

officials. My own judgment (as an RFE research analyst in the late 1960s) of the Items as a source of information was that some were golden, some interesting, and many useless.

Overestimating the importance of Items for broadcasting leads Feinberg to exaggerate a feed-back loop in which perceptions of broadcasters influenced the views of listeners, interviews with refugee listeners influenced perceptions of broadcasters, and so on. Research in RFE broadcast archives may clarify how much Information Items were used in specific broadcasts. Even so, while western radios (VOA and BBC from the outset, RFE after 1951) reached significant numbers of east Europeans in the early 1950s with information about their countries and the world unavailable in regime media, evidence is lacking that western broadcasts altered the mindset and vocabulary of listeners.

Readers will benefit from this book's nuanced examination of "lies" behind the Iron Curtain but will need to turn elsewhere for the successes and failures of counter-vailing western efforts to convey "truth" to Stalinist eastern Europe.

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Broadcasting and National Imagination in Post-Communist Latvia: Defining the Nation, Defining Public Television. By Jānis Juzefovičs. Chicago: Intellect

Books, 2017. 164 pp. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. \$50.00, paper.

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Jānis Juzefovičs' monograph *Broadcasting and National Imagination in Post-Communist Latvia: Defining the Nation, Defining Public Television* provides detailed insight into the media and TV viewing habits of ethnic Latvians and Russian speakers in Latvia. Juzefovičs's research angle and his methods allow him to go beyond generalized attributions and positions. His research approach of quota and snowball sampling to recruit participants for ten focus groups, as well as in-depth qualitative interviews with five families (including three generations) at their homes permit him to rebuke widespread accusations by ethnic Latvian politicians who tend to regard Russian speakers as completely stuck in the orbit of Russian propaganda. As Juzefovičs stresses, Latvia's Russian speakers are far more critical of the Russian media than they are given credit for.

Another important merit of this study is its focus on the diversity of Latvia's so-called "Russian-speaking population." Here, the monograph's appendix, in which Juzefovičs provides short overviews of the focus groups' participants as well as family profiles, is particularly revealing. The family profiles give the reader insight into the diversity of Latvian family life, where intermarriages between ethnic groups are common, and "Russian speakers" are by no means all ethnic Russians.

The monograph is organized into five chapters discussing the ways in which television viewing habits can help us understand the central question of national belonging in post-communist Latvia. Most of the research was conducted between October 2011 and July 2012, with emphasis on public television. While Juzefovičs assesses both viewing habits of ethnic Latvians and Russian speakers, a large focus of the study is the overarching question of national loyalty among Latvia's Russian speakers. The crisis in Ukraine has exacerbated the questioning of this group's loyalty by Latvia's nationalist politicians and also raised concerns among NATO partners. Yet, as Juzefovičs argues, even those (mostly elderly) Russian speakers who view Russia as their fatherland still see Latvia as their homeland, show interest in news from Latvia,

and feel connected to the Latvian nation. At the same time, they accuse Latvia's main public broadcaster, LTV1, of excluding Russian voices—and therefore the narrative of the Russian-speaking population—from its broadcasts. Here, it needs to be added that Latvian public TV has expanded its Russian-language broadcasting since 2014 (after the study was conducted), in response to the crisis in Ukraine, filling the need to provide alternative points of view missing from the Russian media sphere.

Juzefovičs' study underlines the generational divide. Those Russian speakers who were born and grew up in independent Latvia after 1991 are far less likely to watch the news on the popular media outlet *Pervyi Baltiiskii kanal*, which produces some local programming and rebroadcasts Russia's state-owned *Pervyi kanal*. This finding once again raises the awareness of “the Russian-speaking population” as a very diverse group, and not a monolithic bloc. Taken seriously, this should make Latvia's nationalist politicians rethink their education policies. As Juzefovičs' research shows, younger Russian speakers in Latvia already speak Latvian very well and are loyal to the Latvian state, even if they criticize Latvian politicians.

This is an important book not only for scholars interested in media habits and public television but also for those who would like to understand the diversity of Latvia's population. At times the author could have provided more detailed explanations about Latvia's history for the non-expert audience. For instance, the concept of non-citizenship is introduced only very briefly. Its history and the reason why Latvia introduced the “non-citizen” passport in 1995 remains unclear. As a reader, I would also have wished for a more thorough editing process. At times, sentences are very long and convoluted, and there are some grammatical errors that can make the reading experience less enjoyable.

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Imperial Odessa: Peoples, Spaces, Identities. By Evrydiki Sifneos. Leiden: Brill, 2018. Eurasian Studies Library: History, Societies and Cultures in Eurasia, vol. 8. x, 286 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$25.00, paper.

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Most common patterns for writing an urban history unfold either along a chronological axis or combine various thematic perspectives such as institutional, national, social, cultural, and economic aspects. Evrydiki Sifneos introduces a novel mode of writing which she defines as “peripatetic”—emulating the experience of a walk in the city as the central organizing principle for the composition of her research into the history of imperial Odessa.

Odessa and its communities were objects of several comprehensive historical research projects that put emphasis, alternately, on Odessa's economy, its Jewish community, its civil associations, Odessan myth, journalism, and literature. Between the economy, community, and culture Sifneos introduces an urban space in its various social contexts as a vantage point of her investigation into the history of the city. This approach presupposes the position of a historian as a flâneur, strolling both horizontally in space and vertically in time, when the narrative combines both—the tangibility of the material presence of the city and the subjectivity of the historian as a focalizer and a guide of this journey. Indeed, the personal voice and sensitivities of Sifneos—as a woman, an economic historian, and a descendant of the Greek merchant family that traded in the nineteenth century on the shores of the Azov sea not