.S.

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev assumed the reins of power in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev's election had a profound impact on the future of the Soviet Union: it led to the end of the Cold War, decimation of the Warsaw Pact, the gradual democratization of Eastern Europe, the eventual dismantling of U.S.S.R. and the rise of the new Russian state. Gorbachev, who hoped to restart the crumbling Soviet economy and revitalize the Soviet society, initiated the policies of *Glasnost* (openness and democratization of the public sphere) and *Perestroika* (limited market reforms). He also dramatically changed Soviet foreign policy, introducing the "New Thinking" policies focused on improving relations and boosting trade with the United States and Western Europe.

In next five years, Gorbachev normalized relations with the United States and other Western European countries, withdrew Soviet troops from Afghanistan, abandoned the Brezhnev doctrine, the goal of an ever-expanding sphere of influence, while granting Eastern European countries a right to self-determination.

The Soviet Bloc, those independent but heavily influenced border nations, started to crumble in 1989 when Polish elections led to creation of a non-communist government. Soon other Warsaw Pact countries followed her lead, and with Gorbachev's refusal to use military force to stop them, the "Block" was no more. On November 9, 1989, the end of an empire came as East and West Germans, artificially divided as two nations by Soviet might, tore down the Berlin Wall.

Gorbachev's foreign policy was widely viewed by the public as a success. His domestic policies, however, were increasingly unpopular with the Soviet people. The failure of Gorbachev's attempts to reform the socialistic economy led to rapidly worsening economic and social conditions. According to Shiraev and Zubok (2000), the Soviet people for the first time in almost 70 years started to blame the government and the old Communist system.

In addition to worsening economic conditions, democratization policies of the Gorbachev's government led to the crumbling of centralized control in the Soviet Union and increasing demands of other Soviet republics for independence. In the summer of 1991, a group of high-level Soviet hard-liners attempted a coup against Gorbachev, demanding return to the old Soviet ways. The coup failed when both the Army and the Soviet people took the side of Boris Yeltsin, the new leader of the Russian state, who supported

democratic reforms. After the coup, Boris Yeltsin emerged as the most powerful politician in Russia. The following December, the U.S.S.R. was officially dissolved into 15 independent republics, and Gorbachev resigned.

The changes initiated by Gorbachev had a profound impact on Soviet society and on people's attitudes towards the West and the United States. The policies of Glasnost were aimed at easing strict control of the state over the public sphere and public life. The relationship between the U.S.S.R. and the United States was changing dramatically. Zubok and Shiraev (2000) called it an "euphoric stage of Soviet-American relations that lasted almost 5 years" (p. 144). Official anti-American propaganda was winding down as Gorbachev expanded relations with Western leaders. The slowing down of the nuclear arms race, and personal relations with U.S. President Ronald Reagan and other Western leaders, greatly contributed to the change in perceptions of the United States as the main ideological enemy. At the time, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President Reagan became the most popular foreign politicians in the Soviet Union. During his visit to Moscow in 1988, President Reagan made a statement that would have been impossible several years earlier. Standing on the Red Square, surrounded by a crowd of enthusiastic and welcoming Soviet citizens, he declared that the concept of "Evil Empire" belonged to another era (Meisler, 1988).

Both the intellectual elites and the mass public of the Soviet Union at the time were looking towards the West and the United States for tangible hope of a better life for themselves and their children (Shiraev and Zubok, 2000). After almost 70 years of the communist system the Russians looked up to Western Europe and the United States as

more effective social systems. In the minds of many Russians, dismantling the communist system and adhering to capitalism and a more liberal ideology could bring instant gratification and provide for stable and effective economic, social and political systems. More and more people saw the communist system as the obstacle that prevented Russia from becoming part of civilized society, while the United States represented the future and “symbolized great new opportunity, unlimited potential, prosperity and happiness” (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000, p. 144).

Volkov (2015) described the new enthusiasm of the Russian people towards the United States: “In early 1990s, the majority of population in Russia saw the U.S. not only as a sole superpower, but also the undisputed role model, as the main reference point in the foreign policy.” Levada public opinion polls (Volkov, 2015) conducted in Russia in 1990-1991 confirmed the popularity of the U.S. When asked what foreign country was the most interesting and fascinating to them, respondents placed the United States on the top of the list. Seventy four percent of respondents thought that cooperation with the U.S. was more important than with any other Western countries.

The Years of Yeltsin: disenchantment with the West and the search for national identity

The brief period of admiring the United States was followed by a backlash in public attitudes when the collapse of the Soviet Union led to chaos, ethnic violence, mass pauperization, and the collapse of the welfare state. As Trilupaityte (2008) explained, the end of the communist system and Russia’s embrace of democracy and a market economy in the early 1990s created “a symbolic positioning of Russian vis-à-vis American power”

(p. 82), and gave the people an impression their country would soon achieve the living standards of the United States and Western Europe. However, the new Russian state proved to be a harsh and unforgiving environment for most of its citizens. Instead of improving the standards of living as people hoped, the changes in the Russian state left most people worse off than they were under the Soviet system, both economically and in terms of social status.

The enormous difficulties the Russian people faced in the early 1990s contributed to the growth of anti-Americanism among the Russian public (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000). As Trilupaityte (2008) explained, pro-American attitudes in the late 1980s and the early 1990s were actively propagated by the Russian liberals, many of whom became high-level officials in the Yeltsin government. Positive image of the United States was associated in the public mind with the liberal ideology. The failure of the economic reforms, social and economic crisis that followed led to disenchantment with the new Russian government, and discredited both the liberal ideology and the pro-American position (Shlapentokh, 1998).

Shirayev and Zubok (2000) pointed out that in the minds of the Russian people the communist system had significant flaws, but the new Russian society was facing even greater difficulties. The physiological consequence of these events was once again a rise of anti-Americanism in Russia. As authors explained, “America, with its perceived attitude of indifference toward Russia’s troubles, arrogant advisers, and unattainable wealth became a scapegoat, the cause of the Russian troubles, the country that willingly let Russia fall to her knees (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000, p. 145).”

The Russian government, and to some extent the general public, expected the United States to help the struggling Russian economy during the crisis in the early 1990s. According to the Levada Center public opinion polls in 1991, 37% of Russians expected the U.S. to help the Russian economy and a majority felt certain the U.S. would provide aid (Volkov, 2015). Deeply disappointed by the lack of financial aid from the West aimed at supporting the new and struggling Russian economy, Russians felt that their country was being treated as a lesser nation. To them, the Soviet Union had its flaws and failures, but it was an empire. The post-fall Russian resented the lack of support, especially during the severe economic crisis (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000). In addition, both elites and the general public in Russia were becoming increasingly frustrated over the loss of the status of a great geopolitical force.

The Russian Federation, up until the late 1990s, did not play a major role in the international arena, and the actions of Western nations towards Russia led to a widely perceived sense of national humiliation (Shirayev and Zubok, 2000). Both Gorbachev and Yeltsin expected to see changes in the balance of power after the collapse of the Soviet Union, leading to a bipolar balance, a reduction in U.S. expansionist policies and a reduction of the role of NATO. Instead, NATO expanded its membership to include several former Warsaw Pact countries and even three Baltic countries that used to be part of the Soviet Union. The European Union also gradually expanded to the East. Both expansions were perceived by Russian leaders and the Russian public as encirclement of Russia by the Western countries threatening Russia's national security.

Another element affecting the change in attitudes of the Russian public towards the U.S. was a renewed search for national identity, and with this search a rising popularity of nationalistic-leaning movements, fueled by the Russophile ideology. According to Shiraev and Zubok (2000), it was a blending of the ideas of Russian exceptionalism, leadership as a Eurasian nation, and the uniqueness of Russia's history and rich culture that called for a special, exclusive way of development. According to these views, the Western economic systems and especially Western values were foreign and alien to Russians, who had their own special destiny, and were more spiritual and cultured than the West.

As Shiraev and Zubok (2000) noted, despite a growing resentment towards the West and the U.S., anti-Americanism in 1990s did not "become virulent and never assumed a violent form." Since the first surveys examining public attitudes towards the United States were conducted in Russia, for almost a decade the Russian public had a generally positive view of the U.S. According to Levada polls, more than 65% of Russians steadily expressed positive attitudes from 1990 to 1998. Although the number of pro-American respondents was slowly declining and the number of people who expressed negative opinion rose from 5% in 1991 to around 25% in early 1998, the majority of Russians viewed the United States in positive to neutral terms. The majority of Russians found themselves deeply pessimistic, and too focused on the shortcomings of their personal economic lives to find great interest in geopolitical opinion making (Shiraev and Zubok, 2000).

By the late 1990s, public attitudes towards the U.S. in Russia began to change. In 1997, according to Levada, half of the Russian population saw Russia and the U.S. not as

allies, but as geopolitical rivals. Volkov (2015) suggested that the major change in the way the Russian public perceived the U.S. took place in 1998-1999. Several events took place in the two year span that have affected both relations between two countries and the attitudes of the Russian public towards the United States. Volkov (2015) explained the spike of anti-American attitudes as a reaction to a combination of foreign and domestic events, such as the NATO Serbian military campaign, the beginning of war in Chechnya, the financial crisis in Russia and NATO's expansion to the east. He pointed out that those events had a profound impact on how the United States were perceived by the Russian public.

The Serbian military campaign against Slobodan Milosevic was perceived by the Russian elites and a majority of the Russian public as "America's desire to establish control over additional territories, rather than an attempt to enforce international norms and punish their violators" (Volkov, 2015). At the same time, Yeltsin's attempts to influence the conflict by sending Russian troops to Serbia were extremely popular in Russia among elites and the general population. Shiraev and Zubok (2000) said Yeltsin's actions in Serbia were applauded at home because they made the Russian public feel that their country was regaining influence in the international arena. This lesson, according to Volkov (2015), was learned very well by the Russian authorities, who used foreign policy and anti-Americanism to booster patriotic feeling among Russian and to increase domestic support for their policies.

Volkov (2015) suggested that coinciding with the military campaign in Serbia, a certain way of interpreting American actions were first developed, and that this shaped the

way both Russian elites and the general public perceived the future military operations where U.S. forces were involved. According to this logic, U.S. involvement was an act of self-interest, an attempt to gain control over territory, and had little to nothing to do with any U.S. declared desire to enforce international law or prevent human rights violations. Public opinion polls conducted by the Levada Center showed that each of the following conflicts (including Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria) was interpreted according to this logic by more than half of the Russian population.

Putin and Medvedev: The pendulum swings

By 1999, even before Vladimir Putin was elected to his first term as president, public opinion polls in Russia demonstrated that the mass public had begun to perceive actions of the United States as hostile to Russian interests. For example, according to Volkov (2015), 75% of Russians agreed with the statement that “the U.S. is taking advantage of Russia’s troubles to turn it into a second-class country,” and for the first time in a decade they placed the United States at the top of the list of countries that pose a threat to Russia.

In the decade following Putin’s first election, the nationalistic, anti-American views were increasingly incorporated into official Kremlin rhetoric. Since the mid-2000s, Russian authorities have used anti-Americanism as one of the key elements of state propaganda. As Levada’s polling numbers showed, most Russians have interpreted the actions of the United States during conflicts in Iraq, Georgia and even Ukraine as being hostile towards Russia.

With the help of an increasingly anti-American stance purported by Russian authorities and communicated by the state-run media, even events in neighboring countries began to be seen by the Russian public as a result of American anti-Russian actions. For example, more than half of the Russian population assigned blame for the Russian/Georgian war, which was indisputably initiated by the unilateral aggression of the Russian Federation, on the United States and American desires to extend influence to Russian neighbors (Volkov, 2015).

The events of 9/11 and the cooperation between George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin during its immediate aftermath in fighting global terrorism produced a temporary spike in pro-American sentiments among the Russian public. Soon after, however, the levels of anti-Americanism in Russia returned to a pre 9/11 levels.

The rise of anti-Americanism: 2012-2015

Levada polls showed that a significant increase in anti-American attitudes among the Russian public began in late 2012, in tandem with anti-government protests that took place all over Russia from November 2012. Mass protests took place in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other Russian cities. Initially the protests were focused on people's dissatisfaction with the results of the Duma elections, which according to various independent observers were rigged in favor of Putin/Medvedev United Russia party. As the protests continued, the underlying theme evolved to reflect a broader and more general anti-Putin sentiment.

In a response to the mass protests, the Kremlin initiated a mass propaganda campaign aimed at discrediting the protest movement and boosting support for the authorities. Putin, Medvedev and other public officials openly accused the United States of orchestrating and financing the protest movement with hopes of destabilizing the political situation in Russia. An infamous documentary, “Anatomy of the protest,” represented the new wave of anti-American and anti-Western propaganda campaign. In addition to discrediting the oppositional movement by portraying it as a sell-out to the West, the Kremlin and state-controlled mass media were attempting to divert public attention away from the wide-spread accusations of corruption within the Putin government.

The rise of anti-Americanism continued after March 2012, when Putin was elected president for the third term. After a year and a half of Putin’s presidency, polls showed a significant worsening in public attitudes about the United States. According to the Levada Center, by November 2013, 49.2% of respondents expressed negative opinion, and 37.4% expressed positive views about the United States.

By January 2015, after annexation of Crimea, the beginning of the civil war in Ukraine and the introduction of sanctions against Russian by a number of foreign countries lead by the U.S., anti-American sentiments in Russia reached the highest peak in post-Soviet history. The new Cold War between Vladimir Putin and the West was reflected in Russian public opinion, while policies of the president were supported by 85% of respondents.

Gudkov (2014) and Volkov (2015) suggested that the dramatic rise of anti-American sentiments in Russia in 2014/2015 was a combination of several factors,

including events in Ukraine, the Kremlin's propaganda campaign and the public's perception of Putin's foreign policy as a resurrection of great Russia and the restoration of national pride.

The Maidan revolution was perceived by the Russian public within a framework shaped and propagated by the Russian authorities through mass media. The general public perception of the events in Ukraine was as scheming on the part of the West and mainly the United States against the Russian interests. When asked why people protested in Ukraine, almost half of respondents (44%) thought the West was trying to pull Ukraine into the orbit of its political interests. Other popular reasons included nationalistic attitudes and attempts to pull Ukraine away from Russia. Some 84% of respondents viewed events in Ukraine as a coup-d'etat. The ongoing civil war in the Eastern Ukraine was viewed by the Russian public in the same interpretation scheme. According to Volkov, in the summer of 2015, 56% of Russian respondents thought that the conflict continued because it was "advantageous for the government of the United States and other Western countries," while only 6% blamed Russian involvement.

While the events in Ukraine coincided with an intense anti-Western and anti-American propaganda campaign, Volkov argued that the influence of state-sponsored propaganda was not the only reason for the dramatic rise of anti-Americanism.

The actions of Vladimir Putin in the international arena, as well as his aggressive nationalistic rhetoric, seemed to deeply resonate with the Russian public. From 2014, his support rating continued to exceed 80% and in June 2015 it reached an unprecedented 98%. Volkov (2015) argued that Putin's foreign policy victories, such as the annexation of

Crimea and the inability of the West to counter Russia's actions, "gave a majority of Russians the sense for the first time since the collapse of the Soviet Union that their country was a superpower (70% of respondents feel this way, compared to just 47% in 2011)."

The anti-Western attitudes of the Russian public were also reflected in their attitudes towards the European Union. Russian attitudes towards their European neighbors for 20 years have been consistently better than attitudes towards the United States. 2014-2015 Levada polls showed that the sentiments of Russians about the European Union were slightly more positive than their views about the United States, but followed a very similar pattern.

Conclusions

For a century, the United States played a major role in the worldview and imagination of the Russian and Soviet people. In the first decades of the Soviet Union the United States occupied an important niche in the mass psyche: the United States became a Western country to which the Russian people compared themselves. Even though credible public opinion polling numbers from the Soviet period are not available, a number of other sources indicate changes in the public sentiment.

While the United States remained the main official ideological foe of the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War, public attitudes towards the United States were more complicated and ambivalent. Part of the Soviet population believed the official propaganda and held anti-American views, but others were fascinated with the United States culture and were sympathetic towards the American people in general. These neutral and even

sympathetic attitudes rose and fell throughout the history of the Soviet Union depending on multiple factors, including relations between two countries, political situation in the Soviet Union, and influence of popular culture.

During Perestroika, initiated by Gorbachev, relations between the two countries drastically changed for the better. The new pro-American official position was supported by the population: in 1990, according to the Levada Center, over 80% of Russians expressed positive attitude towards the United States.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian public went through a brief period of intense infatuation and idolization of the West and the United States. When Russians faced an economic and social collapse, however, they were faced with the reality that their dreams of living in a society similar to the West in terms of the living standards were unrealistic and dissatisfaction and discontent began to increase. While relations between two countries remained constructive and even friendly at times during the following decade, both the elites and the general public in Russia started to turn away from the West.

Experts (Gudkov, 2014; Shlapentokh, 2006; 2011; Zubok and Shiraev, 2000; Volkov, 2015) suggested that a change in perception of the West and the United States during the 1990s was influenced by psychological trauma from the collapse of the Soviet empire and the loss of international status, significant loss of territory and the integration of some of the former Soviet states into European Union and NATO, perceived aggressive expansion of the Western sphere of influence to the Russian borders, and ongoing economic hardships. This growing irritation and disenchantment with the West coincided

with the formation of the new Russian national identity, which incorporated elevating and highlighting the uniqueness of the Russian culture and civilization, and presented the Western way of life and societal structure as alien and destructive for Russia.

The general perception of the United States also was affected by an interpretation of American actions that originated during the U.S. military operation against Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia in 1999. U.S. actions were perceived as disregarding of international norms and state sovereignty, and solely focused on self-interest and the expansion of geopolitical influence. In addition, the United States began to be perceived as an arrogant super-power focused on holding Russia back and threatening Russian national interests. Such a way of viewing the United States and interpreting American actions framed perceptions of a large part of the Russian public. These sentiments, increasingly reinforced via mass media, were incorporated into official Kremlin rhetoric after 2000.

Improvement of relations between the two countries (Putin and Bush after 9/11 and Medvedev and Obama during the “reset”) coincided with a decrease of anti-American attitudes among the Russian public. Soon after, however, attitudes of Russian towards the United States returned to the pre-improvement level.

Public opinion polls conducted by the Levada Center demonstrated that the sentiments of the Russian public towards the United States were relatively consistent from the mid-1990s until 2012. Pro-American attitudes were expressed by 55% to 60% of respondents, while the anti-American views were held by approximately a third of the respondents. During this period, polls showed four spikes of anti-American sentiments: in 1999, 2003, 2008, and since 2014.

Volkov (2015) suggested those peaks of anti-Americanism in Russia could be explained by Kremlin's propaganda efforts conducted through mass media. In order to understand the reasons behind the success of the state-sponsored anti-American propaganda, however, one needs to study the intricacies of Russian public opinion and the peculiarities of the attitudes of Russians towards the United States.

Chapter 4

Mass Media System in Russia

“Post-Soviet” media: the Soviet influence on the Russian media system

It is almost impossible to understand the contemporary Russian media system without looking into the past and examining the history of mass media in the country. Various scholars focused their attention on the fact that the Russian media system originated from the debris of the Soviet media system, and made attempts to re-evaluate the Soviet experience in the light of contemporary events (for example, see Splichal, 1994; De Smaele, 1999; Becker, 2004; Kratasyuk, 2006).

Strict governmental control over the content of mass media and editorial policies, as well as the use of the media to advocate and promote positions of the state was not an invention of the Soviet State. Strict control over the content of mass media was the governmental policy in the Russian empire since the first newspapers were introduced by Tsar Peter the Great in the 17th century and up until the revolution of 1905. However, after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 the absolute state control over the public sphere in general and mass media specifically reached its peak.

Following the birth of the Soviet state in 1917, the media system in the Soviet Union was based on Marxist ideology and was ideologically committed to the promoting and furthering the goals of the Communist Party (De Smalle, 1999). As Jakubowitz argued, the authorities in the Soviet Union viewed the press as an instrument of social management: “they fulfilled for the state the hegemonic functions of dominance, ideological homogenization of the audience and reproduction of the existing social order” (Jakubowitz,

1995, p. 127). Lenin, the founding father of the Soviet state, described the role of the press in a communist society as “the collective propagandist, collective agitator and collective organizer” (Lenin, 1966). De Smaele (1999) argued that propaganda was the main function of the Soviet press, and that partisanship and serving the working class was the most important principle.

Two scholars of the post-communist media systems, Sparks and Jakubowicz, argued that the communist past and mentality had an enormous influence on transformations of the socio-political and media systems in post-communists countries (Jakubowicz, 2005; Sparks, 2008). Sparks argued that the nature of transformation that post-communist countries were going through was the creation of the new social order. Based on this perspective, Jakubowicz suggested that the final transformation and democratization of the media systems in post-communist countries would happen only when the social order would be finally transformed, and “the legacy of Communism (however that is defined) is finally eliminated” (Jakubowitz, 2005).

The influence of the Soviet past on the current media system in Russia is discussed and argued by various scholars. As a review of literature demonstrates, those effects are strong, varied in nature and could be found at every level of the media-political system in Russia. Numerous works on the Russian media system today refer to the issue of deep-rooted Soviet mentality of the Russian public, decision makers and the journalistic community.

The main topics of discussion include the Soviet mentality of the audience, journalists and the decision makers that influence their attitudes towards the freedom of the

press and the role of media in society. The Soviet past seemed to influence media consumption behavior and expectations, and relationship between the media and the state.

In the post-Soviet Russia, the inherited Soviet mentality and attitudes affected not only mass media audiences, but the journalistic community as well. For example, the IREX Media Sustainability Index 2013 quoted one of panelists (IREX assembles a panel of local experts in each country, drawn from the country's media outlets, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), professional associations, and academic institutions in order to assess the development of media systems), who stressed the negative effects of self-censorship practices among Russian journalists and editors and blamed the problem on the Soviet mentality:

Self-censorship is the main problem of Russian media. I believe that it happens because there are few young people among the heads of media companies. Most often they are people who remember Soviet times and bear a Soviet imprint of living in a constant fear of superiors (IREX Media Sustainability Index, 2013).

As late as 2013, IREX Index also reported the diminishing value of freedom of speech in Russian society. According to Russian panelists, the concept of free speech was perceived as unpatriotic and anti-state. As one of the panelists noted, "Many people prefer to have less freedom in exchange for more social protection" (IREX Media Sustainability Index, 2013). Such attitudes displayed by the public more than two decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union underline how deeply rooted the Soviet mentality was among the Russian people.

Transitions and transformations of the media system: 1990s

In 1991, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia began a long journey of painful transitions and transformations from a totalitarian state with a one-party system to a multi-party representative democracy. Every element of the Russian society was going through a transformation, including the media system (Becker, 2004). De Smaele noted that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia switched from a one-party totalitarian system to a multi-party democratic system, with the economy being transformed from planned command-type to market, which “resulted in an increasing openness and diversity in both political life and media practices” (de Smaele, 1999, p. 176).

In addition, the Russian government officially adopted the principles of press freedom and freedom of expression, reflected in the Constitution and the media laws. According to Davis (1998), those changes influenced the mentality and professional practices of Russian journalists, who demonstrated openness to Western ideas and practices of journalism.

The transformation, however, of the political system from totalitarian to democratic in the early 1990s, as well as the transfer of mass media ownership from the state into a mixed system of privately owned and state-owned media outlets, did not by default mean transition from totalitarian media system into a European social-responsibility model or an American libertarian model. De Smaele (1999) argued, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the Russian society (including the media system) was reorganized according to the western principals, the changes in the media were mostly restricted to the market

area, but the underlying transformation of the media system into a westernized, public-interest focused model did not happen.

De Smaele argued against perceiving the Russian media system as being brought in line with the West. Some scholars of the Russian media have pointed out as early as 1996, that “Russia is simulating only” (de Smaele, 1999), and that the new system of the oligarchic capitalism that emerged in Russia during the Yeltsin era of the 1990s has influenced the Russian media system, once again turning mass media into instruments of political influence and propaganda.

In the 1990s, a transformed and blooming Russian media landscape had distinctive features and defined the media-political system in Russia. The print media landscape was differentiated in terms of ownership, but most print outlets were identified with different political parties and interests (mostly those who were in power), “thus continuing the tradition of the ‘advocacy press’, rather than performing a watchdog function” (Splichal, 1994). According to De Smaele (1999), in the 1990s mass media in Russia turned into a battlefield of different financial groups and oligarchs, connected to various political and governmental clans. Pankin (1998) pointed out that in Russia and other former Soviet Union countries, capital was made through political connections between oligarchs and the government, and the owners of mass media outlets used them as instruments of gaining and increasing political influence.

The broadcast medium was transformed from a Soviet model of universal dominance by the state into a dual system of public (state-controlled) and private broadcasting media outlets. The public broadcasting system in Russia, however, should not

be mistakenly identified with Western European public broadcasting. As Jakubowicz (2005) stressed, Western European public broadcasting is based on the notion of serving the public interest, not the government, and that in order to achieve this goal public broadcasting must be separate and independent from the state's interests and influences. In Russia, however, public broadcasting was not given legal and organizational independence from the state, which, as De Samele (1999) argued, resulted throughout the years in subordination of broadcasting to the state, and led to the transformation of the public media into state-controlled media serving the interests of those in power.

The governmental control over public broadcasting was implemented through financial and organizational means, which, as De Smaele (1999) pointed out, translated into direct and indirect pressure on editorial policy and programming content. For example, the appointment of the management teams of the public broadcasting companies was left to the state. As Splichal (1994) noted, even though the appointments were made by elected officials instead of the Communist Party apparatchiks, as it was in the Soviet Union, the negative effects on the independence of editorial policies were quite similar:

Although the new system differs from the 'socialist' one in that these functions (e.g. appointing personnel) were transferred from the Communist Party to the democratically elected state organs, this does not change the fundamental relations of the dependence of the media on external political authorities and the reduction of the public to a mass of passive consumers (Splichal, 1994).

However, even with an increasing partisanship with the mass media in 1990s, both Kratasyuk (2006) and Becker (2004) stressed that President Yeltsin was a strong believer in the importance of a free press in a democratic society, and that the press in Yeltsin era

enjoyed relative independence from the government. Russian journalist and media scholar

Gessen (2000) described the Yeltsin's position on the freedom of press as follows:

The editors-in-chief of Russia's various national media took comfort in the fact that, to Yeltsin, media freedom was a baseline value.... Yeltsin replaced communist ideology with a supremely simplified version of democracy that boiled down to two tenets: He could not abide Communists, and he supported freedom of the press (Gessen, 2000, p. 17).

During Yeltsin's time, Russian mass media displayed a relative pluralism of positions in both print and broadcast media, and journalists could be openly critical towards the government (even on such hot topics as corruption and war in Chechnya). The government did not attempt to implement strict control over the media outlets, even those "public" outlets where the state had controlling financial interest (De Smaele, 1999). As McNair (2000) described the state of the Russian media in 2000, at the beginning of Putin's first term:

There is in Russia today a real public sphere through which ordinary people can learn about and participate in political debate. The current generation of Russian politicians may be largely incompetent and hugely corrupt, but their activities are frequently exposed to critical scrutiny in the public domain where citizens can make their judgments (McNair, 2000, p. 93).

Vladimir Putin, media freedom and consolidation of state control

The situation changed dramatically after Vladimir Putin gained power, first by becoming the prime minister in 1999 and then being elected as Russia's second president in 2000. Since then, reports by various international organizations advocating for freedom of the press across the globe placed Russia on the list of countries where mass media is partially free or not free at all and where journalists are endangered for their professional activities.

As Becker said in 2004, “The Putin era has not been a good one for the Russian media” (Becker, 2004, p. 139). He argued that the mass media system in Russia under Putin has regressed considerably, and that “Russia has failed to consolidate the nascent democratic media system that began to emerge under the former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and Russia’s first president, Boris Yeltsin” (Becker, 2004, p. 140).

Soon after the beginning of his first presidential term, Putin initiated an aggressive campaign against the media outlets that were critical of him and his policies, especially of the actions of his administration in Chechnya. His attitudes toward freedom of the press and speech were made evident in his first address to the Russian nation as president in 2000. Mass media in Russia, according to Putin, were divided into “state” and “anti-state,” while the privately owned media that were critical of the authority were “mass misinformation outlets,” and “means of the struggle against the state” (Albats, 2001). Those words were soon translated into actions.

Strengthening of the governmental control over the free flow of information in Russia began with the broadcast media (Becker, 2004; Kratasyuk, 2006). During the course of several years, Putin’s government managed to gain control over the four most popular and prominent TV networks in Russia, including NTV (HTB), TV-6, RTR and ORT.

As Becker (2004) explained, the latter two networks were initially part of the public broadcasting system and the changes in editorial policy and content were implemented by appointing new leadership, politically loyal to Putin’s administration. The other two networks, however, were privately owned. NTV, the leading nation-wide news network

that was known for its objective reporting and open criticisms of Russian authorities, was taken away from the owner Gusinsky by a selective application of tax and criminal law.

The government's takeover of the broadcasting systems had special significance for the media landscape in Russia. Kratasyuk (2006) stressed the importance of television news in Russia, noting that Russian television had an "integral, out-look forming role... vital for the community" (Kratasyuk, 2006, p. 34). She argued that within the context of the high level of uncertainty that the Russian society was experiencing after the collapse of the Soviet Union, broadcast media played an integral role in shaping of society, creating national identity and transmitting meanings and interpretations imposed by dominant elites. During Putin's time in power, according to Kratasyuk, the state-run mass media was actively engaged in promoting to the public a pan-Russian national identity, centered in the idea of a single strong state:

Television is used in order to search for and construct the values 'that unite all'. It is a 'monolithic' system of historical norms and political preferences, sanctioned by the state.... The absence of public opinion shaping mechanisms, combined with an acutely felt desire for self-identification, for the creation of an 'image of Russia' (i.e. search for identity) leads to the development, whereby simultaneous watching of TV programmers becomes, for the majority of Russians, the only mechanism holding society together (Kratasyuk, 2006, p. 37-38).

Yevgeniy Revenko, deputy director of news programming for All-Russia State Television (VGTRK), in 2004 described delivering the government's message as the primary goal of state television: "A country like Russia needs the sort of television that can effectively deliver the government's message... As the state grows stronger, it needs to convey its message directly, with no interpretations" (Gessen, 2012, p. 185).

The editorial policy, he added, was to deliver official messages without interpretation:

We do broadcast negative stories – we will report a disaster, if it occurs, for example – but we do not go looking for them. Nor do we go looking for positive stories, but we do focus viewers’ attention on them. We never speculate about the reasons for something, – say, an official firing – even if we happen to know the reason. All our information comes from official government statements (Gessen, 2012, p. 185).

According to Revenko, criticizing the president was off limits for state television: “In any case, the logic is simple. We are a state television company. Our state is a presidential republic. That means we do not criticize the president” (Gessen, 2012, p. 185).

Revenko’s testimony demonstrated that as early as 2004, the state-controlled news media began transforming into a second press office of president Putin, delivering the governmental message to the public without interpretation, alteration or any attempts to follow standards of journalistic objectivity.

A similar process of consolidating state control, according to Becker (2004), happened to the print press after Putin came to power. By changing the leadership and editorial staff, the state managed to align the editorial policies and content of the state-run national and local newspapers with the position of Putin’s administration. Thus, newspapers were turned into active supporters and advocates of president Putin and his government.

Privately owned oppositional-leaning newspapers experienced continuous economic and legal pressure from the state, followed by personal attacks and harassment of the journalists who were critical of Putin (Kratasyuk, 2006). The IREX Media Sustainability Index 2013 stated that during Putin’s time in the 2000s, “the Russian

executive authorities built a strong vertical base of power in the country and took control over majority of Russian media, especially television channels, turning them into instruments of state propaganda.”

The ability of Russian authorities to implement control over mass media was enhanced by three factors (Becker, 2004). First, the state owned a great number of media outlets at the local and national level. Second, because of the peculiarities of Russian business environment during the 1990s (when a great number of business transaction were done illegally or involved corruption), the state was able to implement control and dictate behavior of media moguls by threatening them with selective application of the law. Finally, the weakness of the judicial system in Russia and its close connection to the executive branch turned the courts into a mechanism of punishment for those who criticized the authorities.

Simon & Strovsky (2006) argued that self-censorship by journalists and media organizations was another important element of the Russian media system during Putin’s years in office. They defined self-censorship as “censorship [that] is conducted internally by the media in order to avoid annoying or offending someone (and thus avoid possible sanction or punishment), without being specifically told or ordered to do so officially by an external censor (p. 191).” Pavel Gutiontov, a member of the Russian Union of Journalists, described the resurrection of self-censorship among journalists after Putin was elected:

The sad thing is that it is the press that is readily guessing what the authorities would want it to print... The internal censor is once again becoming the main censor... We have to do a lot of work in eradicating out

inner slave from ourselves, from out editorial rooms, from television (Gutionotov, 2004).

Becker (2004) described transformations of the media system during Putin's years in office as a neo-authoritarian media model, where "formal democratic institutions may appear to exist, but they are rotten to the core" (Becker, 2004, p. 150). He argued that the media system under Putin revealed its authoritarian and state-controlled nature in the areas of media autonomy, legal protection, as well as control over the content and pluralism of positions displayed in mass media.

Such assessments of the media-political system in Russia and of the relations between the state and mass media seemed to be even more accurate almost a decade later, at the end of Medvedev's presidency. By 2010-2011, the main source of information available to the Russian public was television. According to the Levada Center, around 85% of respondents named state TV channels as their main source of information in the country. Broadcasting was heavily dominated by three federal channels. According to IREX Media Sustainability Index 2012, the top three television stations were Russia 1 (broadcasting rating 18.2%), Channel 1 (broadcasting rating 17%), NTV (broadcasting rating 13.8%). Channel One and All-Russia State Television were under direct governmental control, while NTV was owned by the state-controlled energy company Gazprom.

According to Lipman (2010), the state-controlled media, especially television, were used by Russian authorities to maintain popular support and persuade and convince the audience of the efficacy of federal policy and actions:

The three [TV] channels perfectly serve the political goals of the government to shape electoral opinion by boosting, playing down, or ignoring an issue, a figure, or a group and instilling sentiments that benefit the political interests of the leadership. This is a sophisticated operation that capitalizes on and deepens existing suspicion of the West and frustration over Russia's diminished status in the world (Lipman, 2010).

Authors of the IREX Index argued that although there were a great number of news sources in Russia, the audience was not exposed to a variety of viewpoints, and the state media served as instruments of governmental propaganda (IREX, 2012). Reporters Without Borders' Freedom of the Press report (2012) stressed the dominance of state-controlled media in the Russian media landscape and the limited plurality of news sources:

Russian media freedom remained extremely poor in 2011, with the Kremlin relying on both crude and sophisticated forms of media management to distract the public from widespread government corruption, terrorist attacks, and the country's economic troubles.... Most state and privately owned mass media engaged in blatant propaganda that glorified the country's national leaders and fostered an image of political pluralism, as the government maintained control over key television outlets (Reporters Without Borders, Freedom of the Press Report, 2012).

While broadcasting remained under strict governmental control, the print press and online media enjoyed a relative degree of freedom. According to IREX, a "small but stable group of media outlets adhere to principles of fair, independent journalism and manage to function in a market distorted by subsidies and preferences for state-affiliated media" (IREX Media Sustainability Index 2012). The same report stated that while alternative news and opinion were available through independent media outlets, most of Russians did not use those sources of information.

The web was less tightly controlled by the state compared to other sources of information. The number of Russians who used the Internet by 2012 reached half of the population, and online users had access to plurality of information sources, presenting various points of views on events in Russia, including politics. Social media, specifically blogs and social networks, were providing alternative view points and were gaining popularity among Russian internet users (Freedom House, Freedom of the Press, 2012).

Mass media since 2012: shrinking freedoms and growing propaganda

The limited freedom of press and of speech that existed in Russia prior to 2012 was drastically challenged by two consequential political events.

The first, a wave of state sponsored suppression against independent journalists, mass media outlets, and general political expression on the internet, was the reaction of Russian authorities to mass protests that started in late 2011. The protests were a response to legislative elections that were allegedly riddled with fraud in order to ensure a victory for the ruling United Russia party. This election was soon followed by Putin's announcement that he will run for President in 2012 after having already served two terms from 2000-2008. These events resulted in mass protests in Moscow and around the country (Barry, 2011). People were protesting election fraud, a corrupt governmental system and the person of Vladimir Putin. Two of the protests in Moscow, according to organizers, drew crowds of 120,000 (on December 24, 2011) and 160,000 people (February 4, 2012) (Bratersky & Krainova, 2011; RIA Novosti, 2012).

Russian authorities responded by organizing mass rallies across Russia in support of the government and the United Russia party. In addition the state initiated violent repressive measures against protesters by the police and imposed heavy financial penalties against unauthorized public rallies. (Birnbaum, 2013). The last mass protest took place on Bolotnaya Square in Moscow on May 6, 2012. This protest led to mass arrests of participants and alleged organizers, several of whom were later charged with organizing unauthorized riots and violence against the police. Eight protesters received prison sentences, varying from two years and six months to four and a half years (Bodner & Lamme, 2012).

In an effort to codify the state's new position and to avoid future flare-ups of civil unrest, a number of new bills were drafted expanding governmental control over the online sphere. Most easily became law with overwhelming support of the Duma since 2012 (Freedom House, 2015, 2014). In 2012, defamation was recriminalized, and a number of journalists, bloggers, oppositional politicians and civil rights activists were charged with defamation since the introduction of the law.

A prime example of this newly restrictive legislative environment is seen in Federal Law No. 398, that came into force in February 2014. This measure gave federal prosecutors authority to block websites without a court order if they were suspected of disseminating extremist content, calls for illegal rallies, or other forms of illegal activities. According to a Freedom House report (2015), this law was used on a regular basis by the Russian authorities to block independent and oppositional websites.

Another example is seen in Federal Law No. 97, which required all websites (including blogs) with daily audience over 3000 visitors to register with Roscomnadzor (telecommunication regulatory body) as a mass media outlet. This law expanded all the legal requirements and regulations imposed on traditional media to be applicable to online media and even personal blogs. In a later revision to this statute required that social media platforms and networks store information relating to Russian users on servers housed in Russia in order to give the state access to such data.

After the 2012 presidential elections, when Vladimir Putin was once again elected President, the Russian authorities focused their attention on tightening control over the mass media sphere, and using mass media to shape and solidify public perception. According to the IREX report, 2012 was marked by massive changes in the management of various federal and local news organizations, initiated by Russian authorities. The report cited Russian journalist Olga Bakushinskaya, commenting on the Kremlin's pressure on journalists, editors and news organizations:

It is not about [government] taking control over one more TV channel—it is about taking control over all mass media like it was in the Soviet times when there were no Dozhd, no Echo, no Novoye Vremya, and when all media were using materials from Pravda... This is very sad for journalists who want to be fair and cover things that actually happen rather than things that authorities want to see. I think that we are going to have very hard times for these journalists (IREX, Media Sustainability Index, 2012).

If before 2012 oppositional politicians or activities were rarely covered by state-controlled media, after the mass protests and Putin's reelection the coverage changed. The Russian authorities used their control over mass media to discredit political opposition and boost support for Putin:

State-affiliated media were often used as instruments of pro-government and anti-opposition propaganda, such as the federal NTV channel's "Anatomy of Protest" programs, which purported to prove foreign sponsorship and pay for opposition protestors. The TV Press Club, an informal community of journalists who cover television, called these and similar programs on the leading channel, Channel One, notable for their 'propagandist zeal, use of disinformation, facts juggling, and promoting intolerance to dissent' (IREX, Media Sustainability Index, 2013).

The crisis that fomented in Ukraine since late fall 2013 has since dominated news coverage in Russia. State-controlled mass media devoted an enormous amount of coverage to the Ukrainian events. The framing of the crisis by the state-controlled mass media, from the Maidan revolution to the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of the civil war in Eastern Ukraine, was in complete solidarity with the official Kremlin position and the rhetoric of high-level public officials.

REN-TV Deputy Editor-in-Chief Marianna Maskimovskaya commented on the dominance of the Ukrainian events in the Russian public sphere:

Reading the press gives me a feeling that we live in Ukraine, rather than in Russia. We started this year on a positive note with the Olympics, and finished it with the feeling of all-encompassing aggression that literally fills the air; looking for internal and external enemies; jingoism bordering on the verge of chauvinism (IREX, Media Sustainability Index, 2013).

Various international reports confirmed an increasing use of state-controlled mass media outlets as a delivery mechanism for anti-Ukrainian and anti-Western propaganda. Reporters Without Borders (2015) stressed the Kremlin's strategic use of state-controlled mass media and increasing involvement in social media:

Propaganda from state-owned media outlets intensified after Russia began its military intervention in Ukraine in early 2014. The most egregious disinformation was often reinforced by altered or falsely identified images. In April, for example, Russian media reported that Ukrainian authorities were building a concentration camp in eastern Ukraine, citing pictures that

actually showed the abandoned construction site of a European Union–funded facility meant to house illegal migrants. Separately, Russian authorities continued to use paid commentators to influence online content. Media investigations have uncovered paid commenting campaigns organized by pro-Kremlin youth movements, and foreign media outlets in 2014 reported a surge in propagandistic user comments on articles related to Russia or Ukraine (Reporters Without Borders, Freedom of the Press 2015).

In 2015, the Russian news website Colta.ru published a series of interviews with former journalists and news managers from the most prominent state-controlled mass media outlets in Russia. The people who were interviewed quit their jobs after the beginning of the escalation of events in Ukraine. These interviews provided unique insights into the drastic changes that took place in state-controlled mass media after the mass protests of 2012 and the beginning of conflict in Ukraine in 2013. These testimonies highlighted the transformation of the state-controlled media into what can most accurately be described as the Kremlin’s propaganda machine.

The beginning of the events in Ukraine, according to Lisa Lerer, the former editor-in-chief of the marketing department of TV channel “Russia-1,” brought a change in the coverage of news stories, but also made her feel that she could not any longer be open with her colleagues about her views that were critical of president Putin:

But after protests and Ukraine I began to feel at work the way I did back in school [in the Soviet Union]. At school, I could not talk openly with friends about how I feel about the Soviet regime. I could not tell that I go to church. And why on the Saturday before Easter, it was necessarily for me to skip school. The same thing happened here [on TV channel “Russia”] (Sidorov, 2015).

In the interview, Lerer explained her decision to quit her job by saying that at some point she became convinced that working for a state-controlled television station was tantamount to “complicity in a crime.”

Other former employees of state-controlled broadcasting companies also pointed out a dramatic change in the editorial policy that took place in state-controlled television stations after the beginning of events in Ukraine. According to a former employee of the All-Russia State Television (VGTRK), the editor-in-chief of VGTRK announced the beginning of new Cold War in an editorial meeting in February 2014:

There was a meeting in February 2014, when editor-in-chief said that the ‘Cold War’ began. Not just an information war, because everybody already knew that information war started much earlier. But a ‘Cold War,’ which for many of us was a throwback. He said that a new era began, in comparison to which 70s and 80s were just a child’s play, and that those who do not wish to participate can find some other profession, outside of our television channel. All the rest – welcome to the club (Sidorov, 2015).

Standards of journalistic objectivity, as they are understood in Western societies, were not applicable to the journalism practices of the state-run media outlets in Russia. Another former journalist from the All-Russia State Television (VGTRK) stressed an absence of any kind of journalistic standards among the employees of state-controlled television:

If Khodorkovsky [former Russian businessman and oligarch, now in stark opposition to president Putin] came to power and organized his own channel, they would work for him; if a fascist came to power, they would be working for him as well... If the situation suddenly changed, these people would not be able to return to normal journalism, to normal standards – simply because they do not know what those standards are. All of them would have to be lustrated, to be thrown out of the profession. [We would have to] hire all the new people and teach them differently (Sidorov, 2015).

Several former employees of state-controlled TV channels described the relationship between the Kremlin and the leadership of major broadcasting companies. According to their accounts, the editors-in-chief participated on a weekly basis in meetings with representatives of the presidential administration, where they were given detailed guidelines on how to cover the news for the coming week (Sidorov, 2015).

From 2013 to 2015, state-controlled TV channels in Russia were transformed into a single propaganda machine designed to deliver a unified, Kremlin-approved message to the Russian audience. The transformation was described very well by a former correspondent of the All-Russia State Television:

... There was no war between the channels anymore, that is, the competition did not exist anymore. There was an order from the Presidential Administration for us to stop bickering, stop competing who has more exclusive materials... Overall it [broadcasting by various TV channels] became a massive flow of information. Everybody [journalists from different TV channels] were sharing everything with each other: photos, speakers, and passed contacts to each other. All [TV channels] became one. Different companies, different shareholders, different media structures. A consolidated propaganda body was created (Sidorov, 2015).

The effectiveness of the new consolidated propaganda campaign was demonstrated not only through public opinion polls that showed growing support for Putin and his policies, but also through growing ratings of the newscasts of the state-controlled TV stations.

A limited number of news outlets attempted to adhere to the standards of journalistic objectivity in their coverage of events in Ukraine, but under constant pressure from the Russian authorities objective reporting was becoming increasingly difficult.

The Rise of Anti-Americanism in the Kremlin's rhetoric and in mass media

Another important consequence of the mass protests in Russia in late-2011 into 2012 and the unraveling crisis in Ukraine was the increasingly anti-American and anti-Western sentiments expressed publicly by the Russian leadership and subsequently supported by a parallel rise of anti-American feeling expressed in state-controlled mass media (Birnbaum, 2013).

Remnic (2014) suggested that the rise of official anti-American rhetoric was Putin's attempt to suppress domestic opposition: "Putin, feeling betrayed by both the urban middle classes and the West, made it plain that he would go on the offensive against any sign of foreign interference, real or imagined. A raw and resentful anti-Americanism, unknown since the seventies, suffused Kremlin policy and the state-run airwaves."

The Russian president openly blamed the United States and the State Department for encouraging and financing the protests in Russia: "She [Hillary Clinton] set the tone that gave some of our activists inside the country a signal. They heard this signal and, under the support of the US state affairs, began their active work" (Weaver 2011). He also added that "hundreds of millions of dollars" are spent by foreign powers in Russia with hopes of influencing political process" (Weaver 2011). This last remark turned into one of president Putin's consistent talking points, accusing the United States of financing the Russian opposition.

Putin's rhetoric during the presidential campaign of 2012 became increasingly isolationist, anti-American and generally hostile to the West:

Putin's campaign focus has been external and bellicose, alluding to looming threats from abroad. Specifically, the campaign has singled out the United

States as a nefarious and untrustworthy meddler both internationally, as well as in Russia's domestic politics. The repeated message essentially is this: Russia will have its rightful place on the world political stage once it has a military to be contended with; Russia will not tolerate what it perceives to be outside meddling in its internal affairs; and the election of Putin will ensure Russia's security and stability (Sternhal, 2012).

In March 2012, Putin won the presidential elections with 63.6% of the vote. Just as has been previously shown in the context of mass media and freedom of the press, Russian authorities moved quickly after the election and, under the pretense of limiting foreign influence on domestic affairs in Russia, to systematically suppress the activities of and erode the perceived legitimacy of non-governmental organizations, specifically those that were openly critical of the Russian government (Amnesty International, 2013).

An openly anti-American framing was used by Russian authorities and, consequentially, state-controlled mass media, in presenting the anti-NGO campaign to the public. According to media reports, Kostantin Kosachev, head of the Federation Council's Committee for Foreign Affairs and the main sponsor of the bill, publicly accused the West of using NGOs for promoting revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia (Gorbachev 2015). He stated that "Americans and their allies don't hide that Russia is next," adding that foreign NGOs should be controlled "in order not to repeat another defeat of the country and the nation" (Gorbachev, 2015:2).

In the following years, anti-Americanism became a pillar of the Kremlin's ideology. Putin's rhetoric was more and more focused on the ideological struggle between the Russian civilization and its way of life and a hostile, aggressive United States:

Putin's speeches were full of hostility, lashing out at the West for betraying its promises, for treating Russia like a defeated 'vassal' rather than a great country, for an inability to distinguish between right and wrong. He denounced the United States for its behavior in Hiroshima and Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, the Balkans and Libya. He cut off adoptions to America, claiming that 'our' babies were being abused by cruel and heedless foreigners. The West was hypocritical, arrogant, self-righteous, and dissolute, according to Putin, so he strengthened his alliance with the Russian Orthodox Church to reestablish "traditional Russian values" (Remnic, 2014).

Since 2012, coverage of the United States by Russian state-controlled mass media fully corresponded with the Kremlin's increasingly anti-American rhetoric. State-controlled television stations were repeatedly talking about the "treachery of Russian liberals and American manipulations" (Remnic, 2014).

Dmitry Kiselev, the head of recently created news agency Russia Today, and the host of a popular Sunday night show "Vesti Nedeli" (News of the Week), spearheaded the propaganda efforts. Remnic (2014), who called Kiselev "a masterly, and unapologetic, purveyor of the Kremlin line" described his attacks against the United States on Russian television:

With his theatrical hand gestures and brilliantly insinuating intonation, he tells his viewers that Russia is the only country in the world that can turn the U.S. into 'radioactive dust,' that the anti-gay-propaganda laws are insufficiently strict, and that Ukraine is not a real country but merely 'virtual'.... He tells his viewers that, in Ukraine, fascists abound, the U.S. State Department underwrites revolutions, and 'life is not worth a single kopeck' (Remnic, 2014).

Accusations against the United States of scheming against Russian interests, initiating and supporting the revolution and civil war in Ukraine, and imperialistic ambitions of world domination became a mainstream framework in state-controlled mass media.

State-run television became a key factor in the Kremlin's strategy to foster anti-Western attitudes among the Russian public. Birnbaum (2015) argued that state-controlled mass media, with television as its dominant force, were promoting the image of Russian as a nation under attack by skillfully mixing facts with biased opinion in their coverage for the clear purpose of moving the public mindset.

Sabrina Tavernise of the *New York Times* provided an accurate description of the extent of anti-Americanism in Russian broadcasting in 2015:

“Independent voices are all but gone from Russian television and most channels now march to the same, slickly produced beat. Virtually any domestic problem, from rubles decline to pensioners losing subsidies and public transport, is cast as a geopolitical stand-off between Russia and America, and political unrest anywhere is portrayed as having an American state department official lurking behind it” (Tavernise, 2015).

By 2015, state-controlled mass media had been turned into an effective propaganda machine, and anti-Americanism was one of its driving components.

Chapter 5

Results of the Study

Public opinion analysis: dimensions of anti-Americanism in Russia

Anti-Americanism in Russia was examined by applying various methods of statistical analysis to the data from a survey conducted in Russia by the Pew Research Center in 2012. The dataset from the 2012 survey wave was chosen because it was the only recent survey that allowed comparison with research conducted by Chiozza (2010). Both Pew surveys included not only questions about respondents' attitudes towards the United States and the American people, but also focused on various aspects of American culture and influence, such as cultural norms, economic regulations, foreign policy, etc.

In order to investigate peculiarities of public attitudes held by the Russian public towards various aspects of the United States, the author used descriptive statistics, and conducted factor analysis, regression modeling, and cluster analysis in order to detect structural patterns and evaluate relationships between variables. All of the data analysis was conducted in SPSS. Other methods, such as cross-tabs and correlations, were also used to further analyze the data.

Table 1 displays the opinion of all of the Russian respondents towards the United States and the American people in 2012. The Pew poll included two separate questions ("opinion about the United States" and "opinion about Americans") focused on the United States. Although Pew Research Center did not provide operationalization of the terms "United States" and "Americans" or differences between them, we can suggest that the term "United States" was used to study respondents' attitudes towards the U.S.

government, leadership, and policies while “Americans” referred to the people living in the United States.

A majority (52.6%) of respondents held positive views (“very favorable” and “somewhat favorable” answers combined) about the United States, and 34.4% expressed negative opinion. The Russian respondents demonstrated their basic friendly attitude towards the American people: 63.9% held positive views, and only 24.2% expressed negative views.

The views of the Russian public about the United States in 2012 generally corresponded with the global trend. As seen in Table 2, data from the same survey conducted by Pew Global in 20 countries (Brazil, Britain, China, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, Pakistan, Poland, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United States) world-wide showed that the attitudes of the Russian respondents towards the United States and its people was slightly higher than average across other surveyed countries. In comparison to global trends at that time, the Russian public mindset could be described as moderately pro-American.

Table 3 included answers of Russian respondents to a variety of soft power questions about the United States, its people and culture. Nye (2004) defined soft power as the ability of a state to get the desired outcome through attraction rather than coercion or payments. In the Pew survey, soft power was measured by asking respondents about their attitudes towards American scientific advances, popular culture, ideas about democracy, ways of doing business and spread of American customs in Russia.

Table 1. Attitudes of respondents in Russia towards the United States and the American people. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

	Q8A. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of the United States?	Q8B. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of Americans?
Very favorable	11.3	12.7
Somewhat favorable	41.3	51.2
Somewhat unfavorable	25.2	18.7
Very unfavorable	9.2	5.5
Don't know	11.7	10.7
Refused	1.3	1.2

Table 2. Attitudes of respondents in 21 countries towards the United States and the American people. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

	Q8A. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of the United States?	Q8B. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of Americans?
Very favorable	12.5	12.8
Somewhat favorable	35.7	39.3
Somewhat unfavorable	22.0	21.4
Very unfavorable	18.4	15.3
Don't know	10.3	9.9
Refused	1.2	1.4

Table 3. Attitudes of respondents in Russia towards various aspects of American soft power. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

	Q54. American ideas and customs spreading in Russia	Q55. American ideas about democracy	Q56. American ways of doing business	Q57. American music, movies and television	Q58. American technological and scientific advances
Positive attitude	20.2	26.9	33.8	49.5	34.2
Negative attitude	67.9	52.5	41.1	42.3	48.9
Don't know	11.5	20.1	24.9	7.5	15.9
Refused	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.7	1.0

Table 4. Attitudes of respondents in 21 countries towards various aspects of American soft power. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

	Q54. American ideas and customs spreading in Russia	Q55. American ideas about democracy	Q56. American ways of doing business	Q57. American music, movies and television	Q58. American technological and scientific advances
Positive attitude	28.9	41.0	40.0	47.6	63.7
Negative attitude	56.6	42.3	41.2	39.7	23.1
Don't know	9.6	11.5	13.6	7.6	8.1
Refused	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2

Comparison between answers to questions related to American soft power in Russia (Table 3) and across the globe in 2012 (Table 4) demonstrated similarities and distinctions between views of the global and Russian public.

Russian popular opinion about issues related to American soft power (or “dimensions of America” in Chiozza’s terminology) generally also followed global trends. The Russians, as well as the global public, embraced American popular culture and technological and scientific advances. The notion of American cultural imperialism (table 4, Q54 “American ideas and customs spreading in Russia”) was perceived negatively by majority of respondents both in Russia and across the 21 countries surveyed by Pew.

As seen in the Tables 1 and 3, the Russian public in 2012 mostly held neutral to moderately positive attitudes towards the United States and its people. Their attitudes towards different displays of American soft power (with an exception of American music, movies and television) were much more negative, and more negative than views of respondents in other countries.

The results of this study confirmed the notion that views about the United States in Russia are indeed a complicated and multi-dimensional phenomenon. The data demonstrated the multi-faceted nature of the attitudes of the Russian public towards the United States. These findings supported Chiozza’s (2010) dimensions of America theory. Chiozza stressed the multidimensional nature of foreign public’s views of the United States, incorporating sometimes conflicting views on various aspects of the United States and its actions. According to the theory, opinion of foreign publics towards the United

States “takes a loose and multi-faceted form, in which negative and positive elements coexist with no apparent tension” (Chiozza, p. 4).

The data demonstrated that, in accordance to Chiozza’s dimensions of America theory, large sections of population in Russia held simultaneously positive and negative attitudes towards various dimensions of United States, its culture and influence.

The aggregated respondent’s answers to survey questions described above provided useful information about general attitudes of the Russian public towards the United States and its people and culture, but also presented additional questions.

First, what was it about their attitudes towards the United States that changed so drastically from the spring 2012 to January 2015, when the number of Russians holding negative feelings about the U.S. reached 81%? What was it about the attitudes and mindset of the Russian public that facilitated and allowed such a drastic increase in anti-American feelings?

And second, how much influence did attitudes towards other issues, people and events have on Russians’ views about the United States? Additional statistical testing and analysis was performed in order to answers these questions and provide insights into the mindset of the Russian public in regards to the United States.

Factor analysis

According to Hill & Lewicki (2005), factor analysis is a statistical method used to (1) reduce the number of variables and (2) detect structure within the relationships between variables, that is, to classify variables. Factor analysis is focused on seeking out joint

variations in response to unobserved variables, also called factors. This method describes variability between correlated variables, focusing on extracting fewer unabsorbed underlying variables and reducing the number of variables for better interpretation.

In this study, factor analysis was employed to extract factors (unobserved variables) among the following variables representing attitudes of the respondents in Russia towards the United States, its people and various aspects of American culture and influence:

Q8. Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of (INSERT)?

- a) The United States
- b) Americans

Q54. Which of the following phrases comes closer to your view? It's good that American ideas and customs are spreading here, OR it's bad that American ideas and customs are spreading here.

Q55. And which of these comes closer to your view? I like American ideas about democracy, OR I dislike American ideas about democracy.

Q56. Which comes closer to describing your view? I like American ways of doing business, OR I dislike American ways of doing business.

Q57. Which is closer to describing your view? I like American music, movies and television, OR I dislike American music, movies and television.

Q58. And which comes closer to describing your view? I admire the United States for its technological and scientific advances, OR I do not admire the United States for its technological and scientific advances.

In accordance with the approach taken by Chiozza (2010), the variables describing public attitudes towards various aspects of American culture and influence were transformed into binary variables. The greater or lesser degree of negative attitude to a certain aspect of American influence was coded 1, while all other options (including positive attitude) were coded as 0.

Principal components factor analysis (as suggested by Hill & Lewick, 2005), including varimax factor rotation, produced two factors that explained 56% of the variance. In other words, the underlying factors explained more than half of the variance of the different aspects of attitudes towards the U.S. and its culture. The relevant factor loadings (i.e. correlations between variable and the two factors) were presented in the following table.

Table 5 showed that respondent's attitudes towards the United States and Americans were highly correlated amongst themselves, and all the soft power questions were highly intercorrelated amongst themselves. At the same time, correlations between the two types of questions was comparatively small.

Thus, factor analysis showed that there were two relatively independent factors: attitude towards the U.S. and Americans (the second factor) and the attitudes towards other aspects of American influence (the first factor). The first factor was marked by high loadings on the American soft power questions, the second factor was marked by high loadings on the attitude towards the U.S. and the American people. Contribution of variables q8a and q8b to the first factor, as well as of variables q54-q58 to the second was relatively small.

Table 5. Factor loadings in factor analysis, data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

Variables	Factor Loadings	
	1	2
Attitudes towards the United States (q8a)	.201	.882
Attitudes towards American people (q8b)	.153	.896
Attitude towards spread of American ideas and customs in Russia (q54)	.679	.189
Attitude towards American ideas about democracy (q55)	.741	.170
Attitudes towards American ways of doing business (q56)	.722	.118
Attitudes towards American music, movies and television (q57)	.540	.147
Attitudes towards the United States for its technological and scientific advances (q58)	.612	.059

This meant that the respondent's answers to questions about Americans and the United States were interconnected: if a respondent had a negative view of the people, he or she would tend to have negative views on the United States. At the same time, if a respondent expressed negative views about one aspect of American culture, he or she would tend to have negative views about all other aspects of American soft power. This logic was proven to work with both negative and positive views.

However, there were no statistically significant correlation between the two factors. Positive or negative attitudes towards American music, art, movies or any other aspects of American soft power could be combined with the either like or dislike for the United States and its citizens.

Other methods of statistical analysis, which will be discussed further, confirmed the results of factor analysis.

Regression analysis

The purpose of the multiple regression analysis, according to Hill & Lewicki (2005), is to “is to analyze the relationship between several independent or predictor variables and a dependent or criterion variable.”

The multiple regression analysis was used in this research project to study the relationship between the dependent variable “attitude towards the United States” (variable Q8a in a binary form) and a number of independent variables, i.e. to find out which of the other survey questions reflecting respondents' attitudes on a number of domestic and

foreign issues have better predictive power in regards to their attitude towards the United States.

In addition to variables that measure various aspects related to dimensions of America, this analysis incorporated more than a dozen variables that measured the attitudes of the respondents in Russia towards various aspects of public life, domestic and foreign policy. All of them, apart from demographics, have been transformed into binary variables, where various degrees of negative assessments were reduced to 1, and all positive to 0. The variable “age” was transformed into a variable with three gradations: youth (18-29), middle age (30-59) and older (60 and older). The variable “education” had 8 answer options, in accordance with the different levels of education adopted in Russia.

When variable Q8b (attitudes towards the American people) was incorporated into a set of independent variables, the Nagelkerke coefficient (an analogue to squared correlation coefficient in the standard regression analysis for interval variables) was 0.58.

A set of independent variables, beta coefficients of which were significant at the 0.95 confidence interval, was presented in the following table.

Where the variables Q54-55 were described above, and Q2, RUS4, and Q92 were the following:

Q2 Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?

RUS4 Which statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right? Russia is as respected around the world as it should be OR Russia should be more respected around the world than it is?

Table 6. Results of the regression analysis including variable “attitudes towards the American people,” data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

Variable	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Attitude towards spread of American ideas and customs in Russia (q54)	.576	.024
Attitude towards American ideas about democracy (q55)	.630	.006
Satisfaction with the way things are going in Russia today (q2)	.674	.001
Views on whether Russia is respected around the world as it should be (rus4)	.619	.010
Overall approval of the international policies of President Barack Obama (q92)	.883	.000
Attitudes towards American people (q8b)	3.537	.000

Q92 Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the international policies of President Barack Obama?

In the table above the positive regression coefficient of the variable Q2 was worth noticing. Those respondents who believed that things in Russia were going in the right direction in 2012 were not more, but to a lesser extent prone to anti-Americanism. In other words, those who did not like the policy of the Kremlin, did not like America either.

As it can be seen from Table 6, attitudes towards the American people was the best predictor of the attitude towards the United States. Variable Q8b had the largest value of the beta coefficient, significantly exceeding the coefficients of the remaining variables.

It is also interesting, however, to mention variables that were not included into the model because of the low significance of their beta coefficients. Those variables included demographics (age and education), and attitudes towards Putin, who in 2012 was just elected for a third term as president.

The regression model, where the variable describing the attitudes towards American people was excluded, produced somewhat different picture. In this model, the explanatory power of the model is markedly reduced, the Nagelkerke coefficient was only 0.32. The list of variables with significant beta coefficients are presented in the following table.

Compared with the previous model two additional variables were added:

Q40a Now I'm going to read a list of political leaders. For each, tell me how much confidence you have in each leader to do the right thing regarding world affairs – a lot of confidence, some confidence, not too much confidence, or no confidence at all?

Table 7. Results of the regression analysis excluding variable “attitudes towards the American people,” data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

Variable	Beta coefficient	Significance level
Attitude towards spread of American ideas and customs in Russia (q54)	.859	.000
Attitude towards American ideas about democracy (q55)	.656	.000
Satisfaction with the way things are going in Russia today (q2)	.490	.004
Views on whether Russia is respected around the world as it should be (rus4)	.362	.056
Overall approval of the international policies of President Barack Obama (q92)	.804	.000
Confidence in Barack Obama to do the right thing regarding world affairs (q40a)	.423	.010
Position on the statement “Most elected officials care what people like me think” (q68a)	.570	.002

From a list of politicians only option Q40a – “Barack Obama” was used for this analysis.

Q68a Please tell me whether you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with the following statement: Most elected officials care what people like me think.

In the model that excluded attitudes towards the American people (Table 7) respondents’ attitudes towards the spread of American ideas and customs in Russia had the highest predictor power. The explanatory power of the model, however, was reduced from Nagelkerke coefficient 0.58 to 0.32.

The last variable from the list above (attitudes towards elected officials) presented a paradoxical phenomenon. The coefficient of the corresponding variable was positive. This meant that those respondents who did not believe that the majority of elected officials in Russia care about what people like the respondent think, were more likely to have negative attitude towards America than those who hold the opposite opinion. In other words, those who poorly evaluated elected officials in Russia, poorly assessed the United States as well.

This paradox was partly explained by the results of the cluster analysis displayed in Table 8.

Cluster analysis

Cluster analysis is a statistical method used for grouping objects of similar kinds into categories. According to Hill & Lewicki (2005), this method “is an exploratory data analysis tool which aims at sorting different objects into groups in a way that the degree of

association between two objects is maximal if they belong to the same group and minimal otherwise” (p. 115).

In the context of this research project, cluster analysis was used to separate respondents into groups (or clusters) based on their answers to a number of questions concerning the United States and its soft power. In the results, each cluster contained respondents who held similar views of the United States, i.e. answers of respondents within a cluster were more similar to each other rather than to those of respondents in other clusters.

Variables q8a, q8b, q54-58, describing the attitudes towards the various aspects of American influence, were used in the cluster analysis. They were transformed into the ternary form: negative attitude was coded as “-1”, positive attitude as “1”, any other attitude as “0”. The method of k-means clustering with four clusters was used. Average values of variables in the respective clusters are presented in the following table.

The first cluster includes 26% of the respondents, the second 19%, the third 27%, the fourth 28%.

The first cluster can be called “consistently anti-American.” Among respondents from this cluster the balance of positive and negative assessments of the United States was -69%, while the balance of positive and negative attitudes towards American people was -38%. At the same time, representatives of the cluster dislike not only the United States and American people, but they also held very negative views about everything American. For example, the question about the spread of American ideas and customs to Russia had a

Table 8. Results of the cluster analysis, data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

Variables	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
Attitude towards the United States (q8a)	-0.69	-0.70	+0.85	+0.95
Attitude towards American people (q8b)	-0.38	-0.12	+0.93	+0.95
Attitude towards spread of American ideas and customs in Russia (q54)	-0.92	-0.75	+0.47	-0.80
Attitude towards American ideas about democracy (q55)	-0.78	-0.52	+0.59	-0.42
Attitude towards American ways of doing business (q56)	-0.59	-0.14	+0.57	-0.17
Attitude towards American music, movies and television (q57)	-0.95	+0.81	+0.85	-0.25
Attitude towards the United States for its technological and scientific advances (q58)	-0.61	-0.33	+0.47	-0.20

balance of -92%, while the question about attitudes towards American culture (music, movies and television) had a balance of -95%.

The second cluster can be described as “moderately anti-American.” However, the moderation of their anti-American views is relative, since the level of the negative attitude towards the United States in this group was similar to the first cluster. The level of negativity towards the spread of American ideas and customs was also very high (-75%), although less than in the first cluster. Attitudes towards other dimensions of America in this group was less negative than in the consistent anti-American group. But the most striking difference was found in attitudes towards American movies, music and television. Almost all members of this group demonstrated positive attitudes towards American popular culture (+81%). Their attitudes can be summarized in the following statement: “We do not love America, but we love Hollywood. But only Hollywood.”

The members of the third cluster are “consistently pro-American,” complete opposite of the first cluster. Almost all members of this group like the United States (+85%), and even more of them harbor good feelings towards the American people (+93%). These people also expressed positive feelings towards all other kinds of American culture and influence - technology, democracy, the ways of doing business, popular culture. The least popular items for the respondents in this group were the spread of American ideas and customs in Russia (+47%), and American science and technology (+47%). However, as the table 8 demonstrated, even these two aspects of American influence were viewed by the consistently pro-American respondents in relatively positive way.

The fourth cluster was the most intriguing one. It can be described as “paradoxical pro-American”. Members of this cluster are even more sympathetic towards the United States and the American people than people from the consistently pro-American group (+95% and +95% respectively). However, their attitudes towards all other aspects of the American culture and outreach is definitely negative. These respondents were particularly negative towards the notion of American cultural imperialism, i.e. the spread American ideas and customs in Russia (-80%).

In order to gain additional insight into the mindset of all the clusters of respondents, cross-tabs between clusters and answers to other questions from the survey are provided in Table 9, 10 and 11. Several questions on the survey, including respondent’s views on domestic Russian affairs, provided important information about their worldviews and beliefs.

Based on the suggestions of some experts, for example Shlapentokh (2011), about the nature of modern anti-Americanism in Russia, i.e. that it has been artificially inflated by elites and the Russian authorities for the purpose of boosting public support of their policies, those respondents who supported Russian authorities and were satisfied with the way things were going in Russian would likely hold stronger anti-American convictions, while people opposed to Russian authorities would be more pro-American.

Table 9, however, demonstrates that these assumptions were disproved by the survey data analysis. In 2012, a majority of respondents from both clusters of those consistently and those moderately anti-American clusters (clusters 1 and 2) were dissatisfied with the way things were going in Russia. At the same time, respondents who

viewed the United States in a more positive way (clusters 3 and 4) expressed their satisfaction with the direction the country was going.

Analysis of respondents' attitudes towards the re-election of Vladimir Putin in March 2012 produced results consistent with the previous table. The return of Putin to the Kremlin was greeted with more enthusiasm by people who expressed positive views about the United States, while those who held anti-American views were less satisfied with election results.

Results of the cluster analysis showed that those who supported President Putin personally *and* were satisfied with the way things were going in Russia held more positive views of the United States than those who were less supportive of Putin. This is contrary to expectations of the traditional explanation for anti-Americanism in Russia as mostly being a result of manipulation by Putin and his administration in 2012.

Anti-Americanism and age of respondents

The data analysis showed that in 2012 anti-American views were expressed to some extent by people across different age groups in Russia. According to the data, the younger population was slightly more likely to have pro-American views, while the older generation, was more likely to harbor negative attitudes towards everything American.

As Table 11 demonstrated, the consistently anti-American cluster had the largest proportion of elderly people and the lowest proportion of young people. The pro-American cluster had the highest proportion of young people - almost 40%.

Table 9. Cross-tab between clusters and question “Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?” (% in cluster). Data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

		Q2. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in our country today?			
		Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know	Refused
Cluster	1	39.2%	53.1%	7.7%	
	2	36.6%	54.5%	7.9%	1.0%
	3	47.6%	37.7%	14.7%	
	4	55.8%	38.0%	5.8%	0.4%
Total		45.6%	45.0%	9.1%	0.3%

Table 10. Cross-tab between clusters and question “Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the results of the March 4th Presidential elections?” (% in cluster). Data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

		RUS1. Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with the results of the March 4th Presidential elections?			
		Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know	Refused
Cluster	1	54.2%	37.3%	8.1%	0.4%
	2	50.3%	32.5%	15.7%	1.6%
	3	56.0%	31.1%	12.5%	0.4%
	4	63.4%	31.2%	5.1%	0.4%
Total		56.5%	33.0%	9.9%	0.6%

It is important to note that among the moderately anti-American respondents a third were younger people, 18 to 29 year olds.

However, regression analysis demonstrated that the age variable had to be excluded from the model because of the low significance of beta coefficients. One cannot, based on this data, claim that age had a strong effect on respondents' attitudes towards the United States.

In order to further test the relationship between two variables (attitudes towards the United States and age of respondents) correlation analyses was performed. Correlation analysis measures the strength of the relationship between the two variables (source). The statistical testing included three standard correlation coefficients (Pearson's r Correlation, Kendall's Tau, and Spearman's rho rank), all of which measure the strength of association between two variables.

As seen in the Table 13, the Pearson's r correlation between attitudes towards the United States and respondent's age was $-.149$. According to suggested estimates for interpreting strengths of correlations, r in the range from $-.01$ to $-.19$ can be interpreted as no or negligible relationship. Kendall's Tau and Spearman's rho coefficients also confirmed that association between age and attitudes towards the United States was statistically weak. These results, combined with the regression analysis, demonstrated a weak association between the age of respondents and their attitudes towards the United States.

Interpretation of these results means that, contrary to an opinion expressed by various experts, it would be a mistake to think that anti-Americanism is Russia was

Table 11. Cross-tab between attitudes towards the United States and age group. Data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

		Age group			Total
		18-29	30-59	60+	
Attitude towards U.S.	Negative	29.5%	33.3%	44.2%	34.4%
	Neutral	10.2%	10.8%	22.6%	13.0%
	Positive	60.4%	55.9%	33.2%	52.6%

Table 12. Cross-tab between clusters and age groups. Data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

		Age		
		18-29	30-59	60+
Cluster	1	13.8%	48.5%	37.7%
	2	33.0%	51.3%	15.7%
	3	39.6%	51.6%	8.8%
	4	24.6%	58.3%	17.0%
Total		27.5%	52.6%	19.9%

Table 13. Correlation analyses between attitudes towards the United States and age of respondents. Data from the survey conducted in Russia. Pew Global Attitudes survey, 2012.

Correlation Coefficient	age_3
Pearson's r	-.149
Kendall's Tau	-.138
Spearman's (rho) rank	-.152

confined within an older population who were born, raised and lived adult lives in the Soviet Union.

Dimensions of popular Anti-Americanism in Russia: conclusions

In summary of the results of the Pew data analysis, one sees first that more than half of the respondents (52.6%) in 2012 held positive attitudes towards the United States, while about a third (34.4%) held negative views. The levels of pro-American attitudes in Russia were slightly higher than the world average, according to the same Pew poll. The respondents' attitudes towards various aspects of American soft power (with an exception of American pop culture) were mostly negative, and were worse than the global average. In accordance to Chiozza's dimensions of America theory, large sections of the Russian respondents held simultaneously positive and negative attitudes towards various dimensions of United States, its culture and influence.

The results of additional statistical analysis provided an important insight into the mindset of the Russian public and its views about the United States.

First, factor analysis produced two hidden factors, and demonstrated that attitudes towards the United States and its people were inter-correlated, but independent from respondents' evaluations of American soft power. Various aspects of American soft power (business practices, popular culture, science and technology, ideas about democracy and spread of American customs in Russia) were interrelated, but independent from respondent's attitudes towards the country in general and its people. Testing the soft power thesis in Russia showed that there was no strong relationship between respondents'

attitudes towards American soft power and their evaluation about the country. Results from Russia differ from Chiozza's world-wide results from 2002 Pew global poll. Interpretation of these results and implications of the soft power theory in Russia are discussed in details in the following chapter.

The multiple regression analysis was performed in order to find out what other variables had the most predictive power on respondents' views about the United States. The analysis demonstrated that respondents' attitudes towards the American people was the best predictor for their attitudes towards the United States in general. When the attitude towards the American people was excluded from the model, the attitudes towards the spread of American ideas and customs in Russia had the highest predictor power. The explanatory power of the model, however, was significantly reduced. It is also important to note that neither age, nor attitudes towards Putin had a significant predictive power over respondents' attitudes towards the United States. According to the results, respondents who were negative towards Putin and his policies were more prone to express anti-American views.

Cluster analysis was used to separate respondents into clusters with similar answers to a number of questions about the United States, its people and its soft power. Cluster analysis produced four clusters, including consistent/moderate anti-American (26% and 19%) and consistent/paradoxical pro-American attitudes (27% and 28%). While these first two clusters that expressed anti-American views displayed traits that were expected based on previous research on anti-Americanism in Russia, the pro-American clusters presented some unexpected results. First, respondents in both of the pro-American clusters displayed

higher levels of support for Putin, his policies and the direction that the country was going than the anti-American respondents. Second, respondents from the fourth (so-called paradoxical pro-American cluster) expressed positive views attitudes towards the United States and its people and highly negative attitudes towards very aspect of the American power.

The implications and possible interpretations of these results are discussed in detail in the following chapter of the dissertation. It is important, however, to stress that the in-depth analysis of mass public opinion about the United States and all of the aspects of its influences in Russia produced results that significantly differ from the research conducted in other countries, and to some extent is counterintuitive to assumptions popular both in academic circles and the expert community.

These results demonstrate the complexity and uniqueness of the relationship between the Russian public and the United States, and stresses the need for additional research and interpretation.

Anti-Americanism, trust and use of mass media

Data provided by the Levada Center was used to study relations between media use, trust for mass media and the level of anti-Americanism among the Russian public. The data covered a period from May 2011 to July 2015.

Tables 14-18 are a cross-tab between respondents' attitudes towards the United States and their main sources of information about events in the country.

Table 14. Respondents' attitudes towards the U.S. and their main sources of information.

Data from the survey conducted in Russia. The Levada Center, 2015.

		What is your main source of information about events in the country?							
	Total	Russian state TV channels	Russian private TV channels	Internet	Foreign sources	Russian state newspapers	Russian non-state newspapers	Radio	Neighbors, friends, acquaintances
July 2015									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	1602	1359	394	627	13	114	14	175	369
Very positive	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.3	5.2	3.1	0	2.6	4
Mostly positive	16.2	14.6	15.7	18	38	11.7	9.7	18.8	16.7
Mostly negative	38.9	39	34.6	41.9	39.7	40.6	11.6	44.9	37.6
Very negative	31.2	33.3	38	28	4.9	30.1	61.5	25.4	31.3
Don't know	11	10.8	9.4	9.8	12.2	14.6	17.2	8.3	10.4
January 2015									
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	806	701	207	301	5	67	9	52	220
Very positive	1.7	1.3	3.1	2.9	0	0	0	0	1.1
Mostly positive	10.6	9.6	7.3	14.1	29.6	10.5	16.7	22.6	7.3
Mostly negative	41.8	41.1	40.4	41.6	59.3	49.2	48.5	36.6	47.7
Very negative	39.3	41.9	40.6	35.2	11.1	40.1	34.8	38.9	38.1
Don't know	6.6	6.2	8.6	6.1	0	0.1	0	1.8	5.8

Table 15. Respondents' attitudes towards the U.S. and their main sources of information.

Data from the survey conducted in Russia. The Levada Center, 2014.

	What is your main source of information about events in the country?								
	Total	Russian state TV channels	Russian private TV channels	Internet	Foreign sources	Russian state newspapers	Russian non-state newspapers	Radio	Neighbors, friends, acquaintances
September 2014									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	1600	1346	494	568	17	107	14	181	406
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
Very positive	1.1	1	1.6	0.8	10.6	1	13.1	0.8	0.8
Mostly positive	15.9	13.6	14.3	21.2	7	22.1	0	20.2	15.7
Mostly negative	42.5	43.5	42	41.8	32.9	42	19.1	38.5	43.7
Very negative	30.2	32.3	30.5	25.6	47.3	28.8	63.2	34.1	28.1
Don't know	10.3	9.5	11.7	10.6	2.2	6.2	4.6	6.4	11.7
March 2014									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	793	707	184	287	12	61	5	60	197
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
Very positive	2	1.8	1	3.8	0	0.4	0	0	2.4
Mostly positive	32.3	31.4	27.1	35.1	64.3	24.7	15.7	50.4	37
Mostly negative	43.5	44.7	47.1	42.8	35.7	56.6	84.3	20.2	35.9
Very negative	12.1	11.9	12.5	10.5	0	7.8	0	17.6	11.7
Don't know	10.1	10.2	12.3	7.8	0	10.4	0	11.8	12.9

Table 16. Respondents' attitudes towards the U.S. and their main sources of information.

Data from the survey conducted in Russia. The Levada Center, 2013.

	What is your main source of information about events in the country?								
	Total	Russian state TV channels	Russian private TV channels	Internet	Foreign sources	Russian state newspapers	Russian non-state newspapers	Radio	Neighbors, friends, acquaintances
<i>November 2013</i>									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>160</i> <i>3</i>	<i>136</i> <i>6</i>	<i>502</i>	<i>546</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>149</i>	<i>313</i>
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
Very positive	4.3	3.5	4.7	4.5	2.4	5.1	5.8	3.5	5.1
Mostly positive	33.1	33.1	33.8	37	39.7	23.2	53.7	40.4	27.3
Mostly negative	35.2	36.8	34.6	34.3	31.5	47.1	21.7	29.8	40
Very negative	14	14.1	14.8	12.1	12.5	16.6	10.1	15.4	11.9
Don't know	13.4	12.6	12	12.1	13.8	8	8.8	10.9	15.6

Table 17. Respondents' attitudes towards the U.S. and their main sources of information.

Data from the survey conducted in Russia. The Levada Center, 2012.

	What is your main source of information about events in the country?								
	Total	Russian state TV channels	Russian private TV channels	Internet	Foreign sources	Russian state newspapers	Russian non-state newspapers	Radio	Neighbors, friends, acquaintances
March 2012									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>163</i> <i>3</i>	<i>139</i> <i>1</i>	<i>792</i>	<i>459</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>167</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>203</i>
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
Very positive	4.3	3.5	4	6.3	15.3	0.8	9.3	4.2	5
Mostly positive	46.2	45.6	42.5	52	34.9	44.4	58.7	62.2	46.6
Mostly negative	27	27.9	29.4	24.5	16.6	30.6	16.5	21.8	20.8
Very negative	7.5	7.8	8.2	6	8.6	5.6	7.8	6.4	9
Don't know	14.9	15.2	15.9	11.2	24.5	18.5	7.7	5.4	18.6
January 2012									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>151</i> <i>9</i>	<i>132</i> <i>3</i>	<i>738</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>237</i>
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
Very positive	2.5	1.8	2.5	3	6.3	1.4	--	5.8	0.6
Mostly positive	41.9	41.3	41.2	51.2	36.8	43.4	38.6	35.4	39.5
Mostly negative	31.1	32	31.1	25.3	16.2	36.4	7.6	29.3	36.1
Very negative	9.1	9.4	9.5	7.1	21.6	13.2	7.6	10.4	8.9
Don't know	15.5	15.5	15.7	13.4	19.1	5.6	46.3	19.1	14.9

Table 18. Respondents' attitudes towards the U.S. and their main sources of information.

Data from the survey conducted in Russia. The Levada Center, 2011.

	What is your main source of information about events in the country?								
	Total	Russian state TV channels	Russian private TV channels	Internet	Foreign sources	Russian state newspapers	Russian non-state newspapers	Radio	Neighbors, friends, acquaintances
July 2011									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>160</i> <i>0</i>	<i>146</i> <i>1</i>	<i>768</i>	<i>319</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>210</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>158</i>
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
Very positive	5.1	4.8	5.2	7	14	3.9	11	4.3	3.1
Mostly positive	53.7	53.4	52.2	60.5	58.8	47.5	29.8	57.5	58.2
Mostly negative	22.5	22.5	25.1	18.3	17.3	22.9	42.8	20.2	17.7
Very negative	6.3	6.5	5.9	5.5	6.5	8	6.4	6	9.3
Don't know	12.4	12.8	11.6	8.8	3.4	17.6	10.1	12	11.7
May 2011									
<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>160</i> <i>0</i>	<i>144</i> <i>8</i>	<i>718</i>	<i>339</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>159</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>239</i>
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?									
Very positive	2.7	2.6	3.7	2.6	6.6	0.7	7.2	2.6	2.1
Mostly positive	49.8	49.7	48.6	56.6	38.1	44.1	58.2	51.3	50.7
Mostly negative	29.5	30.1	29	29.1	26.2	33	34.6	22.3	28.8
Very negative	5.5	5.1	5.9	4.2	17.9	6.1	0	7	5.6
Don't know	12.5	12.5	12.8	7.6	11.1	16.1	0	16.9	12.8

Analysis of the public opinion polling data from the Levada Center provided several important insights into anti-Americanism in Russia and the role of mass media.

First, public opinion polling data demonstrated that the attitudes towards the United States of all of the respondents (with exception of the foreign media users) across various mass media sources from 2011 to 2015 followed the same visible trend. There were several points in time when Russian views about the U.S. changed drastically, and the first event that coincided with the change in Russian public opinion was the election of Vladimir Putin in March 2012.

As Tables 14-18 demonstrated, before Putin was elected president for his third term in 2012, the average number of respondents in Russia who expressed positive attitude towards the United States across mass media sources was high, varying from 58.8% in July 2011 to 50.5% in March 2012. Before the election, more than half of the Russian respondents held positive views about the United States. At the same time, only about a third of respondents (across various mass media audiences) expressed anti-American views.

A year and a half into Putin's third presidential term, public opinion polls demonstrated a major change in views of the public about the United States. By November 2013, the number of people who expressed pro- and anti-American views reversed. At that point, 49.2% expressed negative opinions, and 37.4% expressed positive views about the United States.

The second major switch in Russian views took place between March and September 2014. By early fall, the number of pro-American respondents dropped to 17%, while the number of those who expressed anti-American sentiments reached 72.7%.

A number of important events took place in Russia and the world in those five months. Those events included Russia's annexation of Crimea, widespread international criticism of Putin's actions followed by the imposition of sanctions against the Russian Federation by the United States, European Union and other countries, and an escalation of military conflict in the Donbass region of Eastern Ukraine.

These events included severely strained relations between Russian and the West, especially the United States. The two countries reached such a historic low point in their relationship that a number of experts (Legvod, 2014; Tisdall, 2014; Oliker, 2014) referred to it as a "new Cold War." As described in details in the previous chapters, the change of Kremlin policies since the Maidan revolution and annexation of Crimea was followed by an anti-American and anti-Western campaign in the Russian mass media, unprecedented in post-Soviet Russian history.

In the following year and a half, Russian views about the United States remained consistently negative toward the West, with only a small improvement in July 2015, when the number of respondents who expressed positive attitudes towards the United States went up to 18.9%.

The five-year dynamic of Russian public opinion towards the United States demonstrated that the sharp increase in anti-American views coincided with the Kremlin's rise in anti-American rhetoric, which was amplified through the use of mass media.

The second important outcome of the data analysis was that it demonstrated only a slight difference in attitudes towards the United States between audiences of different mass media outlets in Russia. Audiences of state TV channels, non-state TV channels, state newspapers and non-state newspapers demonstrated somewhat similar views throughout the time period, beginning at the end of 2011 through July 2015.

The biggest difference was found between users of the foreign media and people who preferred to get their information from state TV channels and both state and non-state newspapers. It was not possible, however, to use the data about foreign media users for any kind of analysis, because the percentage of people who picked this option fell below the margin of error. The margin of error for the nationwide surveys conducted by the Levada Center does not exceed 3.4 percent, and the percentage of people who use foreign media from 2011 to 2015 was considerably less than the margin of error. The same problem (total number of respondents was less than a margin of error) was detected with the audience of independent newspapers.

Apart from the data on the foreign media users, the greatest difference in opinion about the U.S. was between the audiences of state mass media and the internet users. However, the gap between the views of those respondents is not wide. While Russian internet users have slightly more positive views of the U.S. compared to the audiences of state-controlled mass media, the difference does not exceed 11%. The data also demonstrated that with time the gap between opinions of all the groups was shrinking.

The difference between the audience of state-controlled media and radio listeners followed a pattern similar to that of the Internet users. As for the respondents who preferred

to get their information from their neighbors, friends, colleagues – their views about the U.S. were very close to the views of the state media consumers.

The absence of significant difference in attitudes between respondents who prefer different sources of information about the country (especially between state and non-state mass media) was an unexpected result of the data analysis. Possible explanations for the similar levels of anti-Americanism across various media sources are examined in detail in the discussion/conclusion chapter.

Testing the proposed hypothesis on anti-Americanism and media use against the data produced the following results:

Hypothesis 1A: “Use of state-controlled mass media outlets as the primary source of news among the Russian public was associated with higher levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.” In general this hypothesis was confirmed: in comparison to users of other information sources (such as the Internet, radio, neighbors/friend/acquaintances) respondents who named state TV stations as their main source of information expressed slightly more negative attitudes towards the United States. The difference, however, in views about the United States between audiences of state and non-state media outlets did not exceed 15% on average.

Hypothesis 1 B. “Use of independent mass media outlets as the primary source of news among the Russian public was associated with lower levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.” This hypothesis was not confirmed in regards to non-state TV. The level of anti-Americanism among the audience of non-state TV stations did not differ significantly from the audience of state TV channels. The audience of non-state newspapers

could not be analyzed since the number of respondents was less than the margin of error. This hypothesis was not applicable to radio listeners, since the Levada survey did not distinguish between state and non-state radio stations.

Hypothesis 2. “Use of television as a primary source of news among the Russian public was associated with the higher levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.” This hypothesis was not confirmed, because the difference in negative attitudes towards the United between the audience of TV stations and all other source of information was not statistically significant, not exceeding 5%.

In order to test a hypothesis related to trust for mass media and anti-Americanism in Russia, the following data was used:

The data did not support Hypothesis 3 (“Trust for mass media outlets in their coverage of domestic and foreign news was associated with the higher levels of negative attitudes towards the United States.”). As seen in Table 15, respondents who did not trust mass media were slightly more negative about the United States than those trusted mass media (57.5% vs. 55.7%). Possible explanations for these results are discussed in the following chapter.

Mass media and anti-Americanism: conclusions

In conclusion, it is important to stress several findings from the analysis of the data provided by the Levada Center on anti-Americanism among the Russian public and use/trust for mass media.

Table 19. Respondents' attitudes towards the U.S. and their trust for mass media. Data from the survey conducted in Russia. The Levada Center, 2015.

	Total	How much do you trust the following mass media?				
		I trust	I mostly trust	I don't completely trust	I don't completely	Don't know
<i>Number of respondents</i>	793	41	339	289	97	26
In general, what is your attitude towards the United States today?						
Very positive	2	4.6	2.2	1	3.7	0
Mostly positive	32.3	28.8	31.8	31.3	37.3	35.5
Mostly negative	43.5	48	43.3	49.7	27.9	29.9
Very negative	12.1	9.2	10.9	9.1	28.4	4.9
Don't know	10.1	9.3	11.8	8.9	2.7	29.7

First, the results showed that the rise of anti-Americanism among the Russian public was detected across the consumers of various mass news media, including state-controlled and non-state broadcasting and print press, as well as, the Internet, radio and interpersonal communication. The majority of respondents who preferred different sources of information showed similar patterns in their shifting attitudes towards the United States. These results call for a possible reevaluation of the nature of so-called state-controlled and independent mass media in modern Russia, specifically of their coverage of foreign affairs. The homogeneous nature of rising anti-Americanism among respondents who prefer to get their information from different sources is discussed in the following chapter, and a number of possible explanations are suggested.

Second, major increases in anti-Americanism among all of the respondents were detected by the Levada Center public opinion polls around two points in time: when president Putin intensified his anti-western and anti-American rhetoric, and when the Russian mass media launched an aggressive anti-American propaganda campaign.

Third, surprising similarities between attitudes towards the United States among the respondents who expressed trust or distrust towards the Russian mass media calls for a discussion of the role of mass media in the modern Russian society. Specifically, those results call into question the influence of trust in mass media outlets vs. the trust of authority figures who use the media as a mechanism to deliver their position to the mass public in Russia.

Fourth, the analysis of the public opinion polling data highlighted the need for future research focused on the audiences of alternative sources of information in Russia.

Since the number of people who named foreign media and independent newspapers as their main sources of information fell beneath the margin of error, it was impossible to incorporate those respondents into analysis. It would be useful in future research to focus on those two groups to detect the differences between their views and the views of people who prefer state-run media outlets as their main source of information.

Chapter 6

Discussion, Conclusions and Observations

Testing anti-Americanism theories and the soft power thesis in Russia

Two alternative viewpoints can be distinguished among the literature on anti-Americanism. The first, represented in works of Hollander, Revel, Rubin and Rubin and others, describe anti-Americanism as a syndrome emerging from a cultural predisposition. In regards to Russia, some experts (Mendelson & Gerber, 2005; Gans, 2013) argued that anti-Americanism is a prominent and inherited feature of the Russian mindset.

The opposing view, which Chiozza (2010) called the Dimensions of America theory, insists that foreign anti-Americanism is not a closed cognitive structure, but rather an “aggregation of considerations, predispositions and information” (p 27). Various academic works focusing on anti-Americanism in Russia fit into this second category. For example, Shlapentokh (2001, 2005, 2011) argued that anti-Americanism in modern Russia is an artificially created phenomenon pushed on the Russian public by the elites and Russian authorities who employ anti-American propaganda for their own political benefits. According to Shlapentokh, “Anti-Americanism in Russia, as well as in most other countries, does not come from below, from the general Russian population, but rather from above, from the elites. It is the elites, through its ability to control and manipulate the media, education and literature, which has the power to either foster or stifle xenophobia” (Shlapentokh, 2001, p. 878).

The statistical analysis in this dissertation investigated the nature of Russian anti-Americanism and placed it in the context of two alternative viewpoints on anti-

Americanism. Results from the cluster analysis were especially helpful in addressing this issue. Data analysis produced a somewhat paradoxical answer: anti-Americanism in Russia seemed to fit both approaches simultaneously. Cluster analysis produced four groups of respondents based on their attitudes towards the United States. Two of these clusters demonstrated attitudes that are best described as the syndrome approach, while two others fit well into Chiozza's Dimensions of America theory.

Anti-Americanism attitudes of the first two clusters of respondents (consistently and moderately anti-American) fit into the anti-Americanism as a syndrome theory. According to the expectation of this approach, people from these two groups seemed to display anti-Americanism as a cultural trait that affected their perception of everything related to the United States. Such sentiments fit descriptions of anti-Americanism as an ideological construct that "systematically and deliberately misconstrues, rejects and belittles the American people and the American policy" (Chiozza, 2010, p. 27).

Two other clusters of respondents (consistently pro-American and paradoxically pro-American) demonstrated different attitudes towards various aspects of the United States, its people and its application of soft power. Attitudes of these two groups of respondents seem to fit the description suggested by Chiozza. Dimension of America theory suggested that foreign publics can have opposite feelings simultaneously on various aspects of American influence. Analysis of the attitudes of the pro-American clusters of respondents produced similar results: those people had negative attitudes towards some dimensions of the United States, but were positive about others.

These results showed that attitudes of foreign publics towards the United States are not homogenous even inside a single country. As the case of Russia demonstrated, views of different groups of the population towards the United States differ not only in terms on negative or positive attitudes, but in the very nature of what is perceived as negative or positive. Data analysis showed that for a significant part of the Russian population anti-Americanism was a deep seated cultural trait, an ideological lens that affected their perception of everything related to the United States. Sentiments of the other parts of the population, however, seemed to be a more complex structure: these respondents simultaneously held different opinions towards different aspects of the United States and its influence.

This research project demonstrated that both theoretical approaches to the study of anti-Americanism can be applicable simultaneously within the context of a single country. Public opinion data analysis demonstrated that the Russian society should not be treated as a monolithic structure; therefore, a segment of the Russian populace has an ant-American ideological bent, but a segment adheres to the dimensions of America model. This is seen, however, only if the investigation reaches beneath the surface of public opinion and identifies groups within society which hold different values and attitudes. In order to do that, the researcher must apply such statistical analytical methods as regression, factor and cluster analysis. These conclusion should be further tested in Russia and in other countries.

Another theory tested within this research project was the concept of soft power. The soft power thesis (Nye 1990, 2004, 2008) suggested that cooperation with other countries could be achieved more easily through taking steps designed to increase the

appeal and attractiveness the United States. According to this seemingly intuitive logic, positive feelings towards the United States could be strengthened if the various aspects of the United States, its way of life and power would seem appealing to foreign publics.

Analysis of the survey data from Russia demonstrated that the relationships between attitudes towards the United States and various aspects of American soft power differed from results of previous research conducted in other countries. In Russia, according to regression modeling, attitudes towards the American people had the strongest influence on attitudes towards the United States. At the same time, factor analysis produced two independent factors: attitudes towards the U.S. and the American people was associated with one factor, and attitudes towards all other aspects of American soft power associated with another factor. In the context of the Soft Power thesis these results had important implications: in Russia, at least on the level of mass public, American soft power (such as American ideas about democracy, or ways of conducting business, or even American popular culture) did not seem to promote positive attitude towards the United States in general.

It is important to stress that these results do not disprove the Soft Power thesis as a concept. Results of the data analysis, rather, showed that in Russia, specifically at the level of mass public opinion, positive attitudes towards various aspects of the American soft power did not seem to influence respondents' attitudes towards the United States. Nye's concept of Soft Power, as well as its implementations through various state-sponsored programs, are not usually targeting the general public in a foreign country. In the case of Russian-American relations, for example, a number of U.S. governmental programs are

targeted at elites, and are intentionally designed to promote American culture, values and way of life to the members of the Russian elites. A number of cultural exchange and engagement programs are designed for different professional groups that can be described as opinion-makers, such as journalists, members of the arts community, civil society activists, politicians, etc. This study was not designed to test the effectiveness of such elite-oriented programs.

An indirect indication of the impact of the American soft power on Russian society, however, can be seen in the ongoing coordinated governmental efforts to reduce the ability of foreign countries and specifically the United States and foreign-supported organizations from utilizing soft power in ways that were established during the early years of the Russian Federation.

Since 2012, the Russian authorities have been engaged in a systematic suppression of international non-governmental organizations in Russia. Under the pretense of limiting foreign influence on domestic affairs in Russia, the so-called “foreign agents” law was passed by the Russian Duma in July 2012 (Gorbachev, 2015). The law imposed new restrictions on non-state organizations, requiring organization that receive funding from abroad and are engaged in “political activity” to register as foreign agents, a loaded term in Russian culture.

This law disrupted the work of various non-governmental organizations, including human rights groups, environmental groups, women-rights groups, charities and others. Both international NGOs, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Transparency International and Russian organizations were targeted (Elder 2013).

According to John Dalhuisen, Europe and Central Asia Director at Amnesty International, "one year after it came into force, the record of the foreign agents law is a grim one. More than a thousand NGOs have been inspected and dozens have received warnings. Several of the most prominent human rights groups have been fined and some forced to close" (Amnesty International, 2013).

The next move to limit activities of non-governmental organizations took place in July 2015, when the Federal Duma voted to create a "patriotic stop-list" of NGOs that allegedly present a threat to Russia (Gorbachev, 2015). This law gave the Russian government the power to shut down non-governmental organizations without a court order if they are suspected to "pose a threat to the Russian constitution or the national security (Gorbachev, 2015)." According to media reports, Kostantin Kosachev, head of the Federation Council's Committee for Foreign Affairs and the main sponsor of the bill, publicly accused the West of using NGOs of promoting revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia (Gorbachev 2015). He stated that "Americans and their allies don't hide that Russia is next," adding that foreign NGOs should be controlled "in order not to repeat another defeat of the country and the nation" (Gorbachev, 2015).

Such extensive efforts on the part of the Russian government to limit the influence of the United States in Russia can serve as an indication that the American soft power is regarded as a threat by the Kremlin. These suppressive actions by the Russian authorities are tantamount to an admission of the effectiveness of soft power efforts.

The dramatic rise of Anti-Americanism in Russia: sociological explanation

This dissertation examined the sentiments of the Russian public towards the United States in order to provide possible explanations of the dramatic shift in the public mood and the rise of anti-Americanism in Russia.

Analysis of public opinion polls conducted by Pew demonstrated that in 2012 the general mood of the Russian public towards the United States was cautiously positive. Less than three years later, however, the Levada Center survey showed a dramatically different picture. As much as 80% of the Russian people have expressed negative views about the United States.

How was it possible for the Russian public to change its mind so quickly and so drastically? In order to answer this question, the researcher examined the results of the cluster analysis from the 2012 Pew survey in Russia.

The data analysis produced four clusters of respondents according to their attitudes towards the United States and its soft power (see Chapter 5 for details). The “consistently anti-American” cluster, which included 26% of the respondents, was hostile to everything American: country, people, and soft power. The “moderately anti-American cluster” included 19% of the people. Those respondents were quite fond of American pop culture and Hollywood, but still disliked everything American, especially the idea of American customs and culture being spread in Russia. Combined those two cluster included 45% of the respondents.

A fundamental change in the way the Russian public views the United States was attributed not to those who in 2012 already were openly anti-American, but to a change of

mindset among those who previously held positive views about the United States. In order to address the problem of how and why the majority of Russians changed their attitudes from friendly to hostile in just three years, it was necessary to closely examine the views and positions of the two pro-American clusters of respondents.

Based on the data, it is possible to suggest that a fundamental change in the attitude of the Russian public was due to the change of opinion among people of the fourth cluster, which constituted almost a third of the respondents. People from the so-called “paradoxical pro-American” cluster expressed positive views about the United States and the American people, but were highly critical about each aspect of the American soft power.

The positive attitudes of these people towards the United States in 2012 already were unstable and inconsistent with their attitudes about other aspects of American influence. This group was demonstrating a certain kind of isolationism, which can be described as “We are good with Americans as long as they stay in America, but we have another way of life and we do not need their values, their style of democracy or even their Hollywood.” It is also important to stress that among all respondents in Russia, support for Putin was the highest in this cluster.

Based on the data available about this cluster of respondents, it would be safe to suggest that when Putin significantly changed his stand on the United States, the members of this cluster, who were highly supportive of him, changed their attitudes towards America as well. When the Kremlin's policy became openly anti-American, member of the fourth cluster changed their attitude towards America to negative, since the pro-American attitudes expressed in 2012 were never deep-rooted.

In order to understand the isolationist mindset of this “paradoxically pro-American” cluster, it is important to take into an account their attitudes not only towards the U.S. and the American people, but to spreading American ideas and customs in Russia. The attitudes towards the influence of the United States on Russia among these respondents was highly negative (the sum of positive and negative answers to this question was -80).

Positive attitudes of this cluster towards the United States and the American people can be explained by Russians generally having good views towards any other people, as long as they stay where they are and do not try to interfere with Russia and its way of life. According to this explanation, members of the paradox cluster approved of Americans because they were good with people in general, but only as long as they do not try interfere and do not try to impose on Russia their values, ideas and culture.

It is quite logical that these people were most receptive to the propaganda campaign that was initiated by the Kremlin and consistently portrayed the United States as an aggressor that attempts to intervene in Russian domestic affairs, supports and promotes anti-Russian color revolutions in neighboring countries and, generally speaking, is a hostile foreign power that is threatening Russia and is focused on preventing Russia from “getting up from her knees” and achieving long-deserved greatness.

Public opinion data analysis provided a probable explanation of how it was possible for a majority of the Russian population to change their views drastically over a relatively short period of time. In addition, close examination of two trends in public opinion (anti-Americanism and support for president Putin) from 2012 to 2015 provided an insight into the reasoning and strategy behind Putin’s increasingly anti-American public stand.

Putin's incentives to fuel anti-Americanism in Russia

From the perspective of 2015, results of public opinion polls discussed in a section above look particularly curious. In the context of aggressive actions by Russia, such as the annexation of Crimea, ongoing attempts of further destabilization of Ukraine, continued military support for insurgents in the Donbass region, and the escalating Russian military presence in Syria, various experts see Putin as the initiator and the leader of Russian revanchism and aggression. According to polling data in 2012, before the shift in Russian foreign policy and the escalation of conflict between Russian with the West and the United States, Putin's increasing anti-Western, anti-American views were shared by a substantial part of the Russian public.

In the beginning of Putin's third term as a president in 2012, those respondents who expressed anti-American views were slightly less supportive of Putin than those who felt positive about the United States. These results were supported by previous research:

Public opinion evidence from the early and mid-2000s (Whitefield, 2005, 2009) indicates that Putin and his government was significantly less likely to be supported by nationalist and anti-Western citizens and that there were only very limited differences socially and ideologically between his supporters and those for so-called liberal politicians (Chaisty & Whitefield, 2015).

By 2015, however, negative views held by the two "anti-American" clusters of respondents were found to be parallel to the official Kremlin position that was constantly being broadcasted by state-controlled mass media. In other words, anti-American attitudes that were expressed by a significant part of the Russian public in 2012, later aligned with the increasing anti-Western policy and rhetoric of the Kremlin.

Increasing levels of public support for Putin and his policies were detected through public opinion polls from 2012 to 2015. In June 2015, Putin's support rating reached its then-to-date peak of 89%. The data analysis demonstrated that the pro-American clusters of the respondents (around 55% at that time) in Russia were already more supportive of Putin in 2012 than the anti-American clusters. Thus, such a drastic increase in the number of Russians who support Putin means that the two anti-American clusters of respondents, who were slightly more critical of him in 2012, in fact moved to show strong support for the president by 2015.

Such conclusions are supported by the results of other polls conducted by Levada that demonstrate the role strong foreign policy plays in shaping people's evaluation of Putin as a leader. For example, in August 2014, respondents named "strengthening of the international position of Russia" as the main accomplishment of Putin during his years in office (Levada Center, 2014).

It is safe to say that since Putin was elected for a third presidential term in March 2012, he effectively used anti-Western and anti-American rhetoric to boost his own popular support among the Russian public.

So what were the possible motivations for the Kremlin to switch positions and employ ethno-nationalist and anti-Western rhetoric?

At the end of Medvedev's term, Putin's prospects of triumphantly returning to the Kremlin in 2012 started to look bleak. Throughout 2011, support for the Russian leadership and the ruling United Russia party declined. Accusations of corruption on the highest levels of the Russian government, propagated by oppositional leaders, began to have an effect on

public opinion. Putin's public announcement that he would be running for a third term, and the following parliamentary elections resulted in massive public protests in Moscow and throughout the country. Protesters soon changed their focus from allegations of fraudulent election to promoting a slogan, "Russia without Putin," openly opposing Putin's third term.

Strong nationalistic, anti-Western and anti-American campaigns initiated by Putin provided the Kremlin with at least two benefits. First, pro-Western protesters and opposition, who could potentially present a threat to Putin's rule if they would be able to appeal to broader social base, were successfully marginalized and discredited in the eyes of the Russian population as sellouts to the hostile West. In addition, the new propaganda campaign that portrayed Russia as being threatened by enemies had a rally-around-the-flag effect, boosting popular support for Putin and distracting the population from a slowing economy.

After the Maidan revolution in Kiev, intensified anti-American rhetoric, according to Volkov (2015), served as means to discredit anti-establishment protests and to prevent such events from happening in Russia:

With the memory of the Orange Revolution still fresh, the Kremlin most likely sought to portray Euromaidan as an American project in order to discredit public protest sentiment as quickly as possible, since Russian and Ukrainian surveys conducted at the rallies showed it to be similar in origin to the Moscow-based protest movement of 2011-2012. Russian authorities did not want a successful spin-off of the civil protest to emerge on Russian soil (Volkov, 2015).

Some experts argued that there was an additional incentive for Putin to use anti-Western nationalistic rhetoric, also rooted in the domestic political situation. Chaisty & Whitefield (2015) argued that after the financial crisis of 2008/2009, the nationalist

movement was gaining popularity in Russia, and could possibly present a threat to Putin's third presidential term. The authors also argued that the crisis in Ukraine forced Putin to take an even stronger anti-Western and nationalistic stance: "If Putin fails to deliver in Ukraine, the possibility of a challenge to his authority from a more radical nationalist agenda is likely to be greater than it was before the start of the crisis."

The role of state-controlled mass media in promoting anti-American attitudes

Regardless of the specific reasoning behind his actions, in late 2011 and early 2012 Putin began to openly express anti-Western and anti-American views, blaming the West and the United States for financing and organizing the protest movement and accusing the West of intervening in Russian affairs. After the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea and the escalating civil war in Ukraine's Donbass region, anti-American rhetoric on the part of the Russian authorities intensified significantly, causing a sharp spike in anti-American attitudes among the Russian people.

Most experts agreed that state-controlled mass media played a vital role in both the rise of anti-Americanism in Russia and Putin's growing popularity (Remnik, 2014; Gudkov, 2014; 2015; Benetts, 2015; Volkov, 2015; Tavernese, 2015). Analysis of public opinion data conducted for this research project provided additional insights into the relations between Russian mass media and anti-Americanism.

One of the interesting findings of the data analysis was a slight difference in attitudes towards the United States between audiences of different mass media outlets in Russia. Audiences of state TV channels, non-state TV channels, state newspapers and non-

state newspapers demonstrated somewhat similar views throughout the time period, beginning at the end of 2011 through July 2015. The biggest difference in opinion about the U.S. was found between the audiences of state mass media and the internet users: Russian internet users had slightly more positive views of the U.S. compared to the audiences of state-controlled mass media, but the difference did not exceed 11%. The data also demonstrated that from 2011 to 2015 the gap between opinions of all the groups of media users was narrowing.

These results may seem to be counter intuitive and challenge the notion about the leading role of state-controlled mass media in fueling anti-Americanism in Russia. These results point at a different outcome. The similarity of attitudes towards the United States of those respondents who preferred to use state controlled media and those who used other news sources could indicate not so much a lack of influence of media coverage on people's views about the United States, but rather point out the homogeneous and unified approach to the coverage of the United States by various news sources in Russia, including those that are under direct state control and those that were labeled "non-state" in the surveys.

It is also important to note the meaning of the categories "state media" and "non-state media." The common-sense assumption about the differences between state and non-state media outlets would be that the second category would be independent and fall outside of the governmental control. Indeed, even in 2015, such media outlets existed in Russia: TV Station Rain, newspaper Novaya Gazeta, radio station Echo of Moscow and others. These outlets were well-known for their independent editorial policy, Western standards of journalism and frequent defiance of official Kremlin position.

One should be cautious, however, to assume that when respondents of the Levada survey chose the option of non-state newspaper or non-state television that they had in mind media outlets described above. In Russia, a great number of media outlets both on the federal and local levels were not owned by the state, but were under governmental control in terms of editorial policy. This control was implemented by a number of mechanisms, and ownership of media outlets was only one of such tactics. Aside from direct ownership of the media, the Russian authorities were known to use the following mechanisms as a means of influencing editorial policies and shaping coverage of events:

- Promoting practices of self-censorship in the mass media community;
- Harassing of media owners and journalists including physical violence;
- Securing partial ownership of stock of media holdings;
- Enacting media laws and other legislation designed to allow authorities to punish outlets and journalists who do not comply with the Kremlin's positions and policies;
- Controlling of the judiciary by the executive branch by allowing biased ruling against media outlets and journalists;
- Providing media subsidies that many outlets require to remain solvent but also give editorial control to the subsidizer;

An argument can be made that news outlets not owned by the state but still under governmental influence through the tactics described above would be placed by the respondents into the category of non-state media. This would mean that since their editorial

policy and coverage of foreign affairs was influenced by the state, the survey showed no substantial difference in attitudes between audience of state and non-state mass media.

Results of the data analysis demonstrated that major increases in anti-Americanism among all of the respondents were detected by the Levada Center public opinion polls around two points in time: when the Kremlin intensified its anti-Western and anti-American rhetoric, and when Russian mass media launched an aggressive anti-American propaganda campaign. The next section includes a discussion of the possible reasons behind the successes of anti-American propaganda in Russia.

The role of other factors and institutions in promoting anti-Americanism

This dissertation was designed to study the rise of anti-Americanism in Russia as was detected through public opinion polls since 2011-2012, and to examine the role of the state-controlled mass media in promoting anti-American sentiments among the Russian public. While the focus of this dissertation was on the influence of mass media on public attitudes of the Russian population towards the United States, mass media are not the only factor that shapes public perceptions of a foreign nation.

Previous research on nation branding and public diplomacy and soft power described a variety of other factors as influencing agents, including popular culture, interpersonal extra-national engagement, business interactions, consuming foreign products, as well as many other interactions between nations (Nye, 1990, 2004; Dinnie, 2010).

In addition, a number of the agents of socialization (or social institutions), such as family, peer groups, school, church and others affect human behavior and worldviews (Macionis & Gerber, 2011). In the case of Russia, such institutions as formal education, the Russian Orthodox Church, formal and informal societal networks (labor unions, youth organizations, etc.) – all have an influence on how the Russian people view the world and the United States.

One reason this dissertation focused primarily on mass media was an argument made by several prominent scholars about the central role of mass media, and specifically television, in the socialization in Russian society (Gudkov, 2014; Kratasyuk, 2006). Gudkov argued that the socialization role of mass media became much more prominent in Russia as compared to the Soviet Union:

The Soviet system was based on holding an individual as a hostage. The Soviet people had been held hostage by all sorts of groups; not to be thrown out of the society, one had all the time to show loyalty to their place of work, study and so on. This capillary structure of social control, was running through the whole body of society, through all the production teams, the Komsomol, the party, and kept the person under control... The current propaganda works by controlling information space. It's a different type of manipulation of public consciousness. The one who defines reality through the media, also controls people's minds (Gudkov, 2014).

Limitations of the study

Several limitations affected the scope of the outcome of research but not the quality of the analysis that was completed. First, there were study design limitations. This project was designed to utilize secondary data, i.e. results of surveys conducted in Russia by independent polling organizations. Thus, the researcher did not have an opportunity to influence the development or content of the questions, but had to use existing data.

A single database including all the survey questions important for this study did not exist. This project, therefore, utilized data from two widely respected polling firms (Pew Research Center and the Levada Center), which presented additional issues with both data sets. The researcher did not have direct access to the actual survey results of the Levada polls, and had to rely on descriptive statistics provided by the that organization. While the Pew dataset was available online in SPSS format, only one wave of surveys conducted in Russia in 2012 included all the questions needed for this project. This made tracking longitudinal changes in public opinion not possible.

Another possible limitation is that this project did not include content analysis of news stories about the United States in Russian mass media. This, however, was intentional. Conclusions about the rise of anti-American coverage in Russian media from 2012 to 2015 were rather based on reviews of various other sources, including reports by international press freedom and human rights organizations, news reports, interviews of experts published in various Russian and international mass media outlets and other sources. This approach allowed the primary focus to be on the data analysis in question and the statistical methods employed which revealed insights not gained through content analysis.

The data limitations resulted in the exclusion of several categories of respondents from the data analysis. In the Levada polls, it was not possible to use the data about foreign media users or those respondents who preferred to get information from independent newspapers for any kind of analysis, because the percentage of people who have chosen this option was below the margin of error.

These limitations point to future research needs and do not dilute the value of the analysis contained in this dissertation.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should incorporate additional public opinion polls, including surveys designed to explore in-depth attitudes found within audiences of foreign media and independent newspapers. Such surveys should include questions on specific media outlets that are known to have coverage of foreign affairs that stand as an alternative to the official Kremlin line. In addition, it would be of interest to consider an investigation of the differences in coverage of the United States by various categories of Russian news media (such as federal/local, state owned/independent) with a specific focus on the degree of variation and intensity of reporting determined to be “negative.” This can be accomplished via a combination of qualitative and quantitative content analysis.

Apart from traditional media outlets, there is a plethora of non-official news generating and broadcasting mechanisms by various organizations, including but not limited to the Orthodox Church, labor unions, and youth associations. Such organizations produce news content and deliver it to their audiences using various means of communication, including newsletters, social media, blogs and others. The rhetoric and news content of these organizations can directly influence their audiences, but is also often used by traditional media in Russia as sources for more broadly disseminated news stories. An investigation of such alternative sources of information and their audiences could expand our understanding of anti-Americanism and its sources in Russia.

The pro- or anti-American sentiments and attitudes of frequent Internet users in Russia could be the topic of both a stand-alone stream of research or as a comparative companion category. A growing number of Russians who use the Internet, combined with efforts of the Russian authorities to tighten control over the use of the Internet and to extend their presence in the in the online sphere, indicates the growing role of the Internet as a primary news source for the Russian public. Future research could include analysis of the information-seeking behavior online, investigation of the coverage and framing of the United States in online media, study of the of viral news stories regarding the United States on social networks, and an examination of the views of the Internet users in comparison with Russian who prefer other sources of information.

In addition, qualitative studies could greatly contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon of anti-Americanism in Russia. A number of related topics could be best studied through the lens of the humanistic perspective, including both textual analysis of mass media text and analysis of human experiences. Qualitative textual analysis of the news stories would be very helpful, because it would produce a rich description of the themes that dominate the coverage of the United States in Russian mass media. Examination of the experiences of journalists and editors working at state-controlled or independent mass media outlets through deep interviews could enhance our understanding of the role of media in promoting anti-American attitudes in Russia.

Observations

Winston Churchill famously said that, “Russia is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” This was true during his time as Prime Minister of Great Britain and it continues to be true during the new era of a reborn Russian Federation following the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is not, however, a riddle without an answer or a mystery without clues. The Russian mindset can be better understood through in-depth studies of public opinion. This is especially true in regards to anti-American sentiment and foreign policy maneuvering.

Counter to what many in the West believe, it is not President Putin who ultimately sets Russia’s course. It is the Russian people. Putin encourages that public opinion by tapping into the centuries-old longing for empire that is so deeply imprinted on Russian culture, as well as warning of enemies at the proverbial national gate. Public opinion is paramount to Russian authorities’ ability to act, that may be most exceptional.

Considering that Putin has consolidated political judicial and economic power very effectively, and considering that the state controls and/or influences almost all media content, one would initially place little value on the influence of public opinion. When the King controls the kingdom why does the opinion of the serf matter?

But one has to look beyond traditional statistical analysis and use tools more suited for identifying predisposed attitudes and behaviors that group the population in ways that reveal what otherwise would remain hidden. The additional statistical methods employed and discussed at length earlier include cluster, factor and regression analysis. Emerging from this data is the picture of a Russian public that can both love and hate the United

States simultaneously, can trust and mistrust mass media simultaneously while also increasing its support for Putin despite the burden of sanctions and economic difficulties. This is possible because the Russian public is not a single homogeneous amalgamation of opinion. It is a public whose fabric is woven with often conflicting notions: a historic memory of a Soviet empire past, elusive dreams of a democratic future just beyond reach, a disillusionment with a West that turned its back and yet still a quiet longing for the idea that is America.

As entrenched as he was in 2015, Putin was a single leader who like all leaders would eventually leave his seat of power willingly or otherwise. Will this bottom-up pressure on those in power, which is rooted in and defined by strong nationalism, anti-Western and anti-American views, and cultural isolationism combined with a deep longing for expanding Russia's influence as a great power, remain?

This research project suggests the answer is to the question is, yes. Data indicates that these national characteristics and attitudes, while strengthened by Putin using mass media and other means, were not created by him and they will not disappear after he leaves.

Finally, reinforcing this opinion is the fact that the Russian public seems to have little desire for alternatives to anything mainstream, not only in politics but also in information consumption. Regardless of the degree of governmental control over mass media in Russia, it would be a mistake to think that the Russian public does not have access to alternative sources of information about domestic and foreign affairs. Media outlets openly critical of Putin still existed. More than 70% of Russians have access to the Internet, where any interested party can find alternative information. Despite this, polling data

shows that a majority of Russians do not use these sources and agree with the Kremlin's framing of foreign affairs.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western powers, including the United States, increased their use of soft power hoping that with a more intense pro-American, pro-Western message the Russian public would be persuaded to walk away from what these powers deemed a negative point of view. This logic suggested that media freedom and access to alternative information can influence transitional societies and lead them on the path of democratization. The example of Russia shows, however, that mere access to alternative information does not mean people will use these sources and/or trust them.

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Vita

Natalie Manaeva Rice, a native of Belarus, graduated from the University of Tennessee with a PhD in Communication and Information in December 2015. She currently works at the UT Institute for Nuclear Security (INS), where she holds a position of a Graduate Research Assistant for Dr. Howard Hall, Director of the INS.

After completing her studies at the Department of Social Communication at the Belarusian State University (Minsk) in 2008, Natalie decided to continue her education in Mass Media Studies in the United States. She graduated from the University of Tennessee in 2010 with a Master of Science degree in Communication and Information. Her Master's thesis examined the framing of the United States in Belarusian media during first six months of the Obama presidency.

Natalie has a professional background in sociology: from 2007 until the present she is a part-time research fellow at the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS), where she is involved in conducting various research projects.

Her primary research interests are in global security and public policy, with special focus on nuclear security, international mass media and public opinion. Her other interests include domestic and foreign policy and public opinion in Russia, and global anti-Americanism and its impact on international relations. She is also interested in democratic sustainability in transitional societies, and mass media and political communication in transitional societies (Eastern Europe, CIS countries and Russia).

Natalie has published a number of articles in peer reviewed journals (including Columbia University's Journal of International Affairs, and International Journal of

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She has co-authored articles related to global security in a number of mass media outlets, including CNN, and has been interviewed on the Ukraine/Russia crisis by a nationally-syndicated radio show “Security Briefings with Ian Masters.”

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