

Danish Newspapers

Structure and Developments

JETTE DRACHMANN SØLLINGE

This article describes and analyses the main aspects of the current situation and trends pertaining to the press.¹ And it contains a summary of the present state of knowledge about the Danish press. After a presentation of the central competition dimensions, the definition and delimitation of the newspaper as a medium are discussed. The next part is an overview of the historical development from 1848 – when press freedom was instituted – up to the press reform in the beginning of this century. The developments from the press reform until the outbreak of World War II are treated, followed by an analysis of the main features of developments since then. The historical parts are ruled by a press model based on a newspaper typology constructed through analyses of contents.² The following two parts discuss newspaper contents and newspaper readership in more depth. Other, competing media and their recent developments are briefly described in the next part. After a summary of the current situation, the final section discusses possible scenarios for the future.

The first following paragraphs describe the principles of those parts of the Danish media landscape that relate to daily newspapers and the other media in direct competition with the daily press together with central development trends in this field.³

Daily newspapers are confronted today by competition on three fronts: News, entertainment, and advertising. This in itself is nothing new, but competition in recent decades has grown much keener.

As to news, the main pressure is exerted by radio and television. The radio medium has its strength in a speed that the newspapers cannot hope to match. Television is able to show live pictures – originally in black and white, later on in colours, too – and that is outside the scope of both radio and newspapers. On the other hand, the newspapers are able to offer much larger amounts of information than especially TV, they can provide background information of a much more analytical or reflective kind, and in contrast to radio and TV they may be consumed at times suiting the reader. Audio- and videotape recorders have to a certain degree altered this last aspect of the situation, but radio and TV alike may only be taped, when the consumer is aware beforehand of the contents of future broadcasts. A much more dramatic change in this respect is looming on the horizon through radio and television services going on the Internet, but these still are accessed only by a minority. Generally, the news media on the Internet and the

newspaper services on the net are still at so tentative and experimental a stage that nothing conclusive may be stated on this issue. In the specific field of local news there is – growing – competition from the by now omnipresent district papers.

Entertainment is another field. Here competition comes from radio, TV, and illustrated weeklies, and the position of the daily newspapers is weak, because the field by tradition is a somewhat obnoxious one for dailies, especially the majority upholding an image as serious, politically and culturally informative newspapers. The popular tabloids have entered this area of competition, but mostly through turning their news concept away from political events and stretching the limits to subjects that formerly were not considered proper newspaper contents: sexual scandals, glaring murder stories, gossip about well-known people and such. And these papers have suffered the worst from the recent TV boom.

As to advertising, the newspapers are in a stronger position than any other news-carrying media. Of two fully national Danish TV-channels one only is licensed to carry advertising – in reality rather small and strictly regulated amounts of brand advertisements between programmes, while two more, wholly commercial TV-stations not yet are broadcasting nationwide – and the three national radio channels on the air have no advertising license at all, while a fourth commercial radio channel starting broadcasting in March 1997 is satellite-carried. Here the competition partially comes from illustrated weeklies regarding the brand advertisements, but to a nearly threatening degree from the district papers. Especially the large mass of small advertisements with a geographically limited target group – the weekly offers from a local shopkeeper is a case in point – have gone over in droves to the district papers offering low advertising costs combined with a geographically precise aim.

After this short summary of the state of competition in Denmark from the point of view of the daily press, it is time to examine some central concepts in depth. Importance is primarily given to defining the limits of the newspaper concept and partly to the relationship to other media, among these the district papers.

The Concept of Newspapers and Its Definition

March 3, 1964 the *Danske Dagblades Fællesrepræsentation* (the Danish union of newspaper publishers and editors) passed a resolution on the definition of the newspaper concept:

A daily newspaper is a local, regional or national printed periodical appearing daily or several times a week, taken by readers in subscription or bought as single copies. The primary aim of the daily newspaper is to carry all-round news from home and abroad and to contribute to information on society's political and cultural development.⁴

The resolution continues to state that a secondary characteristic is free access to the columns of a newspaper for advertisements from authorities, tradesmen, firms, and private citizens.

This definition was agreed upon as a result of practical considerations provoked by the fact that a gratis paper (*Aalborg-Bladet*), containing advertising and local news only, in 1963 had started to appear all six weekdays, and then claimed the right to reduced duty on newsprint on a par with the daily newspapers. The resolution caused exclusion of the *Aalborg-Bladet* from the newspaper pale and so from the possibility of cheap newsprint.

De facto the definition holds, when one is regarding the press of recent times – that of earlier times is another matter. But it is somewhat too narrow and too vague for research and other external uses, as it – apart from periodicity – is based exclusively on news and advertisements as regards the newspaper contents. Any modern Danish daily has many more central facets to its contents – and no monopoly on either aspect.

In connection with the resolution of the “Fællesrepræsentationen” the Imports Duties Act was amended accordingly. From then it defined the daily newspaper as “a publication that appears at least every other weekday and among other things offers general information on current affairs at home and abroad”.⁵

The Mail Act defines a daily as any paper or any publication appearing at least 5 consecutive days a week.⁶ This definition is the basis for decisions as to whether a periodical may be mailed at the reduced “newspaper rate” or not. In all other connections it is useless as a working delimitation of the concept of the daily or newspaper because of the use of periodicity to the exclusion of all other characteristics.

At almost the same time as the “Fællesrepræsentation” – November 1964 – UNESCO passed a “Recommendation” of the definition of newspapers for use in internationally comparable statistics. In this document it is stated:

*General interest newspapers are periodicals intended for the general public and mainly designed to be a primary source of written information on current events connected with public affairs, international questions, politics, etc. They may also include articles on literary or other subjects as well as illustrations and advertising.*⁷

The definition goes on to include all papers covering events of the last 24 hours regardless of periodicity (i.e. both dailies and e.g. separate Sunday papers, known from England) and non-daily periodicals serving as primary sources of general interest-news and -information to their readers.

The UNESCO definition at the same time is broader and more restricted than that of “Fællesrepræsentationen”. On the one hand it doesn’t stress periodicity so heavily. On the other hand the central focus quite clearly is on public and international matters and politics, which often are more or less the same thing, i.e. on one single part of the contents.

The Danish Media Commission of 1980-83 defines dailies as “periodical publications carrying general news, the economy typically based on newspaper sale, in subscription or at newsstands, and on revenues from advertising. The frequency of publication may vary...”⁸ This definition corresponds to that of the “Fællesrepræsentation” and like that is somewhat too narrow and vague, but places the focus of importance on newspaper contents and fits the current state of affairs nicely. The inclusion of the economic aspects ensures a clear demarcation line between newspapers and district papers.

The typological delimitation used in the three-volume handbook on Danish newspapers and related periodicals, their structure and history: *De danske aviser 1634-1991* (The Danish Press 1634-1991)⁹ is as follows:

Included are newspapers, periodicals resembling newspapers, and (especially from the earlier periods) periodicals serving the functions of newspapers, i.e. serving the public with news on especially public affairs, international affairs and domestic policy and/or commenting on such matters. Moreover, publications must be periodical and more than purely local in their contents to be included.

As to periodicity this definition is broader than most of the former ones for the simple reason that it has to cover the whole period from 1634 until today. In the early periods a regular newspaper appeared 1-2 times a week – today 5-7 times. More pithy yet is the basis of the definition which is the newspaper *function*. The fundamental part of this is that newspapers serve – through at least parts of their contents (other kinds of reading matter are usually included) – to enlighten the readers on matters that must be considered relevant to their life as citizens, i.e. carrying what is by general consent regarded as necessary knowledge of public affairs etc. Additionally, there is only to state that this definition like the three former ones de facto works, but is generally relevant over the whole period, too.

To all the definitions mentioned the caution ought to be given that a category “specialist dailies” – in current reality the same thing as business newspapers – should be added to make the Danish newspaper count come out correctly. In today’s newspaper universe the daily *Børsen* (The Exchange) is included in the definition, although that paper’s contents to a very wide extent is restricted to business-relevant articles.

Two features are common to all these definitions: A demand for periodicity and for news: i.e. information on *recent* events.

Without overruling any of the above definitions it ought to be added, that two elementary points should be underlined with special regard to certain demarcation problems towards the district papers (the above-mentioned *Aalborg-Bladet* is a case in point) and more generally to specify the Danish newspaper tradition with regard to Nordic comparability.

Number one is that newspaper contents to a very large extent are determined by tradition, journalistic routines, etc. There is quite simply (or indeed, not so simply) at any point in time a well-structured concept of how today’s newspaper ought to be as to contents and layout. This concept has been built up through

many years and it is quite striking, when looking at the typological development of the press, *that* most changes come gradually – and *that* (just as important): when a certain type of contents once has achieved citizenship in the columns, it never again disappears completely. *And that* all papers strive to keep distinct, individual profiles. This adherence to tradition is intimately connected with the fact that the reader-hydra is extremely conservative.

Point number two is that some kinds of information and news are considered necessary or at least useful to all citizens, for example political decisions of major scope and other facts of general consequence to the life of the citizens. The general newspaper is the classical vehicle for such information. But more universally and at the same time there is a latent demand on anyone to keep oneself informed about the course of events in general – here too, the newspaper by common consent is the traditionally accepted medium. Regarding the daily newspaper this role concretely means that *the daily newspaper needs no supplements*. This means that the readers don't need other media in order to get sufficient information on diverse subjects to be able to fill their roles as citizens. This is a truth with some qualifications as to the popular press and the smallest provincial dailies, but after all even these papers supply a tolerable selection of the most important national and foreign news. Strictly local newspapers and district papers on the contrary need supplements, be they other newspapers or radio/television.

Strictly *local newspapers* – here defined as paid periodicals carrying regularly edited news of a predominantly local character, appearing 1-3 times a week – are an extremely rare phenomenon in Denmark. Only in Lolland and in Ribe (early in the century and 1961-79 respectively) such papers have existed: Two out of those three were part-continuations of bankrupt dailies. But none of these could survive the competition from the provincial dailies that by Danish tradition supply large amounts of local news plus national and foreign coverage. Only in one island community a local paper of this kind has appeared through many years.

District papers is a translation of the Danish term for those gratis periodicals distributed to all households carrying advertising and small amounts of local news only.¹⁰ Local in this connection originally meant completely unpolitical news such as traffic accidents, burglaries, new goods at the local shops, and the first windflower in spring. In later years this has somewhat changed, so that many of these papers publish the whole round of local news, politics included. But: Local only, except some bureau articles on fashion, car tests and such. Apart from their contents of local-topical interest, these papers appeal by being gratis to the consumer as they are fully financed through local advertising.

In direct continuation of this description of the typological demarcations relevant to the Danish newspaper landscape it is logical to describe the state subsidies available to the press, as these subsidies follow the same demarcations and are authorized by the same acts as mentioned above. There are no *direct* subsidies to the daily press in Denmark, but there are a number of *indirect* kinds of subsidy. The most important is the exemption from VAT on newspaper sales. Moreover the press is favoured by reduced mailing rates, and a Financing Institute for the

Daily Press created by law in 1970 receives state grants. Finally the state and local authorities contribute to the economy of the newspapers through extensive public advertising, which generally favours the larger national and regional papers, however. During the years 1950-70 newspapers were also favoured by a substantial reduction in the imports duty on newsprint. In 1970 this special duty was abolished altogether, leaving no need for a special rate either.

At the same time this policy means that newspapers in Denmark have to survive on market conditions – if not in the purest sense, then in a rather similar one. On the other hand, the survival of newspapers as vehicles for political debate and hence for participatory democracy has repeatedly been an issue of deep concern for Danish politicians, resulting in several commissions or committees on the press since 1960, but not in much political action apart from the arrangements sketched above.

On the following pages main lines of newspaper developments in recent times are described.

Main Characteristics and Developments in the Danish Press after 1848¹¹

The starting point is 1848, year of the end to absolute monarchy and the dawn of the freedom of the press, more exactly the year of abolition of censorship. This meant an entirely new foundation for newspaper publishing. The number of independent newspapers, until then very restricted, grew dramatically and continued to grow until around 1920, after which year an equally dramatic reduction has taken place, cf. table 1.

Taking 1848 as the year zero the important press types were:

Newspapers, i.e. periodicals whose main contents were news, often from abroad, at the same time completely lacking in comment and background articles. This type is the oldest one in the Danish press starting in 1634 with the birth of a periodical press. Before 1848 many of these papers did not carry regular political news which required a royal privilege. These papers all typically bore the mark of the censorship in force until 1848, the primary purpose of which was to suppress critique of the absolute monarchy and its government. Over time these news periodicals had become steadily more general in their contents, including still more subjects in their coverage. I.e.: They became *general newspapers*. Periodicity varied from two to six issues per week.

Debate periodicals, whose main contents were articles reflecting or commenting on diverse subjects. Originally (approximately from 1744 on) unpolitical as a type – occupied by general social and moral questions instead – periodicals containing real political debate were started during the 1790s and after a break again in the 1830s. These usually had a lower frequency of publication than especially the newspapers.

Table 1. Number of Independent Newspapers (I-papers; by the end of each year) and their Circulation in the Kingdom of Denmark (yearly average; week-days; from 1919 including Northern Slesvig)¹²

| | Number of I-papers | Circulation (in 1000s) |
|------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1870 | 87 | 95 |
| 1890 | 126 | 279 |
| 1901 | 137 | 490 |
| 1920 | 156 | 1.112 |
| 1930 | 137 | 1.156 |
| 1950 | 111 | 1.673 |
| 1970 | 62 | 1.798 |
| 1988 | 46 | 1.836 |
| 1992 | 42 | 1.707 |
| 1994 | 38 | 1.614 |
| 1996 | 34 | 1.625 |
| 1997 | 34 | 1.607 |

Note: More papers are disappearing in 1998-99. In eastern Jutland one greater regional paper took over a nearby regional by the beginning of 1998. And in the north of Jutland another greater regional merges with a regional (which earlier on has bought three locals) by the end of 1998 or the beginning of 1999. In 1999 two dwarf-papers are merged with this same greater regional.

Political news periodicals, containing both political news and comment (often most of the latter), started appearing from 1825/30, and several had serious problems with censorship during the early years, especially those belonging to the National-liberal or the “democratic” opposition. After 1848 most of these papers typologically merged with the general newspapers or closed.

Common people’s papers were papers aiming at people characterized by low levels of income and education, both urban and rustic, i.e. completely unpolitical (in reality implicitly loyalist) papers giving priority to easily understood and entertaining news items on everyday subjects. Especially the common people of Copenhagen were offered such papers, the first of these being started in 1772.

In addition there were some few business newspapers, a number of periodicals focused on culture, some papers carrying advertising only, mainly in the fields of work, lodging, services and goods – and some other stray periodicals defying typologies.

It is a central point that this typology in this and later periods by and large is restricted to the Copenhagen press, although the metropolitan press constantly to a certain degree has functioned as a national press. The provincial press has all the time been much more homogenous typologically; it consisted of (general) newspapers, later on general dailies, and only the political divisions had any real significance. In a few of the largest provincial towns some attempts at creating a popular press have been made, but most of these attempts were shortlived.

The provincial press made its first tender beginnings in 1735 in the shape of one single – but not very vigorous – paper in Odense. A regular provincial press started growing from 1767 on, based on general news and advertising. The first round of new papers were founded in the main centres of administration (the towns of diocese seats) and had royal privileges to print the legally valid notices. The second wave of paper foundations came in the lesser administrative centres (the county towns) and these had more restricted privileges. A majority of both groups of papers had a privilege to carry political news and were unpolitical in principle, which should be understood as more or less loyal towards the regime, however. The first attempts to create an oppositional provincial press were made from 1836 on.

A characteristic of the following period is that general newspapers (i.e.: dominated by news) became *general dailies* (also carrying background information and comments), which meant that this distinct type became the norm.

A further characteristic of the Danish press and its developments is that the *daily* fast became the norm, as all newcomers aimed at daily publishing – at least all six weekdays. In the years immediately after 1848 two or three issues a week were still the norm for newspapers, new papers included, and only the strongest papers in Copenhagen or the largest towns appeared more often. But frequency increased fast: by the 1870s four issues a week were standard and by the 1890s less than six issues was the exception. New papers starting during this period often began by appearing three times a week but coming abreast as fast as possible. But almost no papers appeared on Sundays and none outside Copenhagen before the turn of the century.

Another feature was that daily publishing time for a majority of the press was in the afternoon. In Copenhagen some papers did appear in the morning, almost none in the provinces before well into the 20th century. Also, papers were almost exclusively sold by subscription (for a quarter or longer periods), not by sale of single copies.

Distribution was for long a material problem for the press, especially the provincial papers. In the towns messengers or the mail were used, but in the rural areas messengers were uneconomical to use, and the mail was the only realistic possibility. And in the more distant areas the mail did not deliver on a daily basis. Not until 1909 did the last rural areas get their mail and paper daily. Until then, people from outlying farms often had to fetch their paper themselves from a local distribution center such as a general store or an inn (not so entertaining as it sounds as many such districts were dry, being under the influence of the Home Mission).

The most marked of the tendencies in the development of the Danish press was the growth of the *political press*: Every single paper made a political stand and became the mouthpiece of a political party. Each party strived for the formation of a nation-wide network of daily papers. As four major parties emerged, the result was the so-called “four-paper-system” that was the standard right until the great epidemics of newspaper closures. The goal of all parties was to have a daily

in every sizeable town in the country, so that the whole population could be reached by a party organ able to attract readers by offering news and other reading matter, especially local news. Preferably it should be an independent daily – an “independent paper” – but if this wasn’t feasible, a “local edition” had to do.¹³ In many cases a party started in any given town by issuing a local edition of a paper in a nearby larger town, and if this local edition was a success, it was changed into an independent paper that might engender further local editions and repeat the process: the “go-cart principle” (in the archaic sense of the word).

Another prominent feature was the rising number of towns with locally published independent newspapers. In 1847 there were 25 such towns (Copenhagen included) in Denmark proper plus Northern Slesvig. This number rose quite steeply through 58 in 1870 and 60 in 1901 to reach a maximum of 62 in 1918.

This development was partially derived from local patriotism, which then more than later was a factor to be taken highly seriously. People in the smaller towns or in their adjoining rural areas simply would not take a paper from another town. So all local editions of any one paper were carefully supplied with new names in the masthead, even if no other changes were made in the contents. This feature was especially important for papers catering to farmers and smallholders.

To a large extent the very expansion of the press towards total coverage of the country from 1848 until around 1920 (especially after 1870) was created through local editions: On the one hand still more independent papers started publishing a rising number of local editions, on the other hand a growing number of local editions became independent papers. But still of course, a large number of dailies were independent papers from their beginnings.

A dominant feature in this period was the very large shares of political contents – news as well as comment (editorials, often of giant size). In connection with this feature *and* as a direct extension and consequence of the sharp social and political conflicts in the second half of the 19th century, polemics between politicians of different persuasions and so between the papers were often very harsh, especially until the turn of the century.

This relationship was a direct consequence of the role of the press during the time. A paper was less a means of information and still less considered as a business venture, but was a weapon in a political conflict both in fighting political adversaries and – no less important – in organizing supporters. Newspapers became focal points in the self-awareness and socio-political restructuring of a population divided into internally homogenous groups and classes.

Those papers that until around 1848 had been National-liberal and unpolitical/loyalist gradually became Conservative. This party organized the town bourgeoisie (in the original socio-political sense) and higher civil servants.

The years immediately after 1848 saw the first appearances of daily newspapers that became the organs of the opposition party “Venstre” (Liberal Democratic Party: agrarian-liberal) which organized the farmers and originally pro-

gressive intellectuals, too. These papers made special progress during the 1860s and 1870s.

Shortly after 1870 the Social Democratic party started organizing workers in the towns (only later in the rural areas) and its press started growing from one single paper into a net covering the whole country a few years after the turn of the century.

In 1905 “Venstre” was split irrevocably – there had been several formations of sections, splits and unifications before – into “Venstre” and “Det radikale Venstre” (Social Liberals). The new party was a product of a rift between farmers and smallholders, the intellectuals allying themselves with the latter group and by now reinforced by the schoolteachers. Most of “Venstre’s” papers remained loyal, but some went to the new party, and then both parties completed their national coverage by new papers (“Venstre” with the better success).

This typology of the press – the “four-paper-system” – had a virtual monopoly throughout the provincial press. Whereas the Copenhagen press, which as formerly mentioned to a certain extent also was a national press, showed a picture with more nuances.

The Copenhagen counterpart to the system of party-political papers in the provinces was constituted by a political press. But in addition to the four large political groups found in the provinces came organs of rather many smaller political parties (Syndicalist, Communist, Georgist, Nazi, etc.) and non-party idealist groupings (e.g.: Home Mission or the temperance movement), which did not have the strength to erect a nation-wide structure of dailies, but had to make do with one paper, based in Copenhagen, possibly supplemented by one or a very few in the provinces. Gradually the political press, originally to almost total exclusion appearing in the early evening, was divided into a morning and an afternoon or evening press (the publishing houses of Berling and Ferslew both issued a morning as well as an evening edition of their main papers). The morning papers at an early stage assumed the character of news-oriented papers and ousted the evening papers. The serious evening papers allied with a morning paper correspondingly centered on cultural matters (especially reviews), background, comments and other elite-relevant matters (the “quality press”).

During the period until the press reform of 1905 the former news periodicals, political or not, disappeared (or were changed into general political dailies), as did the advertising-only papers and the debate periodicals. The common people’s papers were ousted by or changed into a more modern type: *the popular papers*. These emerged from 1860 on. This type differs from the older common people’s papers by basically being general dailies in their contents criteria, taking a (weakly marked) political stand and carrying a complete selection of news – but on the other hand having a set of priorities that differed radically from that of the political dailies. Importance was primarily attached to sensations, entertainment, and (later on) sports.

In the later part of the 19th century a unique and never-repeated phenomenon saw the light of day in Copenhagen: A newspaper group differentiated along

socio-economic lines. The publishing house of Ferslew gradually started or bought papers aimed at the bourgeois higher strata, the middle classes, and blue-collar workers respectively. All these papers were conservative, but whereas the first paper was a quality paper appearing twice a day and the middle-class paper was a political morning paper with a comprehensive news coverage, the lower-class paper was an almost apolitical popular paper. This group of papers for many years benefited from the advantages of large-scale operations in the printing-shop as well as in the newsroom.

In Copenhagen Sunday editions became usual at a rather early stage: All major papers had one by the end of the 19th century. This was made feasible by the much shorter supply lines in metropolitan distribution. In Copenhagen smaller papers relied on the mail, which delivered two or more times a day, except on Sundays (in 1899 some central districts received mail up to eight times a day!). But the larger papers – and especially the morning papers – increasingly arranged their own messenger services. The irrationality of multiple services resulted in the merger into one of originally three large-paper messenger services in 1921 (“Bladkompagniet”), which gradually took over for all Copenhagen newspapers and later spread to the provinces.

As in the provinces, subscription for longer periods – not single copy sales – was the absolute norm. But a distinct feature in parts of the Copenhagen press was the differentiation of length of subscription periods. Papers appealing to the less well-off strata offered monthly or even weekly subscriptions in addition to the standard quarterly periods. But subscription was the basis for sales until the arrival of the boulevard type of popular papers after the turn of the century (cf. below).

During the years 1848-1910 yet two more press types appeared and died in Copenhagen: On the one hand the *war newspapers* that appeared in great numbers during the two Schleswig Wars with Germany (1848-50 & 1864-65). These were in a certain sense a reversal to the old-fashioned news periodical (news only), but at the same time they pointed to the future, as their whole *raison d'être* was the *fast* communication of raw news on the same lines as bureau telegrams. On this dimension they anticipated the press reform from 1905 on (cf. below). During the French-German war in 1870-71 a few papers of this type appeared, and again at the outbreak of World War I a small number, but by then they had long had their day. The general dailies had realized the value of routinely *fast* news communication and furthermore published extra editions, when great events broke. One more new characteristic of these papers was that they were mostly sold as single copies.

On the other hand what may be termed the *gutter press* (ca. 1898-1910): A short-lived phenomenon comprising a small number of papers. This was the most extremely “yellow” press ever seen in Denmark. In several respects it was an extreme version of the popular press, but these papers went straight for the scandal and the exposure to a quite different degree. With an amazing energy they pried into people’s private lives (especially alert to homosexuality) or went on the hunt

for scandals ("corruption") everywhere. More than one in addition were anti-Semitic in a particularly oafish way. This style of journalism gained a degree of footing in parts of the press in general. It provoked a reaction and even the constitution of societies to the prevention of these papers, and this propaganda became so effective around 1909 that it – combined with a growing distaste among the public – meant the deathblow to the gutter press.

Shortly after the year 1900 the only surviving paper types were general dailies – in a number of versions, political, boulevard, specialized and local – and popular papers.

The Press Reform, Intensified Competition and the First Round of Paper Closures

The start of the *press reform* is usually dated to 1905, when Henrik Cavling changed the Copenhagen paper *Politiken* from a traditional political daily into a modern omnibus paper. This however is somewhat too heavy-handed, as several of the new tendencies had been making their first impact at least ten years earlier. But at this point in time all the modern trends in journalism, lay-out and printing came together in one paper.

The press reform coincided with technical revolutions in printing, type-setting, block-making, distribution, and communications (telephone, teleprinter, etc.).

At the same time the position of the press had changed radically. Until this time it had been possible to recruit totally new readers, i.e. people who formerly did not subscribe to or buy a daily paper. Also, the practise of sharing a newspaper subscription among two or more households had now ceased to be common (it was primarily a rural phenomenon). In fact, the formation of the four-paper-system was made possible by the systematic recruiting of new social groups into the universe of newspaper subscribers. Somewhat simplified: The Conservative press from the start appealed to the town upper and middle classes and landed proprietors, the first people who could afford to take a paper. By turns, "Venstre"s press recruited the better-off farmers, the Social Democratic press the workers, and the Social Liberal an alliance of cottagers, teachers, and intellectuals. This happened concurrently with rising incomes and reduced paper prices, the latter a result of cheaper paper and the introduction of machinery, technical innovations, rising incomes from advertising and the benefits of larger-scale operations.

Around the turn of the century or shortly after, this had radically changed: Quite simply, there were no more people to recruit as readers (cf. table 2). This point was reached somewhat earlier in Copenhagen than in the rest of the country, especially the rural districts. If new readers were to be recruited to the individual paper, two possibilities remained. One was that a rising number of households took more than one paper: a morning and a lunchtime or afternoon paper (mostly in Copenhagen) or a local and a national or regional paper (in the prov-

inces). The use of this possibility was hampered by limits set by household economy, but still was a factor of some importance, especially during the World Wars and the Korean War, when interest in news was intense, and during the years immediately after World War I when the Danish economy was relatively prosperous. The other (and more important) possibility was raids on other papers' readership. Further, the demands for technological modernization (purchase of all the modern machinery) or at least renovation of the printing-works in order to print more papers of more or larger pages made costly investment unavoidable, and this had to be financed through an increase of income from subscription/newsstand sales or advertising. At the same time the readers had become more demanding: More and better news combined with more reading matter in general was the password to the future.

Table 2. Household Coverage for News-Carrying Media (per cent of all households)¹⁴

| | Daily press (weekdays) | Radio | TV |
|------|---------------------------|-------|----|
| 1847 | 9 | - | - |
| 1860 | 16 | - | - |
| 1870 | 24 | - | - |
| 1880 | 37 | - | - |
| 1890 | 56 | - | - |
| 1901 | 81 | - | - |
| 1913 | 109 | - | - |
| 1923 | 113 | - | - |
| 1933 | 99 | 54 | - |
| 1943 | 111 | 72 | - |
| 1953 | 111 | 85 | 2 |
| 1963 | 99 | 87 | 52 |
| 1973 | 91 | * | 85 |
| 1983 | 85 | * | 92 |
| 1988 | 83 | * | 94 |
| 1991 | 75 | * | 95 |
| 1994 | 74 | * | 96 |

* Not computed separately – included in the TV-figures.

As to contents, the press reform meant a reduction of the political aspect in favour of a much more comprehensive news coverage¹⁵, cf. table 3. After the resolution in 1901 of a long-standing conflict over the constitution, resulting in parliamentarism based on the lower house of parliament ("Systemskiftet", i.e. the change of political system)¹⁶, the public interest in political polemics or columns of reports from sittings of parliament or political debates apparently

waned. The public had tired of monster editorials propagating clearcut political views telling it what to think, preferring universal information to think and talk about, and this interest accelerated over the years to come.

Additionally, lay-out was reformed dramatically. Instead of a jumble of items in the columns with no or uninformative headlines, pages became systematically constructed, bringing together related parts. Also, the creation of headlines grew into an art form, and the use of pictures and press photography was professionalized.

In short, the papers started competing on the basis of still larger amounts of news and other more varied sorts of contents, especially of the human interest variety, instead of on the basis of views. The most important person on an average editorial staff from now on was no longer the political editor and editorial writer, but to a rising degree the news reporter.

As a consequence, the share of political news and comment in the newspaper columns fell steadily through the years following the press reform, as appears from table 3.

For all papers, the shares of political matter fell steadily. The rise in 1920 was caused by a rather short period of political turbulence, and the same is the case with 1937, although in a less marked way. By then, major events are considered newsworthy per se, whereas the political routine does not command the interest seen in the years before 1905. Also, the gap between the morning papers and the tabloids grows wider as the paper types stabilize. The increase in absolute figures is due to the massive growth in newspaper volume occurring after 1905 with the editorial reforms and the introduction of new printing presses.

Table 3. Political Contents (news, background, editorials) in Selected Years of Dailies in per cent of Total Editorial Contents (column mm's) [N=column meters political contents]¹⁷

| | | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | 1930 | 1937 |
|-------------------|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Dagens | Political contents | 26.5 | 17.3 | 21.0 | 15.8 | 17.8 |
| Nyheder | N | 49.5 | 28.0 | 64.4 | 80.8 | 98.5 |
| Politiken | Political contents | 22.5 | 17.0 | 25.4 | 14.3 | 16.5 |
| | N | 43.6 | 56.2 | 75.2 | 74.3 | 91.0 |
| Social-Demokraten | Political contents | 27.2 | 22.4 | 28.7 | 18.2 | 19.2 |
| | N | 42.0 | 46.0 | 63.6 | 79.3 | 97.6 |
| Aften-bladet | Political contents | 17.0 | 6.6 | 6.5 | 4.4 | 7.7 |
| | N | 14.4 | 6.6 | 6.6 | 12.4 | 22.9 |
| Ekstra-bladet | Political contents | – | 10.5 | 20.1 | 9.5 | 11.3 |
| | N | – | 18.2 | 21.0 | 25.6 | 29.7 |

Throughout history, and everywhere, news hunger is aggravated in times of war. During earlier wars, the “war newspapers” had catered to public demand (cf. above). By the time of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 the dailies supplied the

news, partly by issuing extra editions, but mainly through extensive and up-to-the-last-minute news reporting. By the end of World War I the whole Copenhagen or large-town press had the lesson of the value of red-hot news by heart – or had perished – and the smaller-town press was learning fast. This development soon spilled over to the journalistic treatment of other subject matters. The recency of news reports became a competition factor in its own right.

Also, the importance of independent newsgathering rose, and competition for exclusive news became a vital factor. Earlier it had been an established practice that the scissors were indispensable editorial instruments: It was completely acceptable to serve the readers columns of news that were several days old and reprinted from other papers. Increasingly, newspapers were forced to keep up with events and get their news at the same time as or – even better – ahead of competitors. This further favoured the larger and better-staffed newspapers at the expense of the weaker ones. Additionally, press photography was on the rise as the technical innovations in cameras, films and reproduction (block-making) made it possible to introduce more news pictures in the columns. These news photographs became one more factor in the inter-paper competition, and they, too, favoured the larger and economically stronger papers.

This competition with expansion of contents as the main strategy meant a need for hiring more journalists that in combination with the growing need for more investments in technical innovations provoked the first round of paper closures during the period from 1925 to 1939.

At the same time advertising acquisition became more crucial than before as this source of income became still more indispensable to pay for operation costs. But advertisers preferred the papers that had the largest circulation in any given area. This meant more revenue to the larger and wealthier papers and still less revenue to the weaker papers. This beneficial or vicious circle mainly constituted by the three factors newspaper sales income, advertising income and journalistic capacity is usually termed “the circulation spiral”.¹⁸

The typological consequence of this development was a further reduction in the number of types. The omnibus paper resulting from the press reform everywhere became not only the norm, but the absolute victor. Developments were lagging somewhat behind in the provinces, but here too the press reform was successful one or two decades later than in Copenhagen. Papers unable to adapt to the new realities ceased publication.

As for the popular papers they also changed their style accordingly. Those nearest to the older types closed or changed but those successful in the longer run were two papers started in 1904 and 1916 respectively – the *boulevard* version of the popular paper. These were not only general papers like other survivors but had another, more metropolitan style of reporting than the older papers and catered to another public: Not first-generation town dwellers, but fully urbanized people. This type of paper was the first to enter massively into single copy sales, which is the nearly exclusive sales system for the two survivors of the group and figures as a factor of some importance for the large morning national papers.

The special arrangement of the Ferslew publishing house mentioned above came to an end in 1931, partly because the socio-economical targeting of papers became irrelevant with the growth of the omnibus newspaper type, partly because the publishing house had suffered financial losses through a less than competent management. The three papers were made into one omnibus close to the old middle-class paper which had adapted itself to the new trends most smoothly.

World War II caused stagnation in developments within the newspaper world: The hunger for news was so great, that all papers were able to sell their entire print runs. Another important factor was the newsprint rationing instituted in 1942 that was markedly stricter for the larger papers who had to choose between printing fewer copies or fewer pages, usually preferring the latter alternative. The largest metropolitan papers suffered reductions of upwards of 40% in paper deliveries when rationing was at its most severe, whereas the smallest papers suffered no reduction at all. I.e.: The competition mechanisms were partially abolished and several smaller papers were given an artificial lease of life. This rationing was in force until the end of 1949, even if somewhat lightened from 1947.

After World War II:

Development of Local Monopolies and Other Trends

A central characteristic of the period after 1945 has been the very few attempts to introduce new independent dailies. And with even fewer exceptions the attempts have failed after a rather short time. From 1945 on in all 10 new regular dailies have been launched, of which only two have survived and both of these are catering to a rather clearly delimited (and narrow) section of the market. One of these (*Information*) with roots in the Resistance caters to leftwing intellectuals, whereas the other (*Nordschleswiger*) is the paper of the German-speaking minority in Southern Jutland. In addition to these there is the highly specialized business paper *Erhvervsbladet*, started in 1964 as a monthly, which in 1974 was relaunched as a daily, since then gaining a secure footing, and an attempt in 1976 to change a district paper into a daily, but a test period of one week indicated a failure. In the spring of 1995 a company publishing an opinion weekly (*Den grimme Ælling*, i.e. The Ugly Duckling) used the title in an attempt to start a popular afternoon newsheet, appearing in Copenhagen twice a week, printing mostly local and late news and destined for daily publishing. This was abandoned after a few weeks' publishing, avowedly because of distribution problems. In comparison it should be noted that in the single decade of 1860-69 no less than 73 dailies were launched of which seven survive unto the present day.

After 1945 and the first turbulent following years the situation was normalized, and the mechanism of competition was reintroduced. Once again the priority of the tough compulsory political parts of the contents was reduced, and competition based on ever-increasing amounts of saleable news, exclusive stories, news photographs, service contents, etc. intensified. The road pointed towards a

more non-partisan press aligning itself to the new conditions of a society characterized by growing homogeneity: less marked social divisions and more social mobility.

Also two rounds of technical reforms – replacement and then introduction of a new generation of modern techniques in type-setting, printing, etc. – made severe demands on financing. Moreover, wages of both journalists and the technical staff were rising steeply after World War II, tightening pressures on newspaper economy. This was partly offset by generally rising purchasing power in the population at large, which on one side allowed an extended media consumption (but, alas, of other media than the daily press, too), but on the other created a basis for an expanding amount of advertising and so for rising revenues to the papers from this source.

From 1955 on the number of paper closures increased again, and this time around developments were even more serious, cf. table 1. As early as 1963 only 70 independent papers of 101 in 1955 had survived. After 1965 (64 papers) the situation stabilized somewhat until 1971, when nearly all remnants of the Social Democratic press in the provinces broke down in spite of heavy subsidies from the trade unions and although a great contraction in the number of the party's independent dailies was implemented in 1961-63, leaving mostly local editions. By 1972 only 52 independent papers remained.

In other words, the circulation spiral took a few more turns, leaving only one survivor with a local monopoly in any given area. The reasons were the same as in the first round – a trinity of newspaper sales, advertising concentration and journalistic staff size and capacity. The victors were mostly from the Liberal press (cf. table 10 below). These had the traditional advantage of a near-monopoly on the more well-off farmers in the environs of the provincial towns, who up till well after 1945 were very numerous – whereas the Conservative and Social Democratic papers had to fight over the town populations: The affluent Conservatives being a minority and the numerous Social Democratic workers too impecunious to attract much advertising interest. The Social Liberal smallholders weren't very attractive advertising targets either, and the teachers of that party not very numerous.

Since 1972 a further 18 papers have closed or become local editions, including the last two provincial papers of the Social Democratic press. Sum total in 1997: 34 survivors. To illustrate this development, the reader is referred to table 1 – note included – above.

It is remarkable that total circulation still rose for quite a number of years after the great massacres. Maximum number of papers was reached in 1919, but population growth and reduction of number of grown people per household made circulation growth possible until around 1988. After that point in time, the total number of daily paper copies has fallen. One important reason for this has been the economic recession in the mid- and late eighties. The circulation figures from the year 1996 showed a slight increase. This was probably the result of two factors: One was the general economic recovery. But the other was the massive

subscription campaigns run by most newspapers in the last year. The latter factor is probably the more important. The decrease in the 1997 figures indicate that the effect of the campaigns are wearing off, even though they haven't been abandoned yet, so that the general trend is showing again.

It was evident already from the figures on circulation and household coverage that many people formerly were reading more than one newspaper a day. The decrease in such habits is one factor determining the overall fall in circulation figures. But not a very important one after the mass deaths of the late 1950s and early 1960s as not much more than a fourth of the adult population by then were reading more than one daily anyway – much more important was the decrease in the number of people reading newspapers at all, as appears from table 4.

Table 4. Percentage of the Adult Population Reading One or More Newspapers a Day in Selected Years¹⁹

| | 1964 | 1975 | 1987 | 1993 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Reading one paper a day | 92 | 88 | 83 | 74 |
| Reading more papers a day | 26 | 26 | 30 | 24 |

Whereas the percentage of people reading newspapers has decreased steadily over these thirty years, the percentage of people reading more than one a day has remained remarkably stable. These of the latter group probably represent the core public of newspapers. But the composition has probably changed somewhat over the years, so that by now a substantial part is those reading either two nationals (a morning national and a tabloid or two morning nationals) or one regional/local plus a national. Of necessity the group reading two local newspapers has more or less disappeared because of the local monopolies.

Two special cases of double readership have emerged during the nineties, as the two national morning papers appearing in Copenhagen each has made arrangements with a local newspaper in Zealand. The subscribers to the local papers get the national paper in the morning in addition to the local afternoon paper. This boosted circulation by a total of 54.000 copies a day. These arrangements are of benefit to both sides: The local papers may concentrate on local journalism as their readers now get a larger amount of fully professional national and foreign news through the national paper. And the national papers become more attractive as advertising vehicles through a denser distribution in a known area – apart from blocking competitors from that area.

A central factor in the developments of the press after World War II has been the demolition of the old and stable structure of political parties after around 1958 and of the traditional loyalty towards political parties and class positions. In a parallel move, the choice of newspaper has become increasingly independent of its political affiliation. Much more important to the appeal of newspapers to their public has become contents in general, especially the profile, breadth and

quality of news. Logically enough, the newspapers have become much less partisan in their news coverage over the period in order to appeal to large sections of the (local) population irrespective of political hues.

Developments in the years after 1945 further consolidated the Danish press structure of few types, all three (national, provincial and tabloid) variations on the omnibus theme. In Copenhagen the last representatives of two paper types were eliminated: On the one hand the quality evening press of which one of the large papers closed down as early as 1931, another became a morning paper in 1969, and the last closed in 1971 (the weekly *Weekendavisen* is the remainder of the *Berlingske Aftenavis*). On the other hand that part of the popular press closest to the old-world common people's papers, the last bastion of which fell with *Aftenbladet* in 1959, leaving the field to the modern boulevard type.

In general, only mainstream newspapers survived, whereas the ones incapable of catering to large sections of the population across political and social barriers had to close.

Provincial Diversification and Typological Redistribution

Just as the expansion of the press to a large extent was made through the creation of local editions, which often were made independent later on, both rounds of contractions found expression in an inversion of this process. An independent newspaper in economic difficulties often tried to save itself through reducing the number of local editions (provided it had any). And several independent newspapers became dependent on or local editions of another, economically stronger, independent paper in a nearby town, preferably of the same political hue. If this ran into difficulties later on, the process might be repeated.

Moreover, it is a remarkable fact that whereas in the years immediately preceding 1950 the average was two independent papers plus one or two local editions to any larger provincial town, the current situation is that no provincial town any longer has more than one paper, independent or not.²⁰ For many years (1974-94) only one provincial town (Rønne) had more than one independent local paper, and here one was closed in the fall of 1994. The consequence of this pattern is that on the whole all provincial dailies now have local monopolies. This – among other things – means that the traditional situation of several political parties being represented by an affiliated paper in any one town no longer exists.

After World War II the formerly quite homogenous provincial press has diversified to some degree. While newspaper districts until then in the absolute majority of cases consisted of one town and its environs, and very few were seeking to spread their circulation into wider areas, some papers have aimed energetically at enlarging their territory after 1945, becoming regional papers for a number of trade districts through elimination of weaker papers in neighbouring towns. While others have continued in the role of regular local papers. I.e.: The differences in district sizes and consequently in circulation figures have increased.

Also, diversification has influenced the content profiles, cf. below. The result has been a split of the provincial press into four types: A small number of *greater regional papers*, in content much resembling the national morning papers, a somewhat larger number of *regional papers* with more local reporting; this content aspect features even more markedly in the third type, the *local papers*, and becomes totally dominant in the fourth, the *restricted local paper*, which means a paper appearing in a rather small town with no sizeable economically dependent environs.

In combination with the large number of paper closures and ensuing local monopolies this had led to a direct reduction in the number of towns with own papers which from a modest 25 in 1847 and 58 by 1870 had been rising to a maximum of 62 by 1918. As early as 1948 there were only 54 such towns, in 1968: 41 and a mere 26 by 1996.²¹

This means that several towns formerly being served by their own paper(s) no longer have one at all, for example such relatively large towns as Roskilde or Slagelse. Aarhus, the second largest town in Denmark, is the home town of two papers, but only one of these may be characterized as a local (regional in fact) paper. The other one, *Jyllands-Posten*, is a decidedly national paper. In view of the fact that more and more people are living in ever-growing towns this development is the more remarkable.

The distribution of circulation averages among the different press types have changed, too. In a by now prolonged stretch of years the national press has gradually won a larger share of the market at the expense of the provincial press, as appears from table 5.

This shows that the local provincial dailies have steadily lost ground until around 1985, but after this time stabilizing their share of the market on a lower level. Especially the medium-sized papers have suffered losses, cf. table 6. It is also evident that the papers sold in single copies, i.e. the popular tabloids, made considerable progress in the 1970s, at the same time spreading into the provinces, but later losing some of the gain to the large "serious" morning papers. The long-term winners have been the national morning press.

Table 5. The Distribution of Circulation as to Different Press Types (per cent)²²

| | 1970 | 1975 | 1980 | 1988 | 1992 | 1996 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| National dailies sold in subscription (the political morning press) | 26.2 | 25.5 | 27.2 | 30.8 | 32.9 | 36.4 |
| National dailies sold in single copies (the popular press) | 21.9 | 26.3 | 25.5 | 24.7 | 22.9 | 19.3 |
| Local provincial dailies (sold in subscription) | 51.8 | 48.1 | 47.2 | 44.5 | 44.2 | 44.3 |

If one further splits the latest developments in newspaper circulation figures by typological divisions a picture emerges as shown in table 6.

Table 6. Circulation Development in the Last Decade by Newspaper Typology (N =number of independent papers)²³

| | 2. half-year 1983 | 2. half-year 1994 | Diff.% | N |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|----|
| Large national morning | 372.162 | 437.421 | +17.5 | 3 |
| Small national morning | 140.749 | 118.483 | -15.8 | 4 |
| Popular tabloids | 462.794 | 340.233 | -26.5 | 2 |
| Greater regional | 323.364 | 293.220 | -9.3 | 4 |
| Regional | 324.018 | 259.462 | -19.9 | 9 |
| Local | 141.424 | 134.944 | -4.6 | 10 |
| Restricted local (dwarves) | 13.971 | 15.695 | +12.3 | 4 |
| Total | 1.778.482 | 1.599.458 | -10.1 | 36 |

The overall picture shows a 10% decrease in circulations over the last ten years, but this decrease is rather unevenly distributed. The large national morning papers show a collective increase by nearly a fifth, which has benefited the two right-wing papers remarkably more than the third social-liberal. The small national morning papers as a whole have lost around 15% of their circulation. Here there is one winner: the specialist business daily *Børsen* (+11%) – and one heavy loser, the remaining Social Democratic paper *Aktuelt* which has gone down by a fourth in spite of heavy Labour Union subsidies through many years and a costly relaunching in 1987 as partly liberated from its political ties. It was relaunched once more in August 1997 as a frankly political paper focusing on analysis and background, apparently without much success, maybe even further circulation decline.

Within the national press of large morning dailies an interesting phenomenon has been observed. In the thirties, three large morning papers in Copenhagen constituted the then nearest equivalent to a national press: Two conservative (issued by the houses of Berlingske and Ferslew) and one social-liberal (*Politiken*). This triopoly was gradually becoming a duopoly as the Ferslew paper was further weakened (cf. above). In 1961 the paper was abruptly discontinued, and the duopoly was a reality. But from 1970 on and especially in the 1990s the one truly supra-regional paper issued outside the capital – *Jyllands-Posten* in Aarhus – began expanding into the Copenhagen area and generally to become national. So now there is a triopoly of national morning papers again.

The tabloids (also national) have suffered heavy losses – here it must be kept in mind that the years around 1983 to them meant an all-time high – due to a combination of reader desertion in favour of TV or the more informative morning papers and price sensitivity in the economic crisis starting in the latter half of the 1980s, which hit single copy sales of tabloids harder than the subscription sales of the other papers. The reader desertion has gone two ways: Those wanting information opted for morning or local papers. Those attracted by the entertainment values opted for TV, a development accelerated through the rising number of commercial TV-channels broadcasting films and other entertainment pro-

grammes around the clock. The trend has been further abetted by the economic factor: As TV consumption is free once the license fee is paid – apart from some coded channels cost is independent of consumption level – it is considered cheaper than newspapers and more of a basic necessity. Moreover, the newsstand sales of tabloids are hampered by a trend in shopping habits towards fewer visits to shops: Supermarkets to an increasing degree dominate the market for an increasing number of daily consumer goods, and consumers concentrate their shopping visiting the supermarkets or shopping malls *and* the newsstands fewer times a week. Also, the price of single newspaper copies has risen more than subscription rates for some years.²⁴

The greater regional papers have generally kept their circulation intact. The total is influenced by a special case, though: A regional merger of two papers which eliminated a number of double readerships.

The papers of smaller regions, on the other hand, have suffered massive losses – one fifth, in fact – and only two of these nine rather large papers are exceptions with small increases. The seven have lost from 12% upwards, the record being 35%. The two exceptions have a common feature: They are published in peripheral, thinly populated areas characterized by marginalization and problem-ridden economies. In these districts the national dailies representing modernization have no chance at all. Those papers to suffer the heaviest losses are based on Zealand and so threatened by the Copenhagen papers – or under pressure from a large regional invading their territory.

The smaller local papers on an average have seen slight losses or growth. The two cases of losses exceeding 10% are both situated in towns with ill-defined environs easily invaded by stronger neighbours. The really small-town papers on the other hand, have stood the course rather well. Only one has had a small loss, whereas one has had a circulation increase of one full fourth. This is due to determined journalistic catering to local interests combined with a judicious selection of national and international news. In short, the paper has made itself indispensable. But most of these papers are threatened, nevertheless, as they cannot in the longer run compete with what the larger papers offer their readers by way of national news and general information. In recent years several have been bought by a regional or greater regional papers, and in 1998 two more followed suit, leaving only three fully independent.

While the market for dailies on weekdays has been steadily shrinking, the current picture is somewhat different as to the Sunday market. In 1970 13 newspapers appeared on Sundays with a total circulation of 1.283 thousands. In 1980 the number had fallen to 10 and the circulation to 1.181. After 14.6.1987 when the two large tabloids started appearing on Sundays, the number rose to 12 and total circulation to 1.450 thousands. On the other hand this initiative killed off two other Sunday newspapers – among these that of the national Social Democratic daily – after which the number in 1992 once more was 10, while the total circulation fell only a very little to 1.443. By 1997 circulation was virtually unchanged at 1.437 thousands. This means that paper sales constantly have been lower on Sundays than on weekdays, but that the difference has narrowed over the years.²⁵

Ownership and Income Distribution

With concentration of papers, there has also been a marked concentration of ownership, especially in one quarter, where one company (Berlingske) by 1995 directly owned two large papers and had shares varying from 100 to 49% in no less than six others, none of these insignificant papers plus co-operating with one more – thus controlling nearly a third of total circulation, and in 1998 further increased its share of the market to 35% of circulation. Meanwhile the next largest (ownership of two large papers and co-operation with one local) controls or influences a mere fifth. A third focus is *Jyllands-Posten* which in 1998 bought a small regional paper near its home town, so controlling about 12%. The north of Jutland is now dominated by one company, as the paper in Aalborg in recent years have bought or merged with all others. The final merger is effected by late 1998 and will result in a market share of 6% or so. Generally, developments in ownership over the last half-century show some interesting tendencies, summed up in table 7.

Apart from the reduction in the total number of newspapers, some tendencies are evident. There has been a steady reduction in the number – and especially circulation: from nearly half to one seventh – of papers in private ownership, i.e.: owned by a family or some single person, plus companies controlled by very few investors. Larger papers have other forms of ownership. Stock company ownership – many investors, voting by stock holding – showed a marked decrease changing to an increase just as marked. This change was caused by a reconstruction of the largest single company in 1982.

Table 7. Development in Types of Newspaper Ownership: Distribution of Number of Papers and [in brackets] Percentage of Total Circulation²⁶

| | 1948 | 1968 | 1973 | 1993 |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Private ownership | 52 [45.0] | 25 [51.0] | 21 [37.0] | 10 [14.2] |
| Stock company ownership | 34 [22.4] | 11 [25.1] | 5 [6.4] | 10 [31.4] |
| Democratic company | 30 [15.4] | 14 [13.4] | 12 [10.8] | 6 [6.5] |
| Union ownership | 28 [15.8] | 9 [9.4] | 8 [6.3] | 2 [3.6] |
| Foundation ownership | 1 [1.4] | 1 [1.1] | 9 [39.5] | 9 [44.3] |
| Total | 145 [100] | 60 [100] | 55 [100] | 37 [100] |

Democratically owned companies – many investors, having one vote each independent of size of holding – have shown a small decline, but a really dramatic reduction is seen in the group of union- or association-owned papers. The main reason is the breakdown of the Social Democratic newspaper group, of which only one single paper remains – this group was owned by the labour unions.

Foundation owned papers – i.e.: papers owned by a foundation with the sole function of keeping the paper in question going – were long a rarity. But from around 1970 there was a dramatic increase in numbers and circulation. The

above-mentioned next and third largest newspaper groups and two out of four greater regionals are now organized in this way. This picture is confirmed by a look at some main accounts figures as shown in table 8.

Table 8. Gross Annual Profits²⁷ [number of papers/gross annual profit i mio. kroner]

| | 1972 | 1993 |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Private ownership | 15: 26.2 | 10: 66.0 |
| Company ownership | 16: 22.3 | 15: 54.7 |
| Association/Union ownership | 7: -19.3 | 1: -2.6 |
| Foundation ownership | 6: 43.5 | 9: 108.7 |
| Total | 44: 72.7 | 35: 226.8 |

Note: The 44 papers in 1972 represent approximately 91% of total turnover. In 1993 no figures are available for two very small papers.

The figures show that negative results are quite usual among the association or union owned papers – these are dying out in spite of massive subsidies. This is partly a result of the Social Democrats' weakened hold on the labour union members and a consequently lessened willingness among the members to subsidize a party press they don't want to read.

In the other groups positive accounts balances are the norm – in a sense necessarily so as these papers cannot fetch subsidies anywhere. But especially the foundation owned papers come out with comfortable figures on the bottom line, partly a consequence of their not having to pay dividends to stockholders or owners.

When paper typology is taken into account, the picture is a different one, although not contradictory. Over the latest decade, the development in main groups of income and expenditure has been as shown in table 9.

From this table appears that as to sales of subscriptions and single copies and – although less convincingly – as to income from advertising, the national dailies have been the winners. But on the other income types the regional and local papers, especially the former, have seen a massive increase. In this latter group, the incomes from district papers are included. This means that the newspaper itself is a much more profitable business for the national papers as a group, even if the figures are dragged down by the rather bad business results of the three small national morning papers. The figures of the large national morning and tabloid papers would look better by themselves.

Table 9. Enterprise Comparison of Danish Newspapers 1985-1994. Index 100=1985, Corrected for Inflation²⁸

| | National | | Regional | | Local | |
|---------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|-------|------|
| | 1985 | 1994 | 1985 | 1994 | 1985 | 1994 |
| <i>Income</i> | | | | | | |
| Newspaper sale | 100 | 177 | 100 | 140 | 100 | 146 |
| Advertising | 100 | 141 | 100 | 128 | 100 | 124 |
| Other income | 100 | 25 | 100 | 361 | 100 | 201 |
| <i>Expenditure:</i> | | | | | | |
| Editorial expenses in all | 100 | 178 | 100 | 172 | 100 | 167 |
| Technical production | 100 | 163 | 100 | 127 | 100 | 134 |
| Distribution | 100 | 181 | 100 | 164 | 100 | 155 |
| Other expenditure | 100 | 99 | 100 | 142 | 100 | 163 |
| Result | 100 | 197 | 100 | 104 | 100 | 121 |

On the expenditure side, the ranking is the same on most accounts: Editorial staff, the technical departments and distribution. On every aspect the national papers expend more, except on "other", which among other things include the newspaper concerns' administration. Here the national papers show that they are generally larger enterprises than the rest and have exploited the rationalization possible to large-scale operations.

The relative position may be viewed as expressed in number of pages and in cost per printed page which is summarized in table 10.

Table 10. Newspapers' Total Number of Pages, of Editorial Pages, and Cost (in Danish crowns, corrected for inflation) per Editorial Page; by Paper Type²⁹

| | Total number of pages | | Number of editorial pages | | Cost per page | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------|---------------------------|------|---------------|-------|
| | 1985 | 1994 | 1985 | 1994 | 1985 | 1994 |
| National papers | 55.6 | 68.8 | 32.4 | 48.0 | 9.957 | 8.830 |
| Regional papers | 40.6 | 53.4 | 23.9 | 36.9 | 3.949 | 3.146 |
| Local papers | 23.3 | 27.7 | 17.2 | 22.6 | 1.713 | 1.611 |

It emerges quite clearly that the numbers of pages have grown in all newspaper types over the last decade or so. By the bye, the number of pages grew much more earlier on, as 4 was the standard number until well into this century. But the recent growth has been much larger in the national and (especially) the regional papers than in the local ones. This has accentuated the differences between large nationals/regionals and the small locals even further. What does not appear from this calculation is the fact that the ones among the regionals to come out with the most marked rate of increase are the greater regional papers.

Also the numbers of editorial pages have grown and at such a rate that the numbers of advertising pages have shrunk, except in the regional papers – they have simply kept the number of advertising columns. The national papers can afford this trend to some degree, but the small local papers can not. This is one more expression of the vice in which the smaller local papers find themselves. On the one hand their readers demand modern-day levels of content, on the other they cannot get the advertisement revenue with which to pay for an increase of journalistic capacity.

In the third set of columns the costs per page are shown. Not surprisingly they are much higher in the national than in the regional – more than double in fact – who in turn spend much more than the local papers. Only a modest part of these differences are explained by differences in wage levels and expenditure on such features as news graphics or special photos. Much more important are differences of another sort: Whereas the large national papers spend generously on foreign correspondents, reviewers, expert columnists, generally printing articles of their own making only, supplementing with costly international material, the regional papers don't have these possibilities. And the local papers have to make do with ready-made bureau stuff in addition to local news done in short time.

More surprisingly, the costs per page have decreased over these 9 years. But not equally. The national papers have been able to rationalize and so cut back on editorial costs by approximately 11% without much loss of quality. The regional papers have had to cut back by 20% which means quality problems and more ready-made bureau matter. The yet smaller papers have cut back by “only” 6% – an expression of their plight: It means that they simply could not cut back any more if they were to have any paper at all, and that the next round of competition pressure may result in extinction.

Political Dis-Affiliation

Politically viewed, provincial newspapers originally associated to the Liberals have survived to a quite dominant degree compared with those affiliated to other parties. Others are Social Liberal and a few Conservative. Of the formerly quite numerous Social Democratic press two survived until 1994 and only one of these had a local – and geographically very limited – monopoly.³⁰ The reasons for this development have been discussed above.

It ought to be noted, however, that by far most monopolist papers have perceptibly downgraded their political colouring of the contents – editorials excepted – after acquiring the position of the only newspaper in a circulation area, and most have opened their columns to other political views in the shape of letters to the editor or other comments. The development on this dimension may be summed up in the following table 11.

Solely within the metropolitan press, where all papers are national papers, does one find papers with historic, but now loosened, affiliations to three out of the four large old parties (two Conservative, two Social Liberal, one Social Demo-

cratic, but none Liberal) supplemented by three independents, one of which is Christian, one leftist and one with trade and business affiliations. The Communist paper closed down by the end of 1990, while the Socialist People's Party (currently the largest by three in Parliament) was unable to maintain a daily for more than 12 years (1970-82). Of a total of eight survivors five are of the type serious political morning press, while two are popular tabloids and the eighth a specialist business daily.

Table 11. Development of Newspapers' Political Affiliations³¹ [absolute numbers]

| | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 1995 |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Social Democrat | 14 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Social Liberal | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Independent Social Liberal | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Conservative | 16 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Independent Conservative | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Liberal | 36 | 27 | 14 | 13 | 6 |
| Independent Liberal | 2 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 9 |
| Communist/Socialist | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Other Independent | 8 | 9 | 12 | 16 | 15 |
| Total | 88 | 62 | 49 | 47 | 37 |

A constant trend from the press reform onwards is a depolitization of newspapers.³² This has taken two forms: On the one hand a reduction of the space devoted to politics, both news and editorials. On the other a weakening of political colouring of news stories. Political journalism has changed very much in post-war years. Formerly, political journalism was structured by its own distinct set of news values, determined by political allegiances. Political friends were given much space and loyal treatment, whereas opponents were overlooked or criticized, occasionally even lampooned. Gradually this has changed so that politics are treated like any other field of journalism, i.e. by standard news criteria.

In the provincial press this has been obviously necessary with the emergence of local monopolies. When a paper – of any one political colour – is the only one left in a given area, its aim will be to recruit the readers of the defunct papers who have different political allegiances. In order to do so the survivor has to appeal to these people and so to tone down its own political opinionmaking. It has to become an omnibus paper in the political sense. But the trend started most markedly in the national papers, probably because they realized at an early stage that readers rather wanted news and background information to talk and think about than being told what to think.

Newspaper Contents at the Present Time and Recent Developments

There are very few comprehensive analyses of the contents of the Danish press in recent times. Some central results of one study is given in table 12. This analysis covers a sample of national morning papers, large or small, the two tabloids and a sample of provincial papers of different region and circulation size. Contents are analyzed as to subject matter, and shares of local journalism in the provincial papers are also presented.

A general tendency is to give a slightly higher priority to political matters in 1994 than in 1983. A closer look at the figures reveals that this happens more in the field of foreign politics – or in the case of the smaller provincial dailies: local politics – than to politics in general. This trend, however, is not accompanied by a repoliticizing of journalism. Rather the opposite in the sense that political journalism has become more analytical or consequence-related than before.

Other tendencies are to allocate increasing proportions of column space to social questions, culture and life-style, whereas economics and entertainment get smaller shares. Sports are another sort of case: Those papers using the largest amounts of column space in this field in 1983 have downgraded this topic – and vice versa. The result is a marked degree of levelling.

Crime, accidents and the like in most cases get smaller attention in 1994 compared with 1983, the tabloids excepted. But figures vary much – and besides these are the most difficult topics to evaluate as they are the most decidedly event-related fields of journalism.

In general – and this pertains to all papers – the trend over the last decade has been towards the more “serious” subjects of politics, economics, social questions and culture, while the more “popular” subjects receive a little less attention. And this trend has not been accompanied by a trend to popularize the harder news. Rather the opposite.

Another tendency has been observed among the provincial dailies. They have become more differentiated. The greater regional papers (*Fyens Stiftstidende* & *Jydske Vestkysten*) are by now spending less energy on local journalism than before, while the smaller papers do the opposite, especially the smallest. This means that the greater regional papers are getting closer to the national papers in character – and the subregional and local papers are getting more dissimilar to the national papers.

Also, the long tradition of the popular tabloids to put growing distance between themselves and the morning papers seems to have been broken. If anything, they are moving slightly towards the position of the morning papers.

Newspaper Readership

Consumption of newspapers is influenced by a wide array of socio-cultural factors. Studies in this field are rather few but the results are reassuringly alike.³⁴

Table 12. Distribution of Newspaper Contents by Subject Matter, per cent of Total Number of Larger Articles³³

| | Politics total | Economy & Soc. | Culture total | Sensation | Sports | Entertainment & leisure | Div. | Total | N |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------|--------|----------------------------|------|-------|-----|
| Jyllands-Posten 1983 | 17.0 | 27.5 | 14.7 | 4.9 | 6.8 | 17.0 | 12.1 | 100.0 | 470 |
| Jyllands-Posten 1994 | 15.3 | 24.3 | 16.1 | 3.4 | 10.3 | 14.3 | 16.3 | 100.0 | 740 |
| Politiken 1983 | 12.5 | 15.6 | 17.8 | 11.1 | 9.2 | 18.3 | 15.5 | 100.0 | 360 |
| Politiken 1994 | 20.9 | 15.7 | 21.5 | 3.8 | 9.3 | 11.3 | 17.5 | 100.0 | 578 |
| Aktuelt 1983 | 16.2 | 20.3 | 12.9 | 9.3 | 15.9 | 17.2 | 8.2 | 100.0 | 389 |
| Det fri Aktuelt 1994 | 24.3 | 18.0 | 15.0 | 3.6 | 15.8 | 9.6 | 13.7 | 100.0 | 366 |
| Information 1983 | 48.4 | 14.4 | 19.7 | 0.5 | 2.1 | 3.2 | 11.7 | 100.0 | 188 |
| Information 1994 | 40.4 | 4.4 | 30.7 | 2.2 | 3.6 | 8.0 | 10.7 | 100.0 | 225 |
| B.T. 1983 | 8.3 | 10.3 | 6.6 | 10.8 | 22.3 | 28.5 | 13.2 | 100.0 | 242 |
| B.T. 1994 | 14.8 | 6.3 | 3.1 | 15.3 | 19.7 | 29.4 | 11.4 | 100.0 | 446 |
| Ekstra Bladet 1983 | 10.2 | 9.0 | 6.3 | 9.4 | 27.0 | 27.1 | 11.0 | 100.0 | 255 |
| Ekstra Bladet 1994 | 10.8 | 10.5 | 7.2 | 9.5 | 19.3 | 29.5 | 13.2 | 100.0 | 400 |
| Fyens Stiftstid. 1983, total | 17.1 | 22.8 | 9.5 | 5.2 | 10.6 | 15.5 | 19.3 | 100.0 | 368 |
| do. local | 8.0 | 20.3 | 11.6 | 4.3 | 15.9 | 8.7 | 31.2 | 100.0 | 138 |
| Morgenposten 1994, total | 19.1 | 16.1 | 14.4 | 5.8 | 11.5 | 13.2 | 19.9 | 100.0 | 627 |
| do. local | 10.8 | 16.3 | 15.9 | 10.5 | 8.9 | 11.6 | 26.0 | 100.0 | 258 |
| Vestkysten 1983, total | 14.7 | 24.0 | 7.3 | 9.4 | 10.3 | 13.2 | 21.1 | 100.0 | 341 |
| do. local | 4.6 | 25.0 | 13.0 | 8.3 | 15.7 | 10.2 | 23.2 | 100.0 | 108 |
| JydskeVestkysten '94 total | 17.9 | 19.4 | 13.3 | 4.9 | 16.2 | 8.8 | 19.5 | 100.0 | 532 |
| do. local | 15.5 | 19.4 | 10.2 | 7.3 | 13.1 | 5.4 | 29.1 | 100.0 | 206 |
| Fyns Amts Avis 1983, total | 16.3 | 23.0 | 8.4 | 5.4 | 12.3 | 14.4 | 20.2 | 100.0 | 430 |
| do. local | 15.1 | 25.4 | 10.8 | 3.9 | 11.6 | 8.6 | 24.6 | 100.0 | 232 |
| Fyns Amts Avis 1994, total | 18.4 | 22.4 | 9.0 | 3.4 | 11.7 | 10.5 | 24.6 | 100.0 | 468 |
| do. local | 14.9 | 31.4 | 9.9 | 5.4 | 9.1 | 5.8 | 23.5 | 100.0 | 242 |
| Vejle Amts Flkbl. '83, total | 19.4 | 19.8 | 9.6 | 4.6 | 7.4 | 9.0 | 30.2 | 100.0 | 324 |
| do. local | 10.5 | 22.6 | 11.1 | 3.0 | 11.1 | 4.5 | 37.2 | 100.0 | 199 |
| Vejle Amts Flkbl. '94, total | 16.3 | 16.9 | 10.2 | 4.6 | 10.4 | 13.1 | 28.5 | 100.0 | 520 |
| do. local | 11.0 | 21.6 | 10.6 | 5.5 | 10.6 | 8.2 | 32.5 | 100.0 | 255 |
| Ringk. A. Dgbl. 1983, total | 17.1 | 22.6 | 8.0 | 7.6 | 11.6 | 17.1 | 16.0 | 100.0 | 275 |
| do. local | 12.1 | 29.3 | 10.5 | 4.5 | 15.8 | 7.5 | 20.3 | 100.0 | 133 |
| Ringk. A. Dgbl. 1994, total | 22.3 | 22.0 | 11.1 | 4.7 | 16.5 | 11.4 | 12.0 | 100.0 | 449 |
| do. local | 22.7 | 21.7 | 11.8 | 5.9 | 18.2 | 4.9 | 14.8 | 100.0 | 203 |
| Skive Folkeblad 1983, total | 16.6 | 29.9 | 12.8 | 5.7 | 11.8 | 16.1 | 7.1 | 100.0 | 211 |
| do. local | 21.6 | 37.1 | 16.5 | 2.1 | 12.4 | 5.1 | 5.2 | 100.0 | 97 |
| Skive Folkeblad 1994, total | 17.6 | 23.2 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 17.5 | 13.2 | 11.9 | 100.0 | 302 |
| do. local | 11.1 | 32.6 | 13.2 | 7.6 | 19.5 | 4.9 | 11.1 | 100.0 | 144 |
| Helsingør Dagblad '83, total | 11.5 | 16.7 | 10.4 | 5.7 | 23.9 | 17.2 | 14.6 | 100.0 | 192 |
| do. local | 11.3 | 19.3 | 11.4 | 9.1 | 23.9 | 13.6 | 11.4 | 100.0 | 88 |
| Helsingør Dagblad '94, total | 20.2 | 14.1 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 17.7 | 17.0 | 14.4 | 100.0 | 277 |
| do. local | 19.6 | 21.0 | 8.1 | 10.8 | 16.2 | 13.5 | 10.8 | 100.0 | 148 |
| Ny Dag 1983, total | 18.5 | 20.7 | 5.0 | 6.4 | 8.5 | 12.1 | 28.8 | 100.0 | 281 |
| do. local | 16.7 | 23.5 | 4.9 | 5.6 | 11.7 | 4.9 | 32.7 | 100.0 | 162 |
| Ny Dag 1994, total | 18.4 | 20.8 | 6.7 | 8.2 | 15.1 | 10.3 | 20.5 | 100.0 | 331 |
| do. local | 18.7 | 27.6 | 7.5 | 10.7 | 13.5 | 5.6 | 16.4 | 100.0 | 214 |

Note: [home town – political affiliation – circulation in 1000s 1983 & 1994]:

Large morning national: *Jyllands-Posten* [Aarhus; independent; circulation 101 & 152] – *Politiken* [Copenhagen; 1983 Independent Social Liberal; 1994 Independent; 149 & 153]

Small morning national: (*Det fri Aktuelt* [Copenhagen; Social Democrat; 55 & 40] – *Information* [Copenhagen; Independent; 34 & 24])

Tabloid: *B.T.* [Copenhagen; Independent Conservative; 207 & 164] – *Ekstra Bladet* [Copenhagen; Independent Social Liberal; 246 & 176]

Greater regional: *Fyens Stiftstidende/Morgenposten* [Odense; Independent; 69 & 66] – *Vestkysten* [Esbjerg; Liberal; 56]; *JydskeVestkysten* [merger of *Vestkysten* & *Jydske Tidende* (conservative); Esbjerg/Aabenraa; Independent (Liberal); 95]

Regional: *Fyns Amts Avis* [Svendborg; Liberal; 25 & 22] – *Vejle Amts Folkeblad* [Vejle; Liberal; 28 & 31]

Local: *Ringkjøbing Amts Dagblad* [Ringkøbing; Liberal Independent; 15 & 17] – *Skive Folkeblad* [Skive; Social Liberal; 14 & 14]

Restricted local: *Helsingør Dagblad* [Helsingør; Independent; 6 & 8] – *Ny Dag* [closed 25.10.94; Nakskov; Social Democrat; 13 & 9].

The overall tendency is that fewer and fewer people read a newspaper on a regular basis, cf. tables 1 and 4 above. Still, most people read a paper at least once a week.

In 1964 92% of the total population read at least one newspaper on any one day. This percentage had shrunk to 78% in 1975 and to 74% in 1993. This means that whereas almost every citizen read a daily newspaper in the early sixties, now only 3 out of 4 do so. Still, these figures are quite high when compared with figures from most other European countries, the other Nordic countries excepted.

But the total picture shows many variations. One dimension of difference is sex. Men regularly read a paper more often than women. In 1993 78% of men and 71% of women did so, 7% being the standard difference irrespective of urbanization, education, etc.

Another important factor is degree of urbanization as appears from table 13, where some central figures are shown.

Table 13. Reading a Weekday Newspaper, Distribution by Urbanization (per cent)³⁵

| | 1964 | 1975 | 1993 |
|--------------------|------|------|------|
| Copenhagen proper | 90 | 78 | 78 |
| Towns (10-100.000) | 94 | 81 | 74 |
| Rural areas | 92 | 80 | 73 |
| Total | 92 | 78 | 74 |

In the beginning of the period, provincial figures are consistently higher than Copenhagen figures. By the end this has been reversed. This probably is caused by at least two factors. On the one hand the electronic media first conquered the metropolitan population and so ousted the papers here before they did so in the provinces – as far as they could. Which means that Copenhagen newspaper readership reached its azimuth earlier than in the provinces and has reached its stable level. On the other hand Copenhagen still has more than one newspaper and so something for very many different tastes. This is no longer the case in the provinces where the local monopolies reign. If people get dissatisfied with their local paper they have nowhere else to turn except to a national daily that does not carry news from their region, which may mean no appeal to people interested in local news – they turn to the district papers instead. Besides, incomes are lower in the provinces than in the metropolitan area.

The educational factor is also very influential. There is a strong tendency that the better educated are more likely to take a paper regularly than the less educated. Some key figures are shown in table 14.

Newspaper habits are weakening on all educational levels, but the tendency is stronger among the least educated. Not only did they less often read a newspaper to begin with, but by 1993 the level has sunk even faster than in the case of the better educated. And the same factors influencing the existence of a newspaper-

reading habit are important as to the habit of reading more than one newspaper a day, if not stronger.

Table 14. Reading a Weekday Newspaper; Distribution by Education (per cent)³⁶

| | 1969 | 1979 | 1989 | 1993 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Primary education only | 91 | 88 | 74 | 66 |
| A-level or more | 94 | 92 | 78 | 75 |

Another question is: What do people prefer to read about in the newspaper? There is a recent study on this subject, and some results relevant to the dimension of the influence of education on choice of reading topic are reported in table 15.

Table 15. What do you Read in the Newspaper? 1993 (per cent)³⁷

| | Sports | Fashion | Crime | Local | National | Politics | Foreign | Culture |
|---------------------------|--------|---------|-------|-------|----------|----------|---------|---------|
| No occupational education | 42 | 34 | 68 | 88 | 79 | 47 | 53 | 34 |
| Short occ.ed. | 55 | 38 | 69 | 89 | 75 | 63 | 55 | 39 |
| Medium occ.ed. | 40 | 36 | 67 | 90 | 93 | 83 | 85 | 71 |
| Long occ.ed. | 43 | 23 | 54 | 79 | 93 | 84 | 90 | 74 |
| Total | 45 | 33 | 67 | 89 | 86 | 62 | 70 | 47 |

The question here is not so much about ranking or graduated preferences but simply about what topics are considered worthy of reading efforts at all. The most generally popular segments are the general news, local or national. Especially in the provinces, local news are highly esteemed, and readers often express wishes for more.³⁸ But whereas the least educated as a group prefer local, the best-educated favour the national. This tendency is even more marked, when foreign news are considered. Sports obviously appeal most often to the second group whose mainstay is the skilled blue-collar worker. Crime is not favoured by very many of those with the longest education – at least not admittedly. Politics, foreign affairs and cultural matters are the more appealing, the higher the education.

A general tendency is that the better educated read about a broader range of subjects – and the more longterm useful subjects – than the less educated and so get a wider range of information. An almost classic case of the Saint Matthew syndrome: “Unto every one that hath shall be given – but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath”.

Also, occupation plays a role. Farmers are among the most likely to read newspapers (98% in 1993), closely followed by higher employees and civil servants (94%). Blue-collar workers show much less interest in newspapers, unskilled

workers less than skilled (66% and 69% respectively). The least likely to read newspapers in 1993 are the unemployed (52%) – at least partly for economic reasons, but with some probability also caused by social marginalization.

The Competing Media

Finally, the development of competing news-carrying media are described. These may be divided into print and non-print (electronic) media. Because of the close relationship between newspapers and district papers, these are treated in greater detail than the electronic media.

District papers started appearing from 1850 on, in the first instances in larger cities. In 1960 there was a total of 275 of these papers with a combined print run of approximately 1.5 million copies. In 1970 the number had increased to 325 (appr. 3.2 mio.) and 1980 to a total of 350 (a little less than 6 mio.). Since then the number has decreased somewhat, while the print run has risen to 7.6 mio. in 1988 and 8.6 mio. in 1992. In 1994 there was a total of 291 papers with a total print run of 7.1 mio.

From approximately 1970 close on 100% of all households have received at least one district paper every week. As no proper, comprehensive audit of circulations exists as to these papers, the calculation is somewhat unreliable. But the end result now is that every single Danish household receives at least one, and many receive 2, 3, or even more of these papers. The average number of district papers received was 2.88 in 1980, 3.44 in 1988 and rising to 3.76 in 1992. Since then it has decreased slightly just as the print run total. This means that the decreasing number of papers with some delay resulted in a lower total as competition eliminated some papers in the districts. In some trade districts one paper now has a monopoly.³⁹

As a medium the district papers have become a considerable factor and a serious threat to the dailies, especially to their advertising revenues: It should be remembered that the district papers are financed almost exclusively through advertising. At the same time there has been a tendency among the district papers to expand the editorial part of their contents, which formerly was extremely modest (in some cases even non-existent). The better part of the contents consists of news on local business, sports, and (in a growing number of cases) politics. Papers appearing in larger towns also carry a sometimes considerable amount of articles on local entertainment.⁴⁰ One chain of district papers has even introduced a modest amount of general news. In this way they sharpen the competition with the smaller provincial dailies on local reporting in the sense that the district papers usually limit themselves very strictly to covering narrow and completely unpolitical local affairs – and the small provincial dailies have only their somewhat broader local coverage as a sales argument in the competition with the regional or national dailies. As counter-moves several dailies have started or purchased district papers. By the mid-nineties approximately half the total print runs of district papers were issued by daily newspaper companies.

A district paper normally appears once a week. And there are few recent exceptions to that rule. As mentioned above, two such papers attempted transformation into dailies in 1963 and 1976 respectively, without success. But there is one paper that since 1975 has appeared five times a week. This paper is situated on the medium-sized island of Samsø, i.e. in a fairly isolated community, is sold in subscription, although at a lower price than the dailies, and has a near-monopoly on local news. It is thus more a local paper (cf. above) than a standard district paper.

The era of electronic media in Denmark started around 1920: Radio transmissions on an amateur basis. The first news broadcast may be dated to 1923, when an announcer to fill out a pause between music broadcasts read a news telegram on a sensational event of the same day. In 1925 the state organized a public service-radio – the still existing Radio Denmark – partly to make order of the emerging chaos on the air. By that time, the three major newspaper publishing houses in Copenhagen had organized their own news broadcasts, which continued for some time. But in 1926 this was changed and from then on there was one single news service on the air, broadcast by a state monopoly radio and controlled by the collective (printed) press. This ensured that the radio news did not become a real menace to the printed press by capitalizing the possibilities immanent to the short production time of the new medium or getting solo stories by exploiting the appeal to news sources stemming from the monopoly position. This arrangement survived until 1965, when the radio news service of Radio Denmark became an independent editorial entity. From that time the number of news broadcasts grew fast. Furthermore, the radio medium in general became widespread at an extraordinarily speedy rate, cf. table 2, and so became a threat to the newspapers.

In the beginning there was only one radio channel, but by 1951 this was felt to be too restricted and a second channel was started. 1958-61 a commercial pirate transmitted radio – mostly pop music – from a ship just outside Danish territorial waters. This was stopped, but the demand for broadcasting of pop music had by then grown so insistent that Radio Denmark in 1963 started a third channel devoted to this kind of programmes. In March 1997, the national telephone company and the TV2 (cf. below) started a satellite-carried commercial radio channel.

The first experiments with TV were made in Denmark in the late thirties but developments were halted by World War II. The first regular broadcasts were transmitted in 1950, but in the early years the cost of TV receivers was prohibitive. Not until 1957 did the number of TV-sets grow significantly, but then the effect was an explosion (cf. table 2). Broadcasting on the single channel (now: DR-TV or DR1) was entrusted to Radio Denmark, whose monopoly lasted until 1988 (in 1996 a twin, but satellite-carried, channel to this was started). The second channel (TV 2) was organized as a separate entity, partly financed through advertising but at the same time with public service obligations rather similar to that of DR-TV. A third channel (TV3) was also started in 1988: It is London-based and fully commercial but does not yet reach all households. Its programme pro-

file is mainly one of film and serials entertainment. A fourth channel (DK4) is cable-carried and associated with a telephone company. It mainly transmits debates, uncontroversial features and educational programmes, supplemented by some entertainment. In late 1996 networking between local television channels was permitted by a new Broadcasting Act, and a co-operation between eight regional channels was started in April 1997: TvDanmark, which carries news broadcasts of local news plus generous amounts of entertainment. In addition, the number of foreign channels accessible to a Danish audience has mushroomed in recent years.

As to local radio and TV, systematic experiments were started in 1983. Their basis was a law from 1981. The legislative aim was to strengthen democracy and local communities, the latter especially in the provinces. Neither advertising nor networking (close co-operation between radio or TV-stations in different areas) were permitted. The permanent legislation on local radio and TV was passed in 1986 and 1987 respectively. Advertising was still prohibited – but this was changed in 1988-89, when small amounts of advertising were permitted (not exceeding 10%). The result has been a proliferation of small and economically unstable stations.⁴¹ By the start of 1997 networking was allowed, cf. above.

As noted above, the Internet – which is not truly a medium in itself – is emerging. It is mostly being used for two purposes. One is the transfer of true media services: TV or radio news and newspaper services. Some of the largest papers started internet news services in 1996-97, but during the Danish general strike in early summer 1998 quite a number of newspapers followed suit. But still the main importance of the Internet in 1998 is its potential in newsgathering – or rather: In gathering data and other information for use in news and background. As this kind of journalism usually is of the deep-delving, investigative sort, and as this in reality is primarily cultivated by the larger papers commanding sufficient resources, this journalistic trend will efficiently benefit the larger papers at the smaller ones' cost.

The Current State of Affairs

From a typological point of view what has happened is that the remaining Danish daily press is divided into three main homogenous types that all are variations on the omnibus theme:

The *political national morning press* which still features weighty amounts of politics in the pages and attaches much importance to an all-round and serious-minded brand of journalism. It is divided into two rather distinct groups: three very large dailies (current print runs of 150-180.000) and four evidently smaller (below 50.000). Especially the larger of these papers are exponents of the current fully-fledged omnibus model, whereas the smaller ones are somewhat more specialized.

The *provincial local press* which is alike to the national press on many dimensions, especially as to the political and serious aspects, but uses a considerable part of its own journalistic potential on local coverage, to varying extents relying on the Danish telegram bureau of Ritzau as to national and foreign matters. It shows quite a wide range regarding both size of territory and of circulation. At one end of the spectrum one finds large regional dailies with a weekday circulation of 65-100.000. At the other end mere dwarfish dailies with very limited districts and a circulation of no more than 1.700 at the extreme. The absolute majority, however, is to be found in the middle group based in a larger town and its environs, keeping a circulation of 10.-30.000. The larger of the regional and local papers are fully omnibus papers in character and are drawing ever nearer to the national dailies in journalistic character, but the smaller ones concentrate so much on local matters that they must be considered a variation on the theme. So the group seems to be splitting into two, one aligning itself with the national press, the other becoming more resolutely local.

The *popular press* – otherwise characterized as the tabloid or lunch-time press – that on the one hand practices a fairly all-round coverage, but on the other hand – i.e. as to news criteria and journalistic presentation – attaches central importance to saleable sensations and scandals, besides being by and large apolitical. It consists of two very large dailies with a circulation of around 140-170.000. These papers are the ones least omnibus in character of the Danish press as a whole.

Add to this 3 non-regular dailies: *Statstidende* (The Danish official Gazette – an official periodical carrying the legally valid notices) and two dailies aimed at a businessman audience: *Erhvervsbladet* (The business newspaper) and *Licitationen* (a daily mostly printing invitations to submit tenders).

A central factor in the current situation is the unequal strength of the different paper groups as to newsgathering. The larger national dailies, morning or popular, have the upper hand through their number of pages, the quantity and quality of their news service, especially exclusive stories, compared with the smaller dailies. This further favours the reader appeal of the stronger papers.

As to circulation the daily press is on the retreat, irrespective of whether one regards the absolute circulation numbers or the percentages of household coverage, cf. tables 1 and 2. Some recent growth may inspire a degree of cautious optimism, but no more. The decline has been relatively most marked for the provincial dailies, whereas the national papers have done somewhat better. This has brought about a weakening of the economy and restricted the manoeuvring possibilities of the average newspaper, as the reduction in circulations causes both shrinking revenues from newspaper sales and weakened prospects of advertising acquisition. A constant feature has been that the large national dailies have quite stable economies, while the smaller dailies are in weaker positions. A few of the very smallest are exceptions in this direction. This has been ensured, however, through limiting their independent editorial efforts and through solid profits from activities other than the newspaper operation, especially orders to the printing-house and the publishing of district papers, activities that contribute

massively to the economy of all newspapers maintaining their own printing-houses.⁴²

Further it should be noted that the situation in the provinces certainly hasn't stabilized sufficiently yet. Several papers are in difficulties, and apart from regular purchases with subsequent closures more than one merger has been forged during the later years resulting in one paper catering to the public of two neighbouring regions. Also, a number of "part mergers" has been created. The ruling principle of these arrangements is that two papers erect a joint publishing house, operating the technical departments, while the two papers continue to exist as independent editorial units. But the tendency is that several of these "part mergers" in the future may start joint coverage of one or more field of subject matter such as common parliament coverage or general national or foreign affairs and so begin a real merger. A third model has been seen during the latest years: Co-operation between a large national and a local paper in the shape of exchange of subscribers in the local paper's home area. The subscribers get the national paper in the morning and the local in the afternoon. This brings a number of benefits to both. The smaller paper can leave much of its national or foreign coverage to the national paper and so free own resources for use in local journalism, generally offer a better product at a very modest price, and save on technical investments. The national paper gets an enlarged public leading to better advertisement rates, some local news – and an exclusive on a territory ahead of national competitors.

Apart from the pressure exerted by the demand for investments in technical innovations and journalism, a general pressure on the press stems from other media: radio and television plus the local district papers (cf. the introduction). Partly because of these pressures, the household coverage has been falling from 1960 on after a long quite stable period 1913-60, cf. table 2. Extra worrying to the press is the fact that the groups of people not subscribing to or buying a daily to a large degree seem to be younger people.

As far as the national press – with one exception the equivalent of the Copenhagen press – is concerned, the pressure from the electronic media is probably the strongest, exactly because of the very fact that it is a nation-covering press, i.e. without strong local attachments and loyalties. On the other hand the Copenhagen press (and the national exception just mentioned!) has a considerable and rising circulation in the provinces, whereas the provincial press by and large isn't sold at all in Greater Copenhagen. Also, the district papers exert a heavy pressure as to advertisements, as the very level of advertising costs in the national press is by far the highest and completely prohibitive for smaller businessmen.

The problems of the provincial press are of another kind: On the one hand they feel the pressure from both the national press, the electronic media, and the district papers. On the other hand their – albeit paling – party-political colouring conflicts with the party sympathies dominant among their readers. Thirdly their local journalistic coverage at the same time is both their strength and their weakness.

This last point deserves a separate comment. The local news and other articles is the strength of the provincial dailies as this part of the pages to a large extent is their *raison d'être* and best feature in the competition with the national press and the national electronic media. Furthermore the local coverage forms a bulwark against the (free!) district papers appealing to readers primarily interested in local news, who do not care, whether they get their national and foreign news from tv or radio or from the press. Also, this branch of journalism does not require very much background knowledge or research and so may be consigned to any general reporter with some knowledge of the community and written on routine. On the other hand it is their weakness, as this part of the contents at the same time is very costly. A provincial daily is forced to maintain an editorial office staffed by at least one journalist in each of the geographical subdivisions of its circulation area. The editorial matter from each of these local offices usually takes up half a broadsheet page in any one day's edition, but is often read by no more than 2-300 subscribers, seldom by more than 1000.⁴³ In that way this coverage is quite expensive and is growing more so in recent years, as local coverage now to an increasing extent is being written by professional full-time journalists instead of being supplied by the unprofessional informers paid by the line that were usual in former times.

Summing up, the situation of the Danish dailies, and especially that of the provincial local press, is currently confused. Competition is keen and the financial predicament of several papers is acute. Even recently fresh instances of paper closures have occurred and more are on the horizon. It is significant, though, that none of these latest closures have meant complete cessations. Instead, two dailies have merged or the worse threatened paper has been bought by another (financially stronger) and become a dependent paper or local edition of this. It does not just vanish without a trace, as was often formerly the case. Of course this is necessary as all local papers have a monopoly, and a simple closure would leave a geographical paper void.

At present different possibilities are discussed (for example in the branch paper *Dansk Presse*). The most important of these are reductions of costs. Among these two stand out.

One is based on co-operation between the technical departments of separate papers, primarily between the printing-houses. This possibility has already been realized by several dailies – four of the Copenhagen dailies have by now ceased maintaining their own printing departments and two have never had any (the two tabloids). And a small number of provincial dailies have chosen this expedient.

The other one – particularly relevant to the provincial press – is co-operation in diverse fields. One obvious possibility has been co-operation in the acquisition of advertising. Moreover there is discussion of co-operation between editorial offices in the shape of joint Parliament reporting or national reporting in general plus on foreign affairs. This latter part has already to a dominant extent been left to Ritzaus Bureau (the joint telegram bureau of the Danish press) that supplies

ready-made articles. But still most publishers are jealous of their editorial as well as economic independence and do not want giving up any important parts of it.

But the discussion of the future position of newspapers as a medium among other media is somewhat lacking in scope and vision. There is scant research and reflection on the coming information needs that the newspapers may cater to and so survive, or on their future role in society – or just a definition of what newspapers do better than the other media. Day-to-day measures dominate the agenda.

Also, there is no talk about a reduction of the local news, etc. And readership surveys indicate that local reporting is popular with the readers in the provinces.⁴⁴ The provincial papers cling to these kinds of research without reflecting on the elementary point that readers haven't been offered much else and so cannot envisage alternatives. Instead, possibilities include joint local editorial offices for those papers entering into the above-mentioned "part-mergers". Some examples of this kind have been seen already, yet only on the borders between the districts of the papers involved.

The question is, however, whether the local news in future will be worth the efforts. In favour of a positive answer to the question is the weighty argument that several provincial dailies until now have had notable successes through this means. Counter-arguments are based on two tendencies. One is the relative progress of the national papers (cf. table 5) that points to a rising interest in national and international news among at least some parts of the public. The other is the tendency to a direct connection between high education levels and newspaper consumption: The better educated social groups prefer to get their news and other topical information from newspapers rather than getting it on radio or tv – and have a more developed interest in news generally.⁴⁵ These people don't favour local news nearly as much. And the educational levels are rising in the population as a whole.

Moreover, according to an enquiry made in 1980-81 the better educated people tend to prefer reading a national morning paper (31% compared to 11% among the population as a whole), whereas the least educated take a local paper (52% to the average 38%). And at the same time the better educated groups are primarily interested in national, international, and culture reporting, not to nearly the same extent in local reporting. For example: In 1978 41% of regular readers of the morning papers read most foreign news, 50% the national news, 35% the local news, and 34% the culture articles. The regular readers of the provincial local dailies had other customs: 22% read most of the foreign news, 35% the national, 77% the local, and 13% the cultural articles.⁴⁶

As usual, there are some jokers in the game. One is the possibilities opening up with developments in the Internet. Some newspapers already have opened net services offering the whole or parts of the papers' contents, but fewer are starting separate "net-papers". How strong an appeal this kind of service will create still remains to be seen as does the character of the more successfully innovative initiatives. This field is still very much one of experiments and pc's with modems are not really standard household equipment yet. But Internet activities are rather sure to benefit the stronger newspapers, if any.

So the present situation of the press is in a fluid state and its future will be largely determined by decisions made in the first few years, the basis of which has not yet been analyzed by the trade, and still less been the object of action. Moreover, some reevaluation of past strategies is obviously necessary, including a reassessment of the newspapers' role in society and among other media.

Some Possible Scenarios for the Future and the Latest Committee on the Media

Quite apart from the pressure on resources and the financing problems, some main questions the newspapers will have to address are:

As to the definition of the newspaper, the future contents range will have to be considered. Today's omnibus newspaper carries news, comment, analysis and background on a very wide range of matters. At the same time the omnibus concept has more or less been exploded, as the large national papers print a rising number of sections every day dealing with a large array of special subject groups, only the first section being truly omnibus. Especially the property and job advertising sections have grown to mammoth size – each consuming a whole forest in paper – and they are superfluous to many readers. A possibility may be to arrange flexible subscriptions so people only receive the sections they want. This make for combinations of sections from two or more papers to suit the individual. At the other end of the scale, the smallest provincial dailies by today are so dominated by local matters that their omnibus quality is rather questionable and the general section is uninteresting to many.

Another question concerns the future role of the newspaper: The point here is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the newspaper as a medium vis-à-vis other newscarrying media. The strength of newspapers obviously lies more in comprehensive reporting, background information, and analysis in contrast to the fast, but raw and brief news of the electronic media. And to hold the district papers at bay the provincial papers will have to offer either more professional local journalism than these papers – who at present are upgrading their editorial efforts to a degree that makes this strategy rather hopeless in the long run – or more national and foreign news which are costly to a single paper but more affordable if undertaken in co-operative groups. The main weaknesses are interconnected: One is rising costs as intensified competition from other media is met with new editorial initiatives and technological innovations. And the other is the supply of more immediately entertaining offers from these competing media. The conflict is between the informative and the entertaining role of the media and tries the traditional loyalty of the majority of the press towards the informative.

In this connection it will also be important to give thought to the composition of the readership. Currently, the desertion of the less educated is the object of much anxiety, especially from the perspective of the democratic participation of these groups. But the reading habits of the better educated might be challenged, if newspaper contents are made more acceptable to the less informed public, i.e.

less demanding and informative. And the highly educated have effective alternatives in the shape of foreign quality papers, magazines and electronic agents in the budding news services of cyberspace. This point has not yet been made in public debate, but it will have to be taken into consideration even if obnoxious to democratic sensibilities.

The press structure must also be considered: What papers should co-operate on what? As mentioned above, some papers co-operate on national or foreign news, etc. In other cases the technical departments become common to two or more papers. But other co-operation models might be thought out.

These are the most decisive aspects that have to be analyzed and considered. And the possible scenarios for the future range from the very bleak to the more optimistic.

The most depressing scenario – which will come about almost automatically if no action is taken or no changes made – is an equivalent of the black death. But this is hardly likely in view of the measures already taken in later years. It does not seem probable that these should stop.

Other scenarios imply that some small local papers cease daily publication and begin to appear 2-4 times a week. This could mean better conditions for some district papers that might start appearing more often than today and in general approach the position of local dailies. But this extension of the newspaper group requires some legal changes to become feasible.

Still another scenario implies a breakdown of the pervasive omnibus concept and the substitution by a press differentiated by quality level with separate press types catering to more or less distinct readerships. Or a split into a national press that is fully omnibus in character and a local press which cuts down on national and foreign stuff and concentrates on local matters. This might mean more people – especially the better educated – taking two papers: an omnibus and a local, while some make do with one of these only. This might also tempt some district papers to enter the local newspaper market – or the larger papers might upgrade some of the district papers they own.

A variety of this, combined with an extensive degree of co-operation would lead to a system of national or greater regional papers co-operating with each their separate networks of local papers that become local supplements to the larger papers. Or the national and greater regional papers might incorporate the local papers as special sections for parts of their territory. Several cases of this type have appeared during the last ten years, in fact.

Another version of this model is that of national papers issuing local supplements. In fact, one of the three large national dailies already has started two such supplements in 1995, one of these becoming daily in 1997, the other in 1998, and with some success.

Of scenarios there are many – and more could be devised. Three things are guaranteed: That no single pure model will conquer to the exclusion of all other possibilities, although one of a differentiated press seems to become the more

pervasive. That a diversified press will survive for many years to come. And that there is still scope and time to make decisions to shape the future consciously.

In 1994 a committee was appointed by the Prime Minister's Department to consider the media situation and Danish media politics. The reason for the appointment was a declared concern for the maintenance of media plurality which was considered threatened, and especially for safeguarding the public's future possibilities of choice as to comprehensiveness of information and opinion supply. More specifically, the role of newspapers in the democratic processes were considered an endangered essential.

The committee was instructed to make a comprehensive description of the media situation and developments over the last decade, i.e. in the period after the former Media Commission of 1980-83, and set up recommendations for a future media policy.

The final report appeared in June 1996.⁴⁷ In this connection only the parts and majority recommendations dealing with newspapers are considered. It presented a rather bleak analysis and picture of the newspapers' situation. But recommendations were rather few and restricted in scope. Among the main points in this section of the report were a continuation of the newspapers' exemption from VAT and the reduced mail rates, supplemented by a increase in state grants to the public Financing Institute for the daily press mentioned above, including a change in the Institute's statutes that will make it possible to subsidize operation of an economically threatened newspaper enterprise. But the idea of direct state subsidies was rejected.

And so the conditions of the press are materially the same as before. The premises of the scenario described above still apply, and the future is open as the press is left to its own devices.

Notes

In many cases there is more than one source for the information given. Here the number of references have been kept down on purpose and only a few (the best and most all-round) have been listed. Books in English on Danish newspaper conditions or history are scarce. The only one dealing with newspapers in a longer perspective is Thorsen 1953, cf. below.

1. The article is based on a previous paper: *Dagbladsbegreb og avismediestruktur i Danmark – med særlig vægt på udviklingen efter 1945*. In: *Arbejdsrapport V 9311. Nordisk seminar om avisstruktur og avisutvikling*. Ed.: Sigurd Høst. Møreforskning, Volda, 1993. [The concept and structure of newspapers in Denmark. Paper to a Nordic seminar on newspaper structure and development, Volda, August 1993.]. It has been revised and much enlarged.

In order not to make the article impossibly large, general conditions and developments in Danish society are not described except when absolutely necessary.

2. This newspaper typology and its history is described more closely in Søllinge 1989.
3. The sources of this part of the exposition is primarily Søllinge & Thomsen (1988-91), Thomsen (1972) plus the press surveys in *Pressehistorisk årbog/Pressens årbog* 1965 ff. Cf. table 1.

4. *Dansk Presse*, March 1964. [Translation by the author]
5. *Dansk Presse*, April 1964. [Translation by the author]
6. Mediekommissionens betænkning, nr. 3, p. 77.
7. Recommendation concerning the international standardization of statistics relating to book production and periodicals. Paris, UNESCO, 1964.
8. Mediekommissionens betænkning nr. 3; p. 6. [Translation by the author]
9. Søllinge & Thomsen, Vol. 2, p. 13. [Translation by the author]
10. Mediekommissionens betænkning nr. 3, p. 6. [Translation by the author] In some statistics the Danish term is translated as “local weekly” or “district weekly”. This translation is preferred because it does not preclude the inclusion of papers appearing more or less often than once a week.

A formal definition of the district paper reads as follows: A district paper is a periodical, regularly published, distributed to the public in a geographically limited area, the contents of which are advertising, notifications and possibly editorial matter destined for this area. It usually appears once a week and is most often gratis [Søllinge 1996].

11. The parts concerning newspaper typology in the following account over the next pages is an extract of Søllinge, 1989. This systematizing of the Danish newspapers and other relevant periodicals into a typology is in its turn based on the characterizations of every single paper published that the author made as a part of the work on *De danske aviser*, cf. Søllinge & Thomsen, Vol. 1-3. Further the reader is referred to common Danish press history, e.g. Thorsen, 1947-51/1953, and Thomsen, 1972. As to the present state of affairs and recent tendencies readers are referred to the newspaper publishers' trade periodical *Dansk Presse*. Circulation statistics have been gleaned from the *Bulletin of the Danish Audit Bureau of Circulations* – and the household coverage from the three volumes of Danish cultural statistics.
12. Number of papers is given in terms of the definition in Søllinge & Thomsen. Circulation figures are estimates until 1920, 1930 is a gross, whereas 1950 ff are net figures. Sources: Søllinge & Thomsen, vol. 2-3. The 1992, 1994, 1996, and 1997 figures are computed by the author and are based on the *Bulletin of the Danish Audit Bureau of Circulations*.
13. Definitions: An *independent paper* has its own independent publisher, editorial office, and editor responsible to the press law for the total contents. A *local edition* is a branch of an independent paper regarding both editorship and publisher, irrespective of whether it has a distinct name in the masthead or not. An intermediate form is the *dependent paper* that is editorially independent as to local reporting and/or central parts of the political comments, but not as to the rest of the contents. It may or may not be published by an independent agent (company or individual).
14. Sources: Søllinge & Thomsen, Vol. 2, p. 44 & Vol. 3, p. 55. Plus Danish cultural statistics 1960-77, 1970-85 & 1980-92.
15. Cf. e.g. Søllinge, 1982, 1990 (a & b) & 1992. Further references in these works.
16. 1849-1953 the Danish Parliament was divided into two houses – the upper and the lower house – based on somewhat different electorates. The suffrage was consistently more restricted at elections of representatives to the upper house than to the lower. Until 1915 the extra suffrage restrictions regarding the upper house were based on both income and age, after 1915 on age only. Also, women were excluded until the 1915 Constitution was passed.
17. Søllinge, 1990 (b). *Dagens Nyheder*: serious, Conservative – *Politiken*: serious, Social Liberal – *Social-Demokraten*: serious, Social Democratic – *Aftenbladet*: popular, unpolitical – *Ekstrabladet*: popular, Social Liberal/unpolitical.
18. Thomsen, 1972, *passim*.
19. Source: Fridberg, p. 83.
20. Cf. Kjær-Hansen, p. 53. For instance, calculations show that whereas in 1928 there were 29 towns where at least three independent newspapers plus up to several local editions appeared, in 1970 the number was reduced to 3 such towns. The number of towns with two

- independent papers plus possibly some local editions was 11 in 1928, 12 in 1945, but no more than 4 in 1970 (and 2 in 1992 as mentioned). During the period, the number of local editions were reduced even more severely. On the other hand the number of towns with one independent paper and no more than one local edition rose from 8 in 1928 and 9 in 1945 to 28 in 1970. And the number of market towns completely without their own papers (independent or not) rose from 10 to 22 during this period.
21. Søllinge & Thomsen, vol. 1-3, & Dansk Oplagskontrol. Calculations by the author for this purpose.
 22. The figures concerning 1970-80: Mediekommissionens betænkning nr. 3, p. 13. Figures concerning 1988-92 are computed by the author and based on the *Bulletin of the Danish Audit Bureau of Circulations*.
 23. Calculations by the author. Source: the *Bulletin of the Danish Audit Bureau of Circulations*. Only papers alive (or merged) in 1995 are taken into consideration. National morning papers are divided by size – the larger having circulations of at least 100.000, the smaller below 50.000. Greater regional papers are distributed throughout a large region (with one exception more than one county), circulation being above 60.000. Regional papers are distributed in one (smaller) county or less and typically have circulation figures between 25 and 35.000, whereas the local serve one large town with substantial environs (figures between 10 and 25.000) and the restricted local papers are based in a smaller town functioning as trade center for a very small area (circulation below 6.000). The total number of newspapers here comes to 36 and not the standard 37, as the German minority paper is excluded for the reason that it does not fit into the standard typology of regionalization.
 24. Subscription prices rose 12-25% during 1983-94 (national papers by 25%, regional by 12%, and local by 17%) Single copy sales prices rose by 40%. Figures are corrected for inflation. Source: Betænkning om medierne i demokratiet, 1996, p. 173-4.
 25. Calculations by the author. Source: the *Bulletin of the Danish Audit Bureau of Circulations*.
 26. 1948-1973: Lund & Thomsen – 1993: Calculation by the author, source: Greens & Krak.
 27. Sources: 1972 Lund & Thomsen; 1993: Greens & Krak – calculation by the author.
 28. Betænkning om medierne i demokratiet, 1996, p. 173.
 29. Betænkning om medierne i demokratiet, 1996, p. 182, and *Media Trends* 1997, p. 23.
 30. Cf. Ulf Kjær-Hansen, especially p. 52. For example there were 24 Social Democratic independent newspapers in 1928, but only 6 in 1970 and 3 in 1992. The number of Social Liberal independent dailies fell from 20 to 5, Conservative from 40 to 8, whereas the number affiliated to the Liberals was 47 in 1928 and 27 in 1970. In all instances the great dive appeared after 1945, and all have been further reduced since 1970.
 31. Source: the *Bulletin of the Danish Audit Bureau of Circulations* and newspapers' own declarations of political allegiance.
 32. Søllinge, 1990,b, 1992, and 1995.
 33. Søllinge, 1995. Contents of the selected papers from one whole week of each of the years were analyzed. All articles above a given size (an A5-sheet) were classified and counted. This method is a useful approximation to results from the time-consuming method of measuring column millimetres, cf. Søllinge, 1990, a.
Category titles in full: Politics total – Economy and Social issues – Culture total – Sensations (crimes and accidents) – Entertainment & Leisure – Diverse – Total – N = absolute numbers of articles in sample.
 34. Dansk Kulturstatistik 1960-1977 & 1970-1985, Dansk kultur- og mediestatistik 1980-1992 & Fridberg, passim.
 35. Fridberg, p. 82 & 195.
 36. Dansk Kulturstatistik, all three publications.
 37. Fridberg, p. 196 ff. Not all categories are included.

38. Cf. Poulsen.
39. Cf. Winkelmann, *passim*, Søndergård Andersen, p. 28-49, and Søllinge 1995 plus Media Scandinavia (various volumes) and Danish cultural statistics 1960-77, 1970-85 og 1980-92.
40. Søllinge 1995.
41. Jauert & Prehn, *passim*.
42. Ugebrevet Mandag Morgen.
43. Minke, especially p. 66. This work makes an estimate of the demands on journalistic work effort from the covering of local affairs, but the transition from the employment of unprofessional informers to professional, full-time journalists is not taken into consideration.
44. Lund & Poulsen, 1996. Poulsen, 1996.
45. Cf. Bennike, p. 35 , and Danish cultural statistics 1980-92.
46. Mediekommissionens betænkning nr. 3, p. 124-5.
47. Betænkning om medierne i demokratiet, 1996.

References

- Andersen, Ole E.: *Medieudbud og medieforbrug i Danmark 1983-1994*. Rapport udarbejdet for Statsministeriets Medieudvalg. København 1995. [Media supply and consumption in Denmark 1983-1994.]
- Bennike, Sigurd: Avislæsning gennem 20 år. [20 years of newspaper consumption] *MedieKultur*, No. 16, November 1991, p. 31-44.
- Betænkning om medierne i demokratiet*. Betænkning nr. 1320 (+ bilag). Udgivet af Medieudvalget, Statsministeriet, 1996. [Report on media in democracy from the media committee, the Prime Minister's Department]
- Dansk kultur-statistik 1960-1977*. [Danish cultural statistics 1960-1977] Danmarks Statistik & Kulturministeriet 1979.
- Dansk kultur-statistik 1970-1985*. [Danish cultural statistics 1970-1985] Danmarks Statistik & Kulturministeriet 1987.
- Dansk kultur- og mediestatistik 1980-1992*. [Danish Cultural and Media Statistics 1980-1992] Danmarks Statistik, Kirkeministeriet, Kulturministeriet, Ministeriet for Kommunikation og Turisme, 1993.
- Dansk Oplagskontrol: Oplagsbulletin 1933 ff*. [Bulletin of the Danish Audit Bureau of Circulations, 1933 ff] + Udgivererklæring juni 1998 [Publishers' statement, June 1998]
- Dansk Presse 1919 ff* (especially later years) ["The Danish Press" – the trade's paper; orig. title: Medlemsblad for Organisationen af Bladudgivere i Provinsen]
- Fridberg, Torben: *Kultur- og fritidsaktiviteter 1993*. Socialforskningsinstituttet, Rapport 94:6. København 1994. [Cultural and leisure activities 1993]
- Greens' 95. Børsens håndbog om dansk erhvervsliv*. [Greens: a handbook on danish companies, etc.]
- Jauert, Per, & Ole Prehn: *Lokalradio og lokal-tv. Nu og i fremtiden*. Kulturministeriet 1995. [Report on local radio and -TV]
- Kjær-Hansen, Ulf: Følgerne af firepressesystemets sammenbrud. [The consequences of the collapse of the four-paper system] *Økonomi og Politik*, 44. årg., nr. 1, 1970, p. 42-66.
- Krak's Vejviser – Firmaregisteret – 1995*. [Krak's company register]
- Lund, Anker Brink, & Jørgen Poulsen: *Lokale og regionale dagblade – morgen eller eftermiddag?* Roskilde Universitetscenter 1996. [Local and regional dailies – morning or evening?]
- Lund, Erik, & Niels Thomsen: Ejer- og kontrolforhold i dansk presse. *Pressens årbog 1974*, p. 104-131. [Ownership and control in the Danish press]
- Media Scandinavia 1962 ff*. Fortsættelse af [continuation of:] Eberlin's Bladliste, etc., 1948 ff.

- Media Trends 1997*. Eds.: Ulla Carlsson & Eva Harrie. Nordicom, Göteborg 1997. In this: P. Jauert & Ole Prehn: Danish Mass Media. Recent Developments. [This covers the last 5 years only and is rather short and so perfunctory]
- Mediekommisionens betænkning nr. 3*. Betænkning om de trykte mediers økonomi og beskæftigelse. Betænkning nr. 972. 1983. [3. report from the Danish media commission (nr. 972), 1983]
- Minke, Kim: Dagblade i provinsielt dødvande. *MedieKultur*, 16, november 1991, p. 63-77. [Dailies in a provincial deadlock.]
- Poulsen, Jørgen: *Hvad ønsker læserne?* Roskilde Universitetscenter 1996. [What do the readers want?]
- Pressens årbog 1963-91* (title 1963-5: Pressehistoriske afhandlinger & 1966-72: Pressehistorisk årbog) [Yearbook of the Press 1963-91; especially the yearly summaries of events]
- Søllinge, Jette D. (1982): Politisk morgenpresse og populæraviser i København fra århundredskiftet til 2. Verdenskrig. *Pressens årbog 1982*, p. 148-58. [Political morning press and popular press in Copenhagen from the turn of the century until World War II.]
- Søllinge, Jette D. (1989): *Avistyper i Danmark fra begyndelsen i 1634 til i dag – en oversigt med vægten lagt på en typologisering efter indhold*. Paper til IX Nordiska konferensen för masskommunikations-forskning, Öland, august 1989. [Danish newspaper typology from the beginning in 1634 until today – an overview with primary importance attached to a typology based on contents.]
- Søllinge, Jette D. (1990,a): Presseforskning uden sved på panden – eller hvordan man bedriver indholdsanalyse med et A5-ark. *Nordicom-Information*, nr. 4, 1990, p. 23-28. [Press research without sweat on the brow – or how to commit content analysis with an A5-sized sheet]
- Søllinge, Jette D. (1990,b): Politik i pressen. I: *Presse og historie. Festskrift til Niels Thomsen*. Odense, 1990; p. 171-87. [Politics in the press]
- Søllinge, Jette D. (1992): *Strukturændringer i den politiske journalistik mellem 1965 og 1991*. Forlaget Politiske Studier, 1992. [Structural changes in political journalism between 1965 and 1991]
- Søllinge, Jette D. (1995): Dagspressens indholdsmæssige strukturudvikling 1983-1994 generelt såvel som med særligt henblik på lokaljournalistik og politikernes rolle i pressen. Forskningsrapport til Medieudvalget vedrørende aspekter af de trykte mediers indhold. March 1995. [Structural developments in the contents of the press 1983-1994 in general as well as with special regard to local journalism and the role of politicians in the press. This work covers both the daily and the district paper press.]
- Søllinge, Jette D. (1996): *Danmarks distriktsblade – en håndbog om lokalsamfundenes medie*. Projektbeskrivelse, Statsbiblioteket, 1996. [Denmark's district papers – a project for a handbook]
- Søllinge, Jette D., & Niels Thomsen: *De danske aviser 1634-1991*. Bd. 1-3. Odense Universitetsforlag 1988-91. [The Danish Press 1634-1991. Vol. 1-3. – A handbook of the Danish press, both the individual papers and press history and structure in general.]
- Søndergård Andersen, Jørgen: *Den danske distriktspresse. Aarhus 1971*. [The Danish district paper press]
- Thomsen, Niels: *Dagbladskonkurrencen 1870-1970*. Bd. 1-2. København 1972. [Newspaper Competition in Denmark 1870-1970.]
- Thorsen, Svend: *Den danske Dagspresse*. Bd. 1-2. København 1947 & 1951. [The Danish Press. Vol. 1-2] English edition in 1 vol.: See next entry.
- Thorsen, Svend: *Newspapers in Denmark*. Copenhagen 1953.
- Ugebrevet Mandag Morgen: en analyse af dagbladenes 1992-regnskaber, offentliggjort i *Dansk Presse*, 6, 1993, p. 12-14. [An analysis of the balance sheets 1992 of the Danish dailies, made

JETTE DRACHMANN SØLLINGE

by the periodical *Ugebrevet Mandag Morgen* and published in a shortened version by the trade periodical *Dansk Presse*, nr. 6, 1993]

Winkelmann, Otto: *Den danske distriktspresses udbredelse og betydning*. 1945. [Circulation and significance of the Danish district paper press.]