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**Russia Beyond The Italian Headlines:**
*Political Polarization in News Coverage of Russia In The Italian Media*

How did the Russia’ news coverage has changed in the past years in the Italian media?
In the last report published last March 2016 by the Foreign Intelligence Service - an authority that is relying on the Kremlin – every country of the world has been considered with an index of aggressiveness towards Russia’ news coverage. “Neutral”, “mildly benevolent” and “mildly critic” were the attitudes towards the Russian Government that have been shown with different colours.

Together with France, Belgium, China, Egypt, Turkey, Kazakstan, Brasil and Argentina, Italy is coloured in yellow and so considered – thanks to the report – to cover Russian news with a neutral approach. Within the Italian newspapers, Repubblica reaches an index of 0,87, follow-up by La Stampa (with an index of 0,79).

The geopolitical instability of the last years is definitely manifested through media coverage and this is what this thesis wants to research on.

Both Russia and Italy have seen different historical and geopolitical periods going on and their different media are an example of where the relationship of the two countries has arrived.

This thesis aims to research on from the time when the Italian Communist Party and the Soviet Union were still existing, considering the official PCI newspaper L’Unità, to the present time where the so-called media war against the Kremlin is happening seeing Russia as a “danger” for the Western countries. In between it will be considered Putin’s Russia and the close friendship between the Russian president and Silvio Berlusconi, the controlling shareholder of the Italian-based mass media company Mediaset S.p.a., but also the sanctions against Russia that has decreased the Italian investments in the Russian Federation.

I will do a content analysis of the Italian newspapers “La Repubblica,” “La Stampa,” “Corriere Della Sera,” “Sole24Ore,” 2 Italian newscasts, “TG1” and “TG5” during different periods:

1. August 1966. “AvtoVaz” (Fiat car industry) opening in Tolyatti, Russia
5. November 2016/January 2017. How 2016 ended up (5 Stars Movements, Salvini, Referendum, Trump elections) and how the future of Italian policy could influence the relations with Russia
I will also interview some journalists working for Italian media companies (both private and public) covering Russia’s news, like Anna Zafesova, Giulietto Chiesa, Marc Innaro and Gennaro Sangiuliano.

I will start working on the thesis at the end of January 2017; in order to present some data during the conference I will try to analyse two out of six periods.

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