

IMESS dissertation						
Name/code:	Konovalova Evgeniya					
Dissertation title:	The Effects of Western Broadcasting on the Soviet People in Glasnost and Perestroika Period: The Case of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty					
Scale: 5 - excellent, 4 - good, 3 - satisfactory, 2 - poor, 1 - very poor						
	5	4	3	2	1	
ARGUMENT:						
Clearly defined research question		4				No clearly defined research question
Answers research question		4				Does not answer research question
Well structured	5					Badly structured
Shows theoretical awareness			3			Shows no theoretical awareness
Conceptual clarity		4				Conceptual confusion
Empirically appropriate & robust	5					Full of empirical errors
Logical and coherent	5					Illogical and incoherent
Analytical	5					Descriptive
Critical		4				Uncritical
Shows independent thought		4				Does not show independent thought
SOURCES & USAGE:						
Evidence of reading/research		4				No evidence of reading/research
Effective use of sources/data	5					Ineffective use of sources/data
WRITING STYLE:						
Clear	5					Obscure
Good punctuation	5					Poor punctuation
Grammatically correct	5					Grammatically incorrect
PRESENTATION:						
Appropriate length	5					Too long/short
Good referencing	5					Poor/inconsistent referencing
Good spelling	5					Poor spelling
Good bibliography		4				Poor bibliography
Deducted for late submission:		Deducted for faulty referencing:			Mark*: A/86/1	
Charles marker: Daniela Kolenovská		Signed:			Date:4.9.2012	

* Mark: A = 70+; B = 65-69; C = 60-64; D = 55-59; E = 50-54; F = fail, less than 50

Scheme of award (assessment criteria):

	Charles University**	IMESS
Excellent	Výborně [1]	A
Very Good	Velmi dobře [2]	B
Good	Velmi dobře [2.5]	C
Satisfactory	Dobře [3]	D
Sufficient	Dobře [3.5]	E
Fail	Neprospěl [4]	F

CONTINUES OVERLEAF

NOTE: Please provide substantive and detailed feedback

Comments (at least 300 words)

In her Master Dissertation, Evgeniya Konovalova analyses the impact of Western broadcasting on popular opinion in the Soviet Union in the period of Perestroika. She concentrates on the programmes of the Russian Service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) dedicated to the promotion of democratic values, human rights and anticommunism. Konovalova argues that RFE/RL as well as other Western mass media influenced the Soviet audience's perceptions of the communist regime by setting anti-communist agenda and by framing its specific attributes to direct Soviet public toward prescribed Western interpretation of freedom and human rights.

In the dissertation, mass media effects theories are of benefit to Konovalova while political theory has been neglected by her. The role and content of key terms "democratic values" and "human rights" are unexplored in the text. This lack of theoretical background leads Konovalova to accept uncritically the idea of totally divided Western and Eastern worlds. Another serious gap in the concept of the dissertation, caused by the lack of political theory findings, is its ignorance of inner Soviet and Russian intellectual development. Thus, the scale of RFE/RL contribution to changing Soviet public attitudes to the communist regime could not become revealed fully in the dissertation.

On the other hand, Konovalova did much to provide a real insight into the process of RFE/RL programmes planning. She interviewed several RFE/RL employees. Her demanding frequencies analysis and following qualitative content analysis made, together with findings of the Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research department of RFE/RL, a good base to answer the research question.

As a whole, the dissertation is clearly structured and carefully organised and the sources presented in the bibliography section are categorised well. Thus, with the reservation that more of the Russian and Soviet intellectual context should have been included, I consider the text to be excellent.

Specific questions for oral defence (at least 100 words)

Which particular components do the democratic values; human rights and anticommunism consist of? Were there any comparable values discussed in the Soviet religious or moral discourse? Did the RFE/RL Russian Service try to accentuate similarities in the ideas?

What was the impact of RFE/RL employees of Russian or Soviet origin upon the Russian Service programmes for 1987-1991? In the broadcasting, could they promote their own thoughts? Which part of Soviet society did these people represent and what was their role in the change of civil awareness of the Soviet citizens?

What themes would opinions outside RFE/RL give to the research if they were considered?