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Department of Russian and East European Studies

M. A. Dissertation

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The Effects of Western Broadcasting on the Soviet People in Glasnost and Perestroika Period: The Case of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

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Abstrakt

Tento výzkumný projekt pojednává o dopadu vysílání ze Západu na veřejné mínění v sovětské společnosti v období Perestrojky a Glasnosti. Výzkum se zejména soustředí na vliv Rádia Svobodná Evropa/Rádia Svoboda (RFE/RL) na proměnu postojů sovětské společnosti vůči komunistickému režimu a vládnoucí straně, a formování pozitivního obrazu o hodnotách západních demokracií v již zmíněném období. Teoretický přístup se opírá o teorie mediáního dopadu, převážně pak o teorie stanovení a rozpoložení (politické) agendy. Podle těchto teorií, média nejen slouží k předávání informací, ale také mohou uplatňovat značný vliv na veřejné mínění. Prostřednictvím akcentování konkrétních témat a jejich některých charakteristik, média určovala společenskou agendu a ovlivňovala názor lidí na tyto věci. Studie zhodnocuje dopad RFE/RL formou výzkumu posluchačů, a prostřednictvím kvantitativní a kvalitativní analýzy dat. Prozkoumává dosah a frekvence vysílání RFE/RL a analyzuje obsah nejvíce populárních programů s cílem prozkoumat jejich dopad na formování obrazu reality. Závěry z kvantitativní a kvalitativní analýzy a výzkumu publika ukazují, že progamy na RFE/RL udávaly anti-komunistickou agendu na základě prezentování událostí formou asociací (alt: korelace): komunistické/výhodní/negativní a naproti tomu demokratické/západní/pozitivní. Studie tudíž dále tvrdí, že snaha formovat anti-komunistickou společenskou agendy a prosazování západních ideálů svobody a lidských práv, ovlivnilo vidění a vztah sovětského publika ke komunistickému režimu a vládnoucí straně. To pak v důsledku napomohlo nasměřovalo sovětskou společnost k přijmutí západního modelu demokratického rozvoje.

Abstract

This research project explores the impact of Western broadcasting on the public opinion of the Soviet audience in the Perestroika and Glasnost periods. Specifically, it focuses on Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) contribution to changing attitudes of the Soviet public to the communist regime and ruling party, and constructing a positive image of Western democratic values during the relevant period of study. The theoretical approach to the investigation of RFE/RL broadcasting is based on media effects theories, particularly agenda-setting and framing theories. According to them, the media are not simply a conduit of information, but able to shape public opinion. By emphasising the salience of topics and particular aspects and characteristics of the issues, the media set public agenda and influence on people's perceptions about these issues. The study to assess RFE/RL's impact draws on audience research, quantitative and qualitative data analysis. It examines geographical reach and transmission frequencies of the Radio's broadcasts and analyses the content of the most featured programmes to explore how they framed the reality. The findings from the quantitative and qualitative analysis, as well as the audience research data, demonstrate that RFE/RL's programming set anticommunist agenda by framing events based on the premise that communism and Eastern ideas are negative against democracy and Western values are positive. The study further suggests that the RFE/RL influenced the Soviet audience's perceptions and attitudes of the communist regime, by setting anticommunist public agenda and promoting Western ideas of freedom and human rights, leading to the Soviet people towards the Western model of democratic development.

Klíčová slova: vliv médií, mezinárodní vysílání, veřejné mínění, propaganda, studená válka, demokracie, rádio, komunismus.

Keywords: media effects, international broadcasting, public opinion, propaganda, Cold War, democracy, radio, communism.

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Statement:

1. This statement is to confirm that this paper is a product of my own work and also to confirm that I used the listed sources in producing it.
2. I agree that the paper can be checked for research and studying purposes.

Prague, 13 August 2012   Evgeniya Konovalova

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
OWI	Office of War Information
RL	Radio Liberty
RFE	Radio Free Europe
RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
SAAOR	Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research
USIA	United States Information Agency
VOA	Voice of America

1. INTRODUCTION

It would be difficult to overestimate the significance of your [Radio Liberty's]contribution to the destruction of the totalitarian regime in the former Soviet Union

–Boris Yeltsin,
President of the Russian Federation[1]

Yeltsin's testimony is one of the numerous examples of people in power acknowledging the role of the Russian service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in creating an opposition to the communist regime. It is commonly believed that Western broadcasting played an important role in raising awareness of democratic values and promoting human rights in the USSR during the Cold War. Nelson (1997), the former chairman of the Reuters foundation, describing the role of Western broadcasting in his book 'War of the Black Heavens,' stated, 'The first impulses for reform were in the Soviet Union itself, in a society that could no longer tolerate the lack of freedom. Whence came the knowledge of freedom? It came from the Radios' (p. xiii). Numerous scholars further corroborated the argument by mentioning in their research works the effects of Western radio and its contribution to the rebellion of the Soviet citizens against communist regime during Perestroika (Tuch 1992; Johnson and Parta 2010; Mikkonen 2010). Yet despite the growing interest of Eastern European and Western scholars to analyse the cultural side of the Cold War, the role of foreign media as a social change agent in the Soviet Union remains under-researched.

Since Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a unique Western station that had been funded by the US government, but still had a tremendous appeal to the Soviet audience during the Cold War, this radio was chosen as a case study for the dissertation. Mikkonen (2010) defined the position of RFE/RL in the late 80s -early 90s as a 'primary source of accurate information, which was absent in the Soviet media' (p. 4). This paper attempts to investigate further the impact of the RFE/RL's Russian Service on the Soviet audience and

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[1] A message from Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, to Radio Liberty on its fortieth anniversary, March 1993 in Sosin, G. (1999).

find if there was a correlation between the content of the Radio's broadcasts and a shift in the civil position of the Soviet citizens in the times of Perestroika and Glasnost.

1.1 Purpose, Aims and Structure

The purposes of this dissertation is to analyse the role of the RFE/RL's Russian Service (further in text it will be referred to *RFE/RL*) in raising awareness of democratic values among the Soviet people and how it contributed to changing attitudes of the Soviet public to the communist regime and ruling party during Glasnost and Perestroika times.

Built on media effects theories, the study seeks to test the hypothesis which suggests that Western broadcasting (particularly RFE/RL) reported truthful, uncensored information and raised awareness of democratic values, which had a direct impact on the Soviet audience's opinion and changed attitudes of the Soviet public to the communist regime and ruling party during Glasnost and Perestroika period.

The following questions will constitute the central focus of the research: 1) What were the purposes and mission of RFE/RL? 2) Through which tools, policies and sets of programmes did RFE/RL influence the Soviet public? 3) How did RFE/RL present the Soviet reality? Was it biased? 4) Was RFE/RL popular among Soviet people? How was it perceived by its audience? 5) How did RFE/RL influenced the Soviet public? What was the impact of the broadcaster?

The structure of this paper will unfold as follows: *Chapter Two* (Theoretical Framework) discusses some crucial theoretical background concerning media power and media effects and establishes key theoretical frameworks and methodology necessary for conducting the analysis.

Chapter Three (Historical Background of International Broadcasting) elucidates the crucial insights of international broadcasting history necessary for understanding the impact of Western radio stations (primarily RFE/RL) on the Soviet audience. In particular, this chapter explores the potential of radio as a medium and what makes international broadcasting an effective tool of foreign policy. It also looks at the prerequisites of Western transmission to the USSR and the context in which it occurred, as well as providing a brief overview of the key Western radio broadcasters during the Cold War and explaining why RFE/RL was chosen as the most appropriate Western broadcaster for this analysis.

Chapter Four (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty) briefly overviews the history of RFE/RL and its broadcasting activities in Glasnost and Perestroika period. It examines the mission, purposes and programming policies of the Radio and describes the historical context of Perestroika and Glasnost and RFE/RL's operation when these campaigns were in full swing. This section also explains why the broadcaster was unique, and looks at the evolution of RFE/RL's funding.

Chapter Five (Data Analysis) is the data analysis section. It presents the audience research and frequencies analysis and then content analyses the major feature programmes of RFE/RL. The results of the data analysis are drawn together in *Chapter Six* (Findings, Discussion and Limitations). And finally, *Chapter Seven* (Conclusion) summarizes the main findings of the study.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before beginning this analysis, it is necessary to establish some crucial theoretical background. This chapter will be concerned with constructivist approaches to mass media effects theories, since this paper focuses not only on the media messages which produce effects, but also takes into consideration the importance of context.

2.1 Media Power and Media effects

Media power and the effects it may produce has been the central focus in mass communication research for many decades. McQuail (1994) wrote, 'The entire study of mass communication is based on the premise that the mass media have significant effects' (p. 327). Connell (1988) noted that the mass media 'have been credited with 'fabulous' powers to change people' (quoted in McCullagh 2002, p. 2). In democratic societies the mass media are referred to as the 'Forth Estate'. They act as a watchdog on the exercise of power by supplying citizens with accurate and sufficient information and reflecting the spectrum of public opinion and political competition (Dyczok 2000; Mullen and Klaehn 2010). Some authors (Bourdieu 1991, Couldry 2000, Argawal 2007) argue that the media embody a 'symbolic power': the power of constructing reality. Each media message – a programme, image or text – conveys a true representation of fact or convincing fiction and in such a way maintains people's beliefs. Lasswell (1948) suggests that the power of mass communication is represented through three crucial social functions: a) providing surveillance on the environment and alerting the public; b) coordinating and categorising the various elements of social structure; c) representing the cumulative cultural heritage by handing on the knowledge and ideas from one generation to the next .There is no longer discussion in theoretical narrative as to whether media influences their audience or not. As Couldry (2000) noted 'media power generally is too obvious to be articulated and criticised' (p. 5). The media can inform, educate, persuade or entertain the audience and, by doing so, influence public opinion and affect people's beliefs and behaviour.

McGuire (1986) states that the most common intended media effects are: 1) the effects of political campaign and voting; 2) the effects of propaganda on ideology; 3) the effects of advertising; 4) and the effects of media on social control. McQuail's (1994) typology of media effects involves knowledge gain and distribution throughout society, social control and

social integration, reality defining, and institutional, cultural and social changes. Summarising the main streams of communication theory, Perse (2001) concludes that in general the mass media have been hypothesised to have cognitive, affective, and behavioural effects. Cognitive effects are mainly about what is learnt and how much is learnt. They involve the acquisition of information and particularly what people learn, how their beliefs are structured in their minds and if their need for information is satisfied or not. News programmes and public affairs information are usually the focus of these effects. Affective effects deal with the formation or changing of attitudes among the audience; the public's positive or negative evaluations about something as a result of media exposure. Affective effects include concerns about emotional reactions to media content. They develop particular feelings towards other issues, objects and social phenomena, for example, the generation of fear in society as a result of violent television programming exposure. Finally, behavioural effects are those which concern 'the observable actions that are linked to media exposure' (Perse 2001, p. 3). Much of the research devoted to these types of effects is concentrated on anti- or pro-social behaviour.

This paper mainly explores cognitive and affective effects produced by the mass media (in our case - RFE/RL) and will employ two media theories which are discussed further below: agenda-setting and framing. They have proved to be reliable and are widely employed by social scientists and communication scholars. By combining the aforementioned theories and approaches, this will lead to a better theoretical understanding of how the broadcasts of RFE/RL were constructed and how they influenced the Soviet audience.

2.2 Agenda-Setting Theory

Agenda-setting theory is based on the idea that the media are not simply a conduit of information: they can highly influence public opinion. Journalists, editors and news directors, through their day-by-day selection and display of news stories, focus public attention on the most important issues of the day and, by doing so, significantly influence their salience on the public agenda (McCombs and Shaw 1972, McCombs and Reynolds 2002, McCombs 2004). Bernard Cohen (1963), a prominent political scientist, said that 'the press may not be successful in telling people what to think, but they are stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about' (p.13). The media's ability to set public agenda, by emphasizing the salience of topics and establishing it among audiences, has come to be called the 'agenda-

setting role of media' (McCombs and Shaw 1972, McCombs and Reynolds 2002, McCombs 2004).

Walter Lippmann is known as the intellectual father of the concept of agenda-setting, even though he never used that phrase in his work. In his opening chapter "The World Outside and the Pictures in our Heads" published in *Public Opinion* in 1922, Lippmann suggested that 'the news is not a mirror of social conditions, but the report of an aspect that has obtruded itself' (Lippmann 1991, p. 13). According to Lippmann, the media, being a primary source of 'the pictures in our heads,' determine our cognitive map of the world. They construct a pseudo-environment to which the public responds. Since Lippmann, this function of the media has become one of the most fundamental themes in the study of mass communication. For over half a century, researchers put their efforts into exploring long-term media effects on cognitions of the audience. But it was only in 1972 when Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw first empirically tested Lippmann's notion and developed it into an agenda-setting theory. McCombs and Shaw (1972) studied how undecided voters in Chapel Hill, North Carolina made their choices in the 1968 US presidential campaign. The researchers' content analysed the media coverage of the election in order to rank the order of issues and determine the amount of news stories devoted to each issue (they called it 'media agenda'). In conducting their analysis, McCombs and Shaw compared the interviews of undecided voters, who were asked what they thought were the most important issues of the day (this is public agenda). Their findings revealed that the information portrayed in mass media content has a considerable effect over the issue priorities of the audience and how the public views these issues.

Since the Chapel Hill study, there have been a tremendous number of articles dedicated to the agenda-setting role of media. Many of them followed the model and methods pioneered by McCombs and Shaw and studied political campaigns, while others focused on single-issue longitudinal research and examined public opinion in non-election periods (Dearing and Rogers 1996).

For example, Winter and Eyal (1981) examined the civil rights issue in the USA across a 24-year time period using 27 Gallup polls. The researchers analysed a number of front-page stories on civil rights in *the New York Times*. Their findings showed a correlation of +0.71 (with a perfect range of scores +1.0) between the level of public concern about civil rights and the amount of news coverage in the weeks immediately prior to each poll. The same

pattern was inferred by Eaton (1989) for each of 11 different issues over a 41-month period. He based his media agenda analysis on a mix of newspapers, news magazines and television and measured public agenda by using 13 Gallup polls.

Funkhouser (1973) contributed to agenda-setting research by taking a historical look at the news coverage of the issues from 1960 through 1970 and its influence on public opinion. In his influential study, the researcher used years as a unit of analysis. He examined three weekly news magazines - *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News* by counting the number of articles on issues prominent during the sixties. Funkhouser compared these results to the trends in public opinion concerning the most important problems facing the USA across the decade of the 1960s, based on Gallup polls. The analysis revealed a convincing connection between the media and public agendas. Similar findings about the impact of news coverage on trends in public perception were suggested by Behr and Iyengar (1985). The scholars analysed interrelations between television news, real-world cues and public opinion data on the issues of energy, inflation, and unemployment. They determined that 'the media agenda setting is indeed unidirectional' – it influences public concern and not vice versa (Behr and Iyengar 1985, p. 38).

Overall, the immense amount of literature on the agenda-setting process has accumulated strong evidence of the influence of mass media on the general public. This includes hundreds of news outlets, all types of media (print, television, radio, and online) and different geographical and historical settings (McCombs 2004). As Kosicki (1993) notes, 'it can be specified at both macro and micro levels, and studied as a single issue or as a set of issues', but all studies employing the agenda-setting model seem to strengthen the degree of confidence about this media effect (p. 102).

The mechanism of the agenda-setting process that has emerged from this research is illustrated in the Table 2.1 (see below). The issues which are emphasized by the media come to be perceived as important by the public over time (McCombs 2004). In other words, the media sets the public agenda by transferring the saliencies of issues to the audience.

In all types of agenda-setting research media agenda is usually measured by extensive content analysis, whereas public agenda involves survey techniques (Winter and Eyal 1981). The most common method used by researchers exploring the agenda-setting function of mass media is correlation statistics. These statistics summarise the degree of correlation between the issues on the media agenda and the ranking of the same issues on the public agenda

(McCombs 2004). Agenda-setting theory usually predicts a positive correspondence between the media agenda and subsequent public opinion.

Table 2.1 **Agenda-setting role of the mass media**

MEDIA AGENDA   ⟶   PUBLIC AGENDA

Patterns of news coverage   Concerns of the public

MOST PROMINENT   MOST IMPORTANT

PUBLIC ISSUES   ⟶   PUBLIC ISSUES

Transfer of issue salience
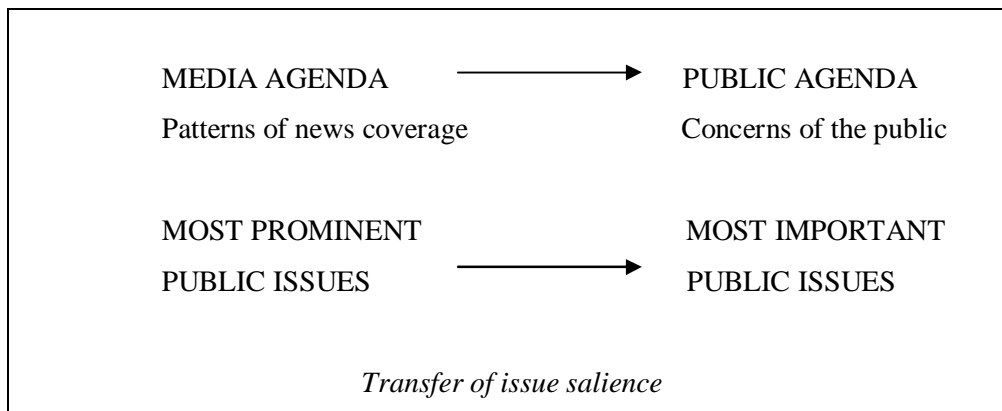
McCombs (2004), p. 5

To explain the agenda-setting effect, McCombs (2002, 2004) refers to the 'need for orientation'. According to him there are many situations in the civic arena where citizens find themselves in a cognitive vacuum and desire considerable background information for orienting cues. For instance, during elections voters usually turn to the mass media to get pertinent information about the situation. Another example can be the economic or political situation in the country, where citizens feel the need for orientation to the same degree. Need for orientation is a psychological concept which is based on Edward Tolman's general theory of cognitive mapping (Tolman 1932, 1938). It suggests that we shape cognitive maps in our minds to help us to direct our external world. Tolman's notion juxtaposes with Lipmann's idea of pseudo-environment. McCombs (2002) further suggests that 'there are individual differences in the need for orienting cues about an issue and in the need for detailed background information about an issue' (p. 8). He defines an individual's need for orientation in terms of two lower-order concepts: relevance and uncertainty. Relevance is the primary defining condition. If individuals perceive a topic to be highly relevant, the level of uncertainty should also be considered. In situations where the relevance of an issue to the audience is high and uncertainty is low, the need for orientation is moderate. Under the conditions of high relevance and high uncertainty, the need for orientation is also high (McCombs 2002, 2004). Entman (1993) further develops this argument by referring to the categories of 'selection' and 'salience'. Selection is carried out by the media to highlight certain elements, whereas salience means 'making a piece of information more noticeable,

meaningful, or memorable to audiences' (p. 53). Finally, Kiousis (2004), to complement the discussion on why agenda-setting occurs, distinguishes three dimensions of this concept: attention, prominence, and valence. Attention is described as the amount of time devoted to a particular issue. Prominence is defined in terms of placement in the news. Valence deals with the tonality of the story; whether it has a predominantly positive or negative tone.

2.3 Framing - Second-Level of Agenda-Setting

Besides focusing on salience of objects (usually public issues) the media also determine which characteristics and aspects of these objects to emphasise. In other words, beyond the agenda of objects, there is another level of agenda which deals with the specific attributes of a topic (Ghanem 1997, McCombs and Reynolds 2002). This second level of agenda-setting is called framing. As defined by Entman (1993) 'to frame is *to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described' (p. 52, italics in original). Framing research explores how the media present and frame a problem or an issue and how the audience thinks about that issue (Takeshita 1997, Ghanem 1997, McCombs 2005).

Table 2.2 shows the theoretical distinction between the two levels of agenda-setting and also demonstrates the hypothesis about second-level agenda setting (or framing) effects.

Table 2.2 **Two levels of agenda-setting theory**

	MEDIA AGENDA	PUBLIC AGENDA
First level	Objects	Objects
Second level	Attributes	Attributes
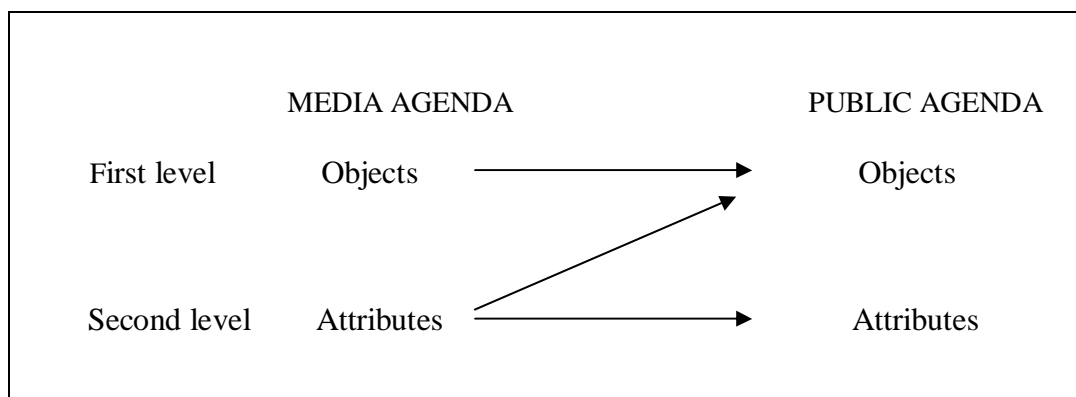
Ghanem 1997, p. 4

For both levels of agenda-setting theory, the independent and dependent variables remain the same: media agenda is the independent variable and public agenda the dependent variable. However, the independent variable for the first level is defined in terms of objects – topics or issues presented by the press. The media agenda for the second level is considered in terms of attributes and perspectives. The public agenda in the case of first-level agenda setting is measured in terms of issue or topic salience, whereas the dependent variable for the second level is the salience of the attributes of the topic or issue. In other words, while agenda-setting focuses on story selection as a 'determinant of public perceptions of issue importance', framing looks at the particular ways in which these issues are formulated for the public and the kind of cognitive influence they can have on people (Ghanem 1997, p. 7).

Framing, then, provides a tool for describing the power of communication to direct individual cognitions toward a prescribed interpretation of a situation or object. Several empirical examples testify to the insights that the framing approach can provide regarding media effects on societal attributions (Iyengar 1991; Zaller 1992). By framing news items in particular ways, the media influence the way people perceive a issue and its consequences that can alter their final evaluation of the issue as a result. For example, research suggests that framing the questions of foreign policy and economics in terms of gains versus losses (Quattrone and Tversky 1998) or framing affirmative action in terms of unfair advantage versus just compensation (Kinder and Sanders 1990) can change the basis of political judgment. Similarly, shifting the news frame of healthcare reform from a focus on economic considerations to ethical considerations alters how voters interpret the issue and use it in electoral decisions (Shah et al. 1996). Media framing can also shape opinion in times of international policy disputes. Presentation of the Gulf War in terms of patriotic, technological, and euphemistic language, as opposed to dissent, error, and human loss, shaped public opinion about American involvement in the conflict (Allen et al. 1994).

To examine the frames and understand the complexities of this concept, a multidimensional approach is required. As Hendrickson (1995) states, 'characterizing all media content, or even one story on a particular topic or issue with any one frame overlooks a great deal of complexity and subtlety' (p. 3). Noelle-Neumann and Mathes (1987) distinguish three levels of the media content research: agenda-setting, focusing and evaluation. Agenda-setting involves the importance of issues and problems; focusing refers to the definition of issues and problems; and finally, evaluation deals with the creation of a climate. According to Entman

(1993) frames have several locations in the communication process, including the communicator; the text; the receiver; and the culture. They perform four functions: they define problems and measure them in terms of common cultural values; they diagnose causes, or, in other words, identify the reasons creating the problem; they make moral judgments – evaluating casual agents and their effects; and finally, they suggest remedies - offering and justifying solutions for problems and predicting their possible effects.

Vreese (2005) divides media frames into issue-specific and generic. Issue-specific frames refer to specific topics or events. Frames which can be identified in relation to different topics and in different cultural contexts are generic. The studies of issue-specific frames have concentrated on the Women's Movement (Terkildsen and Schnell 1997), labour disputes (Simon and Xenos 2001), and public perception of economic and political issues such as budget deficits and elections (Shah et al. 2002). For example, Jasperson et al. (1998) explored public perception of the US national budget deficit. The scholars identified four frames recurrent in the news - 'talk', 'fight', 'impasse', and 'crisis'. These four frames were issue-sensitive and illustrated the development of the problem in the news. The research on generic news frames usually focuses on coverage of politics: in particular, election campaigns and general features of news coverage such as the economic frame, the conflict frame, the powerlessness frame and others (Vreese 2005). This approach is similar to Iyengar's (1991) typology. In his book on how television frames political issues, the scholar categorises news frames into thematic and episodic. The episodic news frame depicts a public issue in terms of concrete instances, whereas the thematic frame places the issue in some general or abstract context. His analysis of news frames of social issues such as poverty, crime, and unemployment from 1981 to 1986 demonstrated that differences in framing influenced societal attributions of political responsibility for the problem (as a causal agent or as a treatment agent).

Ghanem (1997) summarises the research on framing effects by distinguishing four dimensions of frames: 1) the topic of a news item – what the frame contains; 2) presentation – size and placement, 3) cognitive attributes – details of what the frame contains; 4) affective attributes – tone of the picture (p. 12). The Table 2.3 illustrates the extension of the second-level agenda-setting effects model summarised by Ghanem.

Table 2.3 **Dimensions of the second-level agenda-setting**
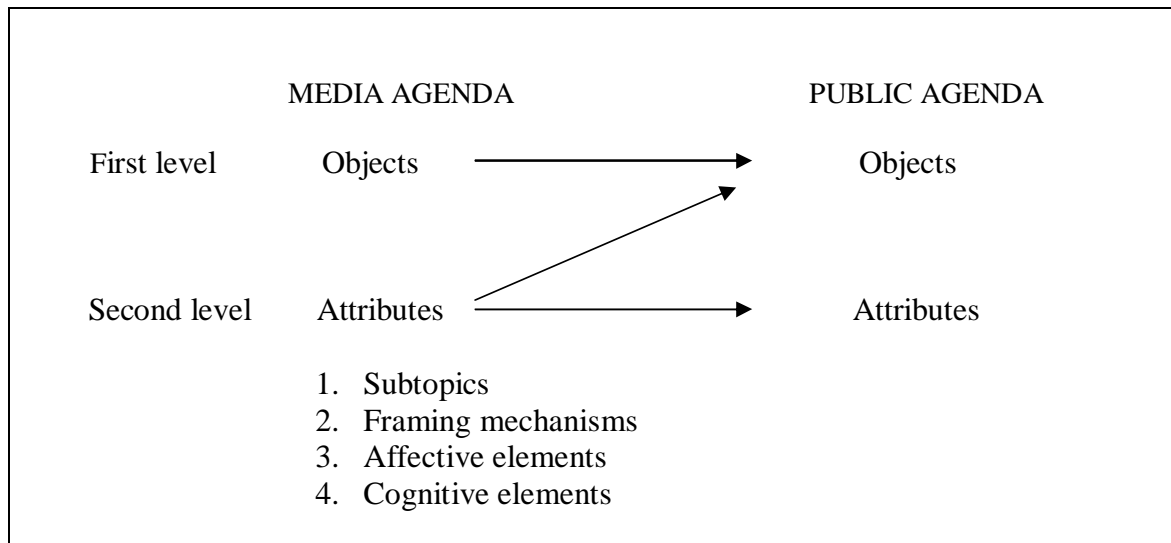
The researcher points out that attributes, as the independent variable of the second-level agenda-setting, are subtopics within a particular news item or issue. Placement and size define the framing mechanism and influence the prominence of the news item. The affective dimension deals with 'the public's emotional response that may result from media coverage' (Ghanem 1997, p. 12). The media may cause concern among people through narrative structure of the news, proximity and human interest. Dohonew (1983), for example, argues that narrative or chronologically ordered stories tend to have a greater psychological impact on the audience than the traditional summary style. Proximity and human interest, in turn, are news values that link a reader or a listener closely to what is being reported. Elliott (1988), in his work on the hijacking of an airplane, investigating the complex political causes of the hijackers, focused on how the human facets of the story were appealing to friends and families of hostages. Finally, cognitive dimension shows whether the media and the audience have the same perception of the problem. It identifies meaning in topics and addresses the problematic situation of the gerneralisable frame (Kepplinger et al. 1989, Edelstein et al. 1989, Edelstein 1993). For instance, if the media covers the news about a state of conflict, the public also perceives conflict. Then both the media and the audience are thinking about the problem in the same way. Ghanem's research (1996) on media coverage of crime found correspondence between the four dimensions and public concern about this issue.

In summary, framing influences public opinion 'by stressing specific values, facts, and other considerations, endowing them with greater apparent relevance to the issue than they might appear to have under an alternative frame' (Nelson et al. 1997, p. 569). Framing research is used to broaden understanding of media effects. Both agenda-setting and framing studies draw attention to the perspectives of communicators and their audiences. However, whereas agenda-setting studies deal with 'the shell of the topic', as Kosicki (1993) defined, and focus on the frequency of media coverage, framing mechanism looks inside the shell and is understood as a catalyst to frequency in terms of the agenda-setting function of the media. Framing research explores how the issues are covered in the news and deals with the special aspects that certain frames have in the content of a message (Ghanem 1997, McCombs 2005, Vreese 2005). Thus, both agenda-setting and framing theories will be considered in this study. Agenda-setting research and framing research would benefit from each other: employing both perspectives simultaneously will contribute to exploring relations between media and society and its effects on the public.

2.4 Methodology

This dissertation focuses on research from a single case study. The advantage of such an approach is that it allows exploration of the complexity of data within a specific context (Gerring 2004, Zainal 2007). The broadcasts and the audience of the RFE/RL's Russian Service during the Glasnost and Perestroika periods, in particular between the years 1987 and 1991 are the focus of the study. Perestroika and Glasnost campaigns were launched by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1986, but the first visible reforms and changes in society started taking place in 1987. Glasnost policy was only really blossoming by the end of 1988 when jamming was removed on all Western broadcasters including RFE/RL. Thus, the period of time for this study was defined according to the following logic: one year prior to the removal of jamming for RFE/RL, until the August coup and the following dissolution of the USSR in 1991.

To gain greater insights on the subject of this study, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed. The quantitative method is described as 'the systematic assignment of communication content to categories according to rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods'[2] whereas the qualitative content analysis

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[2] Riffe, D., Lacy, S., and Fico, F. G. (2005). *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in research.* Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., p. 3.

concerns 'the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.'[3] Thus, qualitative methods were used to acquire deeper understanding of the findings produced by the quantitative methods in this study.

This study entails primary and secondary research analysis. Among the primary research methods, a basic statistical analysis and the broadcasting plan computational technique were used as quantitative methods, while in-depth interviews and content analysis of archival recordings constitute the qualitative part of this study. The secondary research was the analysis of statistical data by the Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research (SAAOR) unit of RFE/RL. SAAOR conducted an analysis of public attitudes, public opinion structures and the role of Western radio between 1972 and 1993. The survey results were summarised by Eugene Parta, a director of Audience Research and Programme Evaluation for RFE/RL, who retired in 2006, and then published the results in 2007 in the book 'Discovering the Hidden Listener: An Assessment of Radio Liberty and Western Broadcasting to the USSR During the Cold War.'

RFE/RL's broadcasting plans, archival recordings and archival transcripts of programme plans, SAAOR surveys and in-depth interviews with Radio's editorial staff and policymakers constitute the empirical data for this study. I examined broadcasting plans from January 1987 through August 1991 that mapped out the schedule and frequencies of each radio programme. The researcher built custom tables in Excel to calculate the number of broadcasts per week, per year, and the number of broadcasting hours per year for each radio programme. Frequency is defined as 'the number of times an individual member of the target audience is exposed to a particular media vehicle in a given time period' while reach is the percentage of the target audience that is exposed to the message in a given period (Percy and Elliott 2005, p.165). Frequency and reach are the key components of media effectiveness that help to explore the effects of RFE/RL in the context of the agenda-setting theory. I was able to find factual evidence in the RFE/RL archives that allowed the calculation of frequencies for each programme while the measures of reach were only available through the secondary sources of

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[3] Hsieh, H. and Shannon, S. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis, *Qualitative Health Research*, 15: 1277-1288, p. 1278.

information. The SAAOR data was the primary source of the information of RFE/RL reach in the 1987-1991period.

To examine the effects of framing, the content of radio archives has been analysed and a detailed examination and codification of programme plans between 1987 and August 1991 was conducted. In addition, forty radio programme recordings, preliminarily identified through the statistical analysis of the broadcasting plans, were selected on a random basis from the period 1987 through 1991. The programmes were carefully listened, transcribed and analysed to gain better understanding of their content and tonality for the qualitative data. Also a number of in-depth interviews with RFE/RL's experts, media policy makers and editorial staff who shaped the content of RFE/RL programmes during the relevant period of this study was conducted. The interviews were conducted on the premises of the RFE/RL's headquarters in Prague, Czech Republic between February 2012 and June 2012. Face-to-face conversations took place with the journalists of RFE/RL Andrey Babitsky and Dmitry Volchek; the author of historical programmes Vladimir Tolz; the author of cultural programmes and writer, Igor Pomerantsev; the political commentator and former director of the Russian Service of RFE/RL Efim Fistein; and the former RFE/RL's programme designer and producer and currently the head of the Russian service, Ruslan Gelischanow. A telephone interview with the Moscow-based Radio's journalist Mikhail Sokolov took place on June 21st, 2012. An interview with the former director of RFE/RL's Moscow bureau Savik Shuster was conducted via Skype on July 3rd, 2012. All interviews lasted one hour on average.

SAAOR survey methodology was based on more than fifty thousand interviews conducted with Soviet travellers in the West during the period 1972-1993. To exclude any possibility of built-in bias, SAAOR collaborated with independent research institutes to entrust interviews and design a standard questionnaire. The interviews dealt with the Western broadcasters in general and did not focus on a single specific foreign radio. Interviewers were unaware of a special interest on the part of any particular Western broadcaster. The input data that came from SAAOR interviews was processed by mass media computer simulation methodology, developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The survey work and data was strictly verified and consisted of two levels. On the first level the local institutes carried out random checks to ensure that the interviews were conducted. On the second level a method of Comparative and Continuous sampling was employed to verify that Soviet

travellers were consistent in their replies and that local differences in interviewing conditions did not significantly affect the results. Chi-square tests were applied to sub-sets of the data that was gathered in different areas and then computerised. If the findings did not show statistical consistency, the data would not be used for analysis. In 1989 SAAOR extended its methodology techniques by moving beyond the study of public attitudes to the analysis of latent structures of Soviet public opinion. The research centre collaborated with a French institute, Agorametrie, to develop sophisticated models for studying attitudinal dimensions of the Soviet public, such as types of population, media use and views on a range of topics of the day. This broadened approach allowed them to estimate the position of Western broadcasters in the USSR and attitudinal structures of its audiences.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING

The literature review in the previous chapter equipped us with the essential theoretical orientations of mass media effects. This chapter elucidates the crucial insights of international broadcasting history necessary for understanding the impact of Western radio stations (primarily RFE/RL) on the Soviet audience. In particular, this chapter explores the potential of radio as a medium and what makes international broadcasting an effective tool of foreign policy. It also looks at the prerequisites of Western transmission to the USSR and the context in which it occurred, as well as providing a brief overview of the key Western radio broadcasters during the Cold War and explaining why RFE/RL was chosen as the most appropriate Western broadcaster for this analysis.

3.1 The Power of Radio

Nelson (1997), in his book 'The War Black Heavens ,' summarising the role of Western broadcasting, stated, 'Why did the West win the cold war? Not by use of arms. Weapons did not breach the Iron Curtain. The Western invasion was by radio, which was mightier than the sword' (p. xiii).

Radio is described in literature as the most powerful and unstoppable medium of mass communication (Hale 1975, Qualter 1985, West 1987, Wood 1992). Qualter (1985) mentions that radio is superior to other means of communication in at least two aspects: it is immediate and it is universal. He argues that there is no appreciable time-lag between broadcast and reception: 'A radio message circles a globe in an instant… It can ignore frontiers and boundaries, for jamming and banning are rarely fully effective and may even be counterproductive. Radio can penetrate where it is officially unwanted' (Qualter 1985, pp. 218-219). Hale (1975) also distinguishes radio among other means of communication. According to him, while 'the printed word is clumsy to distribute and easily censored', and 'television's power is still purely national', radio propaganda which is also compared to advertising does not identify itself as selling a product; it influences deeper and wider (p. x). Listening to foreign radio in countries where censorship impedes a free flow of information is regarded as particularly precious: 'the very fact of making special effort to tune in predisposes the listener to pay more attention to, and believe, what he hears' (Hale 1975, p. xi).

Radio can convey the original sound of the human voice and appeal to the emotions. For example, Hitler used radio as 'a way of inducing mass hysteria' and to sow the seeds of hatred (Hale 1975, p. x). In pre-independence Algeria, radio played the role of a revolutionary force. It performed a similar function for the Voice of the Arabs in the Holy War. Radio Free Europe is believed to be the potent force that brought Hungarians out onto the streets in 1956. The success of radio is also due to its low cost as a form of technology. The discovery of short waves opened up new opportunities and made global broadcasting possible. These waves could travel very long distances using minimal power and reach large audiences with a manageable budget (Wood 1992). In addition, it is much easier and cheaper to re-broadcast radio programmes or send tapes to another country rather than to exchange television programmes (Hale 1975).

The unique qualities of radio, such as its ability to penetrate national frontiers with unexpected news and everyday events faster than any other medium, as well as its use in influencing public opinion, made international broadcasting an element of foreign policy and an arm of diplomacy (Hale 1975, Tuch 1990, Rawnsley 1996, Price 2003). Price (2003) defines international broadcasting as 'a complex combination of state-sponsored news, information, and entertainment directed at a population outside the sponsoring state's boundaries' (p. 53). It is used by one society to shape the opinion of another and influence its governments and state systems (Rawnsley 1996, Price 2003). Hale (1975) also points to radio's central role in international communications, foreign policy and propaganda. He states that radio, being the only medium which can convey messages across the entire globe and from one country to another instantaneously, plays 'an indispensable role in international communications, and keeps its place as the most powerful weapon of international propaganda' (Hale, 1975, p. ix).

Bolsheviks were the first who recognised radio's power and potential. From the start of the October Revolution they used radio to present their point of view to the wider world (Hale 1975, Rawnsley 1996, Nelson 1997). In 1926 the Russians used radio to attack Romania and demand the return of Bessarabia. By 1933 Radio Moscow extended its broadcasting to eleven languages, after its inauguration in 1929, in order to explain the Communist Revolution and 'propagandise its accomplishments' (Rawnsley 1996, p. 7). But it was the Nazis who developed the use of radio as a means of international propaganda and diplomacy and were particularly inventive in the use of this medium. A massive propaganda barrage was used by the Nazis to bring about the Anschluss of Austria in March 1938. German broadcasts gained

a monopoly on information by distributing radio sets which were tuned only to German frequencies (Rawnsley 1996). In the campaign to annex Czechoslovakia, Konrad Henlein, the leading Nazi among the Sudeten Germans, was put on air to make fraudulent charges against the Czech government (Puddington 2000). Eventually, Hitler established worldwide propaganda broadcasting and Germans started transmitting their version of the truth to the world.

Great Britain started international broadcasting to serve its colonists (Browne 1982). In 1938 the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) set up foreign-language services in Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese. The corporation enjoyed much success with its international broadcasts: it quickly gained in reputation as a reliable source of news and information, being independent of government control (Wood 1992). Briggs (1985), evaluating the broadcasts of the Arabic Service said, 'Only the BBC would have jeopardized the start… by telling the truth in a bold factual way' (vol. 3, p. 143). The United States had no experience of independent peacetime broadcasting. The government appealed to international propaganda when the Japanese attacked American territory at Pearl Harbor, forcing them to join World War II.

During the Second World War international broadcasting became a powerful weapon for all participants. The BBC massively increased its propaganda output, from ten languages on the eve of the war to forty-five different languages by the time the war ended. The United States established a propaganda agency, the Office of War Information (OWI), and an international radio network, the Voice of America (Puddington 2000). The Americans endeavored to emulate the objective style of the BBC. The first transmission of Voice of America, heard in February 1942, opened with the promise: 'Daily at this time we shall speak to you about America and the war. The news may be good or bad. We shall tell you the truth' (Fitzgerald 1987, p. 4). German broadcasting was mainly targeted at the entire civilian population of the Third Reich. The Nazis used widespread propaganda to justify and explain the war effort to its people (Wood 1992). To combat the enemy's attempts, the Nazis jammed foreign radio signal, restricting the receiving equipment and intimidating the listeners (Nelson 1997). Clearly both sides deeply believed that international radio broadcasting was an influential instrument of the war. Nelson (1997) notes that radio's most important contribution to the Allied war was in broadcasting to the occupied territories. For example, London radio played an essential role in persuading the French to resume the fight. General de Gaulle called radio

broadcasting 'a powerful means of war' and believed that it was a potent force which helped to beat fascism (quoted in Briggs 1985, vol. 3, pp. 433-434).

When the Second World War ended, the Nazi threat had been replaced by Communism. International radio broadcasting had proved to be a powerful weapon and played an even more influential role in the Cold War between East and West that followed. In totalitarian countries, where censorship limited the access to information and coverage of the domestic media, foreign radio became the only source of information about the events happening outside of each closed society. As Hale (1975) argues, radio was 'an important negotiating card in the struggle to define and institutionalize east-west détente, because broadcasting reaches, and in a sense can create, a public opinion which questions the single-minded assumptions of governments claiming a monopoly of the source of news and information' (pp. xii-xiii). The Cold War was a time when international broadcasting became the most valuable instrument for the Western nations in promoting foreign policy and 'the only way to overthrow socialism.'[4]

3.2 Western Broadcasting in the Cold War

In the late 1940s and 1950s Western governments turned to radio as the most effective tool of countering the Soviet monopoly of information. As Nelson (1997) points out, from the end of the Second World War, Americans and British believed that communication with those of the Soviet bloc was necessary to promote a better relationship and understanding. On March 24, 1946, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) began broadcasting in Russian to the Soviet Union. About one year later the Americans did the same. On February 17, 1947, the Voice of America (VOA) started transmitting its messages in Russian (Nelson 1997). On July 4, 1950, Radio Free Europe inaugurated programming to the communist East. Three years later, on March 1, 1953, Radio Liberty started broadcasting to the peoples of the Soviet Union (Sosin 1999, Puddington 2000).

The idea of Western radio broadcasting in Russian to the Soviet Union and Eastern European satellites was triggered by the Communist takeover of Eastern Europe. The Marshall plan of 1948, launched by the United States to aid Europe to renounce or prevent the spread of Soviet communism; the Berlin blockade; the Iron Curtain; and the Soviet Union's parity with

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[4] The U.S. Congress official document of 1978 in Price, M. (2003). Public Diplomacy and the transformation of American broadcasting

nuclear weapons, ultimately put socialist East and capitalist West in direct confrontation with each other (Cummings 2009). The first phase of the Cold War had commenced and an intensive propaganda campaign began on both sides. Soviet propaganda used Marxist philosophy to attack capitalist features, such as exploitation of labour, while Western broadcasting linked the nature of communism to the Nazi regime of the Third Reich and blamed the USSR for its totalitarian qualities (Wood 1992). President Truman, in his famous 'Campaign of Truth' speech in April 1950, said, 'This is a struggle, above all else, for the minds of men. Propaganda is one of the most powerful weapons the Communists have in this struggle. … This propaganda can be overcome by truth – plain, simple, unvarnished – presented by newspapers, radio, newsreels, and other sources that people trust… We must pool our efforts with those of other free peoples in a sustained, intensified program to promote the cause of freedom against the propaganda of slavery' (in Tuch, 1990, p. 15).

The major western broadcasters were the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL) which were merged as Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) in 1976. Some authors (Wood 1992, Nelson 1997) also include Deutsche Welle, Radio France Internationale, Radio Canada International and Vatican Radio, that also had Russian language services. However, their coverage and audience ratings were minor in comparison to the two American and British radio stations. The origin, nature and character of the principal broadcasters were very different, but they were launched to serve a similar target: to maintain the free flow of information to the totalitarian societies and 'to weaken the communist governments' grip on public opinion' (Hale 1975, p. xiv).

The BBC made the Soviet and East European audiences a high priority after World War II. The British corporation's position was that broadcasting to another country promoted better understanding between nations and could therefore 'defuse an international situation that is potentially dangerous' (Wood 1992, p. 106). As a national station broadcasting worldwide, the BBC focused more on British news and world events and very little on the affairs of their audiences. Sir Charles Curran, the BBC's Director-General, and former Managing Director of External Services, defined the BBC's line thus: 'We explain rather than proselytize… We do not seek to overpersuade, but rather to remind our listeners of these elements in the British case which it would be in their own interests to recognize' (in Hale 1975, p. 60). The BBC Russian Service employed exiles to broadcast to their homelands, but the BBC's central staff prepared the scripts for the exile personnel who then read them on air (Mickelson 1983).

Their main task was to break down the cultural and political isolation of the people of the USSR and Eastern Europe. The BBC's feature programmes informed the listeners about western culture, western philosophy, and political and economic thought (Fraenkel 1986). The British radio's policy was based on the reliability myth. Throughout the years the corporation successfully fostered the idea that it was a world voice, independent of government control and censorship (Wood 1992).

American international broadcasting was mainly represented by the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. The VOA was established as World War II propaganda arsenal and was later incorporated into the United States Information Agency (USIA), created in 1953, making it the most active tool of the U.S. government to carry the worldwide information campaign. The primary role of the VOA was to reflect the official U.S. policy and U.S. life and provide in-depth news about the United States and the world (Tuch 1990). Like the BBC, the Voice mainly focused on the affairs of its own country and less on domestic issues of the targeted states. The VOA Charter dating from 1960 formulated the general principles of radio policy and broadcasts: the American station would serve as a reliable, accurate and authoritative source of information to listeners and 'represent America and not only a single segment of American Society' (Mainland 1986, p. 114). The VOA based its broadcasts on the supposition formulated by the VOA's former Director Kenneth Tomlison: 'Where there is truth, there is hope for better tomorrow' (in Mainland 1986, p. 115). In order to fulfill its basic policy objective, the broadcaster attempted to provide the Soviet Union and its East European satellites with truthful and unvarnished information from the American point of view.

Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were fundamentally different from the VOA, although they were both the instruments of the American international information campaign against communist aggression (Tuch 1990). RFE and RL were founded by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as surrogate domestic radios. Staffed by émigré broadcasters, the radios provided an alternative Home Office in the target countries, by delivering lots of uncensored local news and information. The report by the Presidential Study Commission on International Broadcasting in 1973 clearly defined the distinctive features and missions of these principal American broadcasters. It stated:

> The purposes and functions of VOA are quite different from those of RFE and RL. There is no conflict between them. The VOA is recognized as the official radio

voice of the United States Government. Like all other USIA activities, it gives preponderant emphasis to American developments. VOA programming contains relatively little information about internal developments in its audience countries. RFE and RL programming… gives citizens of the communist countries information on conditions, attitudes, and trends within their own countries and on international developments as they relate to the special interests of the listeners.[5]

RFE/RL was based in Munich and used transmitters in Germany, Portugal, Spain and Taiwan to broadcast to the Soviet Union and the communist countries of Eastern Europe in their respective languages. The role of the broadcaster was indeed unique; by providing local news, history, culture, religion, and literature banned from local media, RFE/RL performed a function of domestic radio. As Puddington (2000) points out, 'while the BBC was appreciated for its professionalism and the Voice of America (VOA) valued for its programs on American culture, only RFE was given the status of honorary member of the democratic opposition'(p. 5). To create the illusion of Home Service, RFE/RL had to broadcast all day and a good part of night, while the VOA and the BBC usually broadcasted between one and three hours daily. As well as this, the exile personnel of these Western radio stations only read scripts on air which had been completed by central staff, whereas RFE/RL's exile broadcasters were the authors of their programmes and shaped the content of radio messages themselves (Mickelson 1983, p. 27).

Western broadcasting was highly provocative for the Soviet authorities. From its very beginning, the communist states commenced significant jamming on the BBC, VOA and RFE/RL's programmes (Woodard 2010). During the periods of détente between the years 1963-1968 and 1973-1981, jamming was occasionally lifted on the VOA and BBC and in 1987, in the Perestroika/Glasnost climate, this was eventually ended. However, RFE/RL was apparently considered a more dangerous broadcaster. Transmissions of RFE/RL were jammed without interruption, and only in late 1988, when Perestroika and Glasnost campaigns were approaching their peak, jamming finally removed for this American broadcaster.

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[5] The report by the Presidential Study Commission on International Broadcasting in 1973 in Hale (1975). *Radio Power: Propaganda and International Broadcasting*. London: Paul Elek, p. 39

Nevertheless, while jamming affected listening habits of the Soviet public, it was not successful in completely preventing the use of Western radio in the USSR. Significant events, such as political occurrences, proved more popular with the public. This Figure 3.2 shows weekly reach rates of principal Western broadcasters, in correlation with key political events between 1979 and 1990. Audiences began to build after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. They reached a peak of 26% in 1980 during the U.S. Olympic boycott. Audience ratings slightly declined in 1981-1982 at the time of martial time in Poland and grew again through the period of the nuclear war scare, when the US introduced Perishing missiles in Europe, in order to counter the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles. During the period of early Perestroika, when the Soviet media was less controlled by official censorship, listening rates dropped considerably. Only ratings of Radio Liberty remained almost the same (9-10%). Scholars explain this by the fact that the broadcaster focused on internal Soviet affairs that were relevant to its listeners, since the situation in the USSR had entered a period of political and social change.

Figure 3.2. **Trends in Listening to Western Broadcasters in the USSR.**
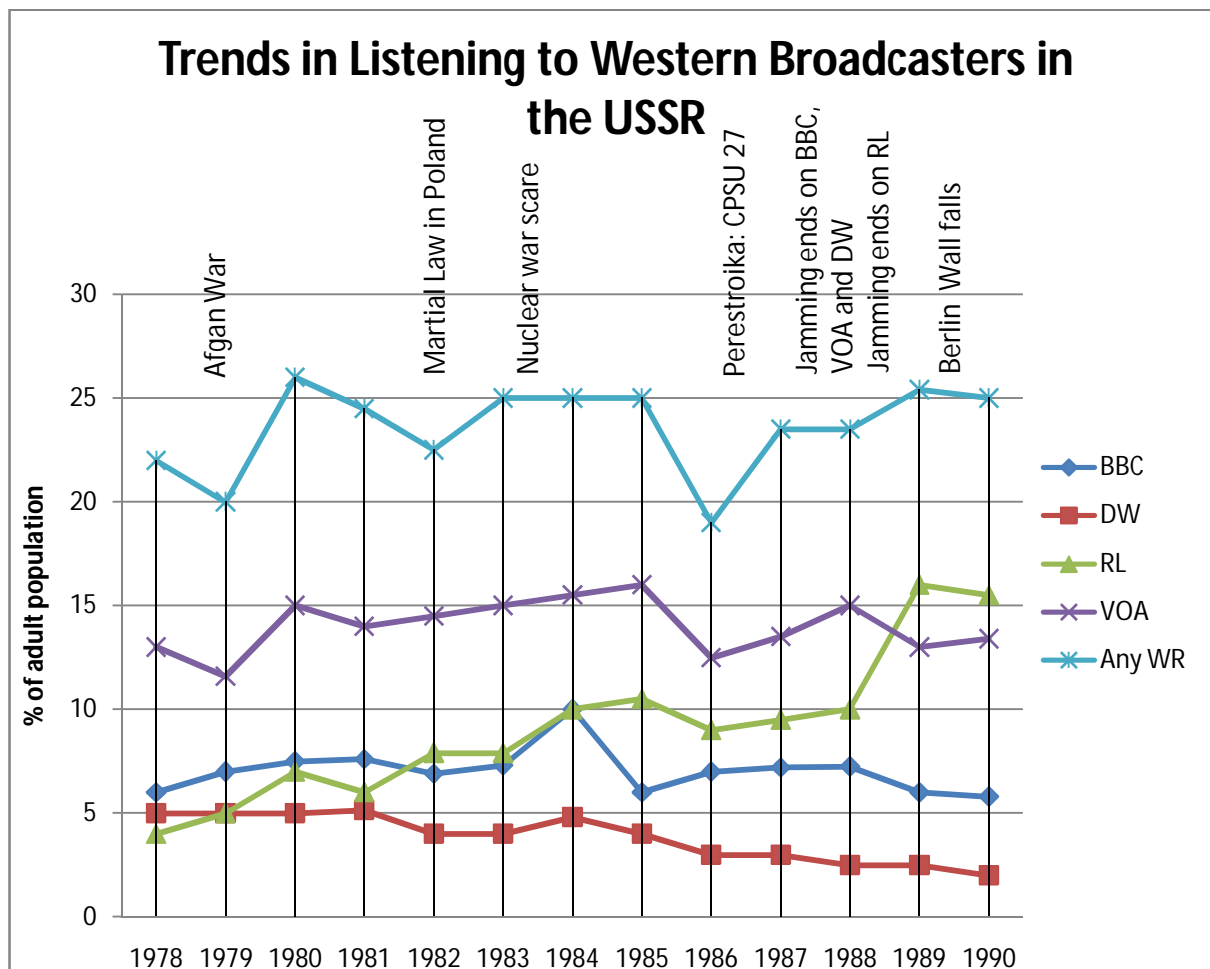
When jamming finally ended in 1987 for VOA, BBC and Deutsche Welle and in 1988 for RFE/RL, as a part of Glasnost policy conducted by Gorbachev's administration, weekly listening rates for Western broadcasters began to climb. The rates of the BBC, VOA and Deutsche Welle returned close to 1980 and 1985 levels, whereas the listening indices of RFE/RL began to grow rapidly overtaking other foreign radios, and RFE/RL eventually became the leader of Western broadcasting in the USSR

Thus, given the unique nature of RFE/RL, a stricter supervision and heavier jamming of its programming by the communist government, and the higher audience rates at the end of the Cold War, RFE/RL's broadcasting appears to have been more valuable for the Soviet public in comparison to other Western radios. The next chapters will provide a closer look at the origin, mission and policies of RFE/RL and examine the broadcasting activities of the RFE/RL's Russian unit and its impact on Soviet people during the period of Perestroika and Glasnost.

4. RADIO FREE EUROPE/RADIO LIBERTY (RFE/RL)

This chapter briefly overviews the history of RFE/RL and its broadcasting activities in Glasnost and Perestroika period. It examines the mission, purposes and programming policies of the Radio and describes the historical context of Perestroika and Glasnost and RFE/RL's operation when these campaigns were in full swing. This section also explains why the broadcaster was unique, and looks at the evolution of RFE/RL's funding.

4.1 History of RFE/RL

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty started its history at the beginning of the Cold War. Initially Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were two separate organisations. Radio Free Europe was incorporated in 1950 to broadcast to the nations of Communist Europe. Three years later on March 1, 1953, Radio Liberty (initially it was called Radio Liberation, but was renamed to Radio Liberty in 1959) started transmitting its messages to the Soviet Union. The "father" of both radio stations was George F. Kennan, a prominent U.S. government official, who was responsible for America's early Cold War strategy and believed that 'the Cold War would eventually be fought by political rather than military means' (Puddington 2000, p. 7). According to the U.S. government review of RFE/RL, the stations were founded to utilise émigré skills from the USSR and the satellite nations, in order to communicate anti-communist messages to their homelands[6]. It was believed in Washington that 'a unified council of exiles would evoke more sympathy among Soviet citizens and create more concentration among the Kremlin leadership than could an American-led body' (Mickelson 1983, p. 60).

RFE was founded under the Free Europe Committee and RL was established under the American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of the USSR which, in 1964, became the Radio Liberty Committee. The objectives of the committees were 'to aid the worldwide Russian and nationalistic emigration in its effort to sustain the spirit of liberty among the peoples of the USSR', 'to preserve and sustain the historic cultures of Russians and the nationalities' and 'to aid the emigration on seeking to extend understanding of the West

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[6] 'The report of the President's Committee (Jackson Committee) on International Information Activities, June 30 1953: Project Clean up,' *Foreign relations,* Vol.2, International Information Activities (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State) in Cummings, R.H. (2009). *Cold War Radio: The dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989.* Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc., p. 9.

within the USSR' (Nelson 1997, pp. 56-57). In the beginning, the radios were secretly funded by the Central Intelligence Agency, but were operated under the guise of private non-profit organisations. As Sosin (1999) notes, 'The facade of a private company was supposed to establish a greater credibility for the Radio as an independent voice rather than as an official arm of the U.S. communications network that included Voice of America. Thus, when Soviet diplomats confronted their American counterparts at international conferences with the accusation that the émigré radio was "interfering in the internal affairs of the Soviet people," they were simply informed that it was a private station not subject to government control' (p. 2). However, in 1971 the CIA's involvement ended and RFE/RL merged into one network in 1976, financed by Congressional appropriations through the Board for International Broadcasting (Tuch 1990).

RFE and RL were set up as home service propaganda or as counter-propaganda to the Soviet information monopoly. The 1954 radio's committee memorandum stated:

> It should be clearly established that RFE [and RL] propaganda is neither white nor black, neither official nor clandestine. It is home service propaganda…The semantics of propaganda have become involved since totalitarian techniques and the employment of big lie came into existence. But exasperation with opposing uses of propaganda should not alter or guide our own. The basis of persuasion to a point of view, to a cause, is the hypothesis of propaganda thought and action and ours can be largely incorporated on one word, "freedom," together with the principles of conduct we believe to be a part of that concept…

> Since there is no standard procedure for propaganda content analysis, one must rely on credibility of content and acceptability of method. Home service broadcasting, as method, needs no defense. Through this service cultural propaganda, which can state a good case, is often more effective than political propaganda…

> RFE [and RL] does not attempt to be doctrinal or propagandistic, to employ propaganda for the sake of propaganda. It *can* attribute much of its program success to fluidity and diversity. Propaganda is not only policy but morality and humanity,

and in this respect its techniques must serve the idea and not vice versa. Because RFE's [and RL's] idea is "freedom," special care must be taken in its presentation.[7]

Thus, RFE/RL was launched as a 'surrogate' radio or, in other words, 'an internal radio even though it was situated beyond the borders of the Soviet Union' (Sosin 1999, p. 8). By providing an alternative service to the controlled, party-dominated domestic press, the radio aimed to preserve the independent thinking of its listeners and 'bring about the peaceful demise of the Communist system and the liberation of what were known as satellite nations' (Puddington 2000, p. ix).

With its headquarters in Munich, RFE/RL had transmitters in Germany, Portugal, and later in Spain and Taiwan. Some of the radio's programmes were sent from the New York bureau and others were prepared by the local Russian unit in Munich. The editorial personnel were composed of émigrés and exiles that were managed by the American executives. The first corpus of Russian staff members included émigré intellectuals who had taken part in the pre-revolutionary struggle against the monarchy; former Red Army officers; captains and journalists defected at the end of the Second World War; editors of émigré magazines; former Soviet citizens living in camps in Western Germany and others (Sosin 1999).

The directors of RFE/RL attempted to make the radio a credible and professional news medium, restraining micromanaging by the CIA, which was the main source of funds for the broadcaster until 1971, and émigré invective (Sosin 2010). The underlying premise of the radio's policy programming was that 'preserving this capacity of independent thought, and at least on a limited basis, discussion would prevent the authoritarian governments in the Soviet sphere from fully consolidating their power over the societies they ruled' (Johnson 2010, p. 6). However, RFE/RL's early broadcasts to the Soviet Union were criticised for being too militant, aggressive and revolutionary. Such a shrill and hostile tone to the communist regime was voiced by the group of political émigrés who were authorised to implement the policy of the new Eisenhower administration and took advantage of their opposition to dictatorship during the first years of the radio's existence. Nevertheless, in the following years the RFE/RL's executives developed a strict system of broadcasts monitoring and policy control. They enlisted advice from American and Western European academics and experts on the Soviet Union, regularly held conferences with British and American scholars and invited

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[7] Free Europe Committee memorandum, "Analysis of Radio Free Europe's New York Programs," December 1954, in Johnson, R.A. (2010). *Radio Free Europe and Radio and Radio Liberty: The CIA Years and Beyond.* Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, pp. 3-4.

well-known American and British Sovietologists and journalists to critically review the radio tapes of the broadcasts in Russian.

From the early years, the American management responsible for RFE/RL's programming policy took into consideration the sensitivity of the Soviet audience: Soviet people's patriotism and their pride in the victory over fascists in World War II, their loyalty to Lenin's ideals and their presumed skepticism of the messages of their exile compatriots in the capitalist West. Gene Sosin, a former director of programme planning for RFE/RL, wrote 'We were aware of the pitfalls of hostile and blatant propaganda that would literally turn off our listeners. We spoke frankly and empathetically about their daily problems, and articulated their hopes for a better future' (Sosin 2010, p. 19). To bridge the distance between the broadcaster and its audience, the Radio's émigré writers and speakers strove to identify themselves with the Soviet people and used the words "our country," "we, your fellow countrymen," "our homeland" (Sosin 1999). In order to attract the listener's attention, which was disrupted by continuous jamming from the USSR government, and to compete with other Western radio stations, the authors of programmes and the Radio's management tried to make sure that the "promise of reward" was greater than the "threat of difficulty" (Sosin 2010). They provided "forbidden fruit"- the information which the Soviet listeners would never get from the controlled domestic media and other foreign broadcasters. For example, the content of RFE/RL's programmes included a series of programmes about banned literature by pre-revolutionary and early Soviet writers, as well as historical events and anniversaries that were ignored by the Kremlin, but were meaningful for the Soviet people. In 1965 the world observed the 75th anniversary of Dostoevsky's death, and RFE/RL prepared forty messages from world-renowned writers and artists who acknowledged the impact of his works on their creativity. Such a variety of different responses provided deeper insight into Dostoevsky's writings and contrasted with the one-sided, biased official Soviet interpretation. In the late 50s, when *Doctor Zhivago* by Pasternak was published in the West, the Radio made this important, yet forbidden book available to its audience.

Khrushchev's secret speech of 1956 unmasked Josef Stalin's image as a benevolent leader, exposing some of his crimes and validating many of RFE/RL's messages. The Radio made an effort to accelerate the erosion of faith in the Party's impeccability and disseminated Khrushchev's text on air, supplemented with necessary comments from experts and political scientists in the West (Sosin 1999). Beginning with the 1960s, and for the remainder of the Cold War, RFE/RL included in its broadcasting schedule samizdat (self-published) literary

works and political documents which were written by famous Russian dissidents, such as Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, Andrei Sinyavski, Yuli Daniel and Andrei Sakharov (Mickelson 1983, Puddington 2000). Since the mid-1970s, the Russian Service of RFE/RL became the channel for dissemination of documents about the Kremlin's violation of human and civil rights. This included petitions of repressed ethnic and religious minorities, such as Lithuanian Catholics, Crimean Tatars and Jewish Refuseniks, as well as each issue of the "Chronicle of Current Events," all prepared by unofficial monitoring groups established after the Final Act of Helsinki Conference of 1975 by Soviet dissidents in several cities of the USSR (Sosin 2010).

The Soviet authorities regarded RFE/RL activities as highly dangerous and provocative. They accused the broadcaster of espionage and tried to project a negative image of the Radio as 'a heaven for spies and renegades' via the Soviet media (*ibid*., p. 21). Moreover, in 1971 it was revealed to the American public that RFE/RL had indeed been covertly financed by Congress via the CIA. These revelations led to heated debates in the US government about whether to continue the radio's operation. Senator J. William Fulbright, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, demanded it cut its connection with the CIA. He was opposed to the stations, declared that they were "outworn relics of the Cold War," and launched a campaign to cut off all funding to RFE/RL, thereby closing the broadcaster down (Uttaro 1982, Sosin 1999). However, his efforts proved unsuccessful. The body of distinguished citizens, commissioned to study RFE/RL's broadcasting activities in-depth by President Richard Nixon, affirmed that the stations had 'demonstrated their effectiveness in furthering the open communication of information and ideas in Eastern Europe and the USSR'[8]. The commission carefully examined the Munich operation and concluded that 'peace is more secure in well informed societies than in those that may be more easily manipulated' and that 'the continuation of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty as independent broadcast media, operating in manner not consistent with the board foreign policy objectives of the United States and in accordance with high professional standards, is in the national interest.'[9] The report emphasised the unique role of the broadcaster as a 'medium capable of operating more flexible rather than as a mere mouthpiece of the U.S.

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[8] The Board for International Broadcasting Act of 1973, see Buell, W.A. (1986). 'Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in the mid 1980s,' in K.R.M. Short (ed.), *Western Broadcasting Over the Iron Curtain*, Croom Helm, Australia: Croom Helm Ltd., pp. 69-97.

[9] *Ibid.*

government' (Sosin 1999, p. 149). The commission recommended preserving the Radios as private American corporations and called for funding to be provided openly by Congress (Puddington 2000). By 1975 the stations merged into one network- RFE/RL Inc. - and were financed by Congressional appropriation through the newly created Board for International Broadcasting. The Board was appointed by the President of the United States and consisted of five members of the majority party and four members of the minority party. The new structure would serve as a link between the government and the radio and would act 'to protect the corporation from political pressure, while at the same time ensuring that broadcasting was not inconsistent with broad U.S. foreign policy' (*ibid.*, p. 210).

To raise the prestige and restore the image of the radio as a credible and independent media organisation, RFE/RL drew on the expertise of the new post-Stalin émigré wave. In the decade of stagnation before Brezhnev's death in 1982, many prominent members of dissident intelligentsia emigrated to the West. Among them were the writers Vasily Aksyonov, Sergei Dovlatov, Vladimir Voinovich, Andrei Sinyavski, Arkady Belinkov, Vladimir Maksimov and Viktor Nekrasov; an artist and sculptor Ernst Neizvestny, musician and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich with his wife, a famous opera singer, Galina Vishnevskaya; human rights activists Boris Shragin and Ludmila Alexeyeva; a famous dissident and satirical balladeer Aleksander Galich; and lawyers Dina Kaminskaya with her husband Aleksander Simis. RFE/RL used this opportunity to draw on the expertise of this new post-Stalin émigré wave. The fresh émigrés worked as regular staff members and freelancers or contributed to the Radio as frequent guests on programmes. They provided crucial insights into Soviet reality that helped to 'reinforce the station's role as a voice of uncensored Soviet public opinion championing civil and human rights and artistic freedom' and raise the popularity of the radio among the Soviet people (Sosin 2010, p. 23). The SAAOR research showed that the audience rates of the RFE/RL's Russian Service steadily increased, despite heavy jamming and Soviet propaganda. The RL's ratings averaged 6.5 million people a week in the 1978-1979 years, which grew to 10.5 million people a week by 1985. The composition of the audience for RFE/RL's Russian Service was estimated at 78% urban, 71% male, 86% under the age of fifty (Parta 2009).

Table 4.1 **Weekly Reach of Western Radio and Jamming: 1978-1985**

Weekly Reach of Western Radio and Jamming: 1978-1985								
	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
BBC	6	7	7.5	7.6	6.9	7.3	10	6
DW	5	5	5	5.15	4	4	4.8	4
RL	**4**	**5**	**7**	**6**	**7.9**	**7.9**	**10**	**10.5**
VOA	13	11.6	15	14	14.5	15	15.5	16
Any WR	22	20	26	24.5	22.5	25	25	25

By the arrival of Gorbachev, the Radio had had three decades of experience on air; it had changed its sponsor; honed broadcasting and programming policies and was gradually capturing the audience by gaining the reputation as a credible, accurate and uncensored source of information about internal as well as external affairs.

4.2 RFE/RL during Perestroika and Glasnost

The succession of Mikhail Gorbachev as the general secretary of the Communist Party in 1985 had prompted significant changes in Soviet domestic and foreign policies. The new leader of the USSR started his "revolution form above" – radical restructuring of the Soviet political, economic and social systems, known as 'Perestroika'. Gorbachev himself defined Perestroika as 'profound and essentially revolutionary changes implemented on the initiative of the authorities themselves but necessitated by objective changes in the situation and in social moods' that would occur within the boundaries of Leninism and socialism.[10] The Communist Party's general secretary first of all attempted to resolve the contradiction between the 'present state and the needs of Soviet development', and the 'mechanism braking progress,' the overcentralised vast bureaucratic apparatus, that became an impediment to modernization.[11] The Party machinery was lacking creative initiative and was criticised for its incompetence and dependence on the centre (Juviler 1988). In 1986, at the Twenty-

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[10] Mikhail Gorbachev (1987). *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World.* New York: Harper & Row Publishers, p. 55.

[11] Pravda, June 26, 1987 in P.H. Juviler and H. Kimura (eds.), Gorbachev's Reforms: US and Japanese Assessment, Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

Seventh Party Congress and after, Gorbachev raised the question of 'economic acceleration', democratization and activation of the human factor. The Soviet economy experienced severe crisis (Buckley 1993). The one of the Perestroika's immediate goals was to achieve significant transformations in all parts of the country's life.

Alongside with the Perestroika Gorbachev launched Glasnost campaign as a component of his programme of reconstruction. Glasnost translated in English as "openness," and means making information public. Gorbachev's efforts to reform party bureaucracy and other spheres of the state's life were often met with resistance from party officials. Glasnost, thus, was introduced to serve Perestroika by uncovering 'the deficiencies and problems of system and society, thereby promoting the necessary awareness for successful reform' (Buckley 1993, p. 18). Initially Glasnost was limited to exposing corrupt officials but 'soon became an instrument for discrediting the conservative opposition to Gorbachev's new policies of Perestroika' and was expanded to permit criticism in the Soviet media (Dzirkals 1990, p. v).

Yet the role of RFE/RL in the period of Perestroika and Glasnost remained relevant and important. The Soviet media was to remain 'collective propagandist' of Party policies and support Gorbachev in his struggle with the Party's hard-liners. ' Gorbachev in his 1987 speech to a Young Communist League congress, said. 'I consider it not superfluous to emphasize with all my strength: democracy is by no means anarchy and permissiveness... Authentic democracy is indivisible... from strict adherence to the laws and norms of the socialist community' (Mickiewicz 1988, p. 215). Androunas (1993) also notes that 'at the start of perestroika the entire media system was under the tough overwhelming control of the Communist party' and was allowed 'as an instrument of Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of 'improving socialism' and a weapon of his struggle against orthodox Communists and the party nomenklatura' (p. 2). Chernobyl disaster on April 26, 1986, is one of the examples demonstrating the limits of Glasnost campaign. The official Soviet media suppressed the news for several days but Soviet citizens learnt about the catastrophe from Western radio stations. RFE/RL understanding ramifications of Chernobyl devoted hour after hour to the story. The radio was giving instructions on the decontamination of food and clothing and the protection of children (Puddington 2000). It was one of RFE/RL's finest hours that helped to attract more listeners and build trust: the data suggested that listening rates skyrocketed during the first days of crisis.

After the Chernobyl tragedy and 'the worldwide political fallout caused by Gorbachev's omissions and distortions,' Glasnost gradually began to flourish. It reached its full swing in the end of 1988 and 1989, when jamming was finally removed from all Western radio stations including RFE/RL and works by previously banned writers such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn were published in full. The changes occurring in the Soviet press were spectacular (Sosin 1999, p. 198). 'Alternative' newspapers and magazines affiliated with new political parties and social movements started expressing their opinions openly, and a wide diversity of views, was presented in variety of journals co-published with Western publishers (Hopes 1992). Although the Soviet media was experiencing transition from totalitarian system to relative freedom and experimenting with Western techniques, they still were 'weighed down by the vestiges of totalitarian mindset' (Puddington 2000, p. 287). Meanwhile RFE/RL had been on air for three decades, had fine journalistic traditions and was able to offer qualitative relevant and unique programming to the listeners. The next chapter will explore in details the content of the Radio's programmes and assess the impact of the broadcaster on the Soviet audience.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

This section presents the data analysis. It looks at the measures of reach for the RFE/RL's Russian Service in the USSR by examining the broadcaster's target audience, the audience perceptions and the listening rates in comparison to other foreign radio stations; studies the programmes' frequencies of the Radio; and conducts qualitative content analysis of the major feature programmes. While reach and frequencies analyses are necessary to determine RFE/RL's ability to set public agenda in Soviet society in the late 80s and early 90s, qualitative analysis helps to explore how the Radio contributed to changing attitudes of the Soviet public to the communist regime and ruling party during Glasnost by looking at dominant frames used in the programmes.

5.1 Audience research

To determine how RFE/RL contributed to the changing attitude of the Soviet public to the communist regime, it is necessary to look first at the measures of reach for the RFE/RL's Russian Service in the USSR. SAAOR data suggests that the annual reach of the Soviet audience by all Western radio stations varied between 30% and 34.5% of the entire adult population between 1980 and 1985.

Figure 5.1. **Annual Reach of Western Radio: 1980-1990.**

Parta (2007), p. 23

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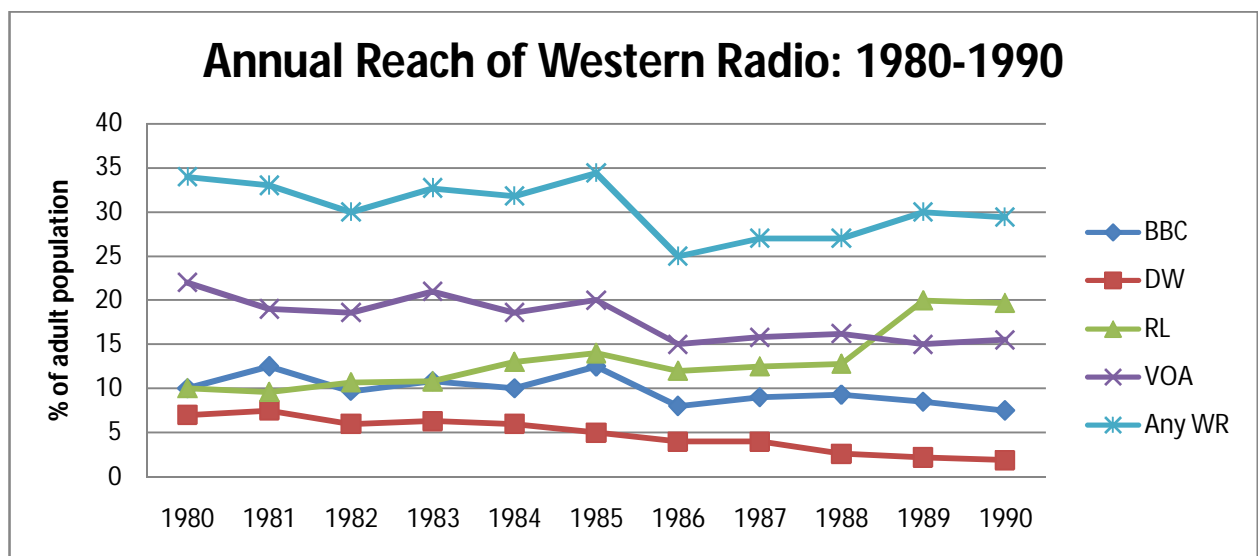
It dropped sharply between 1985 and 1986 and then went up again in 1987 and 1988 due to the withdrawal of jamming. Suddenly, millions of people were able to tune in to the Western radio and hear uninterrupted signal. In 1990 about 29% of the adult population was reached, at least occasionally, by one or more Western radio stations (see Figure 5.1).

In 1989-1990, Western radio was reaching 25 million people per day and over 50 million people per week. For comparison, the entire adult population (16 years and older) in the USSR totalled 209.8 million people in 1990. The "core audience," which in many ways corresponded with the "target audience" for Western radio, was predominantly the urban population who held at least a secondary education. Figure5.2 shows the trends of core audience listenership. The referent population for the "core audience" group was estimated at 47.3 million people by 1990 for the weekly reach of all Western radio (Parta 2007).

Figure 5.2. **Weekly Reach of Western Radio Among the "Core Audience": 1980-1990.**
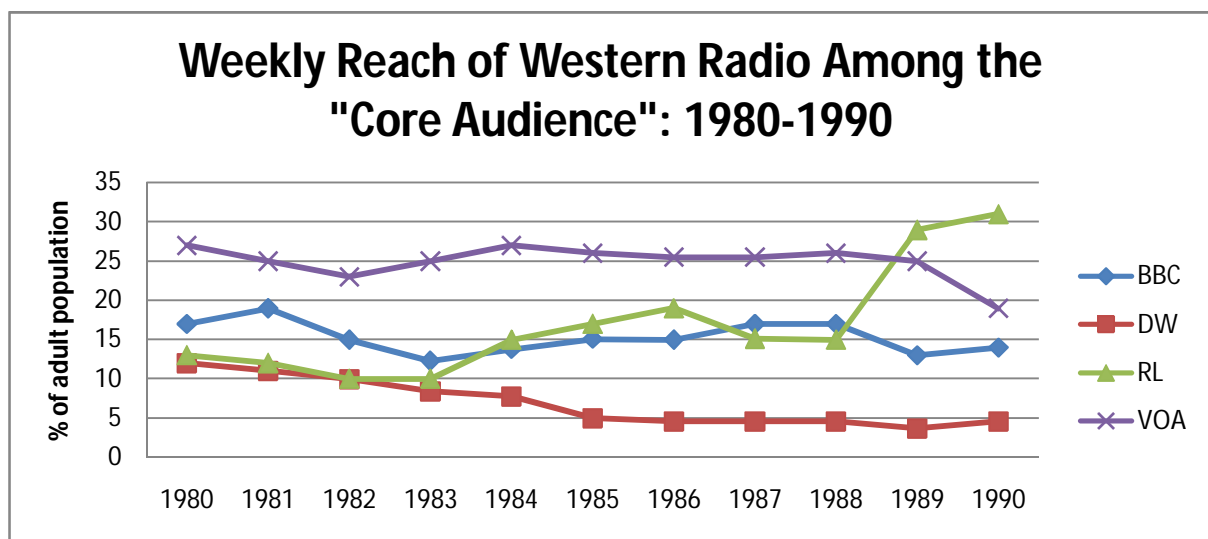
Ibid., p. 12

According to Rogers (1995) the rate of adoption of the media 'often displays a certain distinctive quality called critical mass' (p. 313). He defines critical mass as 'the minimal number of adopters of an interactive innovation so that the innovation's further rate of adoption becomes self-sustaining.' In other words, there are a minimal number of individuals who are engaged in an activity, enough to encourage a social change, before an average individual in the system will join the activity. Thus, this data suggests that a critical mass of the Soviet population was reached by Western radio.

According to the Figure 5.4, RFE/RL's reach grew significantly between 1980 and 1990. The VOA was the lead broadcaster until 1988. Jamming of the VOA started on April 13, 1948. It was halted during periods of detente and completely ended in May 1987. However, RFE/RL was continuously jammed from its first day on the air in March 1953 till November 22, 1988. When jamming was stopped on RFE/RL, it became the leading Western radio station, reaching close to 20% of all adult population in the USSR per week. The end of jamming drastically expanded opportunities to hear RFE/RL programmes by Soviet citizens.

*Figure 5.4.***Weekly reach of Western Radio and Jamming: 1978-1990.**
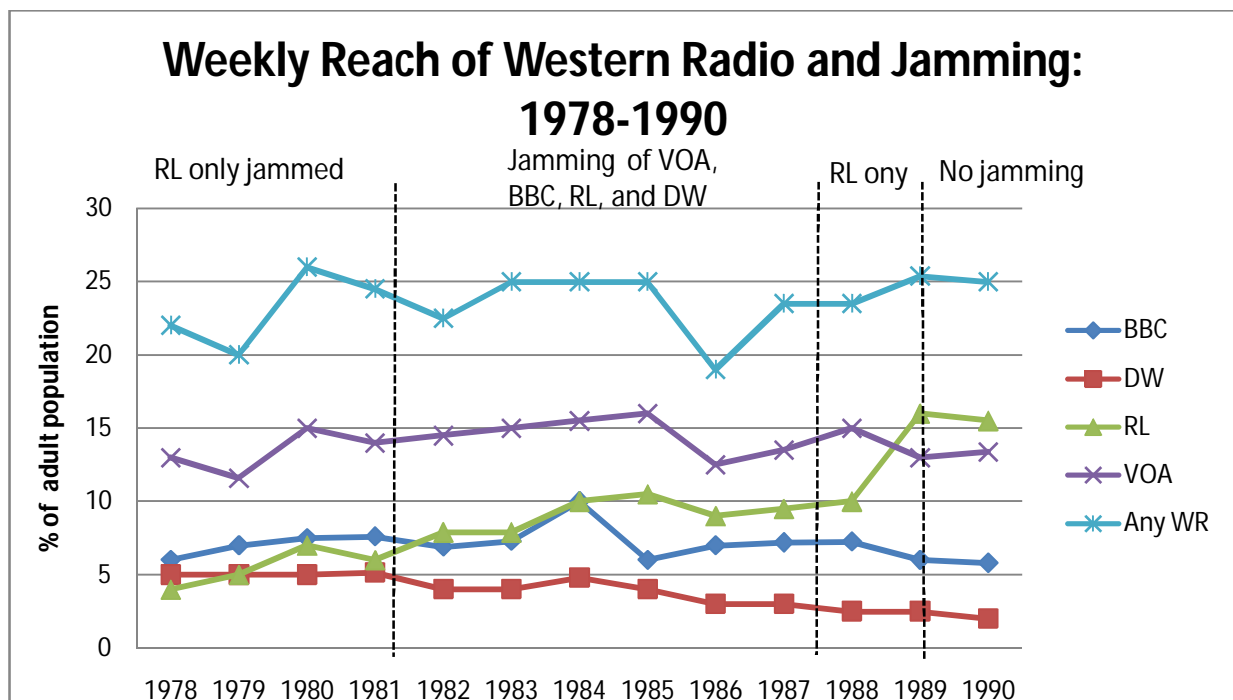
Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show shifts in the listening trends at the end of jamming between 1988 and 1990. Since RFE/RL was jammed for another eighteen months after jamming was ended on all other Western radio stations, the broadcaster started capturing the audience at the end of 1988, when jamming was finally lifted on RFE/RL. Based on Eugene Parta's analysis of the Soviet Archives presented at the Hoover-Wilson Centre Conference in October 2004, about 16% of the listeners in 1989 were genuinely new to the station. This new audience was more educated and urban, in comparison to the long-term listeners, and skewed towards females and the younger generation (under 30 years old).

Figure 5.5. **Shifts in Listening1988-1990: Annual Reach.**
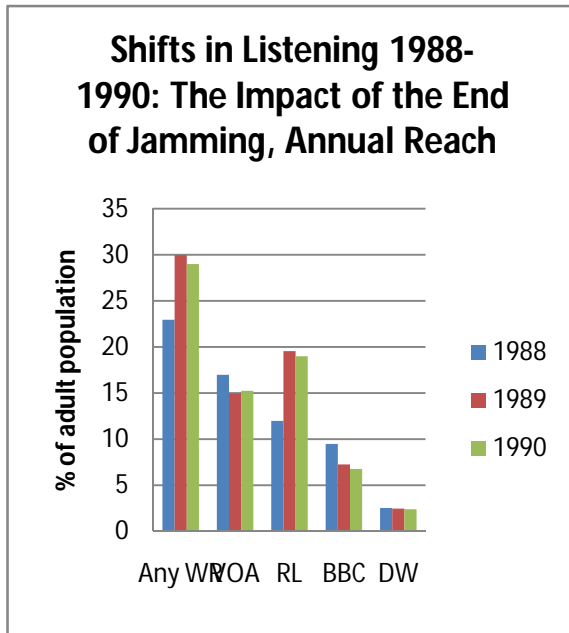
Figure 5.6. **Shifts in Listening1988-1990: Weekly Reach**

Shifts in Listening 1988-1990: The Impact of the End of Jamming, Annual Reach

Shifts in Listening 1988-1990: The Impact of the End of Jamming, Weekly Reach
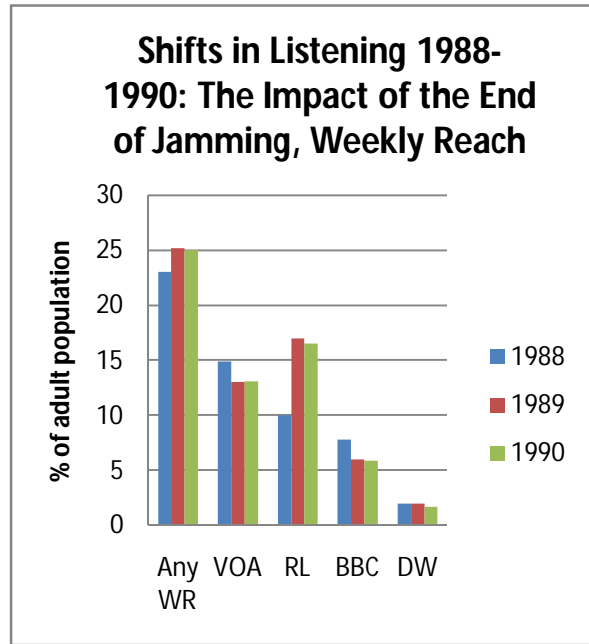
As Parta (2007) states, 'their main priority was to seek out information on the USSR, an area where Radio Liberty had an advantage over other Western broadcasters. There may also have been an urge to taste the "forbidden fruit" as well' (p. 14). Thus, the RFE/RL's Russian Service began to acquire a fairly diverse audience during Glasnost and started gaining greater impact on the Soviet population in general. A more detailed research of the demographic characteristics of listeners (see Figure 5.7) showed that removing of jamming on RFE/RL doubled the listening rates among both men and women. In 1989, the rates among younger listeners aged under thirty years old also doubled what they were in 1987, whereas 30-49 years and the over-fifties group did increase, but not as dramatically.

Figure 5.7. **RL Weekly Reach Rates by Gender.**

RL Weekly Reach Rates by Gender
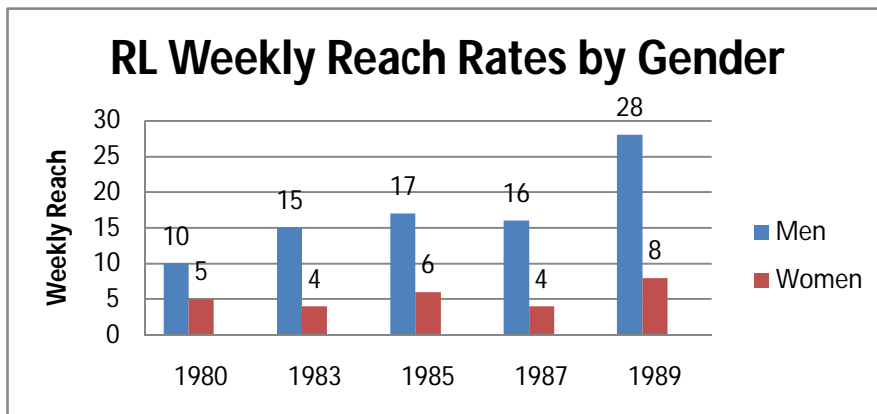
As for listening rates by education and residence, Figures 5.8 and 5.9 show a consistent trend throughout the 1980s. The RFE/RL's programming was primarily targeted at an educated urban audience. After the lifting of jamming on the Radio, weekly rates among educated listeners and those from urban areas almost doubled and rose from 15% in 1987 to 28% in 1989 and 12% to 22% accordingly.

Figure 5. 8. **RL Weekly reach Rates by Education**
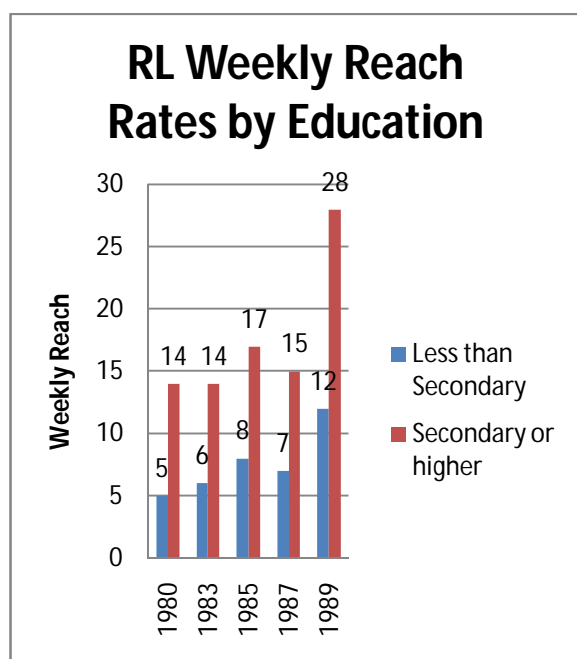
Figure 5. 9. **Weekly reach Rates by Rural or Urban Residence**
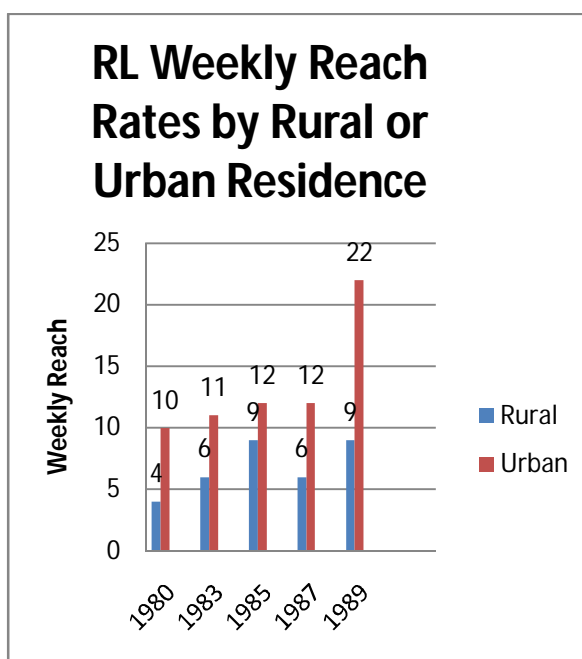
As mentioned in the chapter Historical Background of International Broadcasting, political events also had a direct impact on the listening trends of Western radio. Figure 5.10 shows the weekly reach of the Western radio stations in correlation with major political events. Western radio audiences reached their peak after the US Olympic boycott. Audiences dropped sharply during the early Perestroika/Glasnost period when Soviet censorship reduced its control over the local media. The end of jamming allowed the Soviet audience to hear a different perspective on political events in the USSR and in the world without government interference.

Figure 5.10. **Trends in Listening to Western Broadcasters in the USSR.**
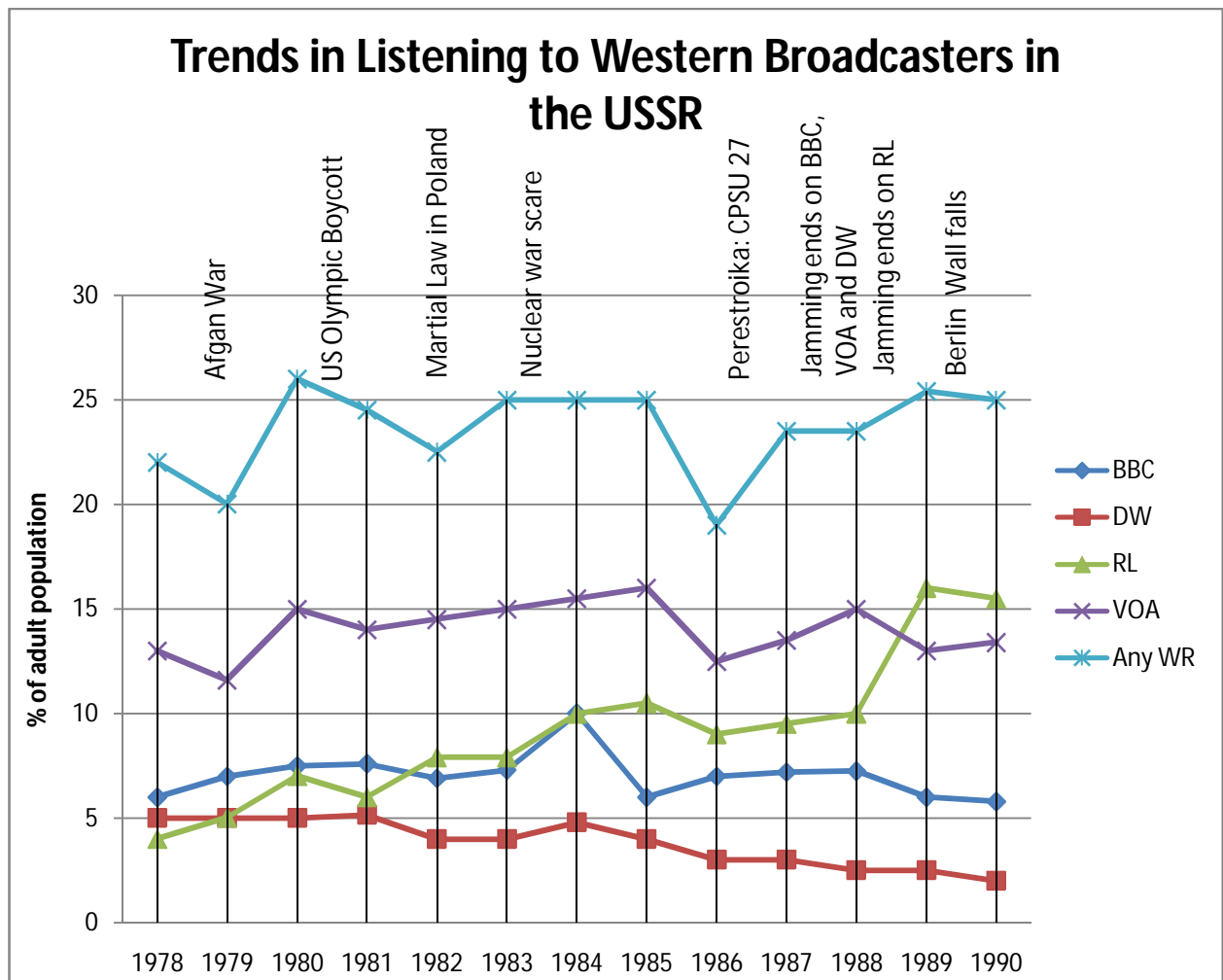
From the Perestroika period onwards, the Soviet people showed positive shifts in their perception of major Western broadcasters, and in particular RFE/RL. Figures 5.11 and 5.12 provide the net scores based on subtracting negative from positive assessments (*ibid.,* p. 36).

Figure 5.11. **"Relevance" Scores of International Broadcasting.**
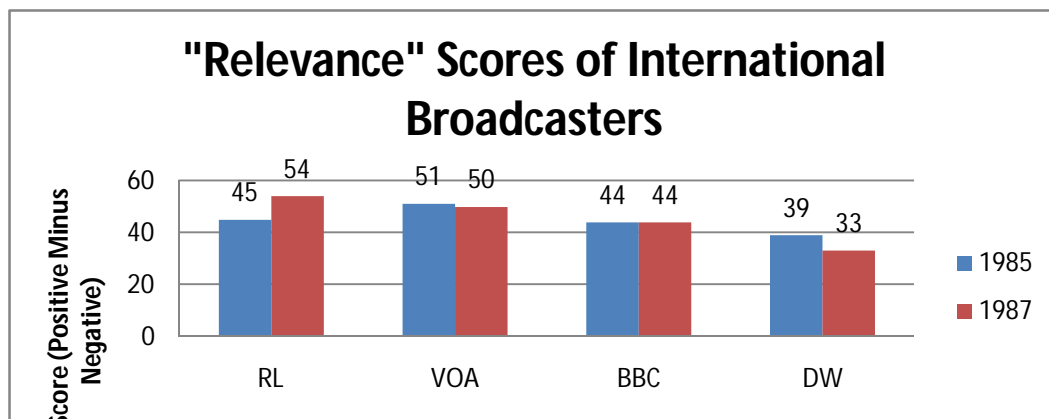
By 1987 RFE/RL was perceived as the most relevant source of information among other western broadcasters, slightly outreaching the VOA. According to Parta, this was because the radio was the only Western broadcaster focusing on domestic news, internal affairs and coverage of Perestroika in the Soviet Union   All broadcasters, in terms of professionalism, showed similar net scores and were assessed by the listeners as relatively high in this area.

Figure 5.12. **"Professionalism" Scores of International Broadcasters**
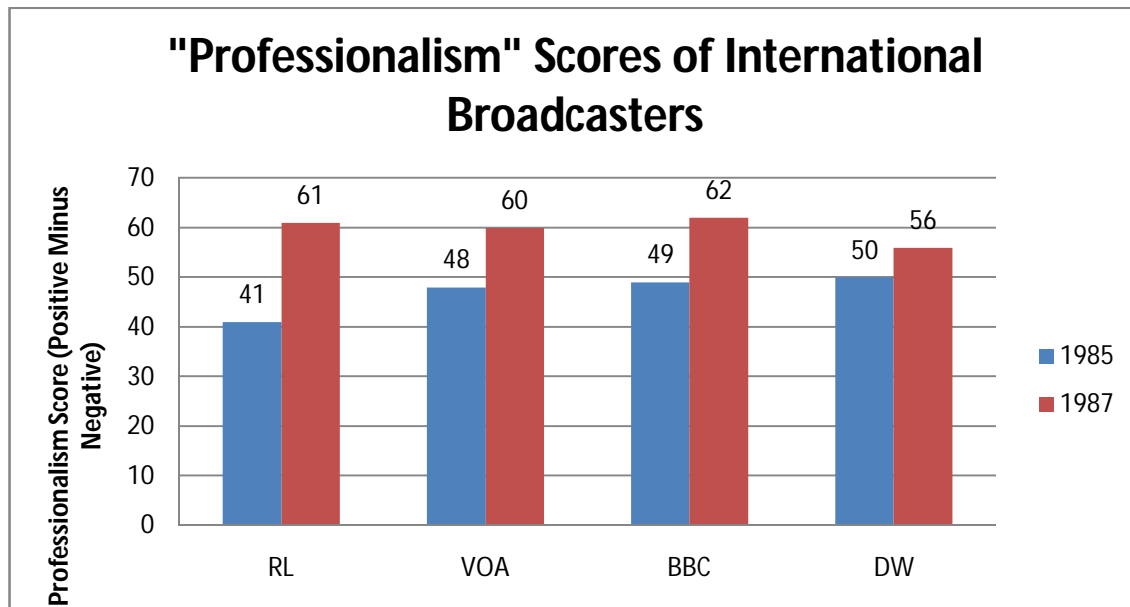
Overall, the listeners changed their attitude to Western radio stations and positively assessed their programming during the Perestroika and Glasnost campaigns. To explain these audience accumulation patterns, Parta refers to two factors: the attempt of Western broadcasters 'to adapt their programming to the new environment in the USSR,' and 'the unprecedented developments brought by glasnost' which reaffirmed the credibility of information provided by Western radio (*ibid.*, p. 39).

5.2 Analysis of the programmes' frequencies of the RFE/FL's Russian Service

According to agenda-setting theory, the media can highly influence public opinion by establishing the salience of issues among the public. Salience can be achieved by exposing the target audience to highlighted elements a certain number of times in a given time period, or in other words, by the frequency of highlighting issues. Thus, the frequency of programmes is another determining factor of the media's impact on its audience. RFE/RL

produced 26 original feature programmes in 1987. This number grew to 43 programmes in 1991. I built custom tables with frequencies for each RFE/RL radio programme between 1987 and 1991. Frequencies analysis will help to determine RFE/RL's ability to set public agenda in Soviet society in the late 80s and early 90s. Below are the frequencies tables for 1987 through 1991.

Table 5.1. Programmes' frequencies for 1987 year

Programmes & Schedule		*News*	*Events and people*	*Culture (Over the Barriers; Writers By the Microphone)*	*Human rights*	*Communism and Reality*	*Soviet Union*	*Samizdat/ Tamizdat*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	24	10	4	0	2	1	4
	Tuesday	24	16	4	3	0	3	0
	Wednesday	24	10	4	1	1	1	0
	Thursday	24	18	4	1	0	3	3
	Friday	24	14	4	2	1	1	0
	Saturday	24	10	5	1	0	3	1
	Sunday	24	7	4	1	2	3	0
Number of programmes per week		168	85	29	9	9	8	15
Number of programmes per year		8736	4420	1508	468	468	416	780
Number of hours per year		1456	1473	754	156	156	139	260

Programmes & Schedule		*Documents and People*	*Communism and Reality*	*Embattled Afghanistan*	*Siberian Fates*	*Russia YTT*	*Round table*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	2	2	0	1	0	0
	Tuesday	0	0	2	0	0	0
	Wednesday	2	1	0	0	3	2
	Thursday	1	0	1	0	1	0
	Friday	2	1	2	1	1	1
	Saturday	4	0	1	2	0	1
	Sunday	0	2	0	2	1	1
Number of programmes per week		11	6	6	6	6	10
Number of programmes per year		572	312	312	312	312	520
Number of hours per year		191	104	104	104	104	173

Programmes & Schedule		Economics	Labour movements	Christianization of Russia	Sovietologists on the USSR	Jazz	In the World of Sport
Number of programmes per day	Monday	0	0	0	1	1	0
	Tuesday	2	0	0	1	0	0
	Wednesday	0	0	2	1	0	0
	Thursday	3	0	0	1	2	1
	Friday	2	1	0	1	1	0
	Saturday	3	3	0	0	1	2
	Sunday	0	0	1	0	0	1
Number of programmes per week		5	5	4	3	3	4
Number of programmes per year		260	260	208	156	156	208
Number of hours per year		87	87	69	52	52	69

Programmes & Schedule		Not by bread alone	Sunday service	Democracy in action	Religion in modern world
Number of programmes per day	Monday	0	0	0	1
	Tuesday	0	0	0	0
	Wednesday	0	0	3	0
	Thursday	0	0	1	2
	Friday	0	0	0	1
	Saturday	2	1	1	1
	Sunday	1	1	3	0
Number of programmes per week		3	2	8	4
Number of programmes per year		468	156	104	416
Number of hours per year		156	52	35	139

Table 5.2. Programmes' frequencies for 1988 year

Programmes & Schedule		News	Events and people	Culture (Over the Barriers; Writers By the Microphone)	Human rights	Communism and Reality	Soviet Union	Samizdat/ Tamizdat
Number of programmes per day	Monday	24	6	3	1	2	4	2
	Tuesday	24	12	2	1	0	3	4
	Wednesday	24	17	5	5	0	0	4
	Thursday	24	13	4	4	2	1	3
	Friday	24	13	5	0	1	3	4
	Saturday	24	8	3	1	0	0	4
	Sunday	24	6	2	3	2	1	4
Number of programmes per week		168	75	24	15	7	12	25
Number of programmes per year		8736	3900	1248	780	364	624	1300
Number of hours per year		1456	1300	624	260	121	208	433

Programmes & Schedule		Documents and People	Communism and Reality	Embattled Afghanistan	Siberian Fates	Russia YTT	Round table
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	2	2	3	3	0	0
	Tuesday	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Wednesday	2	1	0	0	1	2
	Thursday	0	0	4	0	3	3
	Friday	2	1	0	0	2	2
	Saturday	4	0	0	0	0	3
	Sunday	0	2	1	1	1	0
Number of programmes per week		10	6	8	4	7	12
Number of programmes per year		520	312	416	208	364	624
Number of hours per year		173	104	139	69	121	208

Programmes & Schedule		Economics	Labour movements	Sovietologists on the USSR	Jazz	In the World of Sport
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	0	1	0	0	3
	Tuesday	1	4	0		0
	Wednesday	3	0	2	0	0
	Thursday	3	0	0	1	0
	Friday	0	0	1	0	0
	Saturday	0	1	0	2	0
	Sunday	0	0	1	1	2
Number of programmes per week		7	6	4	4	5
Number of programmes per year		364	312	208	208	260
Number of hours per year		121	104	69	69	87

Programmes & Schedule		Not by bread alone	Sunday service	Democracy in action	Religion in modern world	USA today	Science and technology
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	0	0	0	1	0	0
	Tuesday	0	0	0	3	0	0
	Wednesday	0	0	1	0	4	0
	Thursday	0	0	4	0	0	1
	Friday	0	0	0	1	0	3
	Saturday	1	0	1	3	0	0
	Sunday	4	1	0	0	0	0
Number of programmes per week		5	1	6	10	8	4
Number of programmes per year		260	52	312	520	416	208
Number of hours per year		87	17	104	173	139	69

Programmes & Schedule		Man and society	Christianization of Russia	Judaism	World in 1988	Judaism
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	0	0	1	0	0
	Tuesday	0	0	4	0	1
	Wednesday	2	0	0	0	0
	Thursday	0	1	1	1	0
	Friday	0	2	4	2	1
	Saturday	0	2	0	2	3
	Sunday	1	3	0	3	2
Number of programmes per week		7	4	4	8	4
Number of programmes per year		364	208	208	416	208
Number of hours per year		121	69	69	139	69

Table 5.3. Programmes' frequencies for 1989 year

Programmes & Schedule		News	Events and people	Culture (Over the Barriers; Writers By the Microphone)	Human rights	Communism and Reality	Soviet Union	Samizdat/ Tamizdat
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	24	10	3	1	0	2	4
	Tuesday	24	20	5	1	0	3	4
	Wednesday	24	17	5	4	1	0	3
	Thursday	24	20	5	3	1	1	1
	Friday	24	21	4	1	1	0	3
	Saturday	24	8	3	3	2	0	3
	Sunday	101	5	3	3	2	0	1
Number of programmes per week		168	5252	28	16	7	6	19
Number of programmes per year		8736	1751	1456	832	364	312	988
Number of hours per year		1456	1300	728	277	121	104	329
Programmes & Schedule		Documents and People	In the Country and the World	Embattled Afghanistan	Siberian Fates	Russia YTT	Round table	
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	1	1	0	4	0	0	
	Tuesday	0	3	0	0	0	2	
	Wednesday	0	0	2	0	1	5	
	Thursday	1	0	0	0	4	3	
	Friday	5	0	1	0	1	2	
	Saturday	2	0	3	1	2	3	
	Sunday	0	0	1	2	1	0	
Number of programmes per week		9	0	7	7	9	0	
Number of programmes per year		468	4	364	364	468	15	
Number of hours per year		156	208	121	121	156	780	

Programmes & Schedule		Economics	Labour movements	Christianization of Russia	Sovietologists on the USSR	Jazz	In the World of Sport
Number of programmes per day	Monday	1	0	0	3	0	3
	Tuesday	1	0	0	0	1	0
	Wednesday	3	0	2	0	0	0
	Thursday	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Friday	2	1	0	2	0	0
	Saturday	2	3	0	3	2	2
	Sunday	0	0	1	0	1	0
Number of programmes per week		9	5	4	8	4	5
Number of programmes per year		468	260	208	416	208	260
Number of hours per year		156	87	69	139	260	87

Programmes & Schedule		Not by bread alone	Sunday service	Democracy in action	Religion in modern world	USA today	Science and technology
Number of programmes per day	Monday	0	0	0	1	1	0
	Tuesday	0	0	0	4	3	1
	Wednesday	0	0	1	0	0	4
	Thursday	0	0	3	0	0	0
	Friday	1	0	0	0	3	0
	Saturday	4	2	2	0	0	0
	Sunday	3	2	1	0	0	0
Number of programmes per week		8	2	2	0	7	5
Number of programmes per year		416	2	1	0	364	260
Number of hours per year		139	4	7	5	121	87

Programmes & Schedule		Man and society	Christianization of Russia	Judaism	World in 1989	Communism movements in 1989/communism and reality
Number of programmes per day	Monday	0	0	0	0	1
	Tuesday	1	0	0	0	0
	Wednesday	0	0	0	0	0
	Thursday	0	0	1	1	0
	Friday	1	4	4	2	2
	Saturday	4	0	0	2	2
	Sunday	2	0	0	3	1
Number of programmes per week		8	4	5	8	6
Number of programmes per year		416	208	260	416	312
Number of hours per year		121	69	87	139	104

Programmes & Schedule		Law and society	Russian idea	Broadway	Jewish life	Right to choose	In the country and the world
Number of programmes per day	Monday	4	0	0	1	1	1
	Tuesday	0	0	0	2	3	0
	Wednesday	0	1	0	1	0	0
	Thursday	0	3	0	1	0	0
	Friday	0	1	1	2	0	0
	Saturday	1	0	1	1	0	2
	Sunday	4	1	0	0	0	3
Number of programmes per week		9	6	7	2	4	4
Number of programmes per year		468	312	364	104	208	208
Number of hours per year		156	104	69	139	35	69

Programmes & Schedule		West Germany 89	Poland 89	Caucasus 89	Baltic Diary	Hungary 89
Number of programmes per day	Monday	0	0	0	0	1
	Tuesday	0	0	0	3	1
	Wednesday	0	0	0	0	1
	Thursday	2	1	3	0	0
	Friday	1	1	0	2	0
	Saturday	0	0	2	0	2
	Sunday	1	2	0	0	0
Number of programmes per week		4	4	5	5	5
Number of programmes per year		208	208	260	260	260
Number of hours per year		69	69	87	87	87

Programmes & Schedule		France in 1989	UK in 1989	Czechoslovakia 89	China 1988	East European variants
Number of programmes per day	Monday	0	2	0	4	0
	Tuesday	1	0	3	0	1
	Wednesday	1	0	0	0	0
	Thursday	0	1	0	0	0
	Friday	0	0	4	0	2
	Saturday	0	0	0	1	0
	Sunday	1	0	0	4	0
Number of programmes per week		3	3	3	6	9
Number of programmes per year		156	156	156	312	468
Number of hours per year		52	52	52	104	156

Table 5.4. Programmes' frequencies for 1990-1991 years (the analysis revealed similar results for both years)

Programmes & Schedule		*News*	*Events and people*	*Culture (Over the Barriers; Writers By the Microphone)*	*Human rights*	*Communism and Reality*	*Soviet Union*	*Samizdat/ Tamizdat*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	24	7	5.5	1	1	0.5	2.5
	Tuesday	24	8	5	1	0	4	1
	Wednesday	24	10	5	2	0	0	3
	Thursday	24	14	4		0		
	Friday	24	7	4	4	1	1	1
	Saturday	24	20	3	0	0	2	5
	Sunday	24	7	2	0	2	0	1
Number of programmes per week		168	73	28.5	11	4	8.5	17.5
Number of programmes per year		8736	3796	1482	572	208	442	910
Number of hours per year		1456	1265	741	191	69	147	303

Programmes & Schedule		*Documents and People*	*In the Country and the World*	*Embattled Afghanistan*	*Siberian Fates*	*Russia YTT*	*Round table*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	2	4.5	0	1	1.5	2
	Tuesday	0	0	0	0	0	5.5
	Wednesday	0	0	1	0	1	7
	Thursday	3	1	3	0	4	2
	Friday	1	0	0	0	0	5
	Saturday		0	0	2	0	2
	Sunday	2	0	0	1	0	0
Number of programmes per week		6	5.5	4	4	6.5	23.5
Number of programmes per year		312	286	208	208	338	1222
Number of hours per year		104	95	69	69	113	407

Programmes & Schedule		*Economics*	*Labour movements*	*Sovietologists on the USSR*	*Jazz*	*In the World of Sport*	*Christian Russia*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	2	0.5	2	0	0.5	1.5
	Tuesday	1.5	1	0	0	0	0
	Wednesday	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Thursday	0	1	0	1	0	0
	Friday	0	0	0	0	1	2
	Saturday	2	3	2	2	1	0
	Sunday	0	0	0	1	0	1
Number of programmes per week		5.5	5.5	4	4	6.5	2.5
Number of programmes per year		286	286	208	208	338	130
Number of hours per year		95	95	69	69	113	43

Programmes & Schedule		*Not by bread alone*	*Sunday service*	*Democracy in action*	*Religion in modern world*	*USA today*	*Science and technology*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	0	0	1	0.5	1.5	0
	Tuesday	0	0	0	2	0	0
	Wednesday	0	0	1	0	0	4
	Thursday					0	0
	Friday	0	0	3	0	1	0
	Saturday	0	0	0	4	0	0
	Sunday	1	0	0	0	0	0
Number of programmes per week		4	2	5	6.5	2.5	4
Number of programmes per year		208	104	260	338	130	208
Number of hours per year		69	35	87	113	43 2.5	69

Programmes & Schedule		*Man and society*	*Contours of perestroika*	*Judaism*	*World in 1990-1991*	*Judaism*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	0	2.5	0.5	0	0
	Tuesday	1	0	0	1.5	1
	Wednesday	5	0	0	0.5	0
	Thursday	4	1	0	0	0
	Friday	1	0	3	1	1
	Saturday	4	0	0	0	3
	Sunday	2	0	0	0	2
Number of programmes per week		17	3.5	3.5	6	4
Number of programmes per year		884	182	182	312	208
Number of hours per year		295	182	61	104	69

| Programmes & Schedule		*East European variants*	*Law and society*	*Russian idea*	*China 1990-1991*	*Broadway*	*Jewish life*	*UK in 1990-1991*
Number of programmes per day	**Monday**	2	3	3	1	0	1	1.5
	Tuesday	0	0	0	2.5	0.5	0	0
	Wednesday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Thursday	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Friday	0	0	2	4	1	1	0
	Saturday	1	3	1	0	1	2	0
	Sunday	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Number of programmes per week		4	6	7	2.5	7.5	2.5	4
Number of programmes per year		208	312	364	130	390	130	208
Number of hours per year		69	104	121	43	130	43	69

Programmes & Schedule		West Germany 1990-1991	Poland 1990-1991	Caucasus 1990-1991	Baltic Diary	Hungary 1990-1991	France 1990-1991	UK in 1990-1991	Czechoslovakia 1990-1991
Number of programmes per day	Monday	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
	Tuesday	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Wednesday	0	4	4	2	0	0	0	0
	Thursday	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0
	Friday	0	1	0	0	3	3	1	0
	Saturday	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	4
	Sunday	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0
Number of programmes per week		5	6	6	9	5	4	4	5
Number of programmes per year		260	312	312	468	260	208	208	260
Number of hours per year		87	104	104	156	87	69	69	87

The analysis has shown that the following programmes received the most air time and attention between 1987 and 1991: *News; Events and People; In the Country and the World; Culture; Samizdat/Tamizdat; Documents and People; Human Rights in the USSR, Democracy in Action*; *Man and Society*; *Round Table*; and *Soviet Union*. In addition there was an extensive series of programmes about Afghanistan: *Afghan Reports* and *Embattled Afghanistan* and two types of historical programmes: *Russia Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* and *Russian Idea* that gained substantial popularity among the RFE/RL's Russian Service audience in the late 1980s-early 1990s.

The data shows that the *News* had the highest frequency and had been on air on the hour, every day over the course of these years. According to SAAOR data, 77% of all listeners were interested in the news programs in the mid-80s and this trend continued to prevail in the late 80s as well (Parta 2007, p. 33). The second most frequent and most popular programme was *Events and People*. *Culture* was the third most popular according to the frequencies tables. SAAOR data supplements these findings, suggesting that most listeners tuned into Western radio stations to listen to the latest news, gain access to unavailable information, and learn about the outside world. Thus, 70% of the audience tried to hear unavailable information, and 62% of listeners were curious about the outside world. Less than half of all listeners (39%) also reported that they tried to verify information heard from indigenous media sources by comparing it to the information broadcasted by Western radio stations

(*ibid.*). Figure 5.13 below reflects motivations of the Soviet citizens for listening to RFE/RL in 1985. These motivations remained the same at the time of Glasnost as well.

Figure 5.13. **Motivations of Soviet Citizens for Listening to Western Radio Broadcasts.**
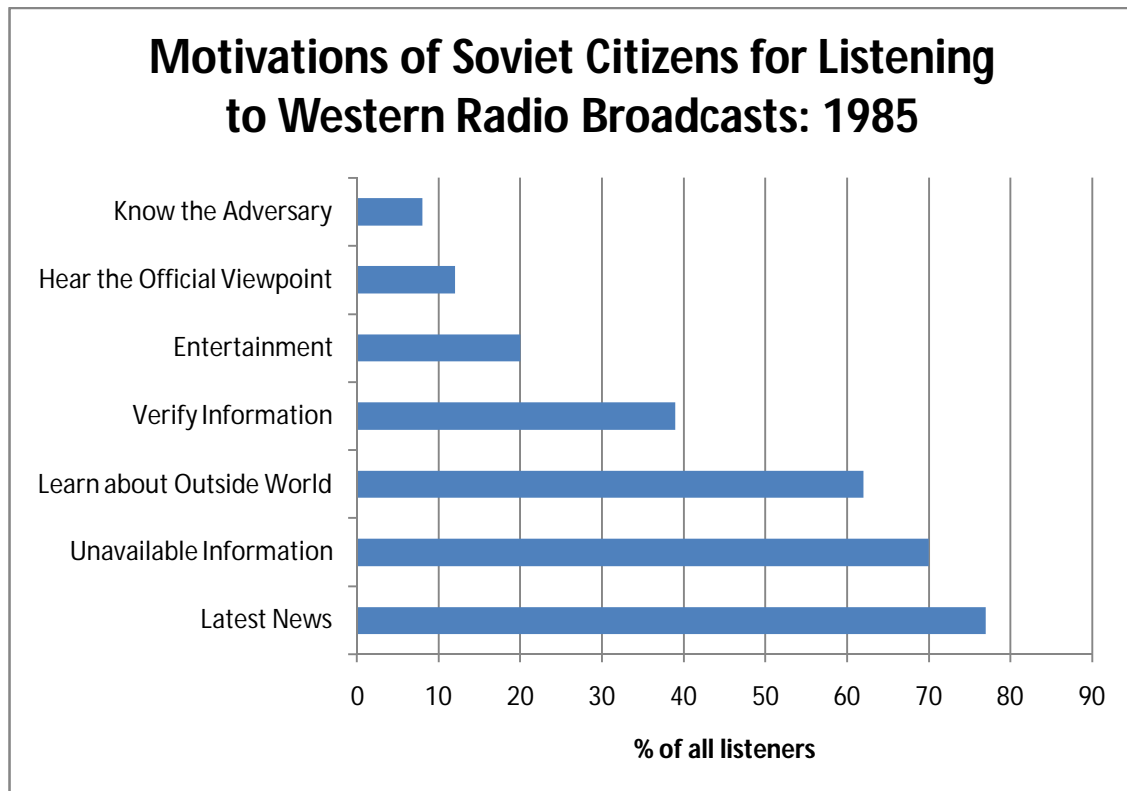
In summary, the frequencies analysis was necessary to determine which programmes had received the most broadcasting time and attention and, therefore, should be content-analysed to explore how RFE\RL framed the Soviet reality and influenced the public opinion.

5.3 Qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis has been employed to explore how RFE/RL framed Soviet reality. In particular, how the Radio contributed to changing attitudes of the Soviet public to the communist regime and ruling party during Glasnost and Perestroika and raised awareness of democratic values among the Soviet people. It will seek to answer the following questions: How did the RFE/RL's Russian Service present Soviet reality? What aspects of the issues were emphasised in its programmes? What were the dominant frames?

The analysis revealed that all programmes could be classified into the following categories:
- News programmes;
- Cultural programmes;

- Human rights programmes;

- Programmes about social and economic issues;

- Historical programmes;

- Programmes about affairs in the East European Communist bloc and Baltic States;

- Programmes about Western Europe and the USA;

- Religion;

- Sports;

- Music.

As has been mentioned above, between 1987 and 1991 the following programmes received the most broadcasting time and attention: *News; Events and People; In the Country and the World; Culture (Over the Barriers, Writers by the microphone); Samizdat/Tamizdat; Documents and People; Human Rights in the USSR; Democracy in Action*; *Man and Society; Round Table; Soviet Union*; Programmes about Afghanistan (*Afghan Reports; Embattled Afghanistan)*; *Russia Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow,* and *Russian Idea.* For the content-analysis I selected several feature programmes among this range, in particular, *Events and People; In the Country and the World; Over the Barriers; Documents and People; Human Rights in the USSR;* and *Russia Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow.* This choice was determined by the availability of these programmes in the RFE/RL archives and from testimonials by RFE/RL's experts, media policy makers and editorial staff, who shaped the content of RFE/RL programmes during the relevant period of this study. Furthermore, to gain a deeper insight and to construct a more complete picture of the RFE/RL's agenda, the programmes were selected from the different categories. Below is the overview of the selected major feature programmes selected, including a brief description of each programme's purpose, duration, and its key topics with the follow-up frame analysis.

News programmes

Two news programmes were selected for the analysis - *Events and People* and *In the Country and the World*. *Events and People* was a twenty minute radio programme that was on air ten times a week on average. *In the Country and the World* was on air for one hour, five days a week. The main purpose of both programmes was to inform people about current affairs and events in the Soviet Union, Eastern European bloc, and in the world and to provide analysis of those events. *Events and People* was usually pre-recorded and covered up to three topics in the course of an issue. However, *In the Country and the World* was a new type of radio news

programme and was very different from other RFE/RL's broadcasts. Launched in 1988 by Savik Shuster, a Western journalist and former director of the information network of RFE/RL, it was the first news programme broadcasted live. In his interview Shuster described *In the Country and the World* as 'a classy Western analytical programme' that included coverage of events and analysis of these events. The journalist stated, 'When I joined the radio in 1988, I introduced a completely extrinsic genre for Radio Liberty: reportage journalism.' Events were presented by the journalists and analysis was conducted in a form of live interviews, roundtables, or recorded and live interviews with correspondents.

To be able compete with other media programmes, Shuster attempted to make the news programme the first and most credible source of information. 'I set the priority that we have to be first in the field of information and share verified news without any rumours or 'yellow' journalism,' he said. In order to achieve this, he built a network of stringers and freelance correspondents that included about 400 people across the Soviet Union and over 40 people in Moscow by August, 1991. 'In the beginning I was looking for dynamic, talented and bold people in Moscow, and then I expanded my search to other capitols of the former USSR countries and other cities in Russia. I understood that without a large journalists' network, without bright and talented people, it would be difficult to build a contemporary radio... I always thought that Radio Liberty had a lot of components, but the informational component should be its foundation.'

The programme quickly gained popularity. The numerous testimonials of RFE/RL's editorial staff support this argument. All the Radio's employees interviewed by the researcher emphasised that *In the Country and the World* was one of the most popular programmes. Dmitry Volchek, one of the first Soviet correspondents of RFE/RL, recalls 'When jamming was ended on RL, we started receiving huge bags of letters from our listeners. The postmen could hardly even carry them and were always annoyed that they had to carry such heavy and large bags. Our listeners were writing to us about what they like and what they do not like, and they almost always mentioned our news programme *In the Country and the World* with words of gratitude.' Shuster explained such success by the fact that the Soviet listeners were tuning to RFE/RL's news as the first source of information, because 'they were getting voices from on-location, valid facts and analysis; because I, as a Western journalist, began to share my analysis and comments... We also paid our journalists in Deutsche Marks and it helped to attract the most talented people.'

In summary, *In the Country and the World* was more popular among the Soviet audience and had a greater impact, since it was presented in a more dynamic and original way and provided a more comprehensive coverage and analysis of Soviet affairs, whereas *Events and People* was more frequently on air and had a higher probability of reaching the Soviet citizens. Thus, both programmes complemented each other in terms of the content and frequency.

The analysis revealed that the programmes used similar frames in presenting Soviet reality. The main focus of programmes was Gorbachev's reforms, problems of Perestroika and Glasnost campaigns and affairs in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. They revealed facts that were hidden or ignored by the communist authorities and the Soviet press. For example, in *Events and People* on July 29, 1987, the military commentator Vadim Kartashov reflected on the state of Soviet defence. Here is an excerpt from the programme:

> *Gorbachev* [publicly] *spoke about the major catastrophes in the Soviet Union, however he never named any of them, since those catastrophes were not mentioned in the Soviet media, in spite of the fact that the Soviet media was presumably penetrated by the idea of "Glasnost"* [referring to the fake media transparency]*... Some of these events included a missile repository explosion at the main base of the Northern Severomorsk Fleet, a crash of a new prototype of an intercontinental strategic bomber, a malfunction of one of the Soviet test missiles, and other similar facts. One of these facts, the crash of a Soviet nuclear missile submarine in the Atlantic last autumn, has been mentioned by the Soviet media; however, it has been broadcasted with a delay. The media explained the delay by arguing that the submarine was presumably perishing right in front of the world's eyes and it has been photographed by the American marine patrol airplanes.*

The programme picked up on failed promises for the openness policy and pointed to the limits of the Glasnost campaign. It used a fake Glasnost frame, which was reaffirmed by revealing some facts (in this case, catastrophes) covered up by the Communist Party from the Soviet citizens. Here is another example of a similar frame from *In the Country and the World* on 23 August, 1987:

> *A statement by Izvestya* [newspaper] *that Glastnost is a norm of our social life and an integral part of a social democracy is simply incorrect. Here is one of the examples. In mid-November, the General Assembly of the UN passed a resolution about the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. One hundred and twenty two countries voted for that resolution, nineteen voted against, and twelve refrained from voting. It was a mass*

disapproval of the Soviet Union because the Soviet troops were the only invader in Afghanistan. In vain, we turned pages of Pravda and Izvestiya [major Soviet newspapers] *looking for the news about the UN voting results. The Soviet newspapers passed over those events with silence. In this case, the principles of wholesome and objective information were forgotten.*

Events and People and *In the Country and the World* provided a critical outlook on Gorbachev's coping strategies and Perestroika. The news framed Gorbachev's reforms as unpromising, hopeless, and doomed to fail:

What does Gorbachev suggest to the military forces as a panacea from many multi-faceted, complex problems? He proposes a range of conflicting methods: vigilance, determination, discipline, organisation, responsibility, and diligence. Out of these six methods, two-determination and responsibility-contradict the remaining four traditional methods that are based on the military coercive system. Vigilance, organisation, discipline, and diligence were inherited from the previous system that implied an immediate execution of any order, even if it was criminal or meaningless. The military folks couldn't complain about injustice, nor could they criticize the orders of the armed forces, where the senior commanders were drowning in luxury, and the soldiers and marines were eating low-grade food in unsanitary conditions at 4-5 rubles of monthly pay.[12]

To strengthen the effect, the programme's commentators usually provided a comparative analysis with the Western democratic (as they emphasised) countries to give a clue to the listeners about the situation in the West in the same spheres.

Decisiveness and responsibility are the qualities acquired by military personnel in the democratic countries. Those qualities imply conscious and not un-questionable discipline. They imply active involvement of the press, television, and other media in the life of the army. Only in these conditions, could a citizen-soldier with an acute sense of responsibility for a given task be fostered. Soviet military forces unfortunately are too far from this ideal.[13]

As we can see, they framed the West as democratic and positive, whereas the Communist East was framed as un-democratic and negative accordingly. *In the Country and the World*

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[12] *Events and People*, 29 July, 1987
[13] *Ibid.*

shows a similar approach. The programme on 24 October, 1988, presented a live roundtable discussion with experts on the Soviet Union who were giving their opinions on and evaluation of the American-Soviet relations in the light of Gorbachev's recent speech:

> *Gorbachev touched the question of dispatching Soviet diplomats from the United State in his speech. Soon it became known that there was a parity between the USSR and the USA that regulated the number of diplomatic representatives* [in each country] *Also, he spoke about the initiative by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs to call back all Soviet employees working at American diplomaticoffices, meaning it as a hit on the American party. However, what was really happening was that the US Congress made a decision long before the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs to replace Soviet workers by American employees in the American embassy in Moscow and Leningrad. I.e. the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs pre-empted the replacement of Soviet workers by Americans and presented it as 'their own initiative' to the ignorant Soviet population as a 'reciprocal response' from the Soviet side. Namely, there was a substitution of the concepts, in the best traditions of the Cold War, when it was discovered that it was not America who was fighting for equality of diplomatic representation with the Soviet Union but the USSR wanted it; the USSR is the disconcerted party.*

To contribute to the erosion of the Communist Party, the news programmes reported some discreditable information about the communist elite. In *Events and People* on the author, describing the communist officials who were taking advantage of their high positions in the Party, referred to the corruption frame:

> *As reported by the American newspaper, the New York Newspaper, the Communist elite is very concerned about acquiring government summer houses as their own real estate, demonstrating capitalism in action. Right now, as private property starts emerging in the Soviet Union, government bureaucrats buy former government dachas* [summer homes] *at ridiculously low prices. Real estate sale was started by a legislation signed by Rudkov on March 29, 1989, three days after the first real election of the People's Deputies, when it became clear that the Communist Party monopoly was coming to an end. For example, the higher government officials organised a co-operative that bought 217 government dachas for 900 thousand rubbles which was 2.8 million rubbles less than their real value.*

The programmes often provided a forum for a wide range of opinions from the opposition. As Shuster stated, 'We connected diverse [political and social] movements that emerged in the

Soviet Union. Naturally, we played a role in creating an opposition to the Soviet regime.' For example, *In the Country and the World* on 18 September, 1989, was devoted to an interview with former prosecutors Telman Gdlyan and Nikolay Ivanov who were telling revealing discrediting facts about corruption among the communist high officials, including the General Prosecutor and his deputies. RFE/RL was the one station among all domestic and western broadcasters that gave them an opportunity to speak out to a wide audience:

> *As of today, seven of the biggest bribe-takers are released from jail; they are free. And soon there will be a new millionaire who is the First Secretary of Cherganks Regional Party. However, the question is what to do with the millions that were not given back. The investigating authorities violated the law again because they were supposed to return the stolen millions, especially with the current state of our economy when the state treasury is empty. And they* [The investigating authorities] *simply let those bribe-takers go home and said "hide the money" so those zealous guys [Telman Gdlyan and Nikolay Ivanov] won't find the money.*

Another example is an interview with Oleg Rumyantsev, the founder of the *Democratic Perestroika Club*. He shared his view on how to develop civil society and build democracy in the USSR:

> *For us it has always been a strategic task to foster independent structures of a civil society. That's how we conceptually defined ourselves in the beginning of 1987 and we continue doing so. Moreover, this conceptual definition has been reinforced since then, because in spite of the possibility of catastrophe that the country might turn back* [to Communism], *I believe we still need to do everything possible to achieve an agreement between society and the state. However, in order to achieve that agreement we need to have equal power and equal participation. Unfortunately, we don't have an equally powerful civil society; therefore, we still have the impunity and uncontrollability of a one-party state monopoly. Our task* [referring to RFE/RL] *is to continue reinforcing the institute of an independent civil society. It means we should shift from separated structures, clubs and groups to the real political power, organisation or a movement that would be at least partially responsible for taking the country out of crisis.*[14]

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[14] *Events and People*, 9 February, 1989

Radio hosts discussed the national question in the Soviet Union; problems of the Soviet economy; ethnic minorities; Stalin's terror; and looked into the state of international affairs in relation to the USSR. Overall, the key topics of *Events and People* and *In the Country and in the World* were devoted to Gorbachev's reforms, the problems of Perestroika and affairs in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States.

Cultural programmes

Cultural programmes were very popular among the Soviet audience. They were aired four to five times a day, seven days a week and lasted thirty minutes. To explain why culture got so much broadcasting attention, Dmitry Volchek, who worked for cultural as well as political programmes, said in his interview that 'intelligentsia has always been a driving force in Russian history.' Ruslan Geliskhanow, who was responsible for the design and production of the RFE/RL's programming and who first made the suggestion to increase the output of culture, continues: 'When the jamming ended, we wanted to grow our audience. The only plausible way to grow the audience … was to reinforce the cultural programmes.' According to him, the culture in the USSR had a relatively free form of expression in the late 1980s. It helped to found a common ground and unite diverse audience members. 'The most powerful weapon that one can have is culture, because a Russian person is susceptible to culture and is very political in that sense,' Geliskhanow said. Igor Pomerantsev, a writer and author of *Over the Barriers* shared Geliskhanow's viewpoint on the role of cultural programmes. He stated, 'In totalitarian countries, culture plays a significantly bigger role than in the free countries, since culture helps to express diverse viewpoints; the whole spectrum of opinions. To exchange the words of a poet, 'a poet in Russia is more than a poet,' and 'the Culture in Russia is more than a culture.' Pomerantsev believed that culture tried to play a role of a political party or a parliament by setting an anti-communist public agenda.'

Thus, several new cultural programmes were launched, conveying a special perspective about political changes underway in Russia. *Over the Barriers* was one of them. It was a cultural-political radio journal which had been broadcasted fifteen times a week on average.

The programme focused on cultural events in the Soviet Union and in the world and revolved around writers, musicians, artists, actors, directors and other cultural patrons and their work. The programme also introduced its listeners to cultural events in Europe and in the USA,

including an overview of avant-garde art exhibitions, theatre plays, and cutting-edge writing and poetry.

Human rights programmes

The most prominent programmes on human rights were *Documents and People* and *Human rights in the USSR*. Both programmes lasted twenty minutes. The purpose of *Documents and People* was to disclose the facts about the violations of human rights in the USSR, in particular, inhumane treatment of those who rebelled against the Communist regime. The programme predominantly featured political prisoners, human rights organisations, repression of innocent people, including periodic updates on the story of Andrei Sakharov and his exile to the city of Gorky.

The Human Rights in the USSR programme explored the subject of human rights in Soviet society as clearly suggested by its title. It had aired, on average, nine times a week. The programme analysed the ideology of the Communist Party, Gorbachev's politics and Stalin's legacy, along with other important issues in the country. The authors of the programme often hosted activists from various socio-political organisations, who offered their own programmes of political reforms and social development.

The dominant frames of *Documents and People* were the violation of human rights and inhumane treatment of political prisoners in the USSR. Below is an excerpt from the programme in January 27, 1988:

> *One of the most famous documents on the topic of psychiatric abuse could be considered an Appeal by Sergey Pisarev to the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences. It was dated April 1970. Pisarev had been a communist since 1918; a professional party worker; bibliographer; a veteran of the World War II; and an order bearer. In January 1953, Pisarev appealed to Stalin, asking to cross-check the doctors held prisoner. On the day of Stalin's death, March 5th, Pisarev was arrested and kept in confinement for two years, including one and a half years in a prison mental hospital. The Serbsky Institute diagnosed him with schizophrenia. In 1956, Pisarev had been rehabilitated and the doctors at the Ganushkin Institute found him perfectly healthy. Pisarev asked in his appeal to the Presidium of the USSR Academy to pay attention to systematic mistakes in medical judgments and conclusions of the Serbsky Institute. The*

cause of these mistakes, according to Pisarev, lies in the subordinate position of these prison hospitals. They submit to the administrative and investigative services which contradicts objective goals of the medical science. Pisarev explained that the institute and special hospitals practically give a pseudo-scientific sanction on the infinite isolation of healthy people in prison hospitals. I remind you about this document to emphasize thought regarding the longevity of Stalin's methods even today.

The programme uncovered Stalin's crimes and the faults of the administrative and investigative services of the communist system. The effect of such programmes was very strong because *Documents and People* presented authentic documents which were often written by well-known and distinguished people in the Soviet Union and the world, such as Andrei Sakharov. Here is an excerpt from February 16, 1987:

> *The document that I am going to present to you was hand-written, as the author of this manuscript mentions that most of his diaries; notes; his photo camera; and his radio were confiscated during the search. The author of this document is a world-renowned scientist and public figure, a Nobel laureate: Academician Andrei Sakharov. A person, who has been awarded the Lenin Prize and the State Prize, the Order of Lenin and the title of Hero of the Socialist Labour three times; the same person who lost all these state awards and was deported from Moscow to the city of Gorky.*
>
> *He has experienced constant shadowing and complete isolation from the world, disconnected from all necessary scientific and human ties, books, and a telephone- he has been made virtually incommunicado. He has been physically assaulted. His manuscripts, both scientific and personal, were stolen numerous times. Sakharov tried to protest: he wrote to the higher authorities, using all methods of communication available to him, and he risked his life several times by declaring a hunger strike. And, all these seven years, Soviet officials were assuring and continuing to assure Soviet citizens that Sakharov simply lives in Gorky and has a normal lifestyle there.*

The programme also emphasised the limits of the Glasnost campaign and demonstrated the viability of Stalin's methods during the early Perestroika period. *Documents and People,* on February 22, 1987, continued sharing Sakharov's story of his stay in Gorky, in order to acquaint the listeners with the kind of 'normal life' he was having in exile:

On May 7th, when I [Andrei Sakharov] sent off my wife to another interrogation, I was seized in the prosecutor's office by KGB officers who were dressed in medical gowns. They applied physical force and dragged me into Gorky regional hospital, and kept me there against my will. They tortured me and thwarted my attempts to escape from the hospital. From May 11th to May 27th I was subjected to humiliating and painful force-feeding, which was hypocritically called "saving my life." Basically, the doctors were following the KGB's order to prevent my wife travelling abroad. They have been looking for the most difficult way of feeding that should force me to quit [hunger strike]. Between May 11th and 15th, they used an intravenous infusion of a nutrient mixture. They pushed me on the bed and tied my hands and feet. The nurses pressed my shoulders while they injected the needle. Between May 16th and 24th I've been force-fed through a probe inserted in my nostril.

Thus the hosts often read memoirs of dissidents and activists of various human rights, political and other organisations, to shed light on the trial process in the USSR; uncovering excruciating facts about torturing innocent people and forcing them to plead guilty against their will.

The Human rights in the USSR programmes were focusing on current political and social changes happening in the USSR. They referred to fake democratic changes and used frames of Soviet incompetence, censorship and roguish Soviet government. For example, a programme on 4 February, 1987, gives a critical analysis of Gorbachev's politics on human rights and demonstrates that declared progress in this sphere still has not been achieved:

The analysis of Gorbachev's politics in the area of human rights convinces us that we, unfortunately, shouldn't expect any serious democratic changes in the arena of human rights. Let's take, for example, the programme's statement that a Soviet citizen has ample opportunity for the expression and realisation of his civic will and interests. Citizens express their will via voting. The Soviet electoral system only retains the election in its form, but in fact is a mockery of the will of the citizens. Pre-selected candidates express the same interests as the main party apparatus and act on its instructions. Selected candidates only nominally depend on the voter.

A programme on the 9th June, 1989, portrays the reality of the healthcare system and spoke out about the problem of HIV. It criticises the authorities who kept telling lies and were not able to cope with emerging problems:

A very 'responsible' edict of medical science, on account of the HIV problem in our country, said that "contamination in a hospital is impossible: syringes are being sterilised. You can be absolutely assured." This was announced in 1998. One year later eighty children got infected in a hospital in Elista, Kalmykiya and twenty-five children were infected in a hospital in Volgograd. The reason it happened is the same as ten years ago – Soviet hospitals, clinics and maternity homes don't have enough disposable syringes and other disposable medical instruments. Yet the Soviet scientists, the Soviet Ministry of Health, and doctors were silent about that.

In general, the most memorable and insightful of *The Human Rights in the USSR* programmes between 1987 and 1991 were dedicated to the analysis of democratisation and Glasnost; the problems and expectations of Perestroika; observance of human rights in the USSR; low-income groups of the soviet population; economic rights; and a review of the Soviet and American constitutions. *Human Rights in the USSR* periodically touched on the topic of religion, for example, struggles of Evangelical Baptist Christians in the Atheist Soviet society. In addition, there were numerous interviews with key figures in the Soviet Union that helped to spread democratic ideas among RFE/RL's audience.

Historical programmmes

Russia Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow was a historical programme about the past, present, and future of Russia that lasted 30 minutes and had been on air 5 times a week. The purpose of the programme was to provide an objective outlook on the historical events in Russia and the USSR and uncover the underlying facts about Stalin and other prominent historical figures.

Vladimir Tolz was one of the authors of the programme. He shared his perspective on the programme in his interview, 'Historical programmes expand your outlook. A man, who knows his past, has a good knowledge of his present and future.'

Tolz tried to 'popularize 'normal' attitude towards history, not the 'Marxist' attitude.' He said that he 'touched such tabooed topics in the USSR as some historical events. For example, religious stories were novelties in the Soviet Union since it was a completely atheist country.' He had been uncovering the history of Russian religious philosophy, the history of Soviet anti-Semitism and some self-published writers such as Orwell that were virtually unknown to the wide audience. 'And of course, we [RFE/RL] were talking about such characters as

Lenin, Stalin and Beria from a completely different angle. It was a pleasant and nice work because I had access to the sources that were inaccessible to others. I meet a lot of people nowadays from the past generation, especially elderly, who learned about many things from our radio,' Tolz said.

The most prominent episodes of *Russia Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* included an interview with a historian Edelman; a perspective into the future of the USSR, upcoming Perestroika and its consequences; the history of Russian emigration; a conversation about the banking system and Swiss banks' security; Russian problems in the independent Latvia that revolved around Russian emigrants who comprised about 40% of the Latvian population; a Baltic tragedy; separation of Russia from USSR; the Khrushchev thaw; the February Revolution in 1917; and a review of the book 'Stalin in October' by Robert Slusser.

6. FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

6.1 Findings and Discussion

The analysis revealed that RFE/RL influenced the Soviet public by presenting information through the prism of democratic values, human rights, and anti-communism propaganda. More specifically, the information reported by the Radio was framed through the premise that communism and Eastern ideas were negative and that democracy and Western values were positive.

RFE/RL was extremely popular among the Soviet public between 1987 and 1991. After the end of radio jamming, it became the leader of the Western broadcasting reaching around 30 million people annually in 1989 and 1990. According to the survey data, the listeners perceived RFE/RL as highly relevant and trustful source of information.

The most salient topics of RFE/RL's major programmes between 1987 and 1991 were the problems of Perestroika and Glasnost, questions of human rights in the USSR and in the democratic societies; the Soviet standards of living and notions of liberty in comparison to the standards of living and notions of liberty in America and Western Europe; a critical overview of Gorbachev's politics and actions; and the national question and the affairs of the Soviet republics. Also, RFE/RL offered a wide range of cultural programmes that reflected political changes underway in the USSR. They also introduced its listeners to cultural events in Europe and in the USA, including an overview of avant-garde art exhibitions, theatrical plays, and cutting-edge writing and poetry.

RFE/RL presented the Soviet reality by focusing on the factual evidence and debunking communist propagandist idea that "all is well in the USSR" if, in fact, it was not. The news correspondents were travelling on-location to verify facts. The authors of the feature programmes conducted a comparative analysis of the facts presented in the Soviet media and in the Western media commenting on any discrepancies between these sources. Programme editors shared expert opinions, opinions of the representatives of the socio-political organizations who were in opposition to the ruling Party and communist regime, and excerpts from the official documents uncovering the Party's crimes and faults of the communist system. In addition, the RFL/RL's Russian Service had an extensive network of their own journalists who collected factual evidence in real time, arriving to the hot spots ahead of many other media representatives. All RFE/RL programmes between 1987 and early 1991

employed at least several sources of information to offer a comprehensive overview of the events and perspectives to its listeners. The Radio was an arena for many prominent Soviet people like a political leader and Gorbachev's opponent Boris Yeltsin, an economist Nikolay Shmelev, the director of the avant-garde Taganka Theatre Yuri Lubimov, a poet Andrei Voznesensky, a leading scientist Andrei Sakharov and others.

One of the methods of influencing the audience's opinion and framing the content of the message is using a certain tone. The tone of RFE/RL's programmes was not neutral. Savik Shuster in his description of the RFE/RL's programming said, 'The Voice of America and BBC were lean naphthalene product without salt and pepper... We needed to be aggressive internal media and we shouldn't be afraid of anything even if we work for the money of the American Congress… I believe we played a pivotal role in developing new, democratic awareness [in the Soviet society] because we had such capabilities that no other media had.' Savik's words were supported by the listeners' perceptions data. Parta's (2007, 2010) audience analysis demonstrated that the listeners assessed RFE/RL's tone as more critical of the USSR than other Western broadcasters in Perestroika period.

All of my interviewees held the opinion that the mission of RFE/RL was to share the ideas of freedom and democracy. Efim Finstein, defining the role and contribution of the Radio, said, 'Because we were upholding the interests of the soviet population and not interests of the authorities, we represented a better Russia, which didn't exist in reality but could be as an ideal.' Mr. Finstein believed that RFE/RL took a position of a 'friend' in the media world that the Soviet audience could confide and trust. 'This combination of being a friend and being different was a key distinction of RFE/RL from other broadcasters (the BBC, etc.). No one from the BBC or VOA could be perceived as "I'm your friend or I am one of you." Other Western media were not friends with the Russian listeners because 'they were mainly talking about the American or British affairs, they were the observers, high-qualified, though, but observers and we were the active participants,' Fistein added.

To sum up the aforesaid, the analysis of broadcasting reach, available radio frequencies, and qualitative content analysis demonstrated empirical evidence that RFE/RL had a significant impact on the Soviet people. The topics that were covered, the way they were presented and the number of times they were exposed to the audience in correspondence with the listening rates and audience perceptions allows us to imply that RFE/RL successfully set anticommunist agenda and promoted a positive image of the West and its values and ideas.

Thus, the study further suggests that RFE/RL raised awareness of democratic values among the Soviet people and significantly contributed to changing attitudes of the Soviet public to the communist regime during Glasnost and Perestroika times.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

Due to the fact that multiple methodologies were employed in this study, there are several limitations to this research work.

I relied on the SAAOR data to measure reach of RFE/RL and other Western Broadcasters in the Soviet Union between 1987 and 1991. Though it was a comprehensive longitudinal study with the vast sample size, it was the only source of information available to me that helped me to obtain those measures.

Also, I used RFE/RL archives to listen to the radio programmes' recordings and calculate how frequently played these programmes were. Even though the archives were well preserved, organised, and maintained, there could have been some missing bits of information including missing recordings and transcripts.

In addition, I focused on the events that happened in the past and provided self-reported data in the qualitative section of my dissertation. It entails several potential limitations: (1) selective memory – my interviewees could have remembered events differently from what actually happened in the past or miss some critical events from their outlook; (2) attribution – a possibility of attributing positive events and outcomes to the work of RFE/RL and attributing negative events and outcomes to its' competitors, other social change agents, and events; and (3) exaggeration – a possibility of overrating the significance of RFE/RL's impact on the Soviet audience.

Finally, I only spoke with the experts affiliated with RFE/RL: they were all current or former employees of RFE/RL. It suggests a possibility of a bias in their testimonials and perspectives. As an implication for a future research, it may be beneficial to expand the scope of the study to researching the broader range of agents and seek additional expert opinions outside of RFE/RL, including the competitor radio stations, political and social organizations and other independent experts unaffiliated with RFE/RL.

7. CONCLUSION

It is commonly believed that Western broadcasting played an important role in raising awareness of democratic values and promoting human rights in the Soviet Union during the Cold War. This study explored the role and effects of Western broadcasting in the USSR between 1987 and 1991 on the case of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. The purpose of the study was to examine if RFE/RL had an impact on changing attitudes of the Soviet people to communism and the Soviet government in Perestroika and Glasnost period.

To test the hypothesis the study employed agenda-setting and framing theories. According to agenda-setting theory, the media can highly influence public opinion by establishing the salience of issues among the public (McCombs 2004). Meanwhile, through framing the media interpret and characterise the aspects of the emphasised objects to influence people's perception about the issues. Hence, based on these media effects theories, the findings in this study provided some insights into the way RFE/RL was shaping public opinion in Perestroika and Glasnost period and its contribution to changing attitudes of the Soviet people to communism and the Soviet government.

The analysis has demonstrated that RFE/RL raised awareness of democratic values among the Soviet people and significantly contributed to changing attitudes of the Soviet public to the communist regime between 1987 and 1991 by setting anti-communist public agenda, and framing events through the prism of liberty and promotion of the ideas of freedom and human rights.

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Fistein, Efim, the political commentator and former director of the Russian Service of RFE/RL.

Pomerantsev, Igor, the author of cultural programmes and writer.

Shuster, Savik, the former director of RFE/RL's Moscow bureau.

Sokolov, Mikhail, journalist.

Tolz, Vladimir, the author of historical programmes.

Volchek, Dmitry, journalist.

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