

Shifting Expectations Regarding Glasnost' and Perestroika in Georgian Print Media

Ketevan Mumladze

Doctoral Student

Social Studies Doctoral Program

Georgian Institute of Public Affairs

Tbilisi, Georgia

Abstract

Since the declaration of Soviet Perestroika and Glasnost (Перестройка и Гласность) in the second half of the 1980s, this Soviet ideological product has been continuously studied in both the West and the post-Soviet space. On an international level, Glasnost (openness), a key constituent of Perestroika, is treated as the most vivid example of the media model of change and development.

Without studying the Georgian periodicals from this point in history, meaning the second half of the 1980s, it is impossible to analyze the incremental development of the media in the era of independence, and to paint a picture drawing on historical context, to explain interdependence and cause and effect relationships, and to systematize empiric knowledge.

This paper seeks to examine and systemize growing expectation-related sentiments as a result of declared Glasnost (openness), transformation of editorial policy, and qualitatively modified communication in the periodicals from the second half of the 1980s. The paper offers a review of a particular section from a vast study/thesis, *Refraction of the Concept of Perestroika and Glasnost in the Georgian Print Media*, which refers to the significance of Perestroika and Glasnost for a specific artistic social strata, those engaged in the areas of literature and cinema, also reflecting their changing expectations and the confirmed results of Perestroika and Glasnost as a means for enhanced opportunities.

Keywords

Search keywords: Perestroika, Glasnost, acceleration, economic accounting, repressions, emigrants, national issue, independence, self-determination, Stalinism, banned authors, national movement leaders.

Introduction

The traditionally accepted starting point of the Perestroika policy is the April 1985 Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union when, in the context of preparation for the 27th Congress, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev urged the Communist Party to put to work its organizational, economic, and social reserves and to accelerate economic reform.

By the time of Perestroika's declaration, Glasnost was not an end in itself but rather a supplementary means (and not a policy) for said acceleration, that is, economic reform.

According to Nicholas Powell (Powell, 2011), when Gorbachev came to power in 1985, the Soviet Union was a shadow of its former self. The country was in stagnation. Scores of troops were lost in the war in Afghanistan. Recognizing an economic crisis in full swing, Gorbachev embarked on a path of his own making, a plan called Perestroika. This program was designed to rights the wrongs of previous generations. Powell argues that Gorbachev sought to achieve popular support in order to carry out economic restructuring under Perestroika.

Although Glasnost accompanying Perestroika did succeed in changing public opinion, the new ideology only boosted skepticism and undermined the bonds between the center and the periphery. Powell believes that the deterioration of solid bonds was one of the key effects of Glasnost all over the place—in the Baltic Republics, the Caucasus, and Siberia alike. The demise of the Soviet Union was the collateral outcome of Perestroika through Glasnost.

This process of Perestroika was not thought-out well. The party's urgings were not supplemented with clear instructions for the media. Changes were put on automatic pilot, without considering concrete criteria. That, however, would not prevent the media to use this opportunity to start actively transforming after a two- or three-year hiatus. If the Georgian language newspapers in 1985-1986 were involved mostly in copying and publishing Perestroika-related party documents—

with the notion of Glasnost mentioned only in phatic context—since 1987, the media started considering Glasnost as an opportunity to grow more active, to diversify content topics, and gain freedom.

The changes implemented under the umbrella term of Perestroika resulted in qualitatively updated newspapers and radio and TV broadcasting in the second half of the 1980s.

It is in that period that changes occur in the interaction between media narrative, the attitude of authors, facts, and their interpretations—reality is perceived from a different angle, and history is reconsidered; and, importantly, reader engagement intensifies, with the audience creating and defining the newspaper agenda by transforming into a source, a cause, a feedback initiator, and a monitor in one.

Genre and thematic analysis of the Georgian periodicals from this period, alongside the volume of inbound correspondence, bears witness to the readership's tremendous invigoration, to the media going social, so to speak, enabling the them to exist and be productive in defiance of censorship.

Scientific Literature Overview/Historical Background

Fierce debates on the essence of Perestroika and Glasnost, and their impact on the vast post-Soviet space, have carried over into the 21st century. The issue found itself under scrutiny as early as the 1980s to continue to be studied as an enormously diverse and multifaceted topic through the prism of communication sciences, Sovietology, and sociology.

According to Hopkins (Hopkins, 1970), overconcentration on success stories and objectives renders the media defunct. This postulate from Hopkins perfectly illustrates the dulness of the Soviet-era media and best fits the Soviet reality.

By the mid-1980s, it became crystal clear to Soviet leaders, including Mikhail Gorbachev, that change was in order. Soviet leadership significantly—albeit with certain reservations—promoted the freedom of speech and christened it Glasnost.

Hough (Hough, 1980) argues that the publications in the official media of that time represented officially sanctioned public discourse.

David Wedgwood Benn (Benn, 1987) believes that, by 1986, the Soviet media focused on local wrongs or secondary issues, with the media orchestrated “from above.” Glasnost accentuated the importance of “social justice.”

Benn also argues that old ideological principles were designed to be used for new objectives under the Perestroika fabric—to curb bureaucracy, for one. Consequently, the new campaign in itself was nothing new, being only designed for new objectives, namely for ensuring bottom-up control.

By losing its reputation, the media would squander the power of influencing public opinion, which is why, the Soviet leadership believed, policy change would have detrimental consequences. At the same time, enhanced openness (Glasnost) could be more fundamental in questioning the nature of the Soviet system.

According to Lagerspetz (Lagerspetz, 1964), the way social problems were covered by the Soviet media was part of the official discourse conflicting with the unofficial one. And this very conflict between common sense and the official discourse brought about the collapse of the system and uncontrollable processes.

Brian McNair (McNair, 1989), in his study *Glasnost and restructuring in the Soviet media*, argues that the Glasnost campaign was a necessary and overdue response to internal and external developments which threatened the ideological hegemony of the Soviet Communist Party at home and the status of the Soviet Union as a major world power.

McNair detects parallels between Gorbachev’s ideological approaches to qualitative societal change and Khrushchev’s strategy, also arguing that Glasnost was a temporary phenomenon, to be followed at some point in the future by a return to neo-Stalinist orthodoxy. History has proved McNair wrong as Glasnost marked the beginning of the end of Communist.

Later, McNair (1991) claimed that, with the Soviet media agenda expanding since 1985, a wide array of previously tabooed topics emerged. A quintessential Glasnost example is Pravda newspaper, the central Soviet party publication trying to imitate Western counterparts. McNair concludes that “All that is glasnost is not gold” (p. 169).

Robert Louis Stevenson and his coauthors (Stevenson, Childers, West, Marschalk, 1988) argue that, even though Glasnost may have been revolutionary by Soviet standards, Western readers would find the Soviet media of that time more like the old-days Western media.

The researchers define Glasnost as follows: Gorbachev, having inherited economic stagnation, sought to establish an effective dictatorship, not Western liberalism. And the mass media was a tool of this policy, an instrumental part in the hands of the ruling regime.

Stevenson believes that the most tangible impact of Glasnost on Soviet journalism lay in “the cosmetic cool breeze,” meaning a milder form of traditionally strict control. For journalists, Glasnost stood for an opportunity to investigate previously banished topics.

Based on the analysis of Pravda and Vremya in 1987, the researchers point out that these media outlets, in early 1987, resembled themselves in 1977, not the Western media:

“Those who expect Soviet mass media to have assumed a glasnost role similar to that of the critical, watchdog Western media, will be disappointed. Pravda and Vremya in early 1987 remain more like they were in 1977 than like today's Western media. But there are changes, important changes, that are evident even without the benefit of a detailed comparable assessment ten years earlier. There is open and critical reporting—up to a point, of course and these two premier Soviet organs do seem to be on the cutting edge of great changes taking place in the Soviet Union” (p.16).

The study reveals that the Glasnost-age media focused mostly on covering domestic issues. Broadcasting targeting international audiences paid little attention to “bad news.” Emphasizing the economy in shambles was reserved for domestic coverage.

The researcher draws three important conclusions concerning the Glasnost-era Soviet media.

Those expecting the Glasnost-era Soviet mass media to do the same as the critical Western media were disenchanted. Still, far-reaching changes were obvious. Reporting grew more open and critical. Changes applied to the character and form of news coverage. Events unrelated directly to the Soviet Union or Marxism were covered as well. Compared to historical prospects, greater attention was paid to news. The Soviet Union redirected its attention from the Eastern European neighbors to its competitors, Western Europe and, especially, the United States. Pravda and

Vremya exhibited an obsession of sorts claiming that the two super empires, the Soviet Union and the US, were equal. “To talk of glasnost in Soviet journalism as revolution seems to be an overstatement. It is reform, significant but controlled reform,” the author concludes (p.17).

He Zhou (He Zhou, 1988)—who also studied Pravda newspaper in 1986-1987 to identify changes in the Soviet news concept—emphasizes that these changes seem to have started with a slight revision of Lenin's doctrine of an agitating, propagandist, educational, and organizational press. The Soviet press was assigned a new role, that of an observer of life, chronicler of the present day, and accumulator of public opinion.

One of the indicators of changes in the Soviet concept of news was the tone of articles. Besides, news stories were released in a timelier manner, and coverage focus and scope expanded tremendously, more factual information, human-interest and entertainment stories, and moderately negative items emerged to grow in volume.

According to He Zhou, Gorbachev used Glasnost for his narrow personal purpose of undermining opposition and gain popular support for economic reforms. He recruited media to tackle bureaucracy and enjoy direct communication with the public, bypassing red-tape filters.

According to Leslie Holmes (Holmes, 2013), Perestroika was initially conceived as a concept focusing on economy. Mikhail Gorbachev sought to deliver the country's economy from stagnation, which is why he declared Perestroika, Glasnost, democratization, acceleration, and new political thinking designed to reawaken the sleeping bear.

When Gorbachev came to power, the Soviet Union was not only unable to compete with the West, but also lagged far behind economically. Better still, the population running out of patience was a real threat.

Amid this very context, Gorbachev announced Perestroika, which boosted public criticism of bureaucracy—both Soviet leaders and even the very foundations of the Communist system found themselves under fire. And criticism against the state was the most dangerous thing to do.

Holmes emphasizes the controversial nature of Perestroika:

“That the word perestroika can be translated in different ways—most commonly as either re-structuring or reconstruction—testifies to the fact that observers disagree on how radical

it was or was intended to be, and what it represented. The term re-structuring is generally assumed to imply change that is less radical and comprehensive than reconstruction. Examining the ways in which Gorbachev himself used the term does not resolve this debate. At times, the General Secretary made it clear that he anticipated a number of policy changes, albeit some of them fairly radical. At other times, he went as far as to equate perestroika with revolution” (p. 187).

Holmes, in compiling various scientific views on Glasnost, points out that Glasnost, in the second half of the 1980s, transformed into nationalism in the Soviet Republics. And this nationalism was one of the decisive factors in the collapse of the Soviet Union and, consequently, of the Communist system.

Elizabeth Teague (Teague, 2013), who distinguishes — and rightly so — Perestroika from Glasnost, emphasizes that Glasnost, after having slipped through Gorbachev’s fingers, grew even more successful than Perestroika itself. Glasnost inspired society to voice its concerns loudly.

Elizabeth Teague, in her paper *Workers’ Reaction to Perestroika and Glasnost*, underlines that:

“By the autumn of 1986, Gorbachev had apparently become convinced that opposition to economic reform was so strong and deeply entrenched, until it was overcome, any improvement in the country’s economic would be impossible. It was then that he switched the focus to political reform. During the next phase of Gorbachev’s leadership (1987-89), much greater political openness (glasnost) permitted” (p. 167).

According to Bulsys and Makay (Bulsys & Makay, 1989), Glasnost boosted the cultivation of “an ideologically flexible, politically tolerant, and socially progressive” Russian idea in the West. The scholars believe that Glasnost, given the equivocality of its specific meaning, turned into a consolidated system of free word in open society. Misinterpretation of Glasnost increased public expectations of changes to the Soviet system, thus resulting in an equal amount of overwhelming disappointment.

The authors also point out five key problematic issues, failure to consider which contributed to the absence of systematization in public policy.

“**First**, while Gorbachev has proclaimed that the mass media are the major platform of glasnost, unfettered communication channels do not exist... **second**, the changes advanced through glasnost have not been institutionalized. No legal code presently exists to protect rights of free and open expression, although such codification is reported to be under consideration... **third**, glasnost is unevenly applied in the Soviet Union... **fourth**, glasnost is bound to "economic liberties" of guaranteed employment, housing, and medical care, less to the political freedoms cherished by the West... **fifth**, Gorbachev's definition of glasnost as ‘constructive criticism’ circumscribes public debate about political principles and the values upon which they rest” (*Ibid.* p. 63).

According to Joseph Gibbs (Gibbs, 1999), Gorbachev’s Glasnost was a hypothetical reform allowing for broad, albeit still scrutinized, public media discourse on selected topics.

Gibbs underlines that the situation in the centralized Soviet media changed drastically after Mikhail Gorbachev’s coming to power in 1985 and the declaration of Glasnost. Before Perestroika, the Soviet media were designed to perform what Western content analysis terms as result-oriented, instrumental communication. Messages were systematically formulated with the sole purpose of influencing the receiver.

The scholar argues that Glasnost was initially a top-down process of which Gorbachev gradually lost control. In non-media applications—where it actually originated under Andropov—Glasnost stood for informing discussions on alternative directions of the party’s performance and encouraging criticism of state and party officials.

Gibbs asserts that Glasnost had an irreversible impact on Soviet reality:

“Glasnost had come full circle. In 1984-85, openness had been promoted as a way to end an ‘anything goes’ atmosphere in government and party bodies. By 1988, the critics of glasnost—and quite a few of its supporters—were charging that its indiscreet use had made society completely permissive. Although its course had been erratic and its use selective and often partisan, glasnost had altered Soviet life irreversibly” (p. 87).

John Murray (Murray, 1990) argues that the content of the Perestroika-era Soviet press saw tremendous change. The combination of new content and language transformed Soviet journalism. At the initial stage of Glasnost, Murray says, it was not clear that the policy to be followed by

enormous freedoms for the press was encouraged by Gorbachev. By 1987, however, it became evident that Glasnost was more than a temporary liberal phenomenon allowed by a new, inexperienced leader.

At a later stage of Glasnost (1988-1990), readers and editors saw that different, vanguard press outlets like Ogoniok¹ and Moscow News² were not shut down and survived, and publications by unofficial media entities, so-called samizdat³ outlets, grew as well.

According to Vidyarthi (Vidyarthi, 2008), Mikhail Gorbachev's aspirations to reorganize the system was botched. Vidyarthi names several factors behind this failure. Perestroika, which started in extremely difficult economic conditions, was way overdue as the Soviet Union was already decaying. In addition, no exact parameters for Perestroika were articulated, which intensified public distrust.

Gorbachev's efforts brought about popular protest and encouraged it in a number of forms of expression. At the same time, Gorbachev never amended legislation in line with Perestroika, hence there was no adequate framework for Perestroika. The weak economy and technological stagnation fueled society's hatred toward Communism. Given the foregoing, announcing Glasnost and Perestroika further intensified people's frustration. In fact, Glasnost and Perestroika turned into the last straw that broke the Soviet Union's back.

Vidyarthi's views are, to some extent, seconded by Richard Rakos (Rakos, 1991), who argues that Perestroika was an enormous experiment that failed—it could not offer clearly defined values to address global challenges.

“Glasnost is the behavioral foundation of perestroika, in other words, the basis for the development of an efficient and effective socialism. Far from heralding the death of socialism, it signifies recognition that people must be directly involved in that which they own, that is, the country's resources,” (p.92) Rakos argues.

¹ Огонёк (Rus.) is a Soviet and Russian weekly illustrated political and literary magazine.

² **Moscow News** was a Soviet English-language magazine.

³ Самиздат (Rus.) a form of dissident activity in the Soviet Union in which individuals reproduced censored and underground makeshift publications.

Ellen Mickiewicz (Mickiewicz, 1988) commends openness and diversity of opinions as the key innovation introduced by Glasnost. The scholar argues that the local media were inconsistent in applying openness and, thus, were not considered as reliable as the central media. At the same time, Glasnost obliterated the boundaries of the acceptable further than Gorbachev would ever anticipate.

Later in 2008, Mickiewicz emphasized that, given the institutional incapacitation of sorts, the process of media democratization proved insufficient in a number of countries under the Soviet system.

Sarah Oates (Oates, 2014) believes that Glasnost as a policy was not only supportive of media freedoms, but also stood for media diversification stemming from a lack of control. Back when Soviet journalists were not what Western standards would define as sufficiently trained, the relaxation of centralized control and the diversity of political views gave rise to pluralism, something new in the Soviet arrangement of that time.

Consequently, Soviet readers enjoyed a diverse media environment at a later stage of Glasnost. Studies reveal that Soviet readers perceived this change as dissonance advocated by dangerous officials. Oates opines that, according to one of the classic Soviet historical myths, Glasnost was a form of media freedom. That the Soviet media system failed to match the Western one under Glasnost did not bother the Soviet leaders. What this dissonance model created was a lack of trust in the central structures of government. The Soviet system dealt a heavy blow to the media and its image. Because of myriad domestic and foreign problems, the real power of the Soviet country was threatened, especially at the beginning. The Soviet media, before Glasnost, did not take much interest in the image of a strong central government and a common vision. The illusion was shattered to be replaced by chaos.

Lampert (Lampert, 1988) admits that Gorbachev's Perestroika enjoyed a considerable impact both in the Soviet Union and abroad. The scholar singles out three aspects: press criticism of officialdom in the context of intensified conflict within the leadership; greater pluralism in the world of publishing and its significance for the relationship between the state and intelligentsia; and the problem of *bad news* in light of traditional Soviet ideology.

The scholar underlines that Glasnost and self-criticism accommodated a greater degree of animosity among state bureaucrats accused of causing numerous problems in the country's everyday life. This inner-party conflict built on the clash between citizens and the state. In the period of understaffing and economic transformation, the state declared war on itself. And that constitutes the main dilemma posed by Glasnost.

According to Lampert, Gorbachev, in traditional meetings with editors, insisted on properly understanding Glasnost. For example, at one such forum, he stated:

“We are for glasnost without any reservations, without restrictions. But for glasnost in the interests of socialism. And to the question, are there limits to glasnost', criticism, democracy, we answer firmly, if glasnost, criticism, democracy are in the interests of the people, then they have no limits” (p.56).

This way, Gorbachev reiterated the limited character of both Perestroika and Glasnost.

However, alongside pluralism, previously tabooed topics were allowed in the media, also making it possible to include/feature statistics. Changes applied to so-called bad news coverage, with enhanced reporting on accidents and natural disasters. After a period of painful silence, Chernobyl found itself in the spotlight of the Soviet press. Such inconvenient and unrecognized phenomena as drug abuse, prostitution, and crime made novel appearances.

Ultimately, Lampert arrives at three key conclusions. Glasnost is an attempt to empower the press as a basic constituent of the party apparatus in the face of the centrifugal tendencies of the political system. The process expanded at the expense of deeper public debate and relaxed cultural controls, essential elements for an alliance between reformists and reform-oriented intelligentsia. Glasnost and increased pressure resulted in more bad news taken on board and an increased flow of information delivered to the public.

Declared Glasnost is a historical and contested process with social actors making specific choices. This process, however, is accompanied by difficulties, among others: “These difficulties are not defined by reference to Western experience or to Western criteria of 'good' press behavior or cultural policy. The dilemmas are 'immanent' ones that arise from the relationship between conflicting stated goals,” (p. 60) Lampert argues. In 1988, he expected said difficulties to intensify.

Similar to Lampert, many researchers (Oates [2014], Young & Launer [1991], Taylor [2013]) believe that the disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant was a critical turning point for the Soviet regime. Chernobyl shed light on the hollowness of Glasnost, serving this way as a catalyst by forcing the Soviet leadership to admit that change was in order. Perestroika researchers believe that the Chernobyl disaster was the extreme point marking the beginning of irreversible processes eventually leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Mary Dejevsky (Dejevsky, 1989) shares Lampert's position by arguing that Gorbachev did not identify openness with genuine press freedom. Gorbachev was guided by the criteria of placing Glasnost, criticism, and democracy in service to Socialism and the people.

Dejevsky also opines that 1987-1988 were a period of breaking taboos and reevaluating history. The press started disclosing widely known facts preserved in the narrative of contemporaries, including those pertaining to POW camps:

“Once given the green light, however, the press has moved further and faster in opening up new subjects for public discussion. Nowhere has the role of the press—or rather a section of it—been greater than in developing the discussion of Soviet history, especially in reappraising the role of Stalin and Stalinism. In the second half of 1987 and through 1988, the press raked over the past and uncovered facts and figures which were widely known, but had not been publicly acknowledged before in the Soviet Union” (p. 27).

Nicholas Powell (Powell, 2011) believes that collapse was the result of Perestroika through Glasnost, which not only brought about the end the Soviet Union, but also buried the career of its own architect, Gorbachev.

“It was the collateral outcome of perestroika through glasnost that brought about the end of Soviet Communism. The system did not collapse, as is sometimes understood. A collapse would indicate a sudden and complete fall from grace. Instead it crumbled gradually, and certainly not from a high position. It really is one of history's great paradoxes: to survive, Soviet Communism had to compromise, but if it compromised, it could not survive,” (p.123) Powell suggests.

In discussing the Russian media, Becker (Becker, 2004) points out that, thanks to the high expectations and enthusiasm of the Glasnost era, the media enjoyed a unique emerging

environment in that they, on one hand, received financing from the government and, on the other, the authorities would not interfere as much with the domain of content. However, the hopes that Russia's media system would become democratic were dashed. Nonetheless, the Russian media in the 1990s did take steps toward democratization, with media control waning and media owners coming to the fore. The researcher believes that seminal changes took place under Gorbachev, but Russia failed to come together as a democratic system.

Soviet researchers Victor Britvin and Mikhail Karakhanyan (БРИТВИН, КАРАХАНЫАН, 1991), in their work *Glasnost: Condition, Problems, Prospects*, review the results of surveys on Glasnost conducted in Moscow and other big cities of the Soviet Union. The Russian scholars underline diverse perceptions of the notion of Glasnost which, in essence, apply to human rights and freedoms and the freedom of speech alike. Still, freedom and communality are its most accentuated meanings.

A big part of the respondents (44%) of 1989 surveys take Glasnost as an opportunity to express any opinion (without fear of retaliation), and 27% consider the factor of Glasnost to play a positive role, while a majority of the respondents (56%) ascribe an equivocal role to Glasnost. About 10% of the interviewees (1990) believe that Glasnost has a negative impact on the process of Perestroika. This indicator was 9% in 1989. Similarly, the statistics of positive assessments of Glasnost saw a decline in 1990 among experts as well, with 8% of the experts interviewed in 1990 slamming Glasnost's impact on Perestroika as negative, and 12% failing to see any ties between Glasnost and Perestroika.

According to 1989-1990 surveys, Glasnost is defined as mandatory disclosure of all governmental decisions, openness in the performance of state institutions, public organizations, and officials, also a policy of mandatorily disclosing and taking into account the results of surveys in important decision-making in public and political life, as well as ensuring the right of people's access to information, freedom of speech, and pluralism.

According to said surveys, most experts (62%) point out improved media performance.

Similar to their Western counterparts, Britvin and Karakhanyan conclude that the development of Glasnost is controversial, accompanied by not only an increasing volume of objective information,

but also by disinformation. Still, Glasnost served as the main driver behind the democratization of Soviet society.

“The development of Glasnost is controversial. It is accompanied not only by a growing amount of objective information, but also by disinformation. Given the absence of necessary political culture, tolerance toward a different opinion, and consideration for the interests of various social and ethnic groups, disinformation may contribute to intensified conflict situations, lead to growing societal tensions. With deepening economic and political crises, which have dealt a heavy blow to most of the country’s population, signs of ‘fatigue with Glasnost’ are evident” (p. 11).

Britvin and Karakhanyan argue that, in 1990, the Soviet Union entered a dangerously critical stage of development. The citizens’ tormenting expectation of a miracle from Glasnost gave way to disenchantment. The deepening crisis, reflecting in the everyday lives of people, eclipsed the significance of Glasnost.

As for Georgia, similar to other peripheries, Perestroika’s arrival was delayed, and its development took a different turn.

Georgian researcher Khatuna Maisashvili (2016) emphasizes that expectations from Glasnost were different among the ruling force and the Western world. They were equally different in the Baltic Republics and Georgia where a demand for independence was voiced.

Maisashvili (2018), in characterizing the later period of Perestroika, points out that, under the influence of two types of political elite (nomenclature and national liberation) in the late 1980s, twofold Glasnost content emerged within Georgia’s media system: so-called pro-Glasnost (official media) and anti-Glasnost (new independent media). The leaders of the national liberation movement interfered, among others, with the content of the state-controlled media. According to the researcher, the nomenclature responsible for the content of Glasnost in Georgia was alienated, detached from the public and unconvincing in power—and, in contrast to what happened in Russia, failed as such to transform into an independent player in the process of Perestroika. The new media springing up in the process of Perestroika, for example, would not share the anti-Stalinist discourse of Perestroika. Unlike the official media, the informal media reevaluated history through criticism

of Marxism, and through nationalist discourse, not at all a directive of Perestroika. Thus, revision of history took place in the informal media instead of the mainstream media.

“Two types of political elites influenced Georgia’s media system in the 1989-1990s. Under the influence of these elites, twofold Glasnost content was created: pro- and anti-Glasnost, that of nomenclature in the official media, and of the national liberation movement’s leaders in the media of newly emerging political unions. The boundaries of this influence over the media, however, were not delineated as clearly as in the case of superficial, formalized review. The leaders of the national liberation movement would not settle for influencing the media content created by the publications under their control. They would penetrate nomenclature-controlled outlets as well. This, among others, may have been due to the fetal state of the liberal-democratic Intelligentsia in Georgia” (p. 120).

According to television and radio researcher Eldar Iberi, Perestroika in Georgian television revealed itself in the form of a kind of tolerance toward dissident and national liberation ideas. The tragedy of April 9 marked the end of one historical era spanning 70 years and the beginning of a new one involving the restoration of Georgian statehood, one that saw the removal of Georgian national television’s restrictions on religious and national themes.

Researcher Nato Tatarashvili (2003) objectively shares the dominant opinion of international researchers about Perestroika developing in the center, with the peripheries placed in hiatus for a long time. She also emphasizes that no significant changes took place in Georgian television prior to the tragedy of April of 1989. And it was only after April 9 that television stepped up communication with the audience, with inbound correspondence increasing. The process of media decentralization and democratization kicked off.

Review of Perestroika-related scientific literature reveals that this process was difficult and controversial, eventually generating unplanned results impossible to project in 1985-1986.

Subject Study

On an international level, the Perestroika-era media are studied mostly through the prism of Sovietology, and even that predominantly covers Russian-language media. Historical context bears witness to the importance of coverage of Perestroika and its product, Glasnost, and studying their impacts by the media.

Research Aims and Objectives

The full work (thesis), *Refraction of the Concept of Perestroika and Glasnost in the Georgian Print Media*, encompasses attempts at scientifically identifying and substantiating what journalists gained after the lifting of taboos, what messages they sent to their audiences, and how media language changed in the absence of clear criteria of “allowed freedom.”

The research aims to characterize the changes in media texts (content, quality of criticism, tabooed topics pitched, rewriting/reinterpreting history, changing attitude) in the period of partial freedoms “allowed from above.”

Based on a comparison of empiric and experimental materials, we decided to divide Glasnost in Georgia into two phases: before and after the tragedy of April 9, 1989. The research’s hypothesis and questions were formulated accordingly.

The main question of our thesis is as follows: **What meaning does Perestroika bear for the specific social group of litterateurs and filmmakers?**

The research’s main question was actualized into two layers: What changes took place in the content of *Literaturli Sakartvelo* (Literary Georgia) and *Kartuli Filmi* (Georgian Film) newspapers under Perestroika? What effect Perestroika and Glasnost had on the Georgian print media, and how Perestroika reflected in media texts? What did Glasnost bring to the media as a product of Perestroika? What topics and issues are relevant in the research period?

Theory

- The media, finding themselves without clear explanations and instructions, developed their own attitudes/concepts and perceptions of Perestroika and Glasnost, all of which eventually transformed into an interest in previously prohibited themes like criticism of the government, national issues, independence, historical revisionism, and the emergence of banned authors, ultimately to start materializing as media freedom. Media content changed substantially at the expense of emerging diversity and developing criticism.

Overview of Sources

A timeframe between 1985 and 1990 in the performance of *Literaturli Sakartvelo* (Literary Georgia) and *Kartuli Filmi* (Georgian Film) was selected for research purposes.

The selection of said Georgian newspapers as study populations was determined by several factors: 1) Both newspapers are outlets of the so-called privileged intelligentsia of creative unions (Writers' Union, Filmmakers' Union), 2) Both have the same publication frequency, 3) The content is often close to literary texts, 4) Their authors often include publicly known, respected figures, so-called informal leaders, 5) By the mid-1980s, *Literaturli Sakartvelo* (Literary Georgia) had quite an amount of experience, and *Kartuli Filmi* (Georgian Film) was a product of Perestroika, which makes their comparison/juxtaposition an exciting effort.

By the time of the declaration of Perestroika in 1985, *Literaturli Sakartvelo* (Literary Georgia, a publication of the Georgian Soviet Writers' Union), had been around for over 50 years. In 1985-1986, the newspaper was clearly established in terms of technology, content, and ideology. Significant qualitative changes took place since 1987 based on two factors. Management changed and Perestroika picked up. It is in that period that the newspaper's content began to diversify, new columns were dedicated to Perestroika and Glasnost, and the publication expanded thematically. Unlike *Literaturli Sakartvelo* (Literary Georgia), *Kartuli Filmi* (Georgian Film)—a publication of the trade unions, Komsomol committees, and administration of V. I. Lenin Georgian Film Studio—was established in 1987, amid Perestroika, hence its brainchild and contemporary product. The newspaper was conceived and implemented in an era of relative freedom, in an environment (in the bosom of filmmakers) with a higher degree of expression compared to other Soviet institutions. *Kartuli Filmi* does not have an extensive Soviet history and past, never having been obligated to accentuate the theoretical postulates of the Leninist press or carry the weight of traditional interaction with party leadership and censorship. It was conceived differently from the very outset, which is why its metamorphosis is not as drastic and tangible as *Literaturli Sakartvelo*'s transformation.

Method

This article features only one section of the quantitative part of the full study (thesis), which draws on the analysis of media texts and consists of both quantitative and qualitative parts—the two were combined into a unified synthetic content analysis, and media samples were studied using the methods of content analysis and/or discourse analysis. The derived data were processed statistically using a factor analysis technique. Inductive reasoning was utilized to conduct the

study. By classifying specific examples, generalization was ensured, and patterns were derived as the output of the study.

Data Collection and Processing

After selecting a timeframe for the overall study population, the following were established: 1) Selection parameters with special criteria, 2) Keywords, 3) Unit of study (article), 4) Characteristics/categories for structuring the unit of analysis by genre and content, 5) A three-specter system developed for evaluating the unit of study (positive, negative/skeptical, and neutral), 6) Each selected newspaper article was labeled by relevant criteria and keyword in special identification cards classified by characteristics/categories. The derived material was inventoried, simple statistical tables were drawn using the results, and variables were identified and subsequently coded, with reliability testing conducted for the coding system. The material was processed using corresponding statistical operations. The results were interpreted.

Identification Card for Analyzing the Unit of Study (Article)

Name of the Source:

Date/number:

Column:

Headline:

Author: (Staff/Contributor)

Type of publication

- a) News story
- b) Essay
- c) Open letter
- d) Letter to the editor/comment/feedback/opinion
- e) Editorial/leading article
- f) Interview/questionnaire/monologue
- g) Other.

Text reference parameters for Perestroika and Glasnost

- a) In a column
- b) In a headline
- c) In a text

Connotation/analog of the term Glasnost in the text

- a) Perestroika as historical revisionism/motivation to rewrite history/a political campaign to demystify Stalin.
- b) Perestroika as lifting taboos from bad news.
- c) Perestroika and Glasnost as a motivator for the modernization of the Soviet planned economy.
- d) Perestroika as the beginning of the demise of the Communist Party's hegemony/multipartyism.
- e) Perestroika's importance to specific social institutions and groups.
- f) The return of historical heritage and banned authors, the idea of independence.
- g) Pluralism, citizen engagement, self-expression.
- h) Other.

Aspects of evaluation for Perestroika and Glasnost

- a) Positive.
- b) Negative/skeptical.
- c) Neutral.

Noteworthy quotes/verbal material

Definition of Perestroika (a quote from an article)

Resume

Remark/comment

SAMPLE

The overall study sample consists of 842 cards (519 for Literaturuli Sakartvelo and 323 for Kartuli Filmi). The scope of the sample singled out in one category (category E, Perestroika's

importance to specific social institutions and groups) and serving as the basis for this article features 150 cards, making it the third largest among the research material’s categories.

Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups/review and interpretation of results

The reduction of the variables identified in the research material was carried out in line with instructions, based on the initial data, and a structure for interconnected variables was defined. Customarily, we grouped under one factor strongly correlated variables and attempted to interpret their contents. Factor analysis enabled us to solve the study’s two most important challenges, namely to describe the subject of study from a variety of angles and yet compactly.

Factor analysis was performed using content categories listed by year. Principal component analysis (PCA) was carried out on 7 components using an orthogonal rotation matrix (varimax). The indicators of three components turned out to be higher than Kaiser criterion 1. Consequently, we singled out three factors.

Factors within the overall research material were grouped as follows:

Table 1

Content Categories (Frames) by Year

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perestroika as historical revisionism • Perestroika as bad news • Perestroika as the beginning of the demise of the Communist Party’s demise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return of historical heritage and banned authors • Pluralism, citizen engagement, self-expression 	<p><u>Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups</u></p>

As mentioned earlier, we singled out three factors (category E) as a standalone topic—Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups—for the purpose of this article. Simple statistics for variable E derived from the materials juxtaposed in the identification cards are as follows:

Table 2

The volume of content category—Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups—by source

Content Categories/Sources	Literaturuli Sakartvelo	Kartuli Filmi	Total
E	59	91	150

As we can see, Kartuli Filmi’s data outnumber those derived in the case of Literaturuli Sakartvelo, even though the research timeframe for the latter (1985-1990) is wider than that for the former (1987-1990), which is due to the higher interest and influence—compared to the literary community—of Kartuli Filmi and the cinema community and their expectations from one of the key material components of Perestroika implying **the inevitability of the cinema sphere’s switchover to self-financing**. And this very constituent defines larger numbers of publications reflecting the direct and/or indirect relation of a specific social group, the cinema community, with Perestroika and its importance. The foregoing is voiced as a vitally important issue among said professional group, as a necessary factor of natural professional selection, one that inspires fear and trembling among the *guild* accustomed to state subsidies. And that causes one of the outcomes of Perestroika, an intensified interest, mixed with fear, in supporting oneself with creative work, which is reflected in growing numbers of publications with relevant content in Kartuli Filmi. As for the key constituent of the Perestroika concept — freedom of creative expression/Glasnost — and its influence on writers and filmmakers, things are not as clear, because there always were more or less effective ways to bypass censorship and express one’s opinion overtly or covertly. And now there was another/additional opportunity up for grabs, a creative freedom beyond censorship, something that representatives of both creative groups embraced with vivid interest and positive expectations. Writers, however, are not as vocal in emphasizing the material profitability of their works, instead perceiving Perestroika as a shot at catharsis/transformation, unhindered creative freedom, and metamorphosis — and this very angle comes to the fore mostly in Literaturuli Sakartvelo.

Table 3

The volume of content category—Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups — by year⁴

Content Category/Years	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	Total
E	8	0	69 (29+40)	46 (6+40)	15 (7+8)	12 (8+4)	150

The dynamic of interest in Perestroika and Glasnost reveals that, at the initial stage (1985-1986), one of the media selected for research purposes, *Literaturuli Sakartvelo*, paid little attention to this novel policy, limiting itself to copying and publishing on its pages party guidance documents related to Perestroika as a bow of sorts to higher authorities, a common Soviet practice. Appreciation of the concept of Perestroika and its importance among these specific creative groups reached its highest in 1987. The jump in the numbers of publications was caused mostly by the launch of *Kartuli Film* in 1987 and the newspaper’s declared interest in Perestroika. Notably, the combined dynamic dropped in 1988, while *Kartuli Filmi* maintained the same level of interest in Perestroika.

Next was the turning point, meaning the tragedy of April 9, 1989, a watershed that brought about total Glasnost as the outcome of Perestroika: opportunities tapped into, all taboos broken; and, at the same time, frustration caused by the April tragedy was evident, consequently triggering declining interest in Perestroika proper as a concept and state policy, an embodiment of broken promises and dashed hopes. By 1990, interest in Perestroika was drying up to drop to the level of the 1985 dynamic.

⁴ **NB:** Hereinafter the first of the values indicated in brackets stands for the material from *Literaturuli Sakartvelo*, and the second - from *Kartuli Filmi*.

Table 4

Aspects of evaluation for Perestroika and Glasnost in category E (Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups)

Evaluation/Year	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	Total
Positive	1	0	43(14+29)	28(2+26)	5(2+3)	2(1+1)	79
Negative/Skeptical	0	0	0(0+0)	(0+0)	0(0+0)	(0+0)	0
Neutral	7	0	26(15+11)	19(4+15)	9(5+4)	10(7+3)	71
Total	8	0	69	47	14	12	150

The aspects of evaluation for the category in discussion (**Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups**) paint a gripping picture in terms of the dynamics of positive and neutral evaluations. In this case too, we see the accentuated importance of the April 9 tragedy as a watershed.

If the aspects of evaluation in 1985-1986 were mostly neutral — which means that this particular social group viewed Perestroika as irrelevant to expectations, as uninteresting, dull, and colorless — in 1987-1988, alongside the growing interest in Perestroika, positive perceptions of its importance increased to almost twice the amount of neutral evaluations. After 1989, both positive and neutral perceptions of the importance of the concepts of Perestroika and Glasnost declined among this group, once again a sign of Perestroika morphing into a colorless embodiment of disappointment.

Said dynamic is also a result of the watershed tragedy of April 9 which exposed the futility of the state’s pseudo-democratic promises, double standards, and ideological bankruptcy.

Table 5

Rotation matrix of components for Factor 3, Perestroika’s importance to specific social institutions and groups

	1	2	3
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<u>Perestroika's importance to specific social institutions and groups</u>	-.236	.297	.914
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Table 6

The table below displays the statistics for content category E by year, including mean, mode, median, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum.

	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<u>Perestroika's importance to specific social institutions and groups</u>	42.86	15.00	0	53.155	0	150

The volume of Factor 3 in the second research source (Kartuli Filmi) outsizes the first research source (Literaturuli Sakartvelo), which may be explained by both general and specific reasons.

General reason: For quite a while after its declaration, Perestroika was perceived as another party nomenclature doctrine. The peripheral media were playing a waiting game and keeping an eye on the central media. In 1985-1986, not much was published by the peripheral media, including in Georgian, about or due to Perestroika, with the exception of mandatory party documents, all of which explains a research material void in 1985-1986. 1987-1988, on the other hand, marked a period of acceleration, with the waiting period over and the media coming to embrace relative freedom and jumping into this new opportunity, trying all the while to use the name of and motivation offered by liberation and Perestroika to explain and cover every possible societal metamorphosis. After the peak of Perestroika (April 9, 1989), the media revert to business as usual, with frustration welling up, no tabooed issues left, openness becoming a norm, the goal achieved, everything transformed or under Perestroika transformation, and interest in Perestroika as a tool consequently dwindling. That applies to the Georgian media in general, not to a specific research volume or frame.

The same motive may explain the anticipation policy of the creative intelligentsia (litterateurs, filmmakers). Initially, newspapers covered the issue of Perestroika as a simple token gesture by publishing mandatory party documents that were not directly linked to literature or film. Later since 1987, however, it became clear that Perestroika could be used as a powerful tool in the hands

of the creative intelligentsia, which is why writers, critics, and film directors and experts start actively discussing Perestroika, pointing out that it was long overdue as an actual opportunity offering a new space to the creative intelligentsia, with the message from below heard somewhere among higher authorities and, surprisingly enough, a response likely anticipated. That is why Factor 3 may be conventionally labeled as **phatic interaction**, meaning that the party is sending a message about Perestroika to the creative intelligentsia, and the intelligentsia acknowledges receipt, takes the message in, and expresses readiness to engage. It is a chance to establish communication and keep it up and running. And that could explain the growth dynamic in the sample under study, as partially discussed above. A period after 1987 marks years of expedited Perestroika, with numerous party appeals voiced and events held. The growth in the numbers of publications in that period was due not only to an increasing interest in Perestroika, but also to the obligation to commend and share the party's every initiative and directive. The second phase of Perestroika results in dashed hopes and frustration and, consequently, shifting, replacement, and displacement.

Most of the publications grouped under Frame 3 are on the positive or neutral side. Most of the positive evaluations stem not from an actual fact, but from positive expectations: "Will be!" "Must be!" "Is in order!" "Will take place!" The message may be encapsulated as follows: "Everything will be all right." As a positive outcome/goal Perestroika existed in the future that would follow vigorous efforts exerted to this end in the present.

Three themes can be highlighted under Frame 3: **the necessity to transform literature and cinema, switchover to economic accounting, and the film *Repentance***. Compared to the abstract notions of transformation in literature and cinema and spiritual catharsis of litterateurs and filmmakers, the last two subcategories come across as more tangible.

The newspaper texts grouped under Frame 3 abound in actual or attempted phatic communication between the party and the creative intelligentsia, the party and society, especially in the first subcategory, **the necessity to transform literature and cinema**. Most publications of this type under Frame 3 are abstract, lacking concrete meaning and factual information. The phatic function of language is used maximally, with the communication corridor always open as a means for the creative intelligentsia to return to the bosom of the party: "Dear representatives of culture, literature, and arts, create works corresponding to the sentiments of revolutionary change,

Perestroika! Be active in fostering the spiritual richness of society!” (*From the Appeal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Kartuli Filmi, November 4, 1987); “We strongly commend the party’s course, one of accelerated social and economic development, as reflected in the plan for the key directions of the economic and social development of the Soviet Union for 1986-1990 and a period to 2000... and now is the time for further intensifying our action” (anonymous, *At the Writers’ Union of Georgia*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, December 20, 1985); “Perestroika and Glasnost stand for an open competition of talents in administrative, economic, and artistic areas.... Our country is unwavering in developing democracy and openness in every area, including arts” (Yevgeny Yevtushenko, *The Right to Equivocality*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, January 9, 1987); “The process of transformation and renewal has started, and it must be furthered continuously” (Giga Lortkipanidze, *The 10th Congress of the Theatrical Society of Georgia*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, January 30, 1987); “Democratization is a decisive precondition of Perestroika” (Jansugh Charkviani, *More Socialism, More Democracy*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, July 17, 1987); “Contemporary Soviet film is on a brand new track, reflecting the fundamental transformation in modern Soviet society, with an inclination for critical analysis of years past” (Khatuna Topuria, *London Echo*, Kartuli Filmi, November 18, 1987).

The party is committed to fostering the development of literature and arts. Appeals for professional mobilization to meet the party’s demands are voiced: “Soviet society is facing enormous transformations. And these transformations will be carried out by man” (Givi Vardosanidze, *Man of Free Labor*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, December 6, 1985); “In this time of great transformations and shifts, Georgian literature plays an exceptional, special role” (Zaur Kalandia, *Thoughts on Literary Life*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, July 31, 1987); “ Our creative life must be transformed to secure for Georgian dramaturgy the lion’s share in Georgian theater” (Anonymous, *Theater and Dramaturgy*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, June 26, 1987); “It is preferable to see characters transform gradually onscreen. National character must be preserved” (Anonymous, *In Support of the Staging Project*, Kartuli Filmi, March 23, 1988).

The plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union formulated the ultimate goal of Perestroika as follows: “Fundamental renewal of every aspect of the country’s life. Perestroika must bring good: Our society today lives and breathes Perestroika” (Anonymous, *Difficult Spiritual Life*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, February 20, 1987).

It is at the expense of such abstract — unfocused, one would say — publications that the sample's volume grows by 1987. Since 1988, however, problems and concerns become better formulated and the dynamic starts declining.

Georgian writers and filmmakers emphasize and recognize the difficulty and yet necessity of the metamorphosis demanded by the party: “Perestroika has a difficult formula, one pertaining to the spiritual realm of human beings, their mentality, faith, behavior, emotions, and their attitude toward one another and work, which is why it is hard to deal with” (Archil Sulakauri, *Formula for Moral Transformation*, *Literaturuli Sakartvelo*, January 5, 1987); “What matters in the process of Perestroika is not to deceive ourselves again” (Akaki Vasadze, *With Honor and Truth*, *Literaturuli Sakartvelo*, June 22, 1987); “Perestroika, democratization, Glasnost must start in our own homes” (Jemal Kiria, *The Train Has Left the Station*, *Literaturuli Sakartvelo*, July 3, 1987); “As a writer, I am proud that Georgian literature has welcomed changes standing on its feet.... Perestroika and acceleration in no wise stand for a whim or infatuation” (Guram Panjikidze, *A Goal after the Whistle*, *Literaturuli Sakartvelo*, July 24, 1987); “It is advisable and necessary to discuss the flaws in our contemporary literature... we must seek an impetus for Perestroika both outside and within ourselves” (Zurab Chavchavadze, *What Are We Doing?*, *Literaturuli Sakartvelo*, September 11, 1987); “The great revolutionary transformations in our country—such as bettering every aspect of social life, democracy, Glasnost, criticism, and self-criticism—are growing stronger by the minute among Kartuli Filmi's staff” (Editorial Board of Kartuli Filmi, *At the Meeting of the Artistic Council of the Film Studio*, Kartuli Filmi, June 3, 1987); “A deep interest in Perestroika is present in the Georgian Film Studio, much the way it is in the whole country, republic, economy, and social and spiritual life” (Anonymous, *Innovation, Initiative*, Kartuli Filmi, April 9, 1987); “Industrial transformation is futile unless artistic mentality is transformed and new themes originating in our time are discovered” (Tamaz Giorgadze, *Perestroika: Film Studios and Their Problems*, Kartuli Filmi, July 15, 1987); “Our party has chosen a remarkably effective path by putting the country on the path of Perestroika” (Merab Saralidze, *Whom Would You Like as Your Director?*, Kartuli Filmi, July 27, 1988); “Perestroika is for the ultimate goal, not an end in itself” (Diana Gishiani, Zaira Topuria, *Not to Be Dead on Arrival*, Kartuli Filmi, September 7, 1988); “For the first time, Georgian filmmakers are given a chance to familiarize themselves with a different opinion” (Anonymous, *One Page from the Past*, Kartuli Filmi, March 1, 1988).

The way the importance of Perestroika is perceived by specific social groups, a professional group in this case (litterateurs, filmmakers), is abstract and amorphous, though certainly recognized as necessary and even inevitable. In the same vein, expectations of Perestroika at the initial stage are abstract, though commitment to engaging is clearly expressed as an inevitability, with more clarity, concreteness present later on.

Far more concrete within said frame is another subcategory, **economic accounting**. After it became clear that Perestroika was more than just a material value, the issue of supporting themselves by selling their own products became relevant on the agenda of the creative intelligentsia: “Soon, every studio in the country will switch to economic accounting, that is, a system of self-financing” (G. Gabeskiria, *Suggestion, Opion*, Kartuli Filmi, July 29, 1987); “We will have to solve most complex issues in every area of the national economy, including—probably one of the most difficult tasks—introducing economic accounting in the republic’s cinema” (Valerian Kvachadze, *Suggestion, Opion—Is Another, Third Union Necessary?*, Kartuli Filmi, August 12, 1987).

Kartuli Filmi newspaper pays great attention to switching film production to economic accounting as one of the innovations accompanying Perestroika. Filmmakers are, in a way, anxious to see this component of Perestroika in action. Economic accounting is a material product of Perestroika and its specific perceived goal/outcome, a guarantee of independence: “We will switch to economic accounting only after being paid what we really deserve for our products” (Anonymous, *Conversation with Eldar Shengelaia, Secretary of the Filmmakers Union of the SSR of Georgia*, Kartuli Filmi, December 14, 1988); “Undoubtedly, the ultimate goal of the Perestroika-led cinema transformation is to make good movies. That a few good films are seeing weaker ones through on their broad shoulders is totally unacceptable under economic accounting” (sic!) (J. Kereselidze, *At the Party Committee of the Film Studio*, Kartuli Filmi, July 15, 1987); “Without transforming film production and distribution, nothing will change in the art of film. A new model has been developed with the key goal of introducing economic accounting and the principles of creative and organizational independence in the Film Studio, a process to be finalized on January 1, 1989” (E. Klimov, *Cinema of Tomorrow*, Kartuli Filmi, December 23, 1987); “Moving onto a new track must be strictly differentiated.... To make economic accounting a reality, the work of film archives must be overhauled.... Our society’s democratization, Glasnost, and Perestroika, encompassing

every area of our lives, have become our work's reliable guiding light. We believe that Georgian film will find an optimal path to this new method of accounting" (L. Gagua, *Eve of Switching to Economic Accounting*, Kartuli Filmi, April 27, 1988); „Apparently, the breeze of Perestroika applies to all.... Switching to economic accounting has caused numerous problems" (Anonymous, *Momentous Interview*, Kartuli Filmi, March 8, 1988); "The time for moving onto economic accounting—something we have never heard of before—is around the corner. Now the state provides, but how do we support ourselves in the future?" (T. Babluani, *At the Meeting of the Party Economic Activists*, Kartuli Filmi, July 8, 1987); "The transformation of the film industry in our country is picking up at a steadier pace.... Naturally, the significant amount of public trust and credit enjoyed by filmmakers requires, above all else, everyone's active participation in the tangible revolutionary changes in every area of our lives" (Alexnader Kamshalov, *Independence Is Also a Great Responsibility*, Kartuli Filmi, April 27, 1988).

Judging by the examples above, we can assert that this aspect of Perestroika is far more important to writers and filmmakers, clearly showing a point beyond which, all are responsible for their own incomes.

Publications related to *Repentance*, a film by iconic Georgian filmmaker Tengiz Abuladze, make up a separate subcategory under Frame 3. *Repentance* is assessed as a turning point and rejection of dogmatic dullness, as consent and commitment to change, as an artistic and material hypostasis of Perestroika. This position is found in numerous original and translated publications in both sources under study, and Sovietologists and Perestroika researchers generally agree in recognizing *Repentance* as an inseparable product of declared Perestroika, an embodiment of Glasnost and art beyond censorship. For example: "The screening of this movie [*Repentance*] testifies to trust in human beings, their political and spiritual maturity, their ability to recognize the truth and foster its promulgation" (Anonymous, *Fable and Truth*, Kartuli Filmi, February 2, 1987); "With the advance of Glasnost, more and more Soviet film directors find their voices—and, with it, their eyes and ears, and ultimately their own selves" (Anonymous, *Newsweek, US on Repentance*, Kartuli Filmi, September 7, 1988); "Your film, *Repentance*, was one of the first signs heralding Perestroika, when many were scared so much as to believe in its irreversibility" (Eduard Shevardnadze, *Recognition/Dear Tengiz Evgenis-dze!*, Kartuli Filmi, April 27, 1988); "I would not be standing in front you if it were not for Perestroika, the new policy of Glasnost, and the

democratization of our society” (Tengliz Abuladze, *Speech at the Awarding of the Lenin Prize*, Kartuli Filmi, May 25, 1988); “This film [*Repentance*] was a harbinger of the revolutionary life we call Perestroika, meaning democratization. In other words, people today say what they think. And that is the freedom of soul and words, not a thoughtless execution of commands” (Nana Lomidze, *Together in Unity*, Kartuli Filmi, May 4, 1988).

If making *Repentance* a reality is seen as an approval of Perestroika in professional life, namely in the film industry, Georgian Film, as the studio where *Repentance* was created, is viewed as a place where creative thought can be put to full use: “Georgian Film is the only studio to have welcomed Perestroika transformation” (Anonymous, *Continuous Discussion*, Kartuli Filmi, April 6, 1988); “We engaged in Perestroika by screening numerous important works from years past” (Tamaz Ebanoidze, *Seeker for Movies*, Kartuli Filmi, July 6, 1988); “*Repentance* preaches ideas pertaining to our society’s catharsis and transformation” (Nato Tsitsishvili, *Is Film Criticism the Conscience of Cinema?*, Literaturuli Sakartvelo, July 3, 1987).

In summary, the first of the three thematic subcategories under Frame 3 — **the necessity to transform literature and cinema** — is abstract, lacking concreteness. The second subcategory is better formulated, more concrete, and relates to well-defined issues and problems, one that may be expressed using a simple postulate: He who does not work, neither shall he eat, which is embodied in *Repentance*, an umbrella symbol of that era.

Conclusion

The level of effectiveness and relevance of Perestroika, as a phatic concept with abstract meaning, in the eyes of the creative elite was higher at its initial stage, prior to 1989.

At the second stage of Perestroika, the process of communicatory and thematic diversification and the composition of newspaper authors grow qualitatively complex at the expense of an expanding variety and scope of engagement of informal unions, including representatives of political groups, and their interests and influences. As a result of the Perestroika-propelled growth of multifaceted communication in newspaper culture, thematic objectives and expectations push the professional envelope, with deepening content, and traffic growing heavier down the communication channel. Pressing information, once published in newspapers, snowballs through the engagement of various sides providing feedback, responses, debates, responses to responses, and so on. At the second

stage of Perestroika, diversification is reflected in the growing share of dialogue genres, among others—discourse becomes versatile and multifaceted.

The metamorphosis of the content of publications reveals that the interests and expectations of Perestroika among this specific social group develop from mandatory/compulsory (1986-1987), via the phase of counting on benefits advantages and, next, that of frustration (1989), eventually to transform into a totally independent and qualitatively different type of anticipation, one of the country's reshaping anew (1990).

The subcategories are grouped in line with a logical timeframe: a message passes through the communication channel and is forged from a perception of abstract expectations into a concrete outcome, with the interest in the message subsequently plummeting.

The paradigm is as follows: 1) an artist knows and has long appreciated that metamorphosis is in order, yet there is no recipe for it. The party only urges but provides no guidelines, 2) a person/phenomenon emerges to make a breakthrough relying on intuition and skill—the film *Repentance* is created to inspire, by accident or design, enormous changes, declared changes (with general objective: blanket metamorphosis in creative work), 3) Concrete changes are launched (concrete objective: economic accounting) to give rise to salability as a unit of measurement of an artwork. These three elements make up an entire frame, content that has meaning to a specific social/professional group. 4) Next is the turning point (1989)—after the tragedy of April, professional interests and expectations are replaced by 1990 with a more global, universal interest, the idea of national independence and sovereignty.

The qualitative change in newspaper content is indicative of frustration and ideological, orientation-related shifting that reflect in the attitudes of both readers and authors. 1989 marks the highest point of negative assessments of Perestroika as a doctrine. By 1990, Perestroika is perceived neutrally, because the interest in it declines, and the media are suffused with newer, more pressing topics and trends like the ideas of democracy and the shaping of the country's sovereignty, something Perestroika never sought to achieve in the first place.

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