

8 The Dutch Royal Family in the spotlight. A framing analysis of newspapers *de Volkskrant* and *Trouw* on the quest for transparency regarding the Royal Family – Maxime Hensels

8.1 Introduction

Transparency plays an increasingly important role in present-day democracies. Citizens, interest groups, consumers and media demand further disclosure from authorities and greater openness towards citizens and civil society organizations. Transparency has become the norm of democratic performance. In a recent dissertation of management consultant Erna Scholtes (2012), in which she analysed over 5000 parliamentary documents from the period between 1995 and 2010, the popularity of the use of the term transparency increased drastically.

The desire for an open society does not come out of the blue. Transparency is generally defined as the principle of enabling the public to gain information about the workings of public (and also private) organizations. Greater openness and wider information-sharing are crucial for making informed (political) decisions (Bovens, 2003). According to Scholtes transparency is a buzzword that hardly ever provokes controversy. It seems that no institution can escape the ever growing demand for transparency.

But does this also apply to the Dutch Royal family? The Royal Family is an interesting case to test the demand for greater openness. On the one hand its constitutional role seems to imply that it has to follow the general tendency towards greater openness; on the other, it has traditionally been a bullwark of secrecy. It is clear that if the current King wants to maintain his binding public role, he has to come up to the expectations emanating from the public opinion (Van Osta, 1998).

One way for the Royal Family to get closer to its people is to appear positively in the news media. For sure, it is publicity that to a large extent determines the image of monarchy. The monarchy cannot do without media, but at the same time cannot be completely exposed to it. In 1867, the British essayist Walter Bagehot had already pointed out the dangers of a monarchy getting too close to the people and thereby losing its mystical appeal. Dutch historian Jaap van Osta also confirms the importance of reticence in order to keep up the dignity of the institution, especially when it comes to relations with the public. It is, according to him, of the utmost importance to make a distinction between what belongs to the public domain of the head of state and what should remain in the private domain of the Royal Family. He also acknowledges, however, that the line between these two roles is often unclear (Van Osta, 1998, p. 244). The Constitution only helps to a certain extent. According to Art. 42, which states that the King is inviolable and the ministers are responsible, the Prime Minister has to answer to Parliament when public interest is at stake. He is supposed to indicate whether and to what extent the behaviour of the King and his family members falls within the remits of the public interest (Elzinga, 2007). It is conceivable, however, that what at first seems to be a private affair later appears to be a matter of public interest. A good example is Queen Beatrix' ski trip to Lech in 1998. Against the advice of the government, she went on holiday to Austria during the week in which Jörg Haider's party was elected into government. The Queen stated that her holiday was a private affair. Nevertheless, it still remains possible that such a private character wanes (Van Wijnen, 2000).

Other Royal scandals that emerged in the beginning of the 21st century show us that the public has become less tolerant towards the Royal Family. For example, the public dismay stemming from the construction of a holiday home in Mozambique in 2009 by the then crown prince Willem-

Alexander and princess Máxima, show how much the private actions of the Royal Family are scrutinized (Hoedeman& Meijer, 2012.) In this instance, it appeared difficult to draw the line between what is of public or private concern.

Scandals, affairs and other events in which members of the Royal Family were involved have shown that the position of the Royal Family, and the monarchy generally, is not untouchable (Wijfjes, 2007). American sociologist John B. Thompson (2008) states that this does not only say something about societal norms but that it also indicates that there is a quest for transparency. The fact that information has been withheld, or in other words, has never before been published, can turn into a catalyst for the media to turn it into a scandal. It is not merely accidental that this has happened already a number of times since the year 2000.

It often depends on the political or economic climate whether or not an event is deemed to be a scandal. For example, according to historian Harry van Wijnen, the Greet-Hofmans-affair in the 50s was not at all seen as a scandal. It was only in the late 70s when authority was not automatically accepted anymore, that this issue was judged to be scandal (Van Wijnen, 2000). The importance of the societal context has only increased since then. Shortly before the start of the year 2000, Prime Minister Wim Kok announced in a much read weekly that: "there is a structural debate about how kingship should be interpreted during the next century" (Van Wijnen, 2000, p. 188). The changes should, according to him, be characterized by "new norms of openness and transparency". Not much later a debate in the national parliament followed (Van Wijnen, 2000). The statement by the Prime Minister was also picked up by the media. The written press has, by means of "framing", pushed this transparency debate in various different directions during the last fifteen years. Media research has found that media are not only able to influence what we perceive by selecting the issues that

are being mediated, but also how we perceive those issues. They do so by framing news in specific contexts, highlighting certain aspects of an issue and downplaying others. By analysing media content, it can be researched how big events or societal conflicts are received. Every society contains a range of possible frames, often unconsciously, used by people in a particular society. The kind of issues that appear in the media says something about the current societal discourse (Van Gorp, 2006). It is, therefore, important to be aware of the way in which the media frames the quest for a more transparent Royal Family in order to be able to predict the direction in which the debate about a modern Royal Family will go.

8.2 Research question

This chapter aims to analyse how Dutch newspapers Trouw and de Volkskrant frame the issue of transparency regarding the Dutch Royal Family. This paper conducts an inductive, qualitative content analysis of forty news articles from Dutch newspapers de Volkskrant and Trouw. More specifically, the research question is:

"Which frames can be perceived in the news articles of de Volkskrant and Trouw concerning the quest for transparency regarding the Royal Family?"

News articles have been selected on the basis of six events concerning the issue of transparency of the Royal Family between 2000 and 2015. This chapter does not answer the question of whether or not the Dutch Royal Family conforms to the societal norms of transparency, but is solely focused on performing a framing analysis. The objective is to find out which frames have been used by journalists of de Volkskrant and Trouw in the selected articles concerning the quest of a more transparent Royal Family and especially the future of the monarchy.

8.3 Conceptual and theoretical framework

Framing as a concept originated in the field of social psychology (Bartlett, 1932), but is now applied in many disciplines. In communication science, framing in its broadest sense refers to the manner in which the media and the public represent a particular topic or issue (Reese, 2001).

Within this discipline, namely news articles are analysed. For communication scholars, news is the main source used to analyse what framing is and how it works. Although it can be assumed that a journalist works objectively and autonomously and thus can decide which aspects of a certain event should be highlighted, there are always internal and external factors that influence this process (Shoemaker & Reese, 1991). News thus does not reflect reality, but rather refers to the typical way in which journalists shape the news. This is inevitable, since a journalist functions within a limited frame, both on the individual level as well as at the media organization level (Van Gorp, 2006).

However, from a constructionist perspective, framing is a process that is only partially conscious on the part of the person who creates a message (Van Gorp, 2007). This is because each culture possesses a repertoire of symbols and worldviews that its members can use as a toolkit to attribute meaning to the various events and issues with which they are confronted (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Swidler, 1986). When authors frame a message, they connect a topic to notions that are part of this "common ground" within a given culture, such as values, archetypes and shared narratives. Frames are part of a culture and are thus anchored to cultural motives. Within a culture, there is a great diversity of possible frames that can be applied to the public debate. A journalist applies these frames, be it consciously or unconsciously, when writing an article by using devices. Since

the receiver is part of this same culture and, therefore, is aware of the same cultural motives, textual elements, such as figurative language and metaphors, are able to activate a cognitive graph in the head of the receiver which is similar to the applied frame by the sender. This explains why the receiver interprets a text in the way as envisioned by the sender (Van Gorp, 2006, p. 88). However, this research will merely be focused on the reconstruction of frames in news articles as well as the analysis of the messages within the news articles. The emphasis lies on the reconstruction of the frames and how these are established at the side of the sender. This is also called frame-building; the process in which journalists engage in framing and as well as the eventual presence of frame in publications (Scheufele, 1999).

8.3.1 Framing the transparency debate

Framing mainly appears to be relevant for research concerning conflicts or events that can be interpreted in multiple ways, such as political and cultural issues (Scheufele, 2000). Whether or not the Royal Family is transparent or not, or should become more transparent, can be considered as such a political and cultural issue, which can be interpreted in various ways. Before the content of the selected news articles is analysed, it is necessary to clarify the relationship between transparency and the Royal Family.

The concept of transparency comes from Latin and means originally as much as being able to see through something. Oftentimes metaphors speak about transparency. Boer (1998), for example, defines transparency as: "the ability to look clearly through the windows of an institution" and Davis (1998) speaks about "lifting the veil of secrecy".

In the discussion about the rise of the concept of transparency, it is also important to take note of the way in which we can value this concept. Transparency seems to become an increasingly important public value with an almost religious status (Hood, 2006). Moreover, the concept is ever more viewed as an end in itself. Bovens (2013), for example, speaks of transparency as a "right of the citizens". He states: "Every citizen or every group of citizens has the right to be aware of the process which every transaction, product or service has gone through. Every process of self-regulation, auto control or of interactive policy making that binds third parties should be transparent from the start" (Bovens, 2003, p.126). Besides a right of the citizens, transparency is also seen as an important value in our democratic state, especially when it concerns legal certainty and predictability. This is enabled by the open access to government documents, the open attitude about the type of arguments used and in what cases certain decisions are taken is an important element of democracy. This enables democratic controls (Scholtes, 2012). However, not every public value is a value in itself. Many public values serve as means to meet other ends. Heald (2006) differentiates between the appreciation of transparency as an intrinsic and as an absolute value. Where Brinkshaw (2006) states that transparency is an absolute value, which counts as a "fundamental human right", Heald advocates that transparency should be viewed as an instrumental value. He positions transparency in service of effectivity, accountability, fairness and legitimacy (Heald, 2006). In this chapter, the emphasis lies on transparency in relation to authority, legitimacy and accountability, which in this case concerns ministerial responsibility.

8.3.2 Transparency, authority and legitimacy

The transparency issue is closely connected to the quest for authority of, in this case, the Royal Family, and the question of how this is related to the clarification of the thinking and acting of this institution. It also concerns the possibilities for the offering of criticism. In *Truth and Method* (1989) Gadamer researches both the workings of authority as well as its justification. He, for example, states that authority does not relate so much to obedience but rather to knowledge (Gadamer, 1989, P. 279). Furthermore, he implicitly states that once people have accepted someone's authority, they will consequently blindly trust this person's statements and decisions. In other words, they neglect their own judgement in favour of the judgement by an institute with authority and do not fully consider an issue anymore. According to Gadamer, it should still remain possible to gain insights into the decision-making process of the authority. In fact, he concludes that the possibility of criticism is crucial for the acceptance of authority. However, when this is not possible, it can lead to the crumbling of both trust and authority. The former of course does not mean that the opening of the Royal Family to all kinds of critique is a good idea. The Royal Family, as an institution, has something "unique" and cannot be compared to other public and political institutions. The King, for example, is neutral and impartial in his judgement, which in some aspects is and on others is not reconcilable with transparency (Elzinga, 2007). What nevertheless is clear is that at least in the theoretical sense there should be sound justifications for the expression of criticism. It is easy to refer back to what Warren calls "the neoconservative thesis"; namely the idea that "authority" is irreducibly damaged by questioning (Warren, 1996, p. 48).

8.3.3 Non-transparency and values of privacy

The popularity of transparency creates the impression that it is today's norm. However, there are many situations in which privacy or non-transparency is valued as important, which is a vital part of the democratic judicial state (Scholtes, 2012, p. 8). A number of special situations have also occurred related to the Royal Family in which the quest for transparency is fundamentally different to that of other institutions. The media code is a good example. Lately, the monarchy has been more in the media spotlight than ever before. The media have the power to both break or make the bond between the people and the Royal Family. To limit the power of the media and thus to safeguard the respect for the Royal Family, the Rijksvoorlichtingendienst (RVD) has attempted to limit the media content. As a consequence, most of the Dutch media has accepted the media code published by the Rijksvoorlichtingendienst in 2005 (Beschermingpersoonlijkelevenssfeer, n.d.). In order to be present at the organized media moments, organized by the RVD, the media has to agree not to enter into the personal sphere of the members of the Royal Family (Brink, J. van den, & Volgenant, O., 2009). There are, however, discussions about what the extent is of the applicability of the media code as well as what can be considered the line between public and private. The debate about the burdens and desires of the Royal Family is relevant in this respect; where do we find the balance? The media code is controversial and since its introduction criticism has ensued. The discussion is mainly based on the tension between two basic rights; the right of freedom of expression and the right of protection of one's personal sphere (Vaessen, 2003).

8.3.4 The division between private and public

An important aspect of the transparency issue concerning the Royal Family is the division between the public and private domain. The division between a public function and the personal sphere of the same person is an essential part of the Dutch democratic judicial state. People with public functions should ideally not be judged based on their behaviour in their private sphere, but solely on the way they execute their public function (Pot & Elzinga, 2014). Kingship, however, is not merely a normal public function. In contrast to other people in public functions, kingship is allocated by means of birth, and thus this public function has the power to influence the private life of the king. Unlike other people in public functions, the king also cannot postpone decisions about his behaviour in the private sphere until after his term of office. If the behaviour of the king negatively affects the dignity of kingship, in general, this can be blamed on the king as a person and can lead to negative comments on kingship. Scandals, affairs and issues surrounding a number of members of the Royal Family have shown that, despite the fact that ministerial responsibility exists, the position of the king, kingship as well as the monarchy can be harmed (Wijffjes, 2007). In many cases in which it is unclear whether the behaviour by the king or his family falls within the private domain or not, the Prime Minister will have to answer to the parliament and the public. Although the parliament expects openness, the Prime Minister is often unable to provide this about issues that appear in the media. It merely concerns ministerial responsibility when the public interest is at stake. Only the Prime Minister is to determine whether and to what extent the behaviour of the Royal Family fall within the remits of the public interest. In case he judges it not to be so, he does not only indicate that it concerns a private issue, but also why it is private (Elzinga, 2007). Members of the Parliament and Dutch citizens have no choice but to accept

the decision of the Prime Minister if he does not decide to provide openness concerning Royal affairs.

8.3.5 Scandals, affairs and issues

Transparency is sometimes linked with the disclosure of scandals (Scholtes, 2012). The concept "scandal" carries with it a certain sense of humiliation. Despite the fact that the circumstances in which a scandal arises are bound to time and place, it is possible to make general statements about the culture in which these scandals occur (Wijfjes, 2007). In his work *Political scandal: visibility in the media age*, sociologist John B. Thompson states that the rise of political scandals in the media and the scandal culture in the political sphere is characteristic of the changed relation between the private sphere and the public domain. According to him, scandals say something about legitimacy as well. They in a certain sense indicate when a line is being crossed. An important element of scandals is disclosure (Thompson, 2000). Besides the fact that scandals entail the neglect of norms and values, they do always arise in a context of secrecy when it concerns facts that cannot be exposed. It thus concerns facts which, when they are announced, will be met with disapproval. The public will express their disapproval by publicly condemning the events concerned. The media plays a vital role in creating a scandal (Boersma, 2007). Thompson clarifies that the media do more than merely provide passive reports of the situation. Scandals must therefore not be seen as independent from the media because to a certain extent they become scandals in the first place because of the media. The process of the creation of scandals firstly means that journalists select newsworthy facts. Thus, journalists and editorial offices determine what is made public. All newsworthy events are placed into a context and the story is written from a certain perspective. The process of news production both

says something about the creation of scandals as well as the aspects that are eventually published (Thompson, 2000). The Royal Family has been negatively featured in the news multiple times during the last fifteen years. Different from the Hofmans-affair (1956) and the Lockheed scandal (1976) the 21st century was dominated by affairs and issues. It is important to differentiate between scandals, affairs and issues. This depends on the seriousness of the revelation. Unlike an issue, during an affair, there is little room for discussion because the main players are highly criticized. Oftentimes there is also a shared disapproval visible in public opinion. In contrast, when it concerns a scandal there is true societal indignation. The offences or the crossings of norms have heavy consequences for the main players as well as others who are engaged. In his article *Van de Greet Hofmans-affaire tot Margarita-gate* (2007), Historian Huub Wijfjes contextualizes the scandals surrounding the Dutch Royal Family and places them within the changing of the journalistic culture. He compares the relationship between the press and the Royal Family during the last fifty years. He concludes that the distant behaviour of the journalists during the pillarized, i.e. socio-religiously compartmentalized 50s is completely different from the assertive role that the press was taking in the beginning of the 21st century. According to him, the serious press has taken over many elements from the popular scandal press, while at the same time a political culture has developed in which there is much more interest in scandals surrounding people that appear in the public sphere (Wijfjes, 2007).

8.4 Method

Baldwin van Gorp (2006) assumes that there are a number of ways in which framing can be researched. A couple of researchers choose a qualitative approach, which puts the focus on the interpretation of the data and the

frame analyst is supposed to conduct his research with an open mind. It is also possible to perform a quantitative research. According to this approach, the emphasis lies on the classification of data. This research only makes use of the qualitative approach. Moreover, there are two methods that can be employed in order to determine frames in media texts. The inductive method entails that the researcher performs a textual analysis and consequently creates frames according to the findings. This is thus a rather open approach. Issue-specific frames are often employed within this method. These frames focus on a certain topic, which naturally complicates possibilities to generalize (De Vreese, 2003). In the deductive method, the researcher looks for diverse and already existent frames, which are also called generic frames (Van Gorp, 2006). Advantages of this method are its good external validity as well as the fact that this method lends itself for cross-national research. This research conducts a qualitative, inductive content analysis in order to construe a number of dominant frames in the news articles. Since the analysis concerns the Dutch Royal Family and currently no other findings in this area are known it is necessary to work with an open mind.

8.4.1 Corpus

Before the analysis is conducted it is important to highlight the nature of the material. During a qualitative content analysis, it is necessary to collect texts based on strategic grounds because the intention is to gain insights in the frames that dominate a certain debate. Forty news articles from de Volkskrant and Trouw were selected based on six issues surrounding the transparency of the Royal Family and which occurred between 2000 and 2015. Trouw and de Volkskrant have been chosen because both newspapers, besides the tabloid press, have become involved in publishing news articles

about the Royal Family. During a number of affairs both newspapers have focused on the responsibilities and the possible failures of the government (Wijfjes, 2007). Both Trouw and de Volkskrant mainly focus on the political side of the monarchy (Mooij, 2001). In the first pool 200 articles have been collected about the following issues: the issues surrounding Mabel Wisse Smit (2003), Margarita (2003), Zorreguieta (2000), former Crown Prince Willem-Alexander's holiday home (2009), the holiday home in Greece (2014) and the budget of the Royal Family (2014). In the second pool, these articles have been reselected with the help of the following key words: open(ness), publicity, criticism, privacy and secrecy. In the first graph, the keywords on which the empirical research is based are presented

Intrinsic value(s)	Instrumental value(s)	Non-transparency
Secrecy	Costs and benefits	Myth and enchantment
Disenchantment	The division between private and public	The division between private and public
Modernisation	Accountability	Vulnerability (of the institution)
Cynicism	Symbolic power	Symbolism and culture
Criticism		
Open society		

Graph 1: Key words empirical research

This selection resulted in forty articles that are supposed to provide insight into the way in which both newspapers have framed the debate surrounding a more transparent Royal Family. The sources have been selected within a period of fifteen years. Firstly, this timeframe offers the possibility to provide

insights in the frames which have dominated the debate for a relatively long period. Another guiding aspect for the choice of the timeframe was the possibility to obtain the sources. Both de Volkskrant and Trouw have a digital newspaper archive that only contains articles that are no older than the year 2000. The last and most important reason, however, was the increased attention for the Royal Family in the written press since the year 2000. The political and public noise surrounding the Mabel Wisse Smit affair (2003) and the accession of Maxima Zorreguieta (2000) is the starting point from which this framing analysis about the "quest for a more transparent Royal Family" departs.

8.4.2 The operationalization of the frames

In order to operationalize a frame, the frame analyst needs to be aware of the structures of a particular news article. Gerald Kosicki (1993) differentiates between five structural dimensions which serve as means to frame in the media discourse. The first structure is the syntactical structure. This refers to the typical structure of the news article. The relationship between the syntactical elements is hierarchical and the heading and the picture are often considered as the most important parts. Even the layout of the text can lead to the devices. The syntactical dimension of a news article crosses other dimensions and serves as a supporting framework for the whole. The script structure refers to the narrative of the news articles. Here, one has to think about the structure of the plot, the standpoint of the narrative and the characters. By indicating which standpoints and characters the journalist represents, the coding process becomes much easier and the moral judgement can be identified faster. The rhetorical structure is perhaps the most important dimension during the coding process. This includes rhetorical devices which have been used in a news article in order to paint pictures for the reader. These are similar to the ten framing devices:

metaphors, expressions, examples, descriptions, visual imagery, lexical choices, numbers, symbols, stereotypes and sources. The thematic structure refers to the issue, the theme and the point of view of a news article. It is the intention to link these elements together with the parts of the other structures to the media communicative messages which form the frame. Concretely, this means that the framing devices and the reasoning devices are being mapped out (Van Gorp, 2006).

8.4.3 The analysis of the data

During a qualitative inductive content analysis the coding process, according to Baldwin Van Gorp, takes place in three steps: open coding, axial coding and finally selective coding. During open coding the news articles need to be opened by dividing them into different elements. These elements can then later be compared. It is the intention to systematically go through all collected texts and to create an inventory of the textual elements that could relate to the subject of this research, the transparency of the Royal Family, and to apply codes to these elements. Here, it concerns choice of words, metaphors, stereotypes, slogans or examples. In the second phase of the coding process, namely axial coding, textual imagery is used. Dimensions that refer to categories from the open coding are allocated around an axis. Commonalities and contrasts between these categories can eventually lead to overarching ideas. Thus, step by step an ever greater distance is created from the primary texts in order to reach a certain level of abstraction. Moreover, it is important to devote attention to reasoning devices: different definitions of the situation, the pinpointing of the causes, the responsibility and solutions and moral statement with regard to the studies thematic. Finally, one has to search for clusters in the devices and has to select the codes which represent best the idea within the collection. The findings,

which appear during the open and axial coding, are being rid of further ballast during selective coding. In order to execute this step the coded data has to be transformed into a matrix with the rows indicating the different frames and the columns indicating the devices. In the first instance, this qualitative matrix can be filled out per column. This enables one to look for logical combinations across columns. A guiding line, however, is that the link in the chain needs to be useful. The final goal is to end up with a limited number of frame collections which are mutually exclusive (Van Gorp, 2006).

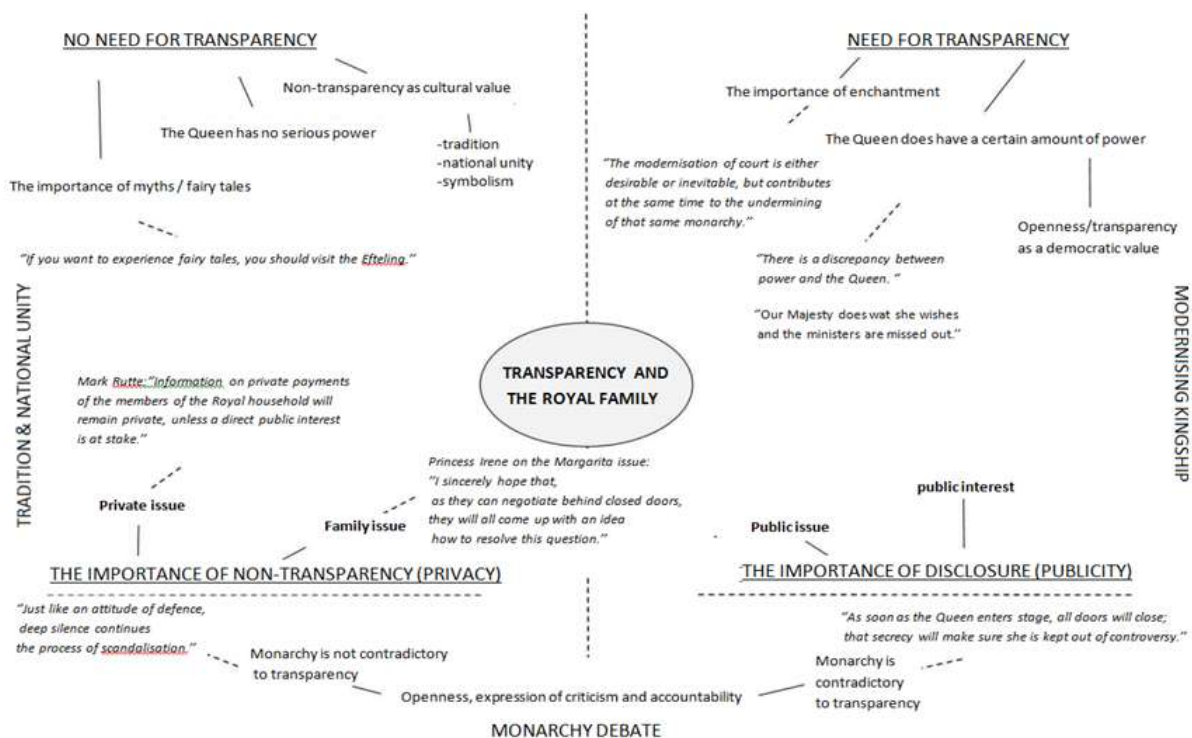
8.5 Empirical data

8.5.1 The coding process

The selected news articles have been systematically analysed by identifying framing and reasoning devices. Firstly, articles have been categorized according to Baldwin van Gorp's dimensions during the open coding phase. The dimensions have been compared and contrasted in order to find commonalities and differences. Consequently, those textual elements that had to do with the quest for transparency have been coded. Coding is based on the choice of words, metaphors, stereotypes and examples.

Open coding is followed by axial coding (Graph 2). The allocated codes from the open coding phase have been placed in a diagram, which expresses the most striking elements of the various texts. Furthermore, the large amount of data is reduced to a small number of codes. The diagram shows that most attention was dedicated to the line between public and private. Almost every article dealt, either implicitly or explicitly, with this issue. Another overarching issue was the debate about the modernization of the Royal Family as an institution. Finally, the monarchy debate also receives quite some attention. A couple of news articles relate the quest for

transparency to the question of whether or not the Netherlands should become a Republic. Moreover, it was questioned whether or not it is necessary to have a monarchy debate and whether or not this debate should have a high priority. By means of axial coding, the dimensions have been couples to the overarching ideas. This way it is shown in which manner the cognitive graphs, employed by the journalists, are related to the subject that is described by the news article in question.



Graph 2: Axial coding

8.5.2 Frame matrix and frame bundles

After the axial encoding, a matrix has been made in which the rows form the logical clusters of framing and reasoning devices which can be assigned to the same frame. Subsequently, the data transform into frame bundles. Each column summarizes the diversity of one framing characteristic. What is left to do is to discover the logical combinations between the columns. There are three story lines which represent the meta-communicative messages that eventually form the final frames. The first story line emphasizes a conservative approach for which the values of privacy, tradition and culture are important. The logical line clearly visible in the second frame bundle focuses on transparency as an intrinsic value. An open attitude of the Royal Family is considered necessary for the institute to continue existing. The last story element represents a whole different sentiment. The question to what extent the Royal Family needs to adopt an open attitude is connected to the debate about the monarchy on the issue of preference for a monarchy or a republic as a state form in the Netherlands. The underlying message in this story simultaneously emphasizes the banality of the discussion; there are more important issues on the societal agenda and therefore, the discussion about the monarchy is not assigned a very high priority.

8.5.3 The reconstructed frames

The first frame which is reconstructed from the analysis is the "maintenance of the status quo is untenable-frame". In this frame "an open attitude" is considered necessary for the institute to survive. No exception will be made for the Royal Family, regardless of the special position they have in constitutional law. Simultaneously there is opposition to the status quo in the form of arguments that maintain the dignity of the Royal Family and the monarchy and regard "openness" and transparency as a threat for the institute. From the perspective of this frame, one argues from the thought

that the citizen has a right to know about what happens behind the closed doors of the Royal Family, regardless of the fact that they do not play an influential political role in the Dutch society. Another element which is characteristic of the same frame considers the fact that the citizen cannot have knowledge about the amount of influence the King and other members of the Royal family in reality have. Transparency is also considered as necessary for this issue. In graph 3 the used reasoning devices for this frame are presented.

"Maintenance of the status quo is untenable"			
<i>Problem statement</i>	<i>Role of the Royal family</i>	<i>Origin of the problem</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
I The royal family does not amount to the contemporary norms of transparency	The Royal family should act in accordance with the zeitgeist and adopt itself continuously to the changing societal norms and values	From institutions, organizations and politics transparency is expected. The Royal family cannot escape this demand.	Politics and the Prime Minister especially. Also the media bear the responsibility to give insight into the circumstances of the Royal family. The task assignment for the media, has changed since the Lockheed-affair.
II We have no clue to which extent the power (authority) of the King and the members of Royal family is influential.	Between the king and power there is a discrepancy. Wisdom and power do not bear with each other.	The monarchy is currently being inspected. The closed attitude of the institute, does not fit to an open, democratic society	
<i>Solution</i>	<i>Moral foundation</i>	<i>Emotional foundation</i>	<i>Cultural motive</i>
I The Royal family should be critically evaluated to the democratic standards of the society, just as any other institute.	Arguing from the "Every citizen has the right to know about what happens behind the closed doors of the Royal family as institution"-argument	mistrust, cynicism	Openness as a democratic value
II By assigning the Royal family and the king a mere ceremonial task, the transparency-issue seizes to be applicable.	What does and does not belong to the public interest, is neither to be entrusted to the Royal family or the responsible Prime Minister.		Modernization

Graph 3: Reasoning devices "Maintenance of the status quo is untenable"-frame.

In an article by Anet Bleich, published in de Volkskrant on the 4th of April in 2001, the way in which the former Prime Minister Wim Kok handled some important issues surrounding the Royal Family is being discussed. The selection of the article considers the turmoil about the entrance of Maxima Zorreguieta to the Royal family. In a cynical tone Bleich states that the Prime Minister acted well. Maxima's charm would have been used to soothe the nation's unrest. Quote: "The only thing to say about the acting of Kok is, just as was the case with Drees at the time, this strange radio silence, which fits more to a duel between regent and monarch than to a modern, open democracy" (Bleich, 2001, translated from Dutch). The important elements within this quotation are the concepts of "radio silence" and "modern, open democracy". The demand for openness is perceived as modern in this frame, in the sense that it fits with the current societal norms of transparency.

The "open democracy" is being opposed to the closed attitude considering the Royal family in this quotation. In another article from de Volkskrant from the 13th of October in 2003, emphasis is put on the relation between the media and persons with a public function. This article was written as a result of the affair Mabel Wisse Smit. The frame that becomes clear here is about the necessity of openness of the members of the Royal family considering issues that are important for the formation of public opinion, especially before the media get informed about the issue. Quotation: "Who tries to shield one's private life in a spastic reflex, awaits a difficult time in public functions" (Korsten, 2003, translation from Dutch). This quotation emphasizes how the separation between the public and private sphere are diffuse in a time where the media landscape changes. The frame is also characterized by several cultural motives, such as values and stereotypes.

In graph 4 the framing devices which belong to this frame are presented. The emotional value of cynicism and distrust is a special element

within this frame. A critical stance is being taken here with regard to the tradition and the status quo. The Royal family is being characterized with metaphors like "a medieval institute". These kind of statements show the importance of the Royal family to adapt to the current societal norms of transparency. "Taboo" refers to the fact that a critical, cynical and mistrusting attitude for a more "open" institute is being dismissed by the supporters of the status quo.

"Maintenance of the status quo is untenable"	
Metaphor/stereotype	Lexical choices
I	doors stay closed, shoving things under the rug
II	The seduction of power asks for opposition. To empty the Royal cesspool.

Graph 4: Framing devices for the "maintenance of the status quo is untenable-frame".

The second dominant frame which is reconstructed from the news concerns the "argument of untouchable value(s)-frame". The demand for transparency is being opposed to the absolute values of privacy and closedness. "Enchantment", myths and cultural values have to be cherished within this frame. Mistrust towards institutions of the state are not being correlated with a "modern", critical stance, as was the case in the previous frame. Moreover, mistrust is a destructive element where both politics, as well as other organizations, suffer from. The "populism" would not only encourage mistrust but could even result in disintegration. In this frame, the advantages and disadvantages are considered, whereby the disadvantages do not only relate to the price tag of the Royal family, but also to the lack of

openness and transparency. The advantages, however, are untouchable and incalculable values presented by the Royal family. Culture, tradition and unity should be cherished in times of increasing populism and disenchantment, according to this frame. The used reasoning devices for this frame are shown in graph 5.

"Argument of untouchable value(s)"			
<i>Problem statement</i>	<i>Role of the Royal family</i>	<i>Origin of the problem</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
I Touchable values are perceived as more important than "untouchable" values. The Royal family's main functions are situated on a cultural level.	is of "untouchable" value for the Dutch society. Symbolical value; national unity and tradition.	The Royal family encounters increased difficulty in acting out its role, when the contemporary media landscape does not express appreciation for cultural values of unity, symbolism and tradition.	...is for the media and notable people who share their opinions publicly who strive for further disenchantment of the society
II The symbolical function and mystical value are lost by allowing more "openness". Openness has a dark side too; an unbalanced idea of the Royal family. Pros and cons have to be balanced out.		The urbanization and modernization contribute to an undervaluation of the monarchy. The king should be above the political sphere and the "closed doors" should protect the king of getting involved in controversies.	
<i>Solution</i>	<i>Moral foundation</i>	<i>Emotional foundation</i>	<i>Cultural motive</i>
I The Royal family is being exposed to too much voyeurism in the current media landscape.	Arguing from "the importance of a strict separation between private and public"-argument		Mysticism and connection are values which are just as important as other rational arguments for or against the Royal family
II The transparency issue does not have a practical, useful goal for the Royal family with their mere symbolical role. Royalty reporting done as gutter journalism; media spectacle		belief in "something higher", something untouchable	Values as closedness, privacy

Graph 5: Reasoning devices for the "argument of untouchable value(s)-frame".

In an article in Trouw from the 10th of October in 2009, the affairs surrounding the Royal family are being related to the changes in the

communis opinio. The "unnecessary" media turmoil which occurs during times of insecurity, like the economic crisis, results in the monarchy being used as the scapegoat. In this frame "populism" is said to bring unjust damage to the people involved in the Royal family. In times of prosperity, the monarchy is being accredited support of the societal and the political sphere. Quotation: "In times of insecurity, the monarchy is thankfully used as the scapegoat" (Goslinga, 2009, translation from Dutch). In an article from de Volkskrant from the 15th of October 2005, considering the affair between Margarita and Edwin de Roy van Zuydewijn, the element of strict separation between public and private is emphasized. Quotation: "It is self-evident that there have been conversations within the family circle about the information" (Dijkstra, 2005, translation from Dutch). In this article, a private character is assigned to the Margarita affair. The Prime Minister is the only person who can judge about the strict separation between the private sphere and the public interest.

Besides, it is interesting to note that the frame experiences the separation as "strict" rather than "diffuse". The article *Disenchanted* from de Volkskrant on the 9th of February, 2004 emphasizes mythologization and enchantment (Dijkstra, 2005). The article questions whether it is desirable or even necessary to know everything about the Royal family. The symbolical character of unity and connectivity can only continue to exist when the importance of the myths in society are being acknowledged. Quotation: "If we do not want to abolish mythology, it has to stay that way" (Blokker, 2009, translated from Dutch). This frame is also characterized by several cultural motives, such as values and stereotypes. Tradition and culture are being perceived as important, untouchable and not always rational elements of our culture.

"Argument of untouchable value(s)"	
Metaphor/stereotype	Lexical choices
I Monarchy as the scapegoat/ transparency has a disintegrating effect	The reporting on the Royal family is "gutter journalism"; media hungry for drama
II	The state household is no pure, unspoiled construction

Graph 6: Framing devices for the "argument of untouchable value(s)-frame"

The "it is not of life importance-frame" is the third and last frame. The train of thought for this frame can be summarized as that it does not make any sense or does not serve any goal to discuss the transparency of the Royal family. The underlying reason for this perspective lies in the fact that the monarchy does not consist of more than "a crown on top of the republic". The king and other members of the Royal family have given away a lot of their initial control over the years. It is merely the symbolism that accredits the institute dignity and a right to exist. The transparency issue is thus not relevant in this frame. Another outstanding element of this frame concerns the way it raises the point of the "monarchy debate". The debate about the monarchy considers the question whether it is either a monarchy or a republic that is desirable for the Netherlands. By correlating the transparency issue with this debate, the focus shifts to a different kind of discussion. At the same time, the monarchy debate, as well as the transparency issue, are being considered as useless and therefore put aside. This is a two-step model in which the focus on the debate on openness and transparency gradually disappears. The used reasoning devices for this frame are presented in graph 7.

"It is not of life importance"			
<i>Problem statement</i>	<i>Role of the Royal family</i>	<i>Origin of the problem</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
<p>I</p> <p>The monarchy debate and the transparency-issue are of no importance. Moreover the debate is problematically polarized, increased by the issue of populism and political opportunism</p> <hr/> <p>The combination of populism and a focus on so-called misbehaviour nourishes the mistrust. It is remarkable that the conjunctural movements in the debate do not seldom coincide with personal affairs and circumstances which are fostered by the media.</p>	<p>The Royal family is a mere crown on top of the republic (symbolical value). The king does not have much political influence; moreover, there are more important issues on the contemporary political agenda.</p>	<p>The transparency issue is not highly important on the political agenda. The Royal family is still very popular among the Dutch citizens. There are more important issues. Characteristic for the absence of an intellectual debate about the monarchy, is the fact that the monarchists do not feel responsible to legitimate the constitutional reality with the right arguments because of the popularity of the Royal family. Their opponents however completely disregard the "democratic legitimacy" of the monarchy. They are bothered by the majority of 'supporters of the Royal family, whom they regard as simple or misguided souls, and observe a confirmation of their being right in any riot involving the Royal family. .</p>	<p>is with the notable people who express their opinions publicly and the political decision-makers. The debate about the monarchy is highly polarized and influenced by populism and political opportunism.</p>
<i>Solution</i>	<i>Moral foundation</i>	<i>Emotional foundation</i>	<i>Cultural motive</i>
<p>I</p> <p>As long as the King does not have influential political power and the Dutch citizens support the Royal family, there is no reason to issue the debate about the monarchy and the transparency question.</p>	<p>Arguing from the "the Royal family is nothing more than a crown on top of the republic" - argument</p>	<p>relativism, downplaying: "there are more important issues on the political agenda"</p>	<p>The Royal family has been upholding itself for over 200 years against Republican sentiments. As long as the citizens do not protest, a serious debate is not necessary.</p>

Graph 7: Reasoning devices for the "it is not of life importance-frame".

The most frequently used metaphors, stereotypes and cultural values which are connected to this frame are clarified in graph 8. The emotional basis which lies at the root of this use of metaphors etc., has to do with a feeling of "relativism" and "downplaying".

"Maintenance of the status quo is untenable"	
Metaphor/stereotype	Lexical choices
Crown on top of the republic, long tradition of "orangism", cultural heritage.	The king does not possess more power than the politicians allow him"

Graph 8: Framing devices for the "it is not of life importance-frame".

8.5.4 Differences between the frames

The three reconstructed frames exclude each other. The motives which are included in the frames can best be coined in the terms of progressive, conservative and pragmatic. The "maintenance of the status quo is untenable-frame" represents progressive thinking. In this frame, the "truthful government", "democracy" and "progress" are central notions. The idea that the citizen has a right to know what happens backstage connects to the idea of an open and honest government. The open attitude that the Royal family has to develop is being correlated with the open, democratic society. The most important element consists of the idea of progress, which is expressed in the idea that the Royal family "cannot stay behind". Transparency here is being seen as an important phenomenon which serves for the manufacturability of the society. In several articles, the explicit call for "modernization" comes to the fore. The "argument of untouchable value(s)-frame" connects most to a conservative attitude. This attitude is characterized by "respect for the notions that should be cherished, especially in a modern society". The Royal family is being perceived as vulnerable because of the contemporary media landscape and should, therefore, be protected in times of populism. Cultural motives such as tradition and dignity are also highly valued within this frame. Another important idea concerns

the aversion towards continuous innovation and progress as a goal in itself. The emotional basis of this frame rests on the protection of the Royal family as cultural heritage. In that sense, the frame strongly contrasts with the "maintenance of the status quo is untenable-frame". The "it is not of life importance-frame" has an underlying pragmatic approach. What is perceived as problematic is related to the "practical means of application". Especially the assumption that the monarchy has a mere symbolical function is not a reason to not change anything on a political level. The transparency issue does not have a practical, useful goal for the Royal family with their mere symbolical role. In other words, not much will change in practice. The actual goal of this frame is to avoid any clarification of responsibilities or finding a solution.

8.6 Conclusions

This chapter asked which frames are perceivable in the Dutch newspapers *de Volkskrant* and *Trouw* considering the issue of transparency in the news about the Dutch Royal Family. Three dominant frames were reconstructed with the help of the research data, all of which guided the transparency debate in a certain direction. Before the process of decoding, there were no clear arguments in the texts perceivable which explicitly asked for more or less transparency. Even more, the content of the articles focused mostly on the description of the process of the six mentioned issues considering the Dutch Royal Family. Through the systematic process of continuous comparison, it shows that the affairs and issues really form the debate of transparency, albeit in an implicit manner. There are several cultural motives which lie at the root of this mechanism.

Firstly, the maintenance of the status quo shows how transparency should be considered as an unlimited, intrinsic value. Also, the idea of

progress and manufacturability form an underlying thought which are determining for the way in which the news comes into being. The kingship and the institute should adapt themselves continuously to the current societal discourse; the unclear separation between the public and private sphere does not change this. The "argument of untouchable value(s)-frame" has a whole different overtone. Within this frame, the Royal Family is seen as one of the few still existing institutions that represent untouchable values of unity, tradition and connection. Even though the two first frames exclude one another and seem to contrast each other sharply, they do share the idea that both transparency and non-transparency are values in themselves. Both frames represent the extremes of the transparency debate, albeit in an opposed manner. The "it is not of life importance-frame" is the most striking of all the frames. This frame is not characterized by an absolute value, but rather by "pragmatic" and possibly also "opportunistic" attitudes. In this frame, the circumstances are more important than the principles. The Royal Family only receives mere symbolical value as well as the debate surrounding the demand for more transparency. The research question was limited to the mere reconstruction of the frames. The results which appeared determine the reach of the debate to a certain extent. However, about the input of the debate on a larger scale no conclusions can be made on the basis of this chapter alone. Further analysis of the frames on the side of the receiver can offer more clarification. The public opinion simply consists of a combination of the news spread by the media and the individual interpretation of the public.