

## **OPORTO NEWSPAPERS AND THE CITY READERS. The construction of editorial and audiences identities**

*JORNAIS DO PORTO, PÚBLICOS  
DA CIDADE. A construção da  
identidade editorial e das  
audiências*

*PERIÓDICOS DE OPORTO,  
PÚBLICOS DE LA CIUDAD. La  
construcción de la identidad  
editorial y las audiencias*

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**Abstract:** *The three Oporto daily newspapers O Comércio do Porto, O Primeiro de Janeiro and Jornal de Notícias were founded during the XIX century and steadily grew in prestige and respect amongst the national Portuguese press. These papers began as local and ideological projects supported by political parties and a powerful commercial*

*association but gradually evolved to more comprehensive newspapers with a wider range of lectors. Each particular profile was built through editorial policies which led to strategies of audience identification, underlined by the charisma of their owners and directors. The aim of this study is to identify the engagement processes with readers in their early days and the methodology will rely on sources such as newspapers contents and some other specialized publications. The key moments of evolution in Comércio, Janeiro and Notícias will be tracked by the adaptation to the modernization challenges according to reports, newspapers and some senior journalists' testimonies.*

**Keywords:** *Oporto daily newspapers, editorial profile, audience identification, Oporto's traditions and values, engagement process*

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**Resumo:** *Os jornais portuenses O Comércio do Porto, O Primeiro de Janeiro e Jornal de Notícias, criados no século XIX, gradualmente estabeleceram-se como títulos nacionais de prestígio. Começaram como projetos ideológicos locais, apoiados em partidos políticos e uma poderosa associação comercial, mas com o tempo evoluíram para modelos noticiosos abrangentes, alargando o círculo de leitores. O perfil informativo de cada um construiu-se articulando-se com públicos-alvo e promovendo processos de identificação, potenciados pela ação de proprietários e diretores carismáticos. O objetivo deste estudo é identificar essas características editoriais específicas e os processos de fidelização de públicos na sua fase inicial, tendo como metodologia o estudo de conteúdo de jornais e publicações especializadas. Os momentos chave de transformação serão identificados por jornais, relatórios e testemunhos de jornalistas.*

**Palavras-chave:** *diários portuenses, perfil editorial, valores e tradições portuenses, processos de identificação, fidelização de públicos*

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**Resumo:** *Los periódicos de Oporto O Comércio do Porto, O Primeiro de Janeiro y Jornal de Notícias, surgieron en el siglo XIX y gradualmente se tornaron títulos nacionales de prestigio. Inicialmente dos de ellos eran proyectos ideológicos de partidos políticos locales y el tercero tenía el respaldo de la asociación comercial, pero con el tiempo fueron evolucionando hacia modelos de información más anchos, ampliando el círculo de lectores. El perfil informativo de cada uno se construyó en articulación con públicos específicos y a través de la promoción de procesos de identificación, reforzada por la acción de propietarios y directores carismáticos. El objetivo de este estudio es identificar estas características editoriales y procesos de conquista del público en sus primeras etapas, según una metodología basada en el contenido de los periódicos y publicaciones especializadas. Los momentos clave de la transformación serán identificados por los periódicos, informes y testimonios de periodistas.*

**Palabras clave:** *diarios de Oporto, perfil editorial, valores y tradiciones, procesos de identificación, manutención de públicos*

## Introduction and methodology

The three Oporto daily newspapers O Comércio do Porto, O Primeiro de Janeiro and Jornal de Notícias were founded during the XIX century under a publicist purpose. They steadily grew in prestige and respect in the North Region and also eventually occupied a place in the national Portuguese press. Two of them (Janeiro and Notícias) were founded with an ideological frame and were supported by political parties, as for Comércio's launching it is related with the commercial association's interests. They all gradually evolved to more comprehensive newspapers, with diversified contents and a wider circulation. The transformation was partially obtained through the inclusion of local, national and international news and, increasingly, the daily factuality that builds a newspaper's agenda but keeping a focus on specific causes that involved Oporto interests.

This study aims to trace how the three Oporto newspapers achieved processes of identification by defining their founding matrixes and initial evolution. The diachronic approach will consist in the analysis of key moments of the transformation processes in order to understand how the initial models were transformed into more modern news projects. The methodology relies on historical sources such as newspapers contents and some other specialized publications. The evolution of Comércio, Janeiro and Notícias into a more informative shape is based on newspapers contents and for recent periods by the testimonies of senior journalists that began their careers during the 60's of the 20th century. There is no data for circulation and consumption of the Portuguese press until the late years of the dictatorship and even those are very inaccurate. Reliable data on circulation was only available when the Portuguese association for circulation (APCT) was founded, in 1986 (LIMA, 2008). Therefore, the processes of the readers' conquest can only be deduced by the contents and writing style of each newspaper. The study of key moments in newspapers, scarce bibliography and journalists' statements aim to outline the three different profiles, each of them considered as national newspapers with a focus on Oporto and the North Region, but with particular traces of identity with their readers.

## Context

Three major newspapers are part of the heritage of the city of Porto. O Comércio do Porto, O Primeiro de Janeiro and Jornal de Notícias emerged during the nineteenth century and obeyed to the general characteristics of the national Portuguese press. But they also presented some specific traits that distinguish them from the general scenario, marked by an ideological model that prevailed in this period. In fact, the

connection to the city and the region gradually gave these three daily papers the intrinsic features that endured as their brand image and added value. This bond assumed a main role in the consolidation of their position in terms of readers and in terms of editorial orientation. During the evolutionary process, these titles eventually would seek a journalism nationwide oriented, although they have never lost the identifying details that prevailed as the initial brand image.

Portuguese journalism registered a considerable increase during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which was due to the consolidation of the liberal regime and the new political stability. The new titles were mainly political, defending particular factions but with a typical short life span, and the vast majority were published in Lisbon and Porto. Therefore, the main challenge for those who launched a new newspaper was whether it would succeed in terms of audience because the press reading was an exclusive habit rather of rich people or politicians. Alberto Bessa indicated as reasons for the low circulation in press the ideological character and also the sale price: "(...) None of these newspapers that I quoted was what is properly called popular because their sale prices did not allow them to spread among the people, and the circulation was limited to those who shared the political ideal of their editors." (BESSA, 1904:170)

The natural ground for newspapers was the city with all the routines that it involves and all the peculiar facts that provide the news that stirs the public's curiosity. It took a long time for the Portuguese press to shape to this model and the implementation of the news journalism, featuring the daily headlines that allured the buyers. In 1864, Eduardo Coelho launched the *Diário de Notícias* a newspaper supported by the ads and with no political purposes. But for some time, in Oporto as in Lisbon, newspapers prevailed as propaganda instruments and the diffusion areas were defined and limited to the political engagement and maintained by powerful sponsors. This trend was gradually dimmed by the inclusion of news stories which turned traditional newspapers in a more attractive shape to a broader audience.

## **From the ideological matrix towards a news model**

Despite differences in age, *O Comércio do Porto*, *O Primeiro de Janeiro* and *Jornal de Notícias* were all founded according to the traditional trend and the property structure described above. Only in time, the changes occurred in the companies allowed the gradual transformation that would lead to a popular information profile, eventually acquired by Oporto daily papers.

Comercio was launched in the June, 2, 1854, by a group of people related to the Associação Comercial do Porto – ACP, (the Oporto Trade Organization). Its purpose was well defined by a launching manifesto stating the need of a specialized newspaper.

*“The Oporto business market needs a Journal of Commerce, Agriculture and Industry, where these powerful elements of economic, historical and instructive matters can be discussed, since they are the sustain and prosperity of modern societies. The Oporto trade demands it because of its inner relevance, and also for Oporto’s good name in the international markets.”* (O Comércio do Porto, 1854)

It also claimed the role of the spokesman for the North Region and all its economic interests, without political engagement. The Comércio was read by the Oporto bourgeoisie and in the wealthy manors of the countryside but the beginnings were difficult and it wouldn’t have survived without the support of the Associação Comercial. There are no records of the circulation for a long period, or even the lists of subscribers, but the newspaper published a letter sent to the ACP’s associates and signed by the president, that encouraged the subscription of Comércio and praising the political independence and the importance of its subjects: “I, as the President of ACP, feel free to recommend it [O Comércio do Porto], certain that your Excellence will subscribe it, and I’ll consider it as a favor to the Association me and to personally (...)” (O Comércio do Porto, December, 11, 1854)

The newspaper subjects and causes were also shared by that powerful organization and during the second half of the 19th century; some of their expertise became Comércio’s editors: “A small and modest newspaper occupies now a leading place in the Portuguese periodical press. This was achieved by the directors’ good recruiting among the best Portuguese publicists (...)”<sup>1</sup> Three of the prominent columnists were José Luciano de Castro, a lawyer, Rodrigues de Freitas, an essayist on economic matters and social doctrine, and Joaquim José Pinto Coelho, an expert on financial matters. Therefore the main articles contemplated financial and economic policies, as well as agriculture, social concerns or legal reforms. Political subjects were also included when they were linked to financial or economic concerns. For instance, Comércio analyzed the governments’ budgets according to a very strict financial scrutiny. The same logic was applied when the main article discussed or claimed legal reforms or specialized courts for the economic activity. Some news had a pedagogical intention, like a series of articles on Baron Forresters’ Port wine trade or the phylloxera plague. The Portuguese banking system and its bankruptcy were also thoroughly treated.

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<sup>1</sup> Gomes Teixeira, O Comercio do Porto, June, 3, 1924.

The reorganization of the layout led to a better distribution of the printing space. The daily edition had four pages and a cover story in the first page, and below a serial. The second and third page had a mix of subjects: news from abroad, usually taken from other newspapers, the pricing and movement of boats cargo at the river Douro's harbor. The last page had short news and announcements, some with small engravings. It was a blur of plain text, with scattered small graphics separators. This blur aspect tended to soften with the graphical improvements. With more space to publish, the separation between the news became more evident by the use of different types or by spacing. Gradually, and in parallel with these main subjects, *Comércio* became closer to a news model by the inclusion of diverse subjects and lighter news. However, the economic matters prevailed and other subjects were often copied from other national or international newspapers. Oporto and the North Region remained as central concern. The variety increased with the collaboration of correspondents from several Portuguese cities and the column *Correio de Lisboa*, mostly referring to the government measures. The column *Telegrapho* included financial news and international news were given by the Havas news agency and a net of international correspondents in Europe and Brazil. By the end of the century some special daily editions reorganized the news according to subjects, in an anticipation of the editorial sections.

After a complicated process of inheritance the *Comércio* became Bento de Sousa Carqueja Júnior's property who became the real mentor of its modernization in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. During this period the newspaper suffered many improvements and created some special editions such as the *Comércio Ilustrado* (1893), which included drawings of some of the best Portuguese artists; and the monthly *Comércio Mensal* (1915), largely composed with news from the *Weekly Times*. In 1903 Bento Carqueja launched *O Lavrador* directed to the rural public but also associated to a plan of mobile schools that aimed to combat the heavy analphabetism that prevailed in the inner Center and North regions. The expansion of *Comércio* in terms of quality and audiences was also patent by the evening edition created in 1922 that included the daily news from Lisbon. Accordingly, new headquarters were built in the most strategic area of the city, at *Avenida dos Aliados*.

Bento Carqueja died in 1935 and his son-in-law Fortunato Seara Cardoso became the new director. The new phase of *Comércio* was also marked by the restrictions imposed by the dictatorship that led to a gradual decline of its standards in terms of quality of writing and the newsroom dynamics. Salazar's policy for printing was also very strict since he didn't allow more than 12 pages daily per week. As a result, most dailies had daily editions of 8 pages and the Sunday editions would include more pages, in order to ensure the ads. Apart from the censorship effects in terms of news, there were no renovation measures and editorial orientation only changed by the sale of most of *Comércio*'s property to the Quina Group in 1973.

The second large Oporto title was founded after Janeirinha, a popular insurrection against taxes, in 1868. The newspaper was initially held by o Círculo Eleitoral Portuense (Oporto electoral circle for the historic party, representing the liberal left-wing):

*“The reason that inspired us to speak, by Primeiro de Janeiro, is the same duty that brings us to the press, defending the same principles. (...) Shall we prevail? It’s with that purpose that we print again this program and we will increase it and comment it in detail in this newspaper.”<sup>2</sup>*

According to Bessa, the Janeiro’s founders were formed by "several people of money among them the alma mater of the newspaper - Gaspar Ferreira Baltar."<sup>3</sup> Janeiro’s first year of existence was very difficult but nevertheless it kept the first editorial purpose. In the following years, the political doctrine prevailed, criticizing or supporting acts of governments according to the ideological identifications. It also devoted attention to issues directly related to Oporto. There was a concern to draw the government’s attention or local authorities to solve urgent situations, as the river Douro’s harbor or the Rua Nova da Alfandega and the new costume house. These claims granted the sympathy of the public, but Janeiro’s readers were mostly in the progress party ranks. O Primeiro de Janeiro wasn’t particularly appealing from the graphic point of view. It had four pages, the first page presenting the main article and the serial. The remaining contents were confusingly distributed. The sections included a Noticiário, with a mix of all kinds of news, the Parte Official and Cortes concerning parliament and government matters. The Chronica do Dia and Parte Marítima formed a kind of agenda for political and business events. Cousas e Lousas corresponded to the social events and fashion, and the last page was for ads. It was, in general, hard to read, and the initial periodicity wasn’t very steady, nor its price. Gaspar Ferreira Baltar bought the entire newspaper in 1870 and lighter subjects were included, but the political features weren’t completely eradicated. Some improvements were put into place, which improved the graphic quality. Circulation was increased by a campaign to promote sales and attract advertising and Baltar hired newspapers vendors that announced the Janeiro on the street: *"My father started the sale of spare newspapers and had the art and ability to attract the public."*(BALTAR, 1934: 19)

But increasing the sales meant also to turn the newspaper’s contents into a more appealing format. Some leading intellectuals such as Guerra Junqueiro, Antero de Quental or João Chagas were hired, all of them very engaged with political matters but, at the same time, fashionable and well-known writers. The newsroom was always carefully chosen, and new journalists gradually were responsible by the inclusion of

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<sup>2</sup> O Primeiro de Janeiro, December 1, 1868.

<sup>3</sup> “Jornaes da Minha Terra”, O Tripeiro, October 19, 1931

news reports. The sections were also modified. The international section was diversified and with more space. Lighter and humorous subjects were added like *Correio da Moda* or the *Gazetilha*. In the beginning of the 20th century *O Primeiro de Janeiro* had a great focus on information and reports, different sections and a group of correspondents from several Portuguese cities. It was proud of the serious tone kept in all matters and this reputation lasted in time. *Janeiro* did quality journalism:

*"[The fait-divers] were treated with circumspect language, and sobriety marked its style. Around 1900, Janeiro, had a varied, attractive and short reading, (...). However it never gave emphasis to crimes or other human miseries. During this period, if someone compared the Lisbon newspapers to Janeiro, he would say that the latter was from another country, so silent and curt in reports of murders and robberies, scenes of jealousy or suicides, themes that other newspapers treated in detail, in the most repugnant way." (MARTINS, 1941: 50)*

During the first decades of the 20th century *Janeiro's* life was never easy. It kept the political engagement and it was the only Oporto newspaper supporting the republican revolution, in 1910. In fact, the news of the revolution was given only by *Janeiro*, because the telegraph communications were controlled by the royalists. On January 6, under the headlines "Communications with the capital are still cut", this daily gave some reports about the events occurred in Lisbon and also gave news of the instability felt in Oporto military quarters. That same day, *Janeiro* launched a special evening edition with the proclamation of the republic and in the following days this subject was profusely treated in a ton of joy: "Morning of radiant joy in the city. The news of the proclamation of the republic is accepted with enthusiastic rejoice", or "Bright and beautiful morning", or the "radiant dawn of redemption for justice that all from this newspaper awaited". The support to the new regime was stated during the following months and from then and forward *O Primeiro de Janeiro* was the newspaper of the republican wing in Oporto and a mark for the opposition during the dictatorship. Therefore there was continuity on the political features that engaged its readers, kept during all the constitutional monarchy and enhanced by the commitment to the republican and democratic cause.

Nevertheless, the 1<sup>st</sup> Republic was a period of great political, social and economic difficulties that were intensified by the Great War. The crises also affected the press due to the lack of paper, and in some days *Janeiro's* edition only had two pages or just wouldn't come out. In January, 1, 1919, the anniversary was celebrated under a grim mood: "Without pride, but with nobility, *Primeiro de Janeiro* celebrates its newspaper's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary". In the following days the somber tone would last enhanced by the news of a monarchic coup that endangered the republican regime. In this same year and due to heavy lack of resources *Janeiro* was sold to the "Lisbon Group". A new reform arrived and the new editorial guidance gave more importance



to 'fait-divers' and news from Lisbon. Janeiro won a wider range of readers and somehow lost the Oporto brand which was strengthened by the opening of a newsroom in Lisbon (the Agency). The Primeiro de Janeiro Company was sold again in 1923 to a new company whose main figure was Manuel Pinto de Azevedo that eventually became the only owner of the newspaper. This new period corresponded to a new glorious stage in its history, which would only end with the revolution of 1974.

The first number of Jornal de Notícias was issued on June 2, 1888, and it was previously advertised through a circular letter inviting the public to subscribe the newspaper, supported by the Partido Regenerador (the liberal right-wing):

*"The newspaper responds to a most urgent and undeniable need in the fight and defense of ideas and political actions of the noble Partido Regenerador. (...) The newspaper that we have the honor to recommend fully accomplish the aspirations of all those who condemn the current deplorable political administration."*<sup>4</sup>

The ideological frame was present in the early years with the critics to the government controlled by the progress party and the colonial policy in particular. The political controversy in Jornal de Notícias didn't last long, due to the general transformations in the Portuguese press and because of the decline of the parliamentary system. In the early 20th century, the newspaper eventually opted for a popular approach of news and the daily factuality became its increasingly main goal. This relatively fast transformation was due to the fact that Oporto lived by then a period of great dynamism but also because Notícias' leaders were able to create an appealing model which allied a lighter language and a more popular style with the matters of national policy. Thus, it presented a blend of styles and intentions. It began with four pages, and the cover story was about a political subject. The Folhetim (the serial) could include foreign or national novels, which were repeatedly advertised in multiple numbers. Other topics were international issues, random news and the agenda. The popular tone was set by the popular novels and the sections The humour appeared under A Rir and Notas Alegres, and it was extended to political issues in Gazettilhas. More than 50% of Notícias' printing space was full with advertisement which shows that it had a good circulation and economic success.

Jornal de Notícias followed the usual strategies in order to allure readers, such as the mentioned Folhetim, the columns signed by notorious writers and the news from Oporto and the North Region. It included big reports from the major events that took place in those days, such as a famous republican rebellion in 1891, the sinking of a ship or the construction of emblematic buildings, such as the train station. It praised the

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<sup>4</sup> Jornal de Noticias, June 2, 1888.

modernization of the city but some concern was also showed because of the lack of regulations in aspects like security, lighting and sanitation.

The popular tone became particularly striking in news like the story of a woman burglar that was described as some kind of buccaneer, an allegedly serial killer, the news of ghosts, the suicides and murderers. The crimes of passion did the Notícias' headlines and were treated with many details and the follow up endured for several numbers. Therefore, the political orientation gradually gave place to a modern and popular framing. In terms of audiences, the turning occurred during the summer of 1899, when the Portuguese health authorities made a decree putting Oporto under quarantine because of a plague episode. Jornal de Notícias began a dramatic campaign against Oporto's isolation and for that it was severely punished by the government. The newspaper's argument was that it wasn't an epidemic issue but the lack of sanitary measures:

*"The century ended and with it one of the most brilliant and courageous campaign of Jornal de Notícias in defense of Oporto and its interests. The poor health and poverty facilitated the spreading [of the disease]. The authorities ill advised by alleged experts, saw the advance of the illness as a plague epidemic and imposed around the city a sanitary cordon highly damaging to Oporto life and its commercial activity."<sup>5</sup>*

During this period, and according to the newspaper, the circulation increased from 10 to 16 thousand, and within a decade, to 22 thousand, which was proudly announced on the first page: "Jornal de Notícias is the daily newspaper with greater circulation in the north region".

The evolution of the ownership of the Jornal de Notícias is also a reason for its success. The political purposes soon gave way to a more pragmatic approach. Accordingly, the founders understood the advantages of transforming the property into a company. After 1925, the newspaper remained in the hands of Anibal de Morais who was the Notícias' very soul. The popular style was kept and the newspaper grew in influence and wealth until his death in 1934. Before that, in 1926, Jornal de Notícias also moved to a more central headquarters, at Avenida dos Aliados. By then the three newspapers were well incorporated in the city life and were a symbol of its values and its entrepreneur spirit.

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<sup>5</sup> Edição Comemorativa do 75º Aniversário do Jornal de Notícias, 1963

## The modernization processes: newspapers profiles, audiences and leadership

During the dictatorship that lasted until April 1974, Oporto daily papers suffered the same constraints that affected the Portuguese national press. For almost a half a century the development of newspapers was delayed by the censorship regime but also by social and economic factors. The low income had an impact on the demand of the press, but the levels of illiteracy were determinant on the low rates on circulation. Until the sixties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was around 40% of illiterates and 30% in the seventies. From the statistic point of view, there is scarce data concerning circulation and the relation between readers and newspapers (MESQUITA, 1987). There are a few numbers on general circulation during the period of modernization when daily papers reached 660 000 copies/day<sup>6</sup>.

Regardless of the many problems caused by the censors and the lack of freedom of speech, newspapers tried to survive in a hostile environment for the news business. Censorship along with several punishments had impact in the way newspapers presented the news. There were also several forms of pressure that could go from suspensions, to Salazar's personal interference such as admonitions or much worse, the lack of banking support. Other forms of pressure could have an economic impact such as the delay in the censorship procedures or the demand of the final prints instead of the print proofs. All this caused trouble in the distribution systems and newspapers companies would have money losses due to the compensations they had to pay. This constraining structure turned editors and newsrooms in cautious compliers of the established order. As a consequence, the news contents lacked the agility and the spirit to attract wide audiences. Only in the late sixties, the press enterprises invested in transformations which included the hiring of young reporters that would stir the newsrooms. For *Comércio do Porto*, *Primeiro de Janeiro* and *Jornal de Notícias* the challenge became the ability to endure in such difficult situation and their directors (Seara Cardoso in *Comércio*, Pinto de Azevedo in *Janeiro* and Pacheco de Miranda in *Notícias*) had to comply with the dictatorship rules, but at the same time they sought to stand for the newspapers' interests and tradition.

For *Comércio do Porto* the period after the thirties was marked by a decline due to the restraining conditions but also to the aging of the journalists and their low academic formation that was translated in its contents. Most of the news sources were from telex takes. The only section that escaped to this routine was sports. *Comércio* invested in detailed information in that section, particularly in football matches. The results were given by a wide net of sources formed by the local police, and, at least on Mondays, *Comércio* was leader in sales. The other original main subject was the

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<sup>6</sup> Secretaria de Estado e Turismo, 1973

Church. The readers from the countryside and the clergy were part of the faithful public and expected this type of contents. This line of news gave *Comércio* a more traditional feature but not necessarily a total submission to the regime. In fact, the publication of a take about the seizing of the Portuguese navy motorboats by the Guinea partisans in the beginning of the colonial war, in spite of the express orders for not publishing, led to the suspension of this newspaper.

Another form of slight contradiction of Salazar's policy was related to the Church subjects. For instance, in 1967, *Comércio* made a large coverage of the Pope's visit to Fátima, and it was well known that Paul VI strongly condemned the dictatorship and the colonial war and this visit caused great unease in the circles of power and was seen as supportive for the non-conservative Catholics. In the same sense, in 1868, *Comércio do Porto* made a large interview to D. António Ferreira Gomes, the Bishop of Oporto known as a great opponent of Salazar's policy.

The slow loss of influence of *Comércio* was felt by Seara Cardoso and his son who, during the sixties, shared the direction of the newspaper. A few changes were tried, such as the hiring of some new reporters but with scarce effects. The big transformations occurred in the Portuguese press companies in this period implied substantial investments, which, in most cases, were provided by the acquisition of most of their ownership by the banks or the strong economic groups that controlled the Portuguese economy in that period (CORREIA, BAPTISTA, 2007; LIMA 2012). The investment that enabled the transformations of *Comércio* was brought by the Quina Group, a holding with several financial interests and owner of a bank, Borges & Irmão. They bought most of *Comércio's* property and provided the loan to finance the modernization of the newspaper, during the early 70's. Transformations were made in the equipment and the printing process and a new crew of journalists was hired in order to renovate the newsroom. A new dynamism could be seen in the news by the inclusion of diverse subjects such as more sports, news concerning some of the Quina's interests and soft news like beauty contests and entertainment. The results of this transformation can't be assessed, due to the revolution of 1974.

During the dictatorship, *Primeiro de Janeiro* kept the label of being the daily of Oporto of republican-wing. In spite of the censorship, one of the ways found to show some defiance was a very complete coverage of Spanish civil war. The framing of the reports was in favour of left-wing forces and *Janeiro* gave detailed news of the combats, supported by pictures and maps that made the front pages' headlines. But the attitudes of rebellion were severely punished and, therefore, *Janeiro* had to accommodate just as the other newspapers. Nevertheless, the republican tradition was achieved by the inclusion of important chronicle authors that were against the

regime. According to Marques Pinto<sup>7</sup>, "Janeiro had an important focus on information from the North and it was very well made. In fact, this kind of news was the most important. On the other hand, the director had a vision of a national newspaper. So the concern for local news was mostly due to the newsroom policy rather than to the director's will." The tradition in the defense of democratic ideals was very hard to maintain due to the censorship regime, so it had to be reflected in opinion columns. In the news coverage the editorial guidance became more of complacency towards the censorship, in order to avoid punishing actions. Still, its sober style and the quality of the writing put *Primeiro de Janeiro* in a place of primacy in terms of diffusion, even though there are no records of its circulation or sales to confirm the senior journalists' statements in this sense. Circulation numbers would only be provided after the democratic revolution and not in a very accurate manner in the early years (LIMA, 2008).

Pinto de Azevedo was *Janeiro's* director and a wealthy business man, reason why it could keep some independence towards the political power. According to Marques Pinto, "Pinto de Azevedo was an old-fashioned boss. He was used to command and be obeyed without questioning." He gave more importance to industrial aspects, rather than the news. This particular effort placed *Primeiro de Janeiro* always ahead of its competitors in technical aspects. By the other hand, the newsroom occupied a second rank which was further enhanced by the unusual fact that the editorial power decision didn't belong to the editor in chief, but it was in hands of the head of typography. Marques Pinto notes that the editor in chief, Mario de Figueiredo had no decision capacity and that, "Rafael Silva [the head of typography], which was a very competent man, often had the power to decide the first page." Pinto de Azevedo's management resulted in a very conservative way of making news. Moreover, the incongruity of a printer with the editorial power expresses somehow a great distrust on the intellectual team that produced the news. The newspaper had created a style and maintained a great reluctance to change. Over time this option resulted in the loss of readers, since the two city rivals operated transformations, albeit with different timelines.

*Jornal de Notícias* had a different evolution from its direct competitors. In the early years of the dictatorship it opted for a strong support to the regime and expressed very radical conservative ideas. The events related to political leaders or radical right-wing organizations had a great space in coverage. In opposition to the *Janeiro's* stands, *Notícias* was in favour of the German side during the II War. The pro-Nazi tone was given mostly by the column opinions and this sidetrack to the previous guidance had consequences on sales: "The sympathy of public opinion is very difficult to achieve. What can please some displeases others, because opinions are divergent and shallow

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<sup>7</sup> In a series of interviews made to 13 journalists that worked at *Jornal de Notícias*, *O Comércio do Porto* and *O Primeiro de Janeiro*: Marques Pinto, Silva Tavares, Marques da Cruz, Braga da Cruz, Manuel António Pina, Joaquim Queirós, (LIMA; 2012)

and there is nothing more uncertain and less secure than human opinions." Nevertheless, the fault should be placed on the troubled times: "The newspaper should be, at times, the great conciliator. It performs a work of astonishing balance in the difficult human enterprises."<sup>8</sup> Apparently, this effort of conciliation was misunderstood by the readers and the newspaper went into a troubled period of decline stated by the decrease on circulation. In 1946, Notícias daily circulation only reached 18700, average, descending to numbers previous to the plague episode. The slow recovering began when Pacheco de Miranda became the new director (1938), but the economic losses lasted for a long period.

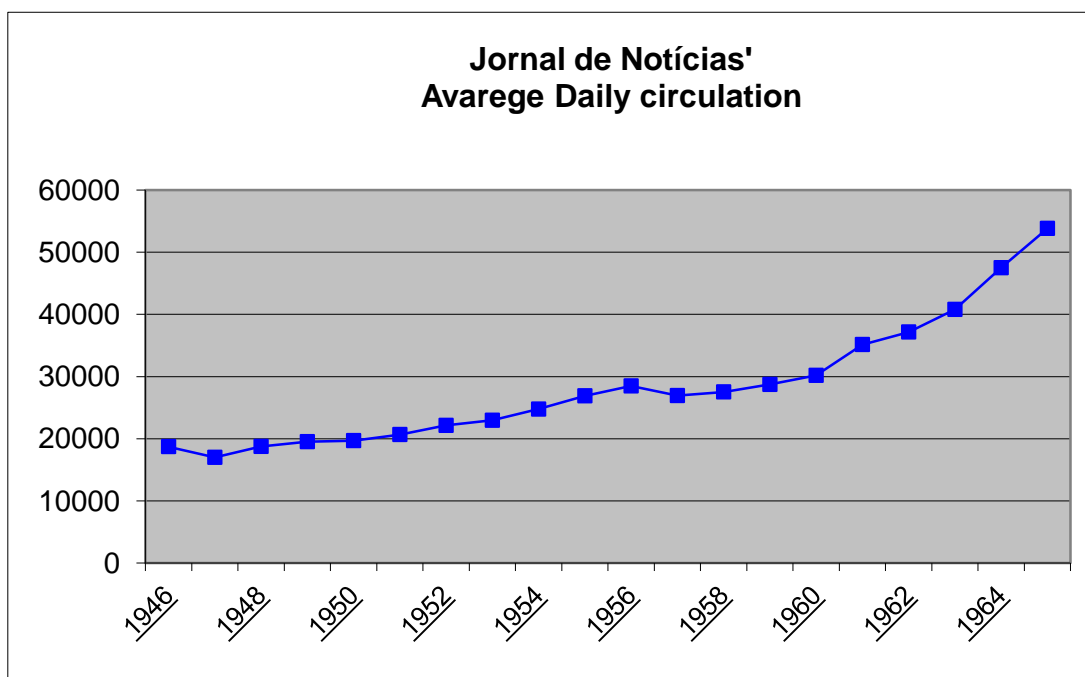


Chart 1- Increase on circulation on Jornal de Notícias<sup>9</sup>

Notícia's strategy to regain the public's confidence was the return to the popular style that it was its trade mark. However, the process was not easy because Pacheco de Miranda wasn't an obedient follower of Salazar and as Freitas Cruz points out, "The Notícias lived serious financial troubles because it was mistrusted by the government, since it had a reticent attitude towards the regime". This independence resulted in retaliatory effects that prevented access to bank loans and, consequently, the delay in upgrading the machinery and the graphic improvements. During the 60's Notícias was partially bought by a financial group held by the State (Caixa Geral de Depósitos). After the acquisition the loans were available and the modernization took place.

Pacheco Miranda opted for a balanced way to manage the Notícias' editorial profile and as a result there was a more favorable response by the inhabitants of Oporto. The

<sup>8</sup> Jornal de Notícias, June 2, 1933

<sup>9</sup> According to data provided by Sousa, 1988

effects of the new guidance were reflected in the increase of circulation and, therefore, results in advertising. The daily was able to adjust to changing without disruptions. The hiring of new journalists in 1971 opened the doors to "Young people with academic training. We were greeted with suspicion and I must say with some aggressiveness." as Manuel António Pina referred. Despite the initial negative reception and some jealousy, the newsroom eventually integrated the newcomers and the modernization was operated without profound disturbances. *Jornal de Notícias* reassumed the emphasis on issues closer to the readers. It was also the first Oporto morning paper to be organized in sections. The reorganization of the printing space was directly linked to a greater number and diversity of news. However, the sinister role played by the censors acted as a hindrance in the intent of changing the newspaper.

The strict management and the rigor catapulted *Notícias* to the top of circulation. The public was also allured by the sports section. The coverage of the Oporto football teams and cycling tours became very important in this process of gaining the readers fidelity. Apart from sports, the tie between *Notícias* and the city was established in other several ways. The newspaper had a remarkable network of sources that was built thanks to the perseverance of the editor in chief Manuel Ramos, that never disregarded the phone calls from the public. Sometimes people called asking questions about an event and a reporter was always sent to the archives to seek facts, which permitted clarification but also would create a bond with the public. This interaction also worked the other way around and when some incident occurred in town the anonymous public called *Jornal de Notícias* and not the other dailies. Freitas Cruz confirms these interactions "In *Notícias*, we looked for the news and because of that, news came to us. There was a bond between the newspaper and the people". And this bond was straightened by the publication of small news that intended to draw attention to small problems that needed to be solved. In many cases people attended to the newspaper to complain and not to the authorities because they believed that the daily had the capacity to put things right. All this made *Jornal de Notícias* a very popular daily paper.

The fait-divers, the sports and the emotional writing were complemented by a colorful layout, in a very different style from the competition. Manuel Pina accepted the characterization of the competitors that scornfully characterized *Notícias* as the maids and the troopers' newspaper. It was indeed a popular newspaper and yet its journalists had a great pride in it, reflected in the words of Manuel Pina: "It always had this reputation of a popular newspaper, a newspaper poorly done. But nobody made a sloppy newspaper as well as we did." Some of these features have survived the upheavals of April 25, 1974, and have been instilled in successive generations of journalists who have been integrating the newsroom. The concept, along with the

editorial guidance, prevailed and made *Jornal de Notícias* one of the largest national newspapers until the present time.

## Conclusions

The three major Oporto newspapers started their publishing in the tradition of the nineteenth-century Portuguese press, ideological and educational in nature, and supported by political parties and the commercial association. This model evolved towards a more comprehensive news purpose according to a progressive transformation of contents and the gradual conquest of readers. This was achieved through loyalty strategies that were common to daily news, but also by a targeting to particular audiences that can only be inferred by the subjects treated by each newspaper, considering the impossibility of audience's studies for that period. These identification processes were achieved through specific policies, but they all included news concerning Oporto and the North region.

Gradually, they all opted by a wider range of subjects and became more comprehensive and with lighter contents. Still, *Comércio*, *Janeiro* and *Notícias* constructed particular audiences according to each particular profile. *Comércio* opted for a very careful editorial guidance, that can be considered as a quality paper, due to the subjects and quality of writing, educational purposes and graphic image. *Janeiro* also kept a serious tone in the news coverage and remained politically engaged and this feature assured a particular range of readers and that prevailed even during Salazar's dictatorship. *Notícias* also constructed a particular audience due to a much more popular approach that can be traced by the inclusion of more emotional news and framing, as well as a lighter writing style that were combined by a more gaudy graphic layout.

Each particular style and success were also linked to their leaders: Bento Carqueija, Gaspar Baltar and Anibal Moraes, but also Seara Cardoso, Pinto de Azevedo and Pacheco de Miranda. These personalities, through their dedication and personal visions carried forward the transformations in key moments of these newspapers history. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and due the difficulties imposed by the dictatorship, the news contents were constrained which had heavy consequences. The modernization of the companies and the newsmaking processes were delayed until the late sixties, at least in *Comércio* and *Notícias*. In spite of these difficulties, some of the initial identity features were preserved and integrated into more modern and appealing models.



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