

THE ANNUAL JOAN GILI MEMORIAL LECTURE

**SALVADOR CARDUS i ROS**

*The Circulation of Daily Newspapers in  
the Catalan-speaking areas between 1976 and 1996*

THE ANGLO-CATALAN SOCIETY  
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## FOREWORD

### **Joan Gili Remembered**

*at the Anglo-Catalan Society's Annual Luncheon, at the  
University of Kent at Canterbury, 21/11/98*

by Geoffrey J. Walker

Vice-Chancellor, President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am greatly honoured to have been invited by your committee to say a few words on this occasion about my dear friend, our late and greatly mourned Honorary Life President, Joan Gili, who will be long remembered by this Anglo-Catalan Society. Now is not of course the moment for me to pay a full tribute to Joan—others did this most eloquently in Oxford at his memorial celebration and in the national press—but I should just like to recall him briefly today on behalf of his friends and admirers as the great Anglo-Catalan he was, and perhaps to help those here present who never had the privilege of knowing him to understand the great sadness our community feels in his passing.

Right into his ninetieth year, and until his illness last year sadly prevented it, Joan attended every event of this Society—ever since the first meeting of the Anglo-Catalan Society in 1954—and this is only the second time in forty-four years that our annual lunch has been held without him. We miss him enormously. But we are nevertheless delighted to see Elizabeth, his dear wife, and practically all their direct family here with us again today as usual.

Joan was of course a founder member of the Society and in a sense right from the start he was very much the incarnation of its character and its ideals. If ever there was an Anglo-Catalan *par excellence* it was certainly Joan, and after his love and devotion to Elizabeth and his family, and of course to his profession as a publisher and as probably the world's foremost connoisseur of Spanish antiquarian books, this Anglo-Catalan Society came high amongst his priorities. Joan loved England and the English, English culture and English humour; indeed it was his consuming interest in English literature that brought him here in the first place years before the Spanish Civil War. Friend of Stephen Spender and others of that English literary generation,

brother-in-law of J.V. Foix, son of a Barcelona family of publishers, books and literature were in his blood. And it is important to remember that, although he vehemently opposed the Franco regime and all it stood for, particularly in its anti-Catalan objectives, Joan was not in fact a political exile, not even a cultural exile, for despite his perfectly acquired Englishness Joan remained equally in love with his native Catalonia and was a champion of everything Catalan. He had that rare gift of being able to carry the fullness of both nationalities within his heart and soul, easily, happily and without internal conflict. Divided loyalty was never a problem for Joan, and yet he could at times be as coolly exasperated with the Catalans as the English sometimes are (and for all the right reasons!) and of course he could also get steamed up and critical of the English, just as many an impassioned Catalan often does. In language too Joan glided effortlessly between Catalan and English, English and Catalan, and his delightful sense of humour was never more evident than in the bilingual word-play in which he often indulged, amusingly playing one language off against the other. His mastery of both tongues gave rise to the many painstaking, elegant and sensitive translations of literary works for which he will be long remembered and often read by all those of us who admire and take delight in such precise linguistic craftsmanship of the highest possible quality. To him we also owe the first serious teaching tool of the Catalan language for English speakers, his *Catalan Grammar*, first published in 1943 and now in its fifth edition. Most of us of the older generation tasted our first drops of the milk of Catalan syntax from Joan's *Grammar*, and indeed our first introduction to Catalan literature from the *Anthology of Catalan Lyric Poetry* that he persuaded Joan Triadú to produce for his Dolphin publishing house in 1953.

During and after the wars, in the late 30s and throughout the 40s, Joan and Elizabeth held their doors in London and Oxford open to many Catalans in refuge from the regime in Spain, and for these the Gili household represented the security of genuine British solidity in which they trusted together with the familiarity of their own Catalan language and culture. Not for nothing did the Gilis' close friend Carles Riba dub Joan as 'Consul Cultural a Anglaterra' and Joan's work as the supreme Anglo-Catalan received official recognition with the award of the Creu de Sant Jordi from the Generalitat de Catalunya, to be followed later by an Honorary Degree from the University of Oxford. The year 1947 saw Joan as secretary of the Jocs Florals de la Llengua Catalana held in London (with Elizabeth as *Reina de la Festa*); and the founding of this Society, in association with Trueta in

Oxford, Batista i Roca in Cambridge, Gonzalez Llobera in Belfast, and the many British friends they had made throughout the United Kingdom, was a natural progression for Joan. Both he and Elizabeth became and remained loyal and active members. Joan held the Presidency for an exceptional four years—the only president ever to flout the Constitution in this way (with the consent of course of the AGM) in order to carry the Society through the very eventful period of the founding of the *Associació Internacional de Llengua i Literatura Catalanes*, which took place in Cambridge in 1973. And then in 1979 following the death of Batista i Roca, Joan was elected by acclaim to the Honorary Life Presidency of the Society. In this office he was no mere figurehead, regularly attending meetings of the committee and giving sound advice on a variety of business. Most notable was his advice and enthusiastic work in the design and publication of the A-CS Occasional Publications series which, backed by the efficient editorial task of Alan Yates, has done so much to bring Catalan affairs to the attention of the English-speaking public—a suitably enduring achievement within the Anglo-Catalan spirit that was the essence of the Joan Gili of whom we were all so fond and whose passing we mourn so sincerely.

You have heard at this morning's AGM that the Society wishes to commemorate permanently the name of Joan Gili at our conferences and that a lecture bearing his name will in future form part of each annual programme. Moreover, the committee are actively planning for the texts of these lectures (to be given by distinguished speakers specially invited from the *Països Catalans*) to be published under the Society's imprint, in order to ensure diffusion of their contents and of the homage they signify. It therefore gives me great pleasure to announce, on behalf of your committee, that this is to be put into immediate effect, and that the first Joan Gili Memorial Lecture will be given at 5.15 this afternoon and that Professor Salvador Cardús of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona will be the first Joan Gili Memorial Lecturer.

# The Circulation of Daily Newspapers in the Catalan-speaking areas between 1976 and 1996

'If you want to understand the power of the press, pay not attention to what it says but to how much notice people take of it.'

**Alexis de Tocqueville**

*L'Ancien Regime et la Revolution (1858)*

It is a great honour for me to present, in this the first Joan Gili Memorial Lecture given at the XLIV Annual Conference of the Anglo-Catalan Society, the results of research carried out for the Fundació Jaume Bofill in Barcelona. My study analyses generic processes affecting the various tiers of the daily press (state-wide, regional and local, these terms to be defined) in relation to the evolution of the political and territorial structuring of the Catalan-speaking areas within the Spanish state, from the beginning of the transition to democracy in 1976 through to 1996.

## Premises

This research is based on three initial assumptions which may be summarised as follows:

- a) The current disappearance of formal land frontiers between states, particularly within the European Union, does not in any way imply the removal of other delimitations of an economic, cultural or symbolic nature, including naturally the media. Within these spaces there are audiences which constitute newly-formed and socially potent groups signifying reconfigured hierarchies of social differentiation, both culturally and politically momentous. In my research I work with the assumption that in the territories known as the *Països Catalans* (basically, for our



purposes Catalonia, the region officially known as the 'Valencian Community' and the Balearic Islands: the Catalan-speaking areas of the Spanish state) one can map a distinct correlation between patterns of media provision and the shaping of sociopolitical realities. It must be said that I am concerned here with only one limited aspect of this relationship—that involving the *daily press*. It is widely acknowledged, however, that from the point of view of political dynamics the most relevant aspect is indeed the press, because of its capacity to lay out the markings of the arena in which politics are enacted.<sup>1</sup>

- b) The process of transition to democracy in Spain, and the uneven, irregular development of the territories defined under the new 'Spain of the Autonomous Regions', marked the beginning in 1976 of the emergence of new patterns of regional balance within the Spanish state. There appeared new 'autonomous communities' in areas that had never before been thought of as single political units; and, by contrast, areas that had aspired if not perhaps to full integration with each other then at least to gradual cultural homogeneity, became fragmented, as in the case of the Catalan-speaking areas, or Navarre in relation to the Basque Country. The outcome has been, on the one hand, the appearance of political and administrative territorial units that previously meant nothing, and, on the other, internal restructuring of other parts—the division of Catalonia into its traditional territorial districts or *comarques*, the creation of a Basque capital at Vitoria-Gasteiz, or the 'Balearisation' of Majorca, Minorca, Eivissa and Formentera. The difficulties of managing the changing relationships between the centre of Spain and the peripheral components of the state became evident, and the complex challenge emerged of giving structure to the whole in search of a balance between the new centrifugal and centripetal forces that came into play.
- c) Third, this study presumes the absolutely central role of the media in the whole process of construction of political reality. Political activity has become a public performance, put over through the vehicle of the

*In Influencia de los medios de comunicacion sobre la opinion pública*, a study produced for TECOP, Jesús Maria Correas and Fernando Martin Regalado conclude that the sector of the media with the greatest influence upon the formation of public opinion is indeed the press, and that it is also the medium which enjoys the highest degree of public credibility.

communications media, which have themselves become the real stage-setting for politics and the stage-managers too, and indeed almost the actual scriptwriters. The press in particular has evolved into the public expression of the powers that be—powers that are both supraeconomic and suprapolitical—and it now exercises an active force in the political arena, participating directly through the publication of statements, interviews, opinion polls, analysis, the uncovering of 'secrets', or the creation of nebulous channels for 'news management'.

### Changes in the Spanish Press

Since 1976 the press in Spain has undergone a traumatic process of transformation of titles, changes in ownership and management, technological revolution, and of course of journalistic culture. And all this has taken place in the context of remarkably static circulation figures, a context not all that dissimilar to the generally declining circulation for the press worldwide. However, and more precisely, in the case of Spain stability has been maintained at extremely low circulation levels which only in 1992 began to exceed the minima established for developed countries, i.e. 100 copies per 1,000 inhabitants.

Table 1. - Press circulation density for developed countries (copies per 1,000 inhabitants)

	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995
USA	281	270	260	245	218
Belgium	239	232	220	301	316
Denmark	341	366	363	352	308
France	201	192	193	208	234
Germany	472	375	391	304	313
Greece	102	120	122	122	153
Holland	-	326	310	301	329
Italy	116	101	97	105	100
Norway	414	463	510	610	596
Portugal	65	49	42	45	41
Spain	98	93	80	88	102
Sweden	539	528	526	526	460
UK	431	417	397	388	344

Source: *Statistical Yearbook*, UNESCO, years 1986 to 1997

To appreciate the enormity of the changes that have occurred in the titles published one has only to refer to the fact that of the general-news papers in existence prior to 1975, in Barcelona only *La Vanguardia* is still published and in Madrid only *ABC* survives. And the relative continuity of titles in the provincial and local press in most cases usually conceals the transfer into private hands of the press of the Franco years—what was known as the National Movement press and, during the transition period, the state-controlled *Medios de Comunicación del Estado*. Everything else is the result of new business initiatives, conspicuous among them being a surprisingly large number of frivolous and short-lived publishing enterprises that proved inordinately damaging to the market and to the professional newspaper people that were ensnared in them. In the Catalan-speaking areas alone, between 1976 and 1996, thirty newspapers disappeared, counting titles that existed before 1975 and folded during those years together with those that started up during the period and failed to make it to 1996.

Second, even though this study is not centrally concerned with the changes that occurred on the business side of newspaper publishing, it should be remarked that we are dealing here not only with a single foreseeable phenomenon—the appearance of new newspaper publishers—but also with a complex process of concentration of business enterprises, whereby several titles fall into the hands of a few monopolistic groups, some with aspirations to multi-media status. This is of great relevance to our subject because often the basing of a paper in a given locality is explained not by the fact that a given organ supports a particular political line, but rather by the nature of its dependence on the business network into which it fits.

Third, regarding new technology, quite apart from the implications that innovation has had for work practices and the decreased size of the workforce, the changes that have come about have allowed newspapers to be printed in several places at the same time and to vary in each edition the content of local news. The success of the different editions of *El País* in Catalonia or in the Valencian Community has enabled a state-wide Spanish daily to become an organ that has much influence in regional politics. And not only this, but in the case of Valencia, lacking as it does a well-established regional press covering all of its three provinces, *El País—Comunidad de Valencia* has become the sole instrument of coordinated coverage and influence across the whole autonomous region.<sup>3</sup> And if this is

3. Juli Esteve in 'El país de les províncies. Aproximació a la fragmentada premsa valenciana', *Revista de Catalunya*, 113 (1996) states, 'It is paradoxical that a Madrid-based newspaper [*El País*] should be single-handedly the only vehicle informing Valencians about the lives of other Valencians' (p.9).

the situation for general-news organs, it also holds true for the district press based in Catalonia's traditional *comarques*. *El Punt* in Girona, as an example, may produce several local editions clearly distinct from each other, or, again, *El 9 Nou* (based in Vic, in the Osona *comarca*) may produce its edition for the locality, say, of the Vallès Occidental altering some pages each day so as to give greater local focus to the very same product aimed at Sabadell or, with differences again in turn, at Terrassa.

Finally, over the years in question journalism itself has also undergone transformations that are no less significant than the ones just considered. The world of Catalan journalism in the final years of the Franco regime was totally different from that of the present day. In this context, quite apart from the ideological changes that have occurred through political democratisation, one may note the relative youth—and often the precariousness—of the workforce, including even the editors of the papers themselves (four out of six of the editors of general-news papers in Barcelona in 1991 were around only forty years old). Also to be observed is the fact that there is now access to the profession straight from university instead of via an apprenticeship within the paper itself, and then there is the interconnection with other media, such as radio and television.<sup>4</sup> All these diverse features indicate the emergence of very new rules in the newspaper game, with some as yet unpredictable consequences.

4. Pierre Bourdieu's recent book, *On Television and Journalism* (Pluto Press, London: 1997) in which he reveals the very close interplay between press and television, has been a great success.

Table 2. - Total circulation figures and growth ratios for the press in Spain and in the Catalan-speaking areas (PPCC) comprising the Balearic Islands (Bal), the Valencian Community (Val) and Catalonia (Cat)

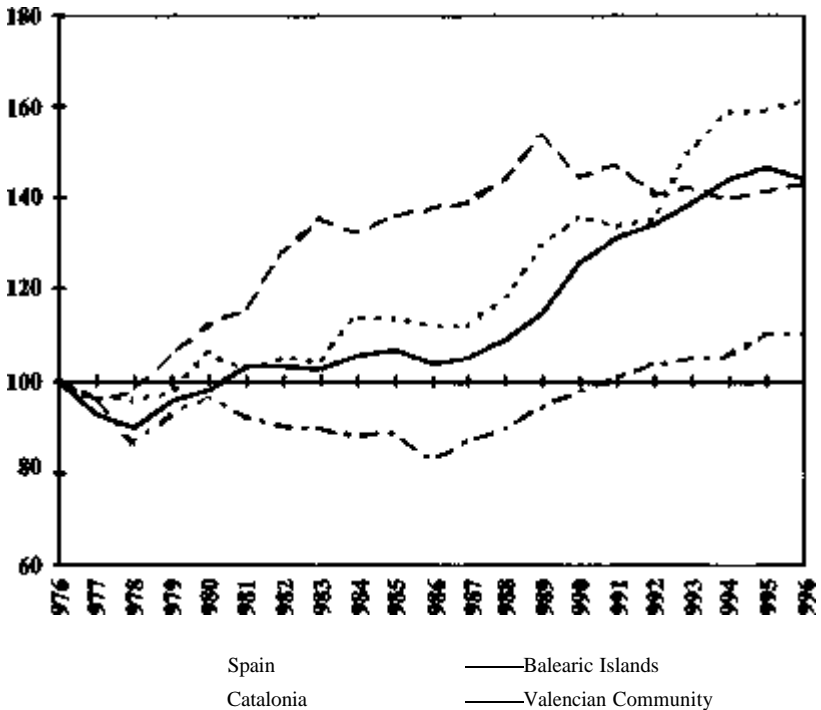
	SPAIN		PPCC		BAL		VAL		CAT	
1976	2896368	100	920896	100	58213	100	112410	100	656122	100
1977	2690436	93	877037	95	55627	96	107649	96	623836	95
1978	2596304	90	830256	90	56791	98	107424	96	565458	86
1979	2761687	95	872952	95	61388	105	109444	97	604731	92
1980	2844523	98	931894	101	65206	112	119058	106	631427	96
1981	2996003	103	913500	99	66937	115	115056	102	604455	92
1982	2991948	103	924150	100	74168	127	117791	105	589275	90
1983	2977756	103	943756	102	78682	135	116938	104	586122	89
1984	3061751	106	951875	103	76907	132	128055	114	574132	88
1985	3086080	107	962519	105	78981	136	127413	113	580685	89
1986	3000058	104	922225	100	80053	138	125867	112	540989	82
1987	3046400	105	954578	104	80736	139	125753	112	567507	86
1988	3162780	109	988677	107	83938	144	132609	118	587632	90
1989	3330258	115	1050806	114	89185	153	145220	129	616790	94
1990	3645807	126	1104583	120	84054	144	152907	136	640449	98
1991	3805759	131	1131239	123	85519	147	150347	134	658912	100
1992	3895076	135	1171529	127	81906	141	151924	135	678727	103
1993	4030321	139	1196449	130	82662	142	168842	150	685633	104
1994	4174952	144	1227468	133	81346	140	178176	159	689682	105
1995	4236749	146	1293979	141	82144	141	178489	159	721359	110
1996	4180000	144	1287261	140	83113	143	180829	161	721782	110

Growth ratios based on 1976=100. For the corresponding circulation density figures see data given in Table 7, page 28.

Sources: For total Spanish circulation two separate sets of data have been used: for the period 1987-1996 the report of Fundesco *Comunicación Social 1996* which refers to data from the official *Oficina de Justificación de la Difusión* with an estimate for papers without published figures; for the period 1976-1988 an estimate based on the growth figures produced by Ramos ('La difusión de prensa diaria en España: el liderazgo de Madrid', in *Telos*, no. 17, 1989). Data for the Catalan-speaking areas were compiled by the author.

But the most intriguing thing about all this is that, as mentioned, it coincided with an extraordinary lack of vitality in circulation figures. These have shown significant movement only in the last five years, and even this could easily have turned back again into stagnation. The first surprise was the decline in circulation figures during the years of the transition itself. Contrary to all expectation, the process of democratisation of Spanish society did not act as a stimulus to the press. And despite the relatively rapid recovery in the smaller and most static sectors of the market, the state of contraction in sectors with more substantial political and economic influence was long-lasting. In Spain as a whole, 1981 was the year in which circulation figures regained their 1976 levels (in Catalonia this did not happen until 1991) but subsequently they remained sluggish through to the late 1980s.

Graph 1. - Comparative circulation rates of the press in Spain and in the Catalan-speaking areas (1976=100)



Moreover, gross circulation figures and readership rates corresponding to all of the Spanish autonomous communities display striking differences between them, and this indicates the extremely varied nature of the market for the Spanish press and the difficulty of analysing it as a whole. It is true that during recent years some of the relative consumption rates that have risen most are those of Communities with very low gross circulation levels, like Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha (in the period 1989-1995, these show increases of 56 and 39 per cent respectively). However, the differences have been maintained because of significant increases in newspaper circulation density occurring also in the better-placed Communities like Navarre and the Basque Country. Thus, in 1995, Navarre stands at roughly double the average readership level for Spain as a whole (102: see Table 1) while Castilla-La Mancha registers roughly half of it, with a distribution of 195 and 54 newspapers per 1,000 inhabitants respectively.

Thus it is clear that in the development of the market for the press what is of most importance is not the fact of being set inside the same single state-wide framework but rather factors that range from economic conditions, urban structure and processes of modernisation to such variable elements as demographic and educational development and above all cultural tradition. And the truth is that these factors do not always influence development in the same way. For example, as some North American writers have pointed out, the spread of the population out to residential 'suburban' areas, even though it is linked to an improvement in living standards, can have negative effects on newspaper circulation. What is certain is that press distribution figures are an efficient means of gauging the marked diversity of Spanish society, a measurement which television by contrast does not offer, as television audiences tend to have practically identical levels throughout Spain.

### **Newspaper circulation in the Catalan-speaking areas**

Circulation patterns in the Catalan-speaking parts of Spain also show very significant variation in growth, readership rates and types of press between the three main territorial demarcations, a fact which reminds us that, as far as the media are concerned, the Catalan-speaking autonomous communities do not constitute a single, evenly structured space.

Thus, while in Catalonia circulation of the press published in Catalonia itself has remained constant in the period studied (sales ranging between 623,726 and 633,937 copies) with practically all the increases being explained by penetration into that market by the central Spanish press (a rise from 33,030 to 137,150 copies), in the Balearic Islands and the Valencian Community, on the other hand, there have been significant increases in sales of regionally produced papers (15 per cent and 60 per cent respectively).

Moreover, readership figures vary markedly between each of the main demarcations, so that in the Balearic Islands (with growth from 116.9 copies per 1,000 inhabitants in 1976 to 149.5 in 1996) the readership rate has always been twice that of Valencia (where in the same period it has grown from 51.0 to 85.6 copies per 1,000 inhabitants), while in Catalonia, which recorded the same figure as that of the Balearics in 1976, growth over twenty years was only very slight (from 116.0 to 126.6 copies per 1,000 inhabitants).

Table 3. - Comparative circulation figures within the Catalan-speaking areas

	Total growth in gross sales 1976-1996 (% since 1976)	Growth in locally produced papers 1976-1996 (% since 1976)	Growth in central Spanish general-newstitles 1976-1996 (% since 1976)	Growth in readership levels 1976-1996 (% since 1976)
Balearic Islands	62.7	15.1*	859.9*	27.9
Valencian Comm.	98.6	61.6	169.7	67.8
Catalonia	17.4	1.6	918.7	9.1
Combined	36.4	13.0	422.7	21.3

\**El Dia del Mundo de Baleares* is treated here as central Spanish press (see below, and note to Table 7, page 28)

Source: data compiled by the author

As far as the distribution of newspapers *between* the three main Catalan-speaking areas is concerned, it has to be said that this is minimal. Overall, fluctuations amount to only 2.3 per cent of the total of the press distributed throughout the whole territory, and they are limited to the movement of the regional Barcelona general-news (0.5 per cent) or sporting (1.8 per cent) papers outwards to the Balearic Islands and the Valencian Community. The



other instances of interchange are so small that they cannot even be measured. This situation, during the twenty years studied, has remained at much the same levels for the distribution of general-news press (always around 0.5 percent) and has doubled, mainly in the Valencian Community, for the sporting press (from 0.7 to 1.8 per cent).

	General-news titles 1976	Sports papers 1976	General-news titles 1996	Sports papers 1996
Balearic Islands	2270	3558	3045	8041
Valencia	3404	3068	3431	14250
Source: data compiled by the author.				

On the other hand, the most significant fact of all is perhaps that 'imported' titles, essentially the press centred in Madrid and with the whole State as its distribution area, has had remarkable success in penetrating, during the period studied, the market represented by the three Catalan-speaking areas.

- a) In the Balearic Islands, as far as the general-news press is concerned—if we include as state-wide press the *Dia del Mundo de Baleares*, the Balearic edition of the Madrid-based *El Mundo* but with its own local section—penetration from outside has grown by a factor of 9.6 in the 21-year period. If sports papers are counted, the overall diffusion of state-wide press grew from 6,911 to 36,000 copies daily, an increase of 433 per cent, and what was a 9.9 per cent market share rose to 32.4 per cent.
- b) Regarding the Valencian context, the 1976 threshold level for penetration of the state-wide press was already higher than in the rest of the Catalan-speaking areas and, on the other hand, locally-produced papers have enjoyed considerable expansion. This explains why the increase in penetration we are measuring here is lesser, at 258 per cent, rising from 37,034 to 135,672 copies per day up to 1996. In terms of market share, this represents an increase from 22.1 to 39.8 per cent. In the Valencian context the place occupied by the sporting press is particularly prominent, expanding by a factor of 4.8 during this period, to the extent that by 1996

*Marca* has become the second most widely distributed daily after *Las Provincias*, with 57,725 copies (*Las Provincias* selling 59,400).

- c) Because of its low threshold level in 1976 Catalonia, despite showing the lowest market share for state-wide press in the Catalan-speaking areas (see Table 7), is where the growth has been proportionally the highest, certainly as regards general-news titles, sales of these having risen from 8,203 to 83,562 copies daily in 1996. In terms of market share, this constitutes a rise from 1.2 to 10.8 per cent. Since diffusion here of the Madrid-based sporting press was already on the high side in 1976—23,435 copies daily—its circulation growth up to 1996 was not that spectacular, merely doubling to reach 41,345. *Marca*, the sporting daily, with an average circulation of 28,763 in 1996, is ahead of any of the Catalan-produced local/district general-news titles and ranks second only to *El País* for the the state-wide sector in Catalonia. Overall, Madrid-based papers now account for 17.5 per cent of the market, with sales levels at 22.2 copies per 1,000 inhabitants.

A pattern emerges: if the measure of political dependence and, consequentially, structural integration of communities within a superior unit can be seen reflected—however partially—in the extent of their informational dependence (basically a question of where their news supply comes from), it can be confirmed that present-day Spain, the Spain of the Autonomous Regions, has not created more *independence* or *autonomy* for its respective agencies of news provision. Quite the opposite. It has rather shown itself to be an effective model of territorial and political integration. To put it schematically, over a twenty-year period the Balearic Islands have become three times more dependent, the whole Valencian area twice as dependent and Catalonia almost four times so. That is to say, we we seem to be half-way through a gathering progression towards equalisation of the degree of dependence of each of the Catalan-speaking autonomous regions, with ratios of convergence currently at two thirds for the Balearic market, 40 per cent for the Valencian one and 17.5 per cent for Catalonia (see annexed maps 1 and 2).

Nevertheless, despite the notable increase in penetration of the Catalan-speaking market by the state-wide press, all three of its segments remain below the relative average circulation rates for 'central' newspapers in the rest of Spain. This average is at 42.2 per cent of total distribution, so that figures of 32.4 per cent for the Balearic Islands and 39.8 per cent for Valencia set them just below the mean, with Catalonia further from it at 17.5 per cent (see annexed map 3).

Table 5. - Growth of the penetration of the state-wide press in the Catalan speaking areas (1976-1996)

	Total Sales 1976	Total Sales 1996	Market Share 1976 (%)	Market Share 1996 (%)	Per 1,000 Density 1976	Per 1,000 Density 1996	Growth 1976=100
Balearics	6911	36800	9.9	32.4	11.6	48.4	533
Valencia	37934	135672	22.1	39.8	11.2	33.8	358
Catalonia	32060	135094	4.9	17.5	5.7	22.2	421
Circulation figures for the state-wide press (general-news, sporting and financial) not including dailies from contiguous zones (e.g. <i>Heraldo de Aragón</i> o <i>La Verdad</i> [Murcia]). Source: data compiled by the author							

From a rather different perspective, although when we speak of media dependence we usually put the emphasis on general-news organs and, specifically, on political news, the fact is that analysis of dependence affecting general and political news media is also borne out by what we observe in the sporting press. Indeed, there are studies which show conclusively the highly-charged political content of all sports reporting and how this is the main agent for the diffusion of national stereotypes (Blain, Boyle & O'Donnell, *Sport and National Identity in the European Media*, 1993). From this point of view, what is highlighted is the protagonism of sports papers in the overall growth of the press in general, especially of the state-wide press coming into the Catalan-speaking territories but affecting also the only case of increase in circulation *between* parts of the Catalan-speaking market, a development very closely related to the phenomenon of support for FC Barcelona. Taking the Catalan-speaking areas as a whole, the growth of the sporting press has been as follows:

Table 6. - Circulation growth of the sporting press throughout the Catalan-speaking areas

	Total Circulation 1976	Total Circulation 1996	% Market Share 1976	% Market Share 1996
Regional	120027	139249	13.4	11.4
Mobile	6626	22292	0.7	1.8
Central	41508	117858	4.6	9.6
Total	168161	279399	18.7	22.8
'Regional' here refers to those sports papers based in the capitals of Barcelona or Valencia which are circulated in the respective regions. 'Mobile' refers to the portion of the previous category which is distributed throughout the Catalan-speaking areas. The 'central' press is that published in Madrid. Source: data compiled by the author				

Finally—and in relation to circulation movement *within* each of the Catalan-speaking areas—it should be said that the case of Catalonia is exceptional in displaying some internal cohesion, and that in the Balearic and Valencian contexts there is no such thing as a genuinely 'regional' press which gives expression, in content and coverage, to any sense of Balearic or Valencian identity: what there is, instead, are local newspapers centred in each of the four islands and each of the three provinces respectively.

- a) In the Balearic Islands, insularity (literally) defines internal frontiers which, despite several attempts, have not been broken down. There is no daily which provides general coverage of all the islands and efforts to produce decentralised editions have not taken root. Minorca, Eivissa and Formentera each have their own daily newspapers, well established and without competition. Nor does it seem that *Balears*, the new daily in Catalan, will manage to break the insularity at the heart of the archipelago.
- b) The case is similar for the three provinces constituting the Valencian Community, with each of them having its own press. *Las Provincias* and *Levante* distribute 90 per cent of their output within the province of Valencia, whilst *Castellan Diario* reached a 93 per cent home-province circulation; *Mediterràneo*—also from Castelló—sells 94 per cent internally, and *Information* of Alacant has a 94 per cent circulation exclusively inside its own province. Food for thought is provided by the example of *La Verdad* from Murcià: its special edition for Alacant still sells—despite the marked downturn in sales over the past twenty years—8,142 copies (16,031 in 1976), which is more than twice the total copies of *Las Provincias* and *Levante* combined (in 1996 3,992 copies in all) that enter the province. Consequently, it is certainly not possible to speak of a specifically regional press for Valencia as a whole, covering all three provinces. The available data demonstrate that the only part of the press which performs such a function here is, paradoxically, the Madrid-based *El Pafs* with a Valencian edition that transcends the internal provincial frontiers. Once again, it is this paper whose distribution patterns, territorially, most closely accord with the model of regional autonomies in Spain, giving articulation to the political unit of the autonomous community while at the same time linking this into the Spanish national space as a whole.

- c) In Catalonia, the appearance of the *comarca-based* district dailies is extremely interesting, representing the only real growth in home-produced press in the last twenty years. However, their specific weight is still small, with a total daily circulation of 30,000 copies accounting, in relative terms, for less than 4 per cent and which, when added to the local and provincial press—whose figures have also remained static—still represents no more than 10.2 per cent of total newspaper sales. The following brief description illustrates the situation province by province.

*Girona (province)*: Of note is the increase in the circulation of the press in Girona—a 56 per cent growth over the last two decades—with sales currently at 140 copies per 1,000 inhabitants, mainly on account of the successful take-off of the district press: specifically, the phenomenon of *El Punt*. The 32-per-1,000 increase in newspaper sales is accounted for as follows: growth figures of 22 from the district press, 19 from the state-wide press, 3 from regional sports papers, with a drop of 12 affecting daily titles from Barcelona. It is to be observed that in Girona, in 1996, the state-wide *El País* sold 3,970 copies daily, considerably better than *Avui* from Barcelona (2,513).

*Lleida (province)*: Growth in overall press circulation has been lower, going from a daily figure of 103 papers per 1,000 inhabitants in 1976 to 112 in 1996. This increase of 9 copies per 1,000 inhabitants is made up by a rise of 14 for the state-wide press (9 general-news and 5 sporting) and 1 for the district press during a period when sales of regional papers went down (a drop of 5 for general-news titles and 1 for sports papers).

*Tarragona (province)*: This province has the lowest readership level in Catalonia, at 103 copies per 1,000 inhabitants. However, since the threshold was so low in 1976, proportional growth here been almost as great as that recorded for Girona. Of the increase of 22 daily sales, 9 are accounted for by the local and district press, 2 by the Barcelona sporting press and 18 by the state-wide press, with a drop of 7 copies for the Barcelona general-news dailies.

*Barcelona (province)*: In terms of daily newspaper circulation Barcelona province has stagnated, having moved up only slightly from an index of 122 copies per 1,000 inhabitants to a figure of 129. The growth of 7 copies in two decades comes from 3 accredited to the local and district press, 16 to the state-wide press (of which 1 is sporting), with the significant loss of 12 for general newspapers published in Barcelona city.

## Conclusions

Beyond the statistical details, the broad span of the information gathered in this enquiry allows us to establish, if not relations of cause and effect, at least clear correspondence between political organisation and patterns of newspaper circulation. Evidently, it is difficult to be certain whether the absence of a sound, territory-wide press network covering a particular demarcation (in this case the autonomous community) can be attributed to weaknesses in the political structuring of that territory, or whether the lack of a good autochthonous press has negative effects on the creation of well-knit autonomous political life. It certainly can be affirmed, however, that the autonomous model for the territorial organisation of post-Franco Spain has been established and has evolved in the Catalan-speaking areas with an unevenness parallel to developments there in the newspaper market.

To sum up: the major movements to be detected in press diffusion are, first and foremost, the increase in the 'vertebrarion' of the Spanish state as a whole, evident as much in the increased weight of the centralised state-wide press penetrating the Catalan-speaking market as in the process of homogenisation revealed by key data referring to total sales, circulation density and market shares. Second, it is clear that in the period 1976—1996, the territorial framework of the Catalan-speaking areas, at least in the sphere of the daily press, has not only *not* been strengthened but, in relative terms, has been weakened. Total newspaper consumption has grown in each of the three constituent areas whereas distribution across their boundaries has remained at the same levels. Third, internal political concertation in each of the three Catalan-speaking areas not only registers no advance—as is evident in the Valencian Community and the Balearic Islands—but has actually even been receding in the zone where it used to be most secure, which is the case in Catalonia. In the first two territories this is because it has been impossible to create a space for authentically regional news media conforming to the map of the autonomous unit and in the latter because the role of the regional press has declined.

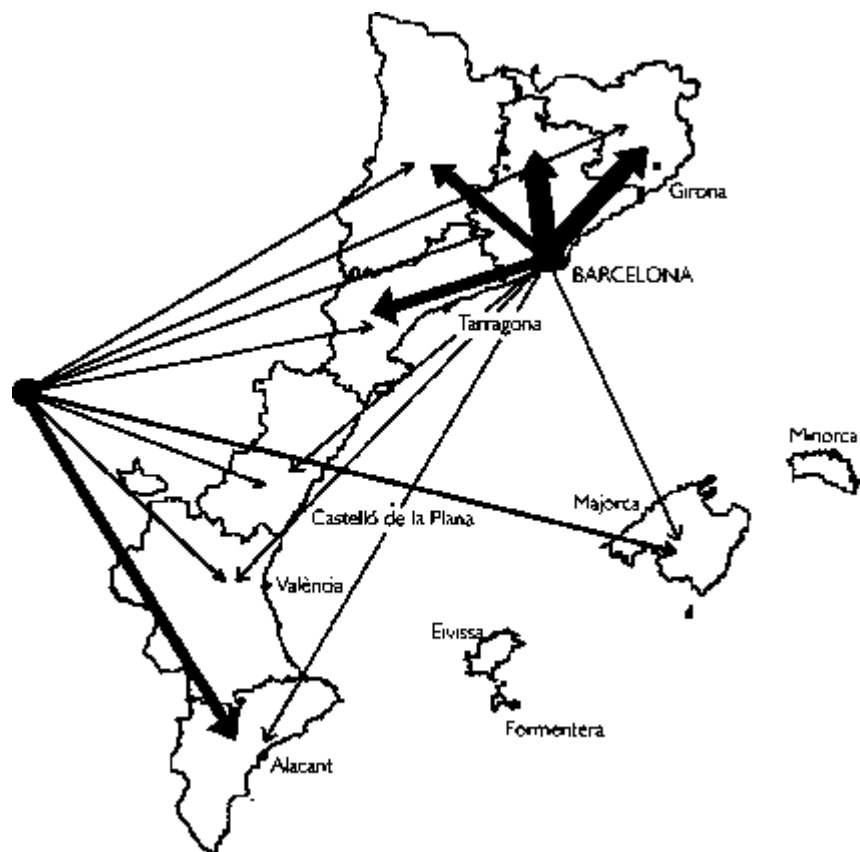
These affirmations should be weighed together with the analysis of qualitative variables since, as our research indicates, simple circulation figures are not the only data by which to measure the political relevance of the press. Even so, our findings in this regard all point in the same direction. One instance is analysis of the assumptions about the definition and internal hierarchisation of the localities being reported on that underlie the way

newspaper sections are put together. In this respect, for example, all the general-news organs in Catalonia have done away with the section dedicated to Catalan politics and this is now subsumed into the pages devoted to Spanish politics. Further, provincial papers, in their efforts to compete and to retain explicitly provincial boundaries, play down the objective importance of news items concerning their next-door-neighbours and give greater prominence to information from outside their particular autonomous community.

To conclude: whatever one's political opinion about the Spanish autonomous model of territorial organisation or about the future of the Catalan-speaking areas, it is plain that both of these issues will ultimately be determined by the strength and efficacy of the corresponding news-media networks which, in a society like our own, are the primordial structures for representation of the interplay of politics.

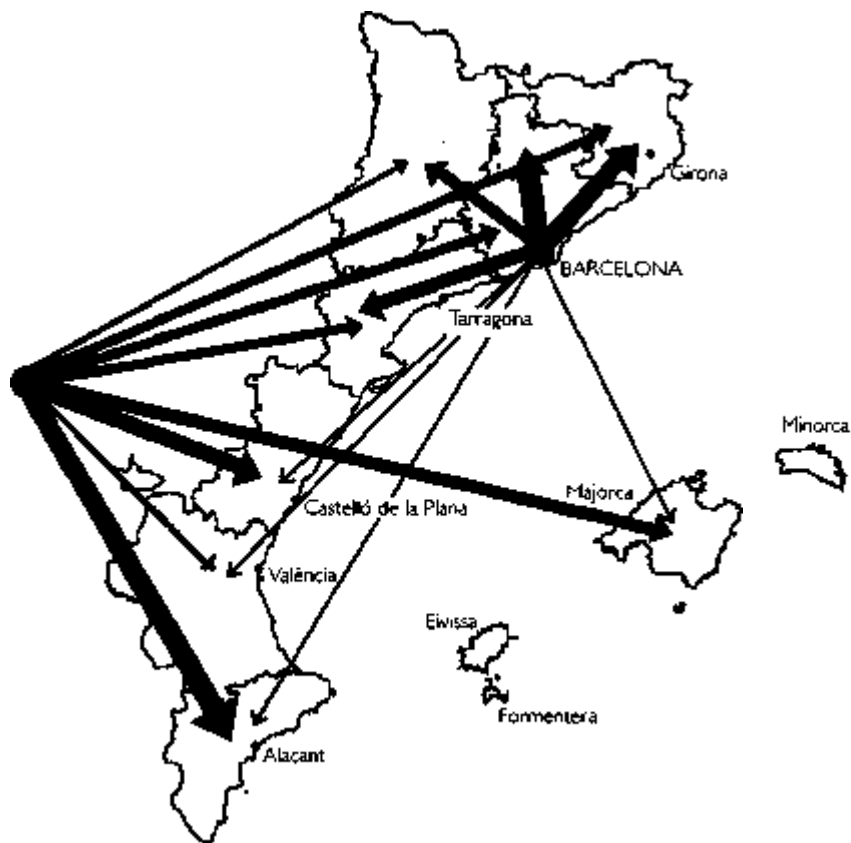
## APPENDIX

Map 1. - Internal circulation figures (Catalan-speaking areas): rates of flow 1976

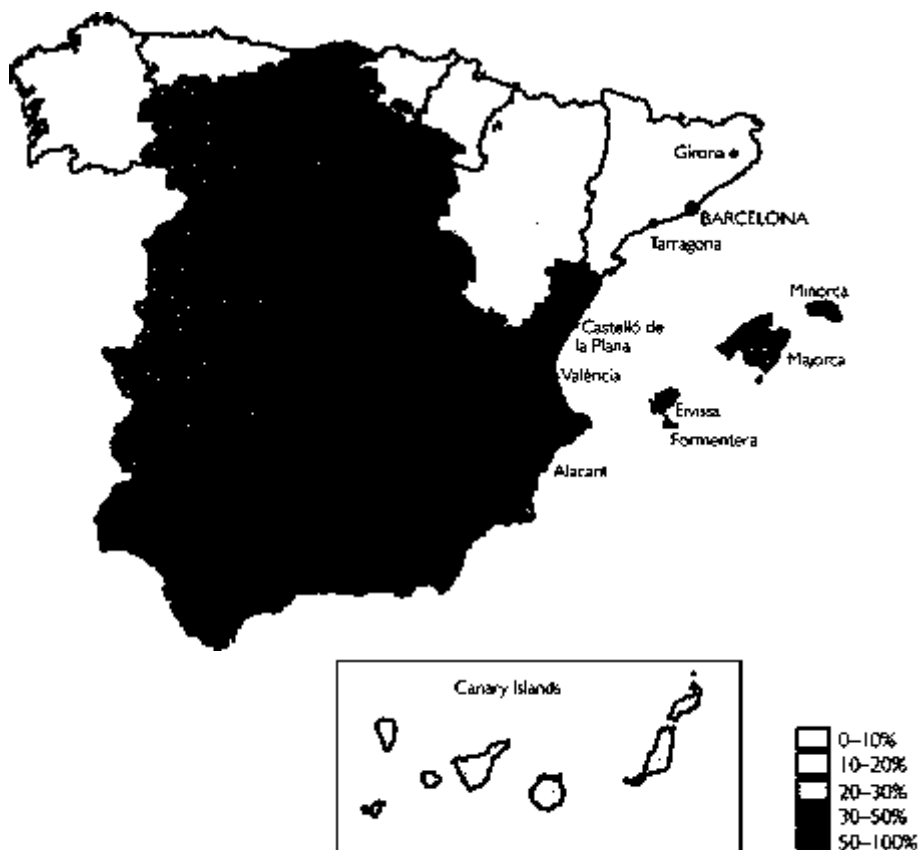




Map 2. - Internal circulation figures (Catalan-speaking areas): rates of flow 1996



Map 3. - Percentage penetration levels of state-wide press in the Spanish Autonomous Communities (% of total press circulation)



	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996
<b>TOTAL CIRCULATION FIGURES</b>					
Balearic Islands	69864	79357	96809	107505	113662
Valencian Community	171515	192783	213763	279107	340611
Catalonia	656756	619928	594304	710430	771087
<b>CIRCULATION DENSITY</b>					
Balearics	116.9	121.0	142.2	151.6	149.5
Alacant	54.1	57.1	64.6	74.9	83.9
Castelló	38.7	37.1	51.0	65.2	85.1
València	51.0	53.8	54.3	72.3	85.6
Valencian Community	50.5	52.9	57.3	72.4	85.0
Barcelona	121.7	109.0	100.9	117.6	129.1
Girona	108.5	103.9	112.5	134.5	140.4
Lleida	103.1	87.7	96.6	115.5	111.5
Tarragona	80.5	71.4	76.0	99.2	103.4
Catalonia	116.0	104.7	99.4	117.2	126.6
Catalan-speaking areas	93.0	87.0	87.1	103.2	112.8
<b>CIRCULATION GROWTH</b>					
Balearics	100	114	139	154	163
Valencian Community	100	112	125	163	199
Catalonia	100	94	90	108	117
Catalan-speaking areas	100	99	101	122	136
<b>% MARKET SHARE</b>					
<b>Balearics (*)</b>					
Locally produced press	81.7	83.0	81.6	78.7	72.0
State-wide press	9.9	10.4	11.1	12.0	18.2
Press from other	8.3	6.6	7.3	9.3	9.8
Catalan-speaking areas					
Valencian Community					
Locally produced press	64.6	58.9	58.2	53.2	52.6
State-wide press	31.6	39.3	39.7	43.1	42.2
Press from other	3.8	1.8	2.1	3.7	5.2
Catalan-speaking areas					
<b>Catalonia</b>					
Locally produced press	95.0	93.1	86.6	85.5	82.2
State-wide press	5.0	6.9	13.4	14.5	17.8
Press from other	-	-	-	-	-
Catalan-speaking areas					

\*The data in this section considers *El Dia del Mundo de Baleares* as local to the Balearics for formal reasons. However, since it is a problematic case, contained in Table 3 are data including it among the state-wide newspapers, which is what it in fact is.

Total circulation: Average daily copies sold in each location; Circulation density: Copies sold per 1,000 inhabitants; Circulation growth: rate of growth where 1976=100; % Market share: Percentage sales proportion of a particular type of paper in relation to total circulation for the specific location in the year mentioned.