



CHAPTER X

The mass media

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1. THE FRANCO ERA: ENFORCED UNIFORMITY

As this book often asserts, The Spanish Civil War brought social and political development to a halt. As a result, Spain was unable to join the cultural tides and economic booms that the democratic conquerers were to enjoy after the Second World War.

From the very start of the Civil War, the Franco régime was aware of the tremendous power of the communications media and made every effort to introduce regulation aimed at exercising strict control over them. The régime resorted to techniques that had been developed in Germany and Italy when European fascism prospered. Communications in Spain were built on two solid cornerstones. Firstly, the media were coupled together to act as channels for State propaganda; secondly, they were also employed as a tool for endeavouring to give citizens the "proper education" as understood by the totalitarian régime.

After the Civil War, several clans comprised the Government; these were the Falangists, the Catholics and, later the Opus Dei. Despite General Franco's partial mistrust of the Falange's home and foreign policies, he entrusted them with the task of structuring the country's communications. So it was that newspapers in the early post-war days were filled with impassioned redemptional missives, heated and idealistic fascist flavoured notions, promising almost forced happiness in exchange for unconditionally supporting the cause.

The 1938 Press Act (Ley de Prensa) was the legal framework within which this structure took definitive shape. The Act was drawn up by the Falangist Serrano Suñer and it is significant that he should hold two offices at that time: Minister of the Interior and National Press Commissioner. Enacted at the height of the war, the Press Act was

supposedly provisional. It nevertheless remained in force for twenty-eight years, until 1966, when the new Press and Printing Act (*Ley de Prensa e Imprenta*), unofficially known as the "Fraga Act", was passed. The long awaited and renowned Act did entail a certain degree of unshackling for the media but, as we shall see later, the so-called "communication freedom" it proclaimed was very relative.

In the 1938 Act, the press is conceived as the State's strongest buttress supporting the cultural instruction of the masses and establishes censorship of all publications prior to circulation. All of the earlier "free press" was condemned as "poisonous" in the preamble, which goes on to state that there is no place for media seeking to create "a market for news and fame" (sic).

1.1. *Censorship and Other weapons of state control*

With statutory censorship applicable to all the media, government control became absolute. Two sets of procedures were employed by the censors. There were those that could be termed defensive or preventive, under which the press, radio, publishers and so on were obliged to furnish the relevant censor with all the material they intended to publish or broadcast. The other type of procedure involved invasive action, designed to build up a state news structure.

Besides censorship, the State was invested with other powers such as the faculty to appoint the senior executives of media companies and the right to intervene in regulating the profession of journalism. In this particular context, the "Official Register of Journalists" was founded. Curiously, the first two entries, made on 20th July 1949, were General Franco and his brother-in-law, Serrano Suñer. Furthermore, during the early years Falangist militancy was a prior condition for registering. The "Official School of Journalism" opened on 17th November 1941, with a direct reporting line to the "Undersecretary for Popular Education". This put an end to the Republican project to create a School of Journalism as a section of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. The situation described remained unchanged until 1971, the year in which the Faculty of Communication Sciences was inaugurated.

Printing paper was a Government monopoly business, meaning that in a more or less underhanded way it was able to impose severe penalties on the printing media. From 1946 onwards, it was decreed that each newspaper's respective editor should administer prior censorship in accord with the "Provincial Heads". Even the space available for advertising was regulated: a maximum 33 percent of the newspaper or magazine's total space.

For forty years, then, the media was harassed by Government or-

ders that were many and varied, running from the number of photographs that could be published on a given subject, to the receipt of leaders whose publication in full was mandatory. The coverage of the death of the philosopher Ortega y Gasset, in 1955, will serve to illustrate the case in point. Newspapers received the order that they were not to publish any photographs taken of the philosopher while he was alive although they could print photographs of his funeral mask or the funeral chapel with his body in state. Only three articles were allowed, i.e. one biography and two commentaries on his work. Mention was to be made of his erroneous thinking on religion. Compliance with the orders issued by the Government was strictly controlled. There is, for example, the case of Manuel Fernández Areal, editor of the Valladolid *Diario Regional* in March 1983, who had proceedings filed against him on the grounds of his "failure to publish a speech delivered by His Excellency, the Head of State (...) providing only an excerpt (...) when it was compulsory to insert the entire speech pursuant to order from the authorities".

1.2. *The long road to freedom*

When discussing communications media in Spain, one cannot forget the Francoist clans whose members spent forty years adjusting to each other's outlooks in order to ensure their own historical survival. It was, perhaps, the clans' desire for endurance, added to the Head of State's great skill, that kept the Régime united for so many years, despite the divergence of opinions that must have existed. Franco showed his skill on two fronts: in the first place he entrusted the job of reorganizing the communications media to the Falange, ideologists experienced in handling the masses. Secondly, he played an active rôle within the media. Although he knew himself to be a very poor public speaker, he could not resist the temptation of showmanship in other fields. He wrote the screenplay for a film, *Raza*, and published doctrine soaked articles in the press under a pseudonym.

The Falange dominated the communications scene throughout the 1940's. They controlled radio stations, regulated forty newspapers, headed by the Madrid *Arriba*, and had considerable control over the State News Agency, EFE. Running counter to the Falange was the "National Catholic Press Association" (ACNP). Although backed by the Episcopate, the news structure was still weak. They had one newspaper, *Ya*, a lacklustre news agency, Logos, and a school of journalism, although this was not founded until quite a few years later. However, as the 1940's progressed, Franco moved gradually closer to them and further away from the Falange. His support of the ACNP was rewarded in the early 1950's by the Concordat with the Vatican.

Lastly, there were the privately-owned groups who had somehow managed to survive through the 1940's, albeit precariously. After the Régime was given international recognition, they gained some measure of security, which benefitted longstanding business groups such as Godó, Barcelona (*La Vanguardia*), Luca de Tena, Madrid (*ABC*) and Editorial Semana (*As*) among others.

The 1960's were marked by the growing need for reform now that Spain was less isolated from the rest of the world. Furthermore this decade heralded the emergence of a mild political opposition. The most significant event was the enactment of the 1966 Press and Printing Act under the auspices of the Minister of Information and Tourism, Manuel Fraga Iribarne. Soon after, cultural and political magazines such as *Cuadernos para el Diálogo* were launched and others, such as *Revista de Occidente*, founded by Ortega y Gasset in 1923, made their reappearance. The university press became more critical; texts on Catholic labour movements were published; finally, a number of Marxist pamphlets were circulated, fruit of a clandestine press, needless to say. But the strength of another pressure group was also growing during this decade: the Opus Dei. They founded their own news agency, Europa Press, and a university in Navarre. Opus Dei was clearly determined to function autonomously, relying on its own resources, and though these did not form a recognizable link, its members were joined by a close personal inter-relationship.

The 1970's saw the outburst of dissidence, and illegal publications appeared together with intellectual literature. A new type of press saw the light of day with the publication of magazines, such as *Triunfo*, which refrained from anything illegal but still acted with unheard of freedom. These were the final years of dictatorship and the cries for social reform were growing ever louder.

1.3. *The press during the Franco Era*

1.3.1 The Movement Press¹

Throughout the Civil War, Franco's side systematically took over newspapers and presses owned by opponents of the Régime. For instance, the "National Confederation of Workers" (CNT) trade union paper in Catalonia, *Solidaridad Obrera* was confiscated and then recast as *Solidaridad Nacional*. As a result of this take-over exercise, a number of buildings were acquired

¹ The "Movement" was defined as a communion of all those Spaniards who accepted the legitimacy of the 18th July, i.e. the date of the uprising against the Republican government.

and a large stock of printing equipment accrued. Rapid reorganization was called for and, so, the Movement Press was founded on 13th July 1940. The Articles of Association vested full ownership rights in the Falange's National Press and Propaganda Commissionership by empowering it to "use, have the benefit of and sell the printing and publishing equipment and material currently in its possession (...) and such equipment and material which although not physically confiscated, should be."

Naturally the State took care to draft tailor-made legislation that assured the optimum functioning of the structure. Pursuant to these laws, the National Press and Propaganda Commissionership became the largest newspaper and magazine publisher in Spain. In 1940, it controlled forty-five radio stations, the news agency PYRESA, five weekly newspapers, fifteen magazines and thirty-seven daily newspapers. There were some significant names among these newspapers, too, such as *Voluntad*, *Yugo*, *Patria* and *Alerta* (respectively Willpower, Yoke, Motherland and Watchword). The chain continued to grow until 1962, when new titles were still appearing.

Ever since its beginnings, relations between the Movement Press and the State had been faultless and the arrangements were not affected by the 1966 Press and Printing Act. However, the structure began to decay in 1967, despite continuing State subsidies and tax credits. Sales dropped the following three years. Oddly enough, the drop was sharpest in the large cities like Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Saragossa and Bilbao and this was worrying indeed, since population rises in all these places coincided with widespread economic expansion. The problems were taken to be the result of bad management: no proper accounting systems in place, no distribution research undertaken, senseless expansion of the labour force and other such unsound business practices. However, the truth was that readers had grown bored and their interest was now turned to publications that were more critical of the Establishment. Several strategies were devised to regain financial equilibrium and save the Movement Press, such as withdrawing some publications from circulation, granting workers early retirement and drawing up technical and financial strategic plans. However, all of this was to no avail. There was nothing that could be done to rescue them from the grave error of not responding to the Spanish people's appetite for news that was not State slanted.

The two leading newspapers belonging to the Movement Press were *Pueblo* and *Arriba*. *Pueblo*, an evening paper whose main purpose was to sing the praises of vertical trade unionism, was untiring in its pro-Régime propagandist rôle. Emilio Romero was the editor between 1952 and 1975, during which time he made the newspaper stimulating and successful. There were two reasons for this: one, he knew how to get the best out of an excellent reporting team and,

two, he coped intelligently with censorship. Emilio Romero was able, for example, to print a full-scale interview with Fidel Castro and yet not endorse those most critical of the Régime. He would sometimes attack the Francoist clans, not the group as a whole, but a particular person within it. He also published articles that no other paper would have dared, shielding behind the parliamentary immunity that the political office of "National Director" afforded him. However, Emilio Romero was dismissed the year that Franco died and *Pueblo* began to languish. Publication ceased on 17th May 1984.

Arriba, founded in 1931 by José Antonio Primo de Rivera, was the principal newspaper in the early days of the Régime. It the voice of the totalitarian State and as such was often used by Franco to deliver his ideological messages. The last edition appeared on news-stands on 15th June 1979.

1.3.2. The Private Press: the road towards freedom

The meaning of "private", as used in this context, is restricted to the source of capital used to fund publishing businesses and nothing more, for the non-State controlled press was closely watched at all times. Indeed, until 1966, the private press was no different than the official press when it came to State dependency. The Statutory Order of 26th February 1941 proclaims that "Increasing State intervention in the press system has caused the press to forfeit its last links with the concept of legal status as a private entity which is what it originally was" (sic). But let us state this more clearly. After the war had ended and the Government had made whatever expropriations it deemed necessary, the private press was not nationalized although every attempt was made to subjugate its ideology and independent views. The 1938 Press Act established a legal locomotive to control the press: the Minister of the Interior was empowered to appoint editors. Two well-known cases in point are the editors thus appointed to the Madrid newspapers *Ya* and *ABC*.

The new 1966 Press Act was an immediate stimulus for the press, which promptly began to exploit cracks that let in the glimmer of freedom of expression. Very soon twenty-nine new publications were on sale and the market became more active than it had ever before been. Prior censorship was repealed but, even so, the Act came nowhere near to proclaiming total freedom for the press. Under the provisions of Article 2 of the Act, freedom of expression and the right to publication were contingent upon "respect for moral truth, observance of the principles laid down by the National Movement and other Fundamental Laws". This Article was a lethal trap for some newspapers and journalists. Infringement attracted severe punish-

ment, but the problem lay in not knowing when one was stepping over the line. Consequently, many reporters opted to censor their own work.

Although the 1966 Act gave publishers the right to appoint their own editors, the appointment hinged on compliance with a number of conditions: the would-be editor must be in possession of the requisite press card, must have no record of convictions for intentional fraud and must not have been presented with three or more administrative penalties in the same year for serious breaches of conduct. Hence it was no hard task for the Administration to free itself of editors it thought might be a nuisance. Government directives practically vanished pursuant to the Act, although a loophole was retained through which the Administration could, if it wished, make its views known. Furthermore, editors were unofficially "counseled" when the Government thought it necessary.

State supervision was made immensely easier by the sanctioning power it granted the Administration. Disciplinary action could be taken against journalists and publishers equally by the Director General for the Press, by the Minister of Information and by the Council of Ministers. Penalties were promptly enforced and "hearings" were held without the benefit of a court of justice and in the the defendant's absence. Between April of 1966 and November of 1975, 1,270 proceedings were initiated and in 450 cases effective penalties were imposed. This is tantamount to saying that one press member was disciplined each week.

It is self-evident that freedom as such did not exist. However, journalists and publishers made the most out of what little deliverance from control there was, striving for the right to freedom of expression even at the very real risk of administrative punishment. An illustration of this, which is at once significant and piteous, is the harassment of an evening newspaper, *Madrid*. First edited in 1966, the newspaper proposed to bring a breath of fresh air to the ebbing official press. Its life was short, just five years, during which the paper was hounded and administrative proceedings and fines could be counted by the dozen. The first one arose after *Madrid* published a leader significantly titled "Protest is not always a moral wrongdoing". The newspaper's closure was ordered on 25th November 1971. Sixteen months later, on 25th April 1975, the building that had housed it was blown up with dynamite, ample proof of an intransigent Régime. The whole legal proceedings came to the end in 1973, when the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the newspaper but, by then, it was too late for resuscitation.

The Government continued to apply other methods of effective censorship. All newspapers and magazines were obliged to provide the Ministry of Information or Provincial Delegations with copies of each issue before circulation. The government officials whose job it

was to read the press could automatically delay the issue or even order its seizure. Furthermore, Article 4 of the 1966 Act provided an original formula termed "voluntary censorship". Under these provisions, administrative agencies could be approached to advise on the desirability or otherwise of publishing specific copy. However, as a manoeuvre this was singularly unsuccessful for by this time journalists were seeking more freedom of expression despite the inherent risk of proceedings or fines.

In spite of the price that some publications had to pay, hindsight reveals that the 1966 Act did serve some useful purpose. Journalism was slightly less restricted, new life was breathed into the press sector and public interest was aroused by copy that moved away from twenty-eight years of staid press dependability.

Let us now take a brief look at publications that were among the most prominent of the times. If there is a newspaper with national coverage that has managed to survive political ups-and-downs, then that is *ABC*. Founded in Madrid by Torcuato Luca de Tena in 1921, it has outlived two dictatorships, one Republic and a Civil War. The arrival of democracy brought the newspaper a number of problems, despite which it is still a going concern. To *ABC* goes the honour of being the first Spanish newspaper to publish a Sunday supplement. Edited by Luis M. Ansón, the 5th May 1968 first issue was an instant success. One might say that it was daring for its times, publishing articles signed by such great intellectuals as Salvador de Madariaga, Claudio Sánchez Albornoz, Aldous Huxley and Bertrand Russell. This independent stance was viewed with suspicion by Manuel Fraga, then the Minister of Information and Tourism. The end of the 1960's and early 1970's brought financial difficulties when the number of subscribers dropped sharply. Under the management of Luis M. Anson, the newspaper started to recover as from 1983.

Another highly influential daily newspaper of the time was *Ya*, published by Editorial Católica. In 1952, Aquilino Morcillo was appointed editor and he brought stamina, congruence and moderation to its pages. At the end of the 1960's, *Ya* gave valuable support to burgeoning democracy. The ten years between 1967 and 1977, saw frequent columns written by young politicians with an evident leaning towards Christian Democracy. A newspaper with a number of victories to its credit, *Ya* managed to retain its status although it was hard hit by the overall press crisis and by the appearance of a new daily, *El País*. Rather than the bearer of front-page news, *Ya* gradually became a vehicle for opinion. Some of the views it adopted were so radical that on more than one occasion the Church had to intervene to save it from closure. It is worth noting that after his visit to Spain, Pope John Paul II decided to rescue *Ya* by handing over the 40 million pesetas that the Spanish people had donated him.

Lastly, one of the most solid newspapers of the time was the Barcelona *La Vanguardia*, established by the Godó family in 1881. A stalwart upholder of traditions, the paper's success was founded on its close relationship with the Catalonian people. This newspaper was seemingly averse to advancing its views although readers were provided with sufficient bases on which to form their own opinions. When the Catalonian autonomous movement resurfaced in 1975, *La Vanguardia* was quick to show sympathy and thus managed to mitigate the effects of the 1970's press crisis. Even today, this is the most widely circulated newspaper in Catalonia and has more subscribers than any other paper in Spain.

1.4. Radio during the Franco Era

From the Civil War onwards, radio became the most effective of all propaganda tools. Even when the war had ended, communiqués were still broadcast in the same patriotic vein and the Government warned the population that Spain continued to be "at war with her enemies, whether at home or abroad". Indeed, the news programmes broadcast by "Radio Nacional" were popularly known as "communiqués" until only but recently.

Spanish radio broadcasting was regulated by the 6th October 1939 Statutory Order right up until 1977, when the Order was repealed. Under the provisions of the Order, all private radio stations were subject to prior censorship by the provincial or local heads of propaganda. Furthermore, news broadcasts were the exclusive province of Radio Nacional. No other station was allowed to have its own news programme, except for those that were located offshore and, even then, only because of the underlying technical problems. Since radio broadcasting was deemed to be the State's sole concern, it also had a monopoly on radio frequencies and their allocation. There was a network of official radio stations, complemented by a number of private stations that nevertheless had to rely on the State inasmuch as it had discretionary powers to renew broadcasting licences or not.

Several radio stations opened during the 1940's. Sixty-eight of them were private, operating under the identification EAJ, some twenty were short wave local stations, with purely propagandist aims, identified as FET, five Radio Nacional stations and Radio SEU, in Madrid. The most important member of the private network was "Sociedad Española de Radiodifusión" (SER), in existence since 1924. Advertising was the private station's only source of income and even that was restricted by a 1941 Ministry of the Interior Statutory Order which stipulated with regard to radio advertising that "no license would be given for the purpose of obtaining financial revenues of an improper nature" (sic).

As we have just stated, the number of radio stations increased continuously throughout the 1940's. In 1946, the "Compañía de Radiodifusión Intercontinental" (CRI) was set up in Madrid; 1947 heralded the first broadcasts from "Radio Teruel", the germ of what would later become the "Cadena de Emisoras Sindicales"; in 1948, the future "Rueda Rato" purchased its first radio station in Toledo and "Radio España" went on the air in Barcelona.

By the following decade, fascism had been replaced by the Communist Bloc as the major international threat to Western Europe. Hence Spain's régime was finally acknowledged internationally but, far from easing the situation, internal State control was tightened up. It was during the 1950's that Gabriel Arias Salgado, whom even staunch Catholics sarcastically nick-named "the news theologian", was appointed Minister of Information and Tourism. Arias Salgado held office for ten years, during which time censorship, needless to say, was his most effective weapon and one which he wielded with all the strength of his Christian zeal. Nevertheless, the 1950's brought stability to radio broadcasting. Major technical and administrative reforms were implemented such as the creation, in 1952, of the "Spanish Radio Broadcasting Administration" (ARE), a legally, administratively and financially independent organization.

Thus, much like the press, radio broadcasting in Spain was divided into two broad groups. There was Radio Nacional and then there was the privately owned sector, strictly regulated by a Government that was empowered to make executive appointments and to exercise ruthless control over advertising. It was during these years that radio station-schools sprang up, becoming known as "Cadena Azul de Radiodifusión" as from 1958, when there was a total of sixty of these stations spread all over Spain. It was at this time, too, that the third State network was being built up, the "Cadena de Emisoras Sindicales", which reached its prime in the 1960's.

In 1953, a rather strange phenomenon took place in certain rural townships. Religious, musical and light programmes were broadcast over public address systems installed in strategic places and controlled from the parish halls. The system was immediately capitalized on by the Apostolic Radio Broadcasting Secretariat, a section of the association known as Catholic Action. Several enterprising parish priests upgraded their respective p.a. systems and transformed them into short wave radio stations, of which there were about a hundred in 1956. The Church stepped in quickly, demanding the same broadcasting rights as the Movement and in 1959 the Directorate General for Radio and Television Broadcasting approved the terms that were to regulate the Church's radio network, known as "Radio Popular". Various religious associations helped to run the network, mainly the Dominicans, the Jesuits and secular clerics. For practical reasons, the

Episcopal Commission decided to limit the number of stations to eighty and the network was officially renamed "Cadena de Ondas Populares Españolas" (COPE).

But to complete our picture, reference must be made to overseas radio links and clandestine broadcasting stations. One such station transmitted for reception outside the Iberian Peninsula, but it was a touch and go operation until 1977 when it became "Radio Exterior de España". This was the only station to broadcast outside Spain, except for Radio Liberty in Gerona, a CIA financed U.S. radio station whose purpose was to transmit anti-communist propaganda. Several overseas stations broadcast to Spain, some with the Régime's blessing although others were evidently anti-Francoist, such as Radio Paris, Radio Moscow or clandestine Radio Euzkadi transmitting from the French Pays Basque. The most popular of them all was Radio España Independiente, which in the early years of its existence broadcast from the Soviet Union under the auspices of Dolores Ibarruri, the "Pasionaria". Years later, the station moved to Bucharest. It was the clandestine radio that most people tuned into until it closed down in 1977.

It was during the 1960's, while Opus Dei technocrats were endeavouring to bring around the necessary reforms for Spain's modernization with constant harassment from the Administration, that radio was commercially and technically revamped. Directives were issued for the purpose of regulating the activities of both official and independent broadcasting companies. Foreign capital was allowed to be invested in the media. The erstwhile radio tax was abolished (henceforth radio stations were funded by revenue from advertising and by State subsidies). British and American style pop music programmes began to be broadcast. With State backing, a few independent groups set up a genuine financial oligopoly: Rueda Rato, Radio Intercontinental and Cadena SER. Technical advancements were in evidence, such as stereophonic transmissions and the use of tapes. And, of course, at the same time radio was being challenged by the novelty of television.

The 1970's heralded monumental changes to the structure and outline of Spanish radio. These were brought about not merely by political vicissitudes but also by significant technological advances: use of the so-called "light techniques", improved sound and the arrival of the transistor, to name but a few. Political activity was intense between 1970 and 1975. There was a feeling that a hoped-for change was around the corner. However, after the ETA bomb attack which killed Admiral Carrero Blanco, the Opus Dei, instigator of reforms in the previous decade, lost the battle. A Cabinet reshuffle ensued and civil rights were once again curtailed. The situation lasted until 1975, the year in which General Franco died.

1.5. *Television: Outset and development in the 1960's*

Although the introduction of television in Spain came later than in the rest of Europe, its origins were the same. After the Second World War, the triumphant democracies embarked on a process aimed at organizing society. Every television system in Europe was perceived as an arm of the State and Spain was no exception. Launched shortly after the Régime's period of autocracy, improvisation was a necessity forced on television in the absence of appropriate technical resources. At the beginning, the senior executives of Radio Nacional de España were in charge of programming and hence television grew much as a limb of radio, whence it borrowed staff and programme expertise.

When technical accomplishment was achieved, after years of testing dating back to 1929, it was also akin to the rest of Europe. From a demonstration made by German technicians at Franco's Burgos Headquarters, he was well aware of the potential afforded by television. The Directorate General for Radio had already instituted the Central Laboratory in 1947, after which an experimental station was set up. No precise details about the first trials are available and it is only known that they started in 1949. On 16th July of that year, a bull-fight was televised from the Plaza de las Ventas bullring and the pictures were relayed to the Circulo de Bellas Artes and to the Palacio del Pardo (Franco's personal residence, T.N.). Official testing began soon there after and by September 1950 trials were fairly continuous. Regular television broadcasting began on 28th October 1956. For the first few years that the media was in operation, efforts were made to achieve nation-wide coverage and to increase the number of hours on the air. Using material from the official cinema newsreel, NO-DO, the early afternoon newscast became a regular television feature beginning in 1957. New telecasts were gradually introduced, such as motion pictures, sponsored series and quizz games, interviews, imported U.S. telefilms and live theatre from the TV's own studios.

The greatest developments were seen from 1966 onwards, during the seven years that Manuel Fraga was Minister of Information and Tourism. The main objective was to gain full coverage, the range being 80% of the country in 1963, and so signal strength was raised and new relay stations were built. On 18th July 1964, in commemoration of what was labeled a quarter of a century of peace, the new Prado de Rey studios were inaugurated in Madrid, possibly the most important event in the history of Spanish television. Unprecedented resources were made available thereby putting an end to television staff's long-standing paucity. The necessary technical support was ex-

panded, the first light mobile units were acquired and video replaced cinematographic devices.

Spanish Television launched Channel 2 on 1st January 1965. Having its own production team gave this second channel genuine management autonomy. Catering to a minority audience, no changes were brought in until the 1980's, but despite scant structural innovation it did achieve a greater measure of freedom.

Developments between 1969 and 1975 were insignificant. The only event of any importance was the creation of regional centres in an attempt to attenuate the latent discrimination inevitable to a radial network. The first regional centre to be opened, in May 1971, was located in Bilbao. Santiago de Compostela, Oviedo, Seville and Valencia were next. For three years, however, these centres merely functioned as branches and it was only in 1974 that they began to operate as intended, broadcasting their own productions and specific programmes.

The closing years of dictatorship were not exactly splendidous for the media. Spanish Television had to enlist the aid of German technicians for the awe-inspiring technical deployment needed to cover General Franco's funeral rites. The resulting telecast was, however, a feather in TVE's hat.

2. 1975-1990. THE MODERNIZATION RACE

There is no doubt that the 1970's were the wealthiest in historic events in Spain since the Civil War. The country had not only moved peacefully from dictatorship to democracy, but had done so under the pressure of having to update structures that were otherwise too outworn to enable Spain to keep pace with other West European democratic nations. Taking a broader view, change was written all over the face of the capitalist world. This was the dawning of the new technological and electronic age, defined as post-modern and post-industrial by information theoreticians. It is also the age of information and advertising, crowning the society of masses that had started to emerge at the end of the 19th Century.

Today's world is it by the sister stars, Information and Communication, and all their satellites. Throughout the 1980's, Spanish households accumulated electronic appliances that exceeded actual requirements. For instance, tiny radios capable of receiving far more stations than can be understood or desk-top computers of whose applications we are largely ignorant. As a result, habits have changed drastically both as regards work and leisure. Thanks to their versatility, personal computers have mushroomed in every area of human activity. This phenomenon has brought about a change in our rela-

tionship with the world around us that no earlier revolution could ever have dreamed of producing. Advertising and the screen show us a world of make-believe, full of goods that promise wellbeing to their owners, a tempting world that is hard to resist.

International relations have also undergone a dramatic change. It has been no easy task for nations to adapt to a communications miracle that seems to have two opposing effects: on the one hand increasingly overall market uniformity and, on the other, social segmentation on a scale hitherto unknown. The world was becoming a Tower of Babel but how was one to challenge it? Law and order would obviously have to be imposed from within each country. Having become powers unto themselves after the Second World War, over the past decade these countries have had to hand over parcels of that power to independent groups. Deregulation, as this process was known, entailed the drafting of privatization policy. Thus, the regulation of world economic markets passed from the State to privately owned enterprise.

2.1. The press after 1975

The onset of democracy gave rise to a spectacular increase in the number of new publications being brought out. However, there was no concomitant increase in the number of readers and many of the new publications were therefore forced to close down after a relatively short lifetime. The press entered a phase marked by sluggishness for several reasons: the success of radio and television, the effects of overall economic crisis and the growth of the sensationalist press, inter alia. Between 1975 and the present, sixty newspapers have disappeared to be replaced by a similar number of new ones. At 110, the number of newspapers published in Spain in 1989 was practically unchanged from ten years previously.

The year 1975 saw the definitive dismantlement of the Movement Press. The Government had ordered its privatization, to be concluded before 1984. As a result, some 40 percent of the newspapers that had been in circulation ten years earlier were republished. Between November of 1975 and June of 1978, no less than 1,112 new publications were registered although the largest contraction of readers then took place in 1978 and 1979.

Humorous publications such as *La Codorniz*, *Por Favor*, and *El Hermano Lobo*, which had been extremely popular from 1966 onwards, disappeared in the course of Spain's political transition. In a different vein entirely, 1976 heralded the arrival for the first time on Spanish news-stands of magazines featuring girls fully in the nude: *Playboy*, *Penthouse* and Spain's own *Interviú*. On the other hand, ma-

gazines that had had a tremendous political and social significance vanished from sight. Such was the case of *Triunfo* and *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*. When it was first circulated, in 1963, the public responded enthusiastically to *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*. This truly progressive and courageous magazine dedicated one of its issues to the Coup d'Etat in Chile and another one to the notorious Burgos Trials. Nevertheless, it was not unaffected by the general crisis in 1978 and was nudged out by new, much more aggressive magazines. Founded by the Falange, *Destino* was another doomed publication. Not only was this magazine culturally representative in the 1950's, carrying articles by writers like Camilo José Cela, Carmen Laforet, Juan Goytisolo and Juan Eduardo Cirlot, but it had such important offshoots as Editorial Destino, the annual Nadal award (for fiction) and the Ancora and Delfin pocket book collections.

Forceful new groups began to take their place alongside the old. PRISA brought out the first edition of the daily newspaper *El País* on 4th May 1976. Circulation grew uninterruptedly until it was the largest in the whole country. The timing of this newspaper's launching coincided with such major political events as the appointment of Adolfo Suárez as President of the Government and the first General Elections in 1977. Furthermore, *El País* actually benefitted from the crisis that was affecting longstanding newspapers like *ABC* and *Ya*. Then, in 1980 it underwent a thorough transformation. Government pressures mounted until the editor, Juan Luis Cebrián, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for publication of an editorial headed "The Press and Democracy" which was construed as civil contempt. Today, *El País* continues to be the largest-selling newspaper in Spain, which is something of a paradox: in this society, with its low levels of readership, mass-appeal dailies are no real competition for a culturally elitist newspaper.

Two other major groups made a dramatic entry onto the 1970's scene, "Grupo 16" and "Grupo Z". The former was founded on 5th May 1971, its first publication being the weekly magazine *Cambio 16*, innovative in both style and its forthright language. The Group expanded rapidly and in 1976 a number of other publications were added to its range, the two most notable being *Historia 16* and *Diario 16*. However, this young group had taken on too much too soon and shortly found itself in a situation of overtrading. Despite its critical beginnings, by 1982 *Diario 16* was third in the ranking by sales. Even so, it never appeared to be a financially sound venture and this may explain its scant sales of advertising space.

Grupo Z also started off by publishing a weekly magazine, *Interviú*. The first number issued, on 22nd May 1976, was immensely successful. Its popularity has been sustained due, perhaps, to photographs of celebrities in the nude, to its sensational approach to cu-

rent events or to its use of gruesome, morbid pictures to illustrate reports of accidents, killings and the likes. On the other hand, the magazine contains both factual and fictional columns penned by renowned authors such as Vázquez Montalbán and Francisco Umbral among others. *Interviú* holds the record for the only magazine in Spain to have sold one million copies. *Grupo Z* then essayed in the world of pornography, publishing a magazine, *Lib*, and setting up a film production and distribution company. For a while after this, the Group endeavoured to earn itself a measure of respectability by publishing a weekly magazine, *Qué*, which was a total failure, and a daily newspaper, *El Periódico*.

Strong economic growth and greater financial activity marked the 1980's. It is not therefore surprising that the business press gained popularity. The daily newspaper *Cinco Días* had already appeared in 1978 and was well established by the time new publications such as *Actualidad Económica* and *Expansión*, among others, arrived on the scene.

By this time, too, the regional press was expanding, particularly in the Basque Country and Catalonia. The most prominent regional newspapers in the Basque Country during Franco's era had been *La Gaceta del Norte* and *El Correo Español-El Pueblo vasco*. In 1975, *La Gaceta del Norte* suffered a major crisis whereas sales of *El Correo Español-El Pueblo Vasco* went up considerably. That same year two new daily newspapers came out in the Basque Country, printed partly in the vernacular and partly in Castilian Spanish. These were *Deia*, a Basque National Party enterprise, and *Egin*, supported by the Herri Batasuna coalition. In Catalonia, *El Periódico*, belonging to the "Grupo Z", was widely circulated. This was joined on 23rd April 1976 by *Avui*, printed in Catalan.

However, without any doubt, the most successful publications of the 1980's were those that come together under the general heading of "Romantic Press". The most famous of these magazines are *Hola*, *Semana*, *Lecturas*, *Diez Minutos* and *Garbo*. Although they started out several years ago on modest budgets, when colour printing became more widespread in the 1960's these magazines were on the road to success. Between them they now sell two million copies each week. After Spain's political transition, they acquired political significance given the enormous number of readers. After the 1977 elections, former President Adolfo Suárez commented how he had won half a million votes thanks to an interview in *Hola*. After winning the 1982 elections, the first press interview that President Felipe González granted was to that same magazine. Of all the Spanish publications, *Hola* is the most widely read and the one with the greatest number of subscribers in both Spain and abroad, including the Soviet Union.

2.2. The Radio after Political Transition

By the mid-seventies, Radio Nacional's news monopoly was showing signs of encroachment from other newscasts, for instance, Cadena SER's "Hora 25", which reached high listening ratings. However, it was not until 1977 that the freedom to broadcast news was legally enacted and even then the State persisted in wanting to control the major broadcasting companies. In the case of Cadena SER, this took the form of being obliged to assign 25 percent of its shares to the State, free of charge, in exchange for certain privileges when it came to allocating the frequencies that corresponded to Spain pursuant to the Geneva Conference of late 1975.

When news broadcasts were legally liberalized, radio became the luminary of political transition and the ensuing inception of democracy. The number of stations increased four-fold and technological reconversion was undertaken. Furthermore, as a result of the undoubted professionalism shown by those working in radio, credibility shot up and so, therefore, did ratings. The high point was reached on 23rd February 1981, with the attempted coup d'état that shocked the whole country. The night of 23rd February came to be known as "the night of the transistors". Thanks to the news coverage given by the different radio stations, everyone was able to follow events in Congress almost as they happened. According to the General Media Poll, seven and half million people listened to the radio in 1975, more than thirteen million in 1980 and over sixteen million in 1982.

However, in 1982 the trend started to reverse. The passion that public and professionals of the media alike had exhibited for news reporting began to wane and, little by little, the radio regained its original function as a provider of entertainment.

The State radio was forced to adapt to circumstances. The erstwhile "Red de Emisoras del Movimiento", "Cadena Azul de Radiodifusión" and "Cadena de Emisoras Sindicales" merged in 1988 to form "Radio Cadena Española". Together with "Radio Nacional", this is one of the largest governmental networks in Europe.

New arrivals on the communications scene demanded a place from which to express their views but there was no legal framework to shelter them. It was then that the "free radio" movement was born, beginning when the Catalanian "Onda Lliure" went on the air. At the same time, local and council stations started broadcasting. Organized under the "Municipal Stations Coordinator", there were 300 of these stations operating in 1988.

As part of the process of developing regional autonomies, regional radio stations sprang up in the 1980's, financed by the Autonomous

Governments and income from advertising. By 1988, four networks were in operation: Catalunya Radio, Eusko Irratia, Onda Madrid and RTV Galicia, some of them with several radio and television stations.

In the 1980's, Cadena SER continued to be the doyen of privately owned stations. In 1986, the PRISA Group (owner of *El País*) acquired 51% of its share capital. Second in the ranking is COPE, whose 59 stations serve 41 provinces. Although smaller than either SER or COPE, other major groups such as Antena 3 and Rueda Rato complete the picture.

In summary, the 1980's witnessed a process of convergence of radio broadcasting companies. Expectations are that the trend will continue over the next few years and that large amounts of foreign capital will flow in. Given technical and financial difficulties, it is evident that the sector will have to give priority attention to cutting costs and, inevitably, to identifying a specialized niche. A very versatile media, the radio has always managed to adjust to political ups and downs and there are no grounds for suspecting any change in the future.

2.3. *Television after political transition*

Political transition coincided with the height of Television Española's most serious internal troubles ever. Industrial dispute was at its worst and accusations of corruption were being made. The unrest had been sparked off by a 1979 auditors report, published in 1980 by *El País*, which disclosed the corporation's lack of proper organization and its disastrous management.

In the government's "Moncloa Pacts", signed on 27th October 1977, the urgent need to provide the television media with an appropriate statute had already been recognised. As a first step, the Provisional Governing Board of RTVE was created, its first ever democratic agency. RTVE's Statute proved to be one of the most controversial pieces of legislation to be drafted and it seemed that an agreement would never be reached. After endless parliamentary debate, the Statute came into force under the 10th January 1988 Act. However, political pressures caused its effectiveness to be delayed for a full year. This was a severe blow to the Government, ever reluctant to relinquish its control over television.

Regional television came into operation in the 1980's. The first of these was the "Ente Público Radio Televisión Vasca" whose transmissions began on 1st January 1983 despite not having obtained a permit from the central government in Madrid. Soon after, the Catalanian and Galician channels were on the air, both of them in the vernacular. Other channels were gradually established in all of Spain's autonomous regions.

A major development in latter years was the advent of privately owned television, preceded by an earnest political battle between lobbyists and the ruling party, PSOE. In possession of no authorization, Canal 10 began transmitting from London on 25th January 1988. However, this venture was nipped in the bud when the owners wound up in court over the company's financial problems. In the end, the Socialist government was forced to give in to the inevitable and authorize independent television. There has been a gradual cut-back in state subsidies to RTVE, now obliged to adopt a much more commercial and competitive programme policy.

2.4. *Looking to the future*

The signs are that the communications sector will be given a strong boost in the 1990's. The five year long plight affecting the press seems to have been overcome, thanks to overall economic recovery and to today's vast advertising expenditure. Advertising agencies allocated 242,000 million pesetas to the press in 1989, against 194,000 million pesetas to television. Surprisingly, the press has not only withstood heightened competition from the growing size of the audiovisual media, but is actually undergoing one of the most pivotal business, technological and structural overhauls in its history. Close to ten new daily newspapers went on sale in 1989, among others *El Mundo*, *El Independiente* and *La Gaceta de Negocios*. Other newspapers, such as *La Vanguardia* and *Ya* to mention but two, have been totally revamped. Fifteen new daily newspapers, mostly local or regional, are expected to be released in 1990. Two have come into being in May, *El Sol* in Madrid and *Las Noticias* in Barcelona.

However, this otherwise optimistic outlook is clouded by the low level of daily newspaper readership in Spain. The average is 82 copies per 1,000 inhabitants whereas Unesco puts this figure at 100 copies per 1,000 inhabitants to discern the threshold of a country's cultural development. Among all of Franco's legacies, this is perhaps one of the most visible, since the current readership is unchanged from the 1931 level. Under Franco, the press as a media was boring and uncritical for forty years. That said, numbers are not always everything. Reading newspapers in Spain is often a group activity. Many places such as associations, clubs and workplaces provide an opportunity to glance through several newspapers and to discuss the news with other people. This is especially true in the rural areas, where the newspaper becomes one of the attractions of the local bar, so in fact just one copy is actually read and discussed by a number of people.

In the five years since 1986, mass media sociology has undergone considerable change in Spain. The communication media is no longer

at the mercy of purely political developments but is increasingly dependent on the industries it has itself generated. Therefore, in order to be able to understand how the media is affected, one must address the issue of marketing.

Speaking in terms of economy and communications, Spain is in a very special strategic position, from both the geographic and business point of view, placed as she is between the North and the South. Over the past few years, Spain has become a focus for investment from economically powerful countries in Europe, Germany and France, and in the rest of the world, U.S.A. and Japan. It therefore seems probable that economically Spain will form part of the Northern economic bloc. At the same time, Spain is making a tremendous effort to transform all the companies belonging to the Communications and Information sector, much more than other Southern countries such as Greece and Portugal and, further afield, Latin America. This task has been made much easier by economic growth that has been stronger even than in other EC countries, as evidenced by GDP growth that has been one and a half times higher than the rest of the Community over the past five years.

Business as well as technological changes have had a tremendous impact on Spanish mass media. However, in this sector the usual law of supply and demand does not apply, for the media itself decides on the supply without giving a thought to theoretical consumer needs. This is an important factor and one that has done much to change the very concept of "information". Traditionally defined as "news", the term has gradually come to mean the whole development of telecommunications in general, and in turn within the wider context of information transmission in modern society, wherein even leisure is considered a market.

In communications there has been a growing tendency in recent years for the world market to be controlled by a few communication giants, for instance Berlusconi and Murdoch to name but two. MacBride's famous "one world with many voices" is changing to "one world with a few voices", thereby giving substance to MacLuhan's idea of a "worldscale village". However, it does seem fairly obvious that the development of the Communications and Information media has not erased cultural differences between the North and the South. Indeed, they have not even managed to tear down the cultural barriers between members of the same society. Statistics on the use made of specialized media in the United States are revealing. A study made of 15 scientific libraries showed that 60 percent of catalogue references were made by men, 70 percent by users aged between 20 and 34, and 70 percent by final year under-graduates. In other words, still just a small élite group has access to information of a highly specialized nature in contrast to the vast majority of the population that is

content to sit back and gaze at a television screen —the focal point in many of today's homes— source of an unvarying and pedestrian culture.

While Spain is certainly immersed in the same overall communications developments that are affecting the entire world, there are certain differences worth pointing out. Television via satellite has been available for five years now but only to a limited sector of the population. The first cable television networks have been set up (cottage-industry business in some cases), an almost unique event in Europe. As an offshoot of both technologies, the first combined satellite-cable systems have come into operation. On the other hand, teletext services are still at an early stage of development.

The current organization of communication channels is as follows: on an international level, Spain belongs to the European movement that is trying to restrict the surge of the U.S. and Japanese markets by joining forces to gain a real competitive edge. On a national level, regional communication channels are permitted, although between them the major networks take the lion's share. Finally, on a local level, innovative cable technology contributes to alternative avenues of expression thereby diversifying the communications market and providing small scale productions possibly their only outlet.