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Editorial Identities, Business Models, and Social Strategies: Spanish Women Editors in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

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ABSTRACT

This article examines women's periodical editorship in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Spain. Drawing on library collections and digital periodical databases, it revisits the pioneering research on a small number of major figures undertaken since the 1990s and tests it on a much larger scale. Was female editorship a negligible phenomenon in the history of the Spanish press, or are we only beginning to discover its scope? And if more women editors are identified, to what extent can we extrapolate insights into the profiles, networks, and strategies of a few *grandes dames* to larger numbers? Our approach not only enables us to answer these questions on a quantitative level, it also opens up a large corpus of periodicals for more in-depth qualitative research. Specifically, after presenting some quantitative findings and general observations, we examine three factors that played a role in the success and failure of Spanish women's periodical editorship: editorial identities, business models, and social strategies.

KEYWORDS

women editors, Spain, editorial identity, business models, social strategies

In Spain, important research on the historical press was undertaken in the 1970s, in the early years of the restored democracy, and again in the 1990s from a feminist perspective. Eminent press scholars such as Carmelo Garitaonandía, Manuel Tuñón de Lara, Antonio Elorza, Manuel Pérez Ledesma, María C. Seoane, and Maria Carmen Simón Palmer advocated for the study of a variety of periodical sources alongside canonical literary genres, and insisted on going beyond biographical storytelling focused on major figures in order to look for models of production and entrepreneurial structures.¹ With the help of twenty-first century technology, we can revisit the pioneering work of these scholars and test it on a much larger scale. Thanks to the growing numbers of Spanish periodicals and newspapers that are being digitized, we can, for instance, undertake a more comprehensive as well as in-depth study of women's editorial work for the periodical press.² Until now, a lot of research has been developed around a small number of well-known female editors, such as Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921) and Concepción Gimeno de Flaquer (1850-1919), and findings about these few figures have been generalized for the whole period. This raises important questions about the representativeness of this scholarship. Was female editorship a negligible phenomenon in the history of the Spanish press, or are we only beginning to discover its scope? And if more women editors are identified, to what extent can we extrapolate insights into the profiles, networks, and strategies of a few grandes dames to larger numbers?

Using digital periodical databases not only enables us to answer these questions on a quantitative level, it also opens up a large corpus of periodicals for more in-depth qualitative research. Specifically, we first present some quantitative findings and general observations on Spanish women editors; subsequently, we adopt a qualitative approach to examine three factors that played a role in the success and failure of female periodical editorship: editorial identities, business models, and social strategies.

In this article, we explore these questions by bringing together our academic expertise in the history of print culture and Digital Humanities on the one hand and hands-on experience in journalism and media business management on the other. In recent decades, a vocabulary has emerged that reflects the formal and informal obstacles and difficulties women encounter in building professional careers. Women hit 'glass ceilings' that keep them from moving up in the corporate hierarchy and obtaining leadership positions; they are excluded from 'old boys' clubs' and become trapped in 'velvet ghettos', where their managerial power does not pose an immediate threat to men's.³ These metaphors, we argue, are also helpful when studying the past. Our focus is on the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, a time of great development in the Spanish press that saw a significant rise in the number of women launching their own periodical publications. This phenomenon started to wane around the turn of the century and ended after the Civil War in 1939, when a dictatorship was established and Spanish women were largely banished from the public sphere.

¹ Carmelo Garitaonandía and Manuel Tuñón de Lara, eds, La prensa de los siglos XIX y XX. Metodología, ideología e información. Aspectos económicos y tecnológicos (Lejona: Universidad del País Vasco, 1986), pp. 14-16; Antonio Elorza, Manuel Pérez Ledesma, and Manuel Tuñón de Lara, eds, Prensa y sociedad en España (1820–1936) (Madrid: Edicusa, 1975), pp. 74; María C. Seoane, Historia del periodismo en España. 2. El siglo XIX (Madrid: Alianza, 1989); María Carmen Simón Palmer, Escritoras españolas del siglo XIX. Manual bio-bibliográfico (Madrid: Castalia, 1991).

² For an overview of new digital approaches in the field of periodical studies, see the 2019 special issue 'Digital Approaches Towards Serial Publications' of the *Journal of Periodical Studies*, guest-edited by Joke Daems, Gunther Martens, Seth Van Hooland, and Christophe Verbruggen.

³ See Beth Ghiloni, 'The Velvet Ghetto: Women, Power, and the Corporation', in *Power Elites and Organizations*, ed. by G. William Domhoff and Thomas Dye (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1987), pp. 21–36

Some Numbers and General Observations

The starting point of our research was a crucial 2014 article by María del Pilar Palomo Vázquez. Using traditional bibliographies, Palomo discovered more than 4,000 women writing in the Spanish press throughout the nineteenth century. She also identified forty-seven women editors, but assumed there were more. We extended her research by visiting the Hemeroteca Municipal in Madrid, the Barcelona City Archive, and the Cádiz Provincial Archives to consult non-digitized periodicals and bibliographic records as well as by taking advantage of the freely availably digital databases Hemeroteca Digital (National Library of Spain), Biblioteca Virtual de Prensa Histórica, Arxiu de Revistes Catalanes Antigues, and the Internet Archive. We also used key reference works by Manuel Ossorio y Bernard, Ensayo de un catálogo de periodistas españoles del siglo XIX (1903), and María Carmen Simón Palmer, Escritoras españolas del siglo XIX. Manual bio-bibliográfico (1991). In addition to unearthing evidence to substantiate some of Palomo's more tentative findings, we managed to identify eighty Spanish periodicals edited by women in the nineteenth century and sixty-seven in the twentieth century before 1939.

The first Spanish journal known to have had a woman editor was the radical *El* Robespierre español (Isla de San Fernando, 1811-12), which was edited by María del Carmen Silva for a short period of time in 1812. Our quantitative findings confirm that this earliest instance of female editorship was followed by what María C. Seoane has called 'el gran silencio' ['the great silence'] of 1814 to 1820, a period in the history of the Spanish press in which no new periodicals were launched.⁵ From the 1840s onwards, a growing number of periodicals were edited by women until they reached a peak in the 1880s: five in the 1840s, seven in the 1850s, thirteen in the 1860s, twenty-three in the 1870s, and again twenty-three 1880s. Among them were miscellaneous magazines, family magazines, and fashion magazines as well as literary, cultural, and activist publications, disseminated on a weekly, fortnightly, or monthly basis to readerships that tended to be small but loyal. Notably, Spanish women at the time did not edit daily newspapers. The daily production of newspapers not only carried heavy costs, there was also a strong tradition of alignment with political parties and tendencies, from which women were largely excluded. The periodicals we consider in this article all had similar cost structures. Printing costs were the largest portion of the expenditure; staff and management costs were marginal, with the exception of publications heavily reliant upon illustration, which was labour intensive and therefore expensive. To cover these costs, the periodicals were primarily dependent on sales and subscriptions, donations, advertising, and, exceptionally, loans from friends or family, or private wealth, ranging from a large fortune in the case of Emilia Pardo Bazán to a small, almost marginal one for Pérez de Celis (1840-82).

In the 1890s, the number of identified women editors dropped to ten, followed by a further decrease in the early twentieth century. This dearth of female editorship is remarkable given that serial print media boomed in Spain in the first decades of the twentieth century, particularly around 1913 and during the Civil War (1936–39), when the market was flooded with both left- and right-wing periodicals, many comprised

⁴ María del Pilar Palomo Vázquez, 'Las revistas femeninas españolas del siglo XIX. Reivindicación, literatura y moda', Arbor, 190.767 (2014): a130.

⁵ Seoane, pp. 69–76.

of just a few pages.⁶ One might expect the number of women editors to have risen accordingly, but in reality there were very few. One reason for this apparent discrepancy is that from the turn of the twentieth century onwards it became more difficult for editors in general to establish periodicals from scratch, as many weekly and monthly publications did not survive for long.⁷ A common complaint was that the printed press had transformed from an instrument of communication and opinion-making into a capitalist enterprise driven by economic interests and increasingly interwoven with political power structures.⁸ It can be assumed that this tendency affected female editors in particular, as they were more likely to lack access to the financial resources and networks behind this system.

Editorial Identities

According to our own research and survey of previous scholarship, we can distinguish four types of female editorship which overlapped in different ways depending on how the editors' public identities were shaped: named versus 'hidden' editorship and single versus collective editorship. Not many Spanish women editors' names were presented on the title pages or in the mastheads of their periodicals, apart from the 'happy few' who were wealthy, well known, and, in some cases, also the proprietor of the periodical: novelists like Emilia Pardo Bazán with Nuevo teatro crítico (1891-93), writers and journalists like Faustina Sáez de Mélgar (1834-95) with La Violeta (1862-66), Paris-charmant (1882-84), and La Canastilla de la infancia (1893), Carmen de Burgos 'Colombine' (1867–1932) with Revista crítica (1908–09), and Concepción Gimeno de Flaquer, who funded and edited El Album iberoamericano (1891-1909) until her husband took over officially in 1900. A few were able to use their prominent social positions to ensure successful publication, such as Patrocinio de Biedma (1858-1927), who had an aristocratic background, with Cádiz: Revista de Artes, Letras y Ciencias (1877-80), Emilia Serrano de Wilson (1843–1922), a baroness and keen traveller with a large international network, and the wealthy sisters Isabel (1878-1974) and Ana Oyarzábal, who co-edited La Dama y la vida ilustrada (1908-11). The Viscountess de San Enrique asserted her status as 'Directora y Proprietaria' ['Editor and Proprietor'] in the masthead of Mujeres españolas (1929-31), Ana and Amalia Carbia were similarly identified as editors and owners of Redención (1915), and Consuelo González Ramos (1877–1956), a primary school teacher known in the press as 'Celsia Regis', was listed as 'Directora-fundadora' ['Founding Editor'] of the feminist weekly Las Subsistencias (1924–30).9

The presence of a named female editor not only attracted more female journalists and contributors to the periodical, women's prominence as editors was also used to increase readership, as the Baroness de Wilson did for *El Último Figurín* (1871–73) and Enriqueta Lozano de Vilchez (1829–95) for *La Madre de familia* (1875–84). ¹⁰ In

- 6 For more information about the Spanish press in this period, see Carlos Salaün and Carlos Serrano, 1900 en España (Madrid: Espasa, 1991) and Jean-Michel Desvois, ed., Prensa, impresos, lectura en el mundo hispánico contemporáneo: homenaje a Jean-François Botrel (Pessac: Institut d'études ibériques & ibéro-américaines, Université Michel de Montaigne-Bordeaux 3, 2005).
- 7 Salaün and Serrano, p. 47.
- 8 See, for example, Luis Araquistáin, 'El periódico industrial', España (24 February 1916), 5.
- 9 In Spanish, director refers to the chief editor and overall manager of the periodical and its contents. Editor in Spanish is the publisher, the representative of the owner (or, in some cases, the actual owner) of the periodical and, thus, the person in charge of the editorial line and the general budget. Redactores are members of the editorial team. Throughout this article we use 'editor' in the English sense of the word.
- 10 El Último Figurín and La Madre de familia consistently mentioned the name of the editor. Long before twentieth-century periodicals such as Mujer, Mundo femenino, and Nosotras, these magazines were openly proud of their female editors and journalists.

addition, women editors highlighted their names in order to showcase their religious, ideological, or political commitments, including the catholic Sofia Tartilán (1829–88) in La Ilustración de la mujer (1873–77), mouthpiece of the women's charity organization La Estrella de los Pobres [The Star of the Poor]; the anarchist couple Joan Montseny (1864–1942) and Teresa Mañé (1865–1939), and later also their daughter Federica Montseny (1905–94), who jointly edited La Revista blanca (1889–1905; 1923–36); feminists such as Celsia Regis of La Voz de la mujer (1917–31) and Carlota O'Neill (1905–2000) of Nosotras (1931–35); and the right-wing traditionalist Carmen Fernández de Lara (1880?–1960) of Aspiraciones (1932–35). Rarely were named female editors appointed by the owner of the periodical on the basis of their skills and expertise. One case we found was María Luz Morales (1889–1980), whose work as a film critic led to an invitation from the director of Paramount Pictures to become editor of Revista Paramount (1928), later renamed Revista Gráfico (1929), the magazine of the company's Spanish branch.

Named female editors were exceptions compared to the number of women whose editorship was anonymous, pseudonymous, or otherwise hidden, for various legal, political, moral, or commercial reasons. ¹¹ Until 1931, the Spanish Civil Code, following the Napoleonic Code of 1804, did not recognize married women's property rights. The law in fact served to reinforce what was effectively a witch hunt undertaken by Minister Juan de la Cierva against anarchists and spiritists such as Amalia Domingo Soler (1835–1909), editor of Luz y unión (1900–10), who in 1908 was presented as managing editor, with J. Esteve listed as 'Director' ['Editor-in-Chief']. ¹² To protect Teresa Mañé and her husband from prosecution, La Revista blanca was officially managed by fellow anarchist Anselmo Lorenzo. Some women tacitly took over their husbands' editorial responsibilities because their husbands were persecuted, exiled, or imprisoned. The Portuguese-born María del Carmen Silva, the first known female editor in Spain, on 27 September 1811 tacitly assumed editorship of the radical newspaper El Robespierre español after her husband, Pedro Pascasio Fernández Sardino, was arrested for spreading seditious messages. Similarly, Eva Canel (1857-1932) became editor of her husband Eloy Perillán Buxó's satirical liberal periodical La Broma (1881–97) upon Buxó's exile to Bolivia due to his republican views. ¹³ While Sofia Tartilán's name appeared prominently in the masthead of La Ilustración de la mujer, she remained hidden as editor of the hunting magazine La Caza (1865-67), most likely not only for reasons of decorum but also for commercial reasons, because it would be more difficult to market a womanedited sports periodical to a primarily male readership.

If, as we mentioned earlier, periodicals with named female editors tended to have higher numbers of female contributors, we can formulate a similar hypothesis with regard to unnamed female editorship: when a periodical ostensibly run by men makes it known that many of its journalists are female and that its main tasks are performed by women, or when such a periodical is entirely devoted to defending women's rights and interests, these are fairly sure signs that women, either individually or collectively, were doing most of the editorial work behind the scenes. Examples include the illustrated

¹¹ This phenomenon has been studied by Dolores Romero, 'Revisión crítica del uso del seudónimo en mujeres escritoras', in *La otra Edad de Plata. Temas, géneros y creadores (1898–1936)*, ed. by Ángela Ena (Madrid: Editorial Complutense, 2013), pp. 143–70.

¹² For more information about women's participation in the anarchist press, see Concepción Bados Ciria, 'Escritoras, educación y género en la prensa anarquista española (1898–1936)', in Escritoras españolas en los medios de prensa, 1868–1936, ed. by Carmen Servén and Ivana Rota (Sevilla: Renacimiento, 2013), pp. 13–34.

¹³ For more information, see Blas Sánchez Dueñas, 'Preocupación patriótica y compromiso nacional en las escritoras españolas finiseculares a través de la prensa', in *Escritoras españolas en los medios de prensa*, 1868–1936, ed. by Carmen Servén and Ivana Rota (Sevilla: Renacimiento, 2013), pp. 237–66.

women's and needlework magazines *La Mariposa* (1919–22), whose official editor-inchief was Luis Bernet, and *El Primor femenil* (1897–1903), which listed D. T. Díaz Capdevila as 'director y dibujante' ['chief editor and cartoonist'] and two women, Francisca Surribas de Diaz and Concepción F. de Puig, as 'redactoras técnicas' ['technical editors']. The short-lived feminist *Mujer* (1931) had a male 'director-gerente' ['managing editor'], Santiago Camarasa, though it was clearly produced by a feminist collective comprised of leading female journalists and writers of the time, such as Concha Espina, Rosa Arciniega, Halma Angélico, Margarita Nelken, Matilde Muñoz, Matilde Ras, and Magda Donato. Amalia Domingo Soler's name does not appear in the masthead of *La Luz del porvenir* (1879–04), but she signed many of the lead articles, women bylined the largest share of contributions, and there is a notice in the 29 May 1884 issue announcing that she had taken over the administration and proprietorship from the publisher D. Juan Torrents.¹⁴

By the same token, editorial responsibility also tended to lie with women when the magazines were the mouthpieces of women's groups, associations or trade unions. Cultura integral y femenina (1933–36) reported on the activities of several feminist associations. J. Aubin Rieu-Vernet was listed as editor-in-chief, yet in reality the periodical was run by a female editorial board consisting of, among others, Clara Campoamor (1888–1972), Consuelo Bergés (1899–1989), María Lejárraga (1874–1974), Isabel Oyarzábal, Elisa Soriano (1891–1964), and editorial secretary Jacoba Reclusa. ¹⁵ We also found a large number of unnamed, collective female editors during the Civil War, the period in the history of the Spanish press with the most militant and ideologically engaged periodicals on both sides. The fascist monthly Ecos de mi colegio (1933-40), which did not carry any male signatures at all, was managed and edited by a religious order in Salamanca identifying itself collectively in the masthead as 'Hijas de Jesús — Mostenses' ['Sisters of Jesus — Mostenses']. Y: Revista para la mujer (1938–46) was the voice of the 'Sección Femenina', the women's branch of the fascist political party Falange [Phalanx]. It was the brainchild of founding editor and director of the Press and Propaganda Department, Marichu de la Mora (1907–2001), whose editorship was never disclosed in the pages of the periodical. The inaugural 1 May 1936 issue of the Republican Mujeres (1936-39), mouthpiece of the Asociación de Mujeres Antifascistas [Association of Antifascist Women] revealed the editorship of the founder of the association, Dolores Ibárruri (1895–1989), but the frequent use of the feminine first person plural 'nosotras' ['we, women'] suggests the editorial involvement of several women. Behind La Mujer y el trabajo (1912–25), the official monthly publication of the Sindicato Obrero Femenino de la Inmaculada [Women's Labour Union of the Immaculate], were the editorial efforts of María de Echarri (1878–1955), one of the union's most active propagandists. Occasionally, evidence of female editorship emerges upon closer inspection of the periodical. Founded by Dolors Monserdá de Maciá (1845–1919), the Catalan women's weekly Or y Grana (1906-07) was officially edited by Gaspar Roure, yet the first issue contained a photograph (Fig. 1) of the all-female editorial team captioned 'unas servidoras de vostes' ['some of your servants'] and a reader's letter in the issue of 27 October 1906 was addressed to 'Sras. Directora y Redactoras' ['Ladies Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Team Members']. 16

^{14 &#}x27;Advertencia importante', La Luz del porvenir (29 May 1884), 1.

¹⁵ Seoane and Sáiz, pp. 505-06.

^{16 &#}x27;Las redactoras d'²Or y Grana", Or y Grana (6 October 1906), 9; 'Comentari', Or y Grana (27 October 1906), 55–57 (p. 57).



Fig. 1 The all-female editorial team of *Or y Grana* (6 October 1906). Arxiu de Revistes Catalanes Antigues

Business Models

Spanish female editors used a variety of financial strategies to establish and run their periodicals, with varying degrees of success. Women such as Ángela Grassi (1823–83) who had enough capital to fund their own periodicals were an exception. Grassi was able to buy the fashion magazine El Correo de la moda from her brother in 1867 and headed it until her death in 1883. Some women launched their editorial activities by means of a minimum personal investment in the form of a loan from a friend. For example, Raimunda Avecilla lent her friends, the Oyarzábal sisters, 2,000 pesetas to help them found La Dama in 1907.¹⁷ In the many cases of periodicals published to benefit certain causes, the editors often relied on donations and unpaid labour. Concepción Arenal (1820-93) established the biweekly La Voz de la Caridad (1870-84), devoted to social, public health, and prison reform, with the financial support of two sponsors, the Countess of Espoz y Mina and Fernando de Castro. 18 A short note in the 15 April 1870 issue informed readers that none of the editors were paid, that any income from the periodical would be donated to the poor, and that they did not regard their subscribers as 'tributarios' ['taxpayers'] but as friends. 19 Other examples of periodicals built on the work of volunteers include the numerous magazines published in support of women's efforts during the Civil War, such as Dolores Ibárruri's Mujeres and the biweekly Emancipación (1937), mouthpiece of the Secretariado Femenino del POUM [Women's Bureau of the POUM], the Workers' Party of Marxist Unification.²⁰

¹⁷ Isabel Oyarzábal, *I Must Have Liberty* (New York: Longman, 1940), p. 81. According to MeasuringWorth, the equivalent of 2,000 pesetas in today's money is around 8,000 euros.

¹⁸ Concepción Arenal, 'Don Fernando de Castro', La Voz de la Caridad (15 May 1874), 67.

^{19 &#}x27;El artículo', La Voz de la Caridad (15 April 1870), 42.

²⁰ For more information, see Rosario Calleja Martín et al., 'Despertar, represión y letargo de la conciencia feminista España 1936–1939)', in *Mujer y sociedad en España 1700–1975*, ed. by Rosa M. Capel Martínez (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1982), pp. 333–64.

Periodicals to a large extent depend on subscribers to survive, and it is a sore reminder of the financial obstacles women editors in particular had to overcome to see how fiercely these women fought for subscriptions. As the title of a message from the editors in La Mujer y el trabajo, 'Una carta más a los lectores' ['One more letter to the readers'], already suggests, this required a sustained and repeated effort.²¹ A notice in the first issue of La Madre de familia urged — 'suplicamos' ['we beg'] — readers to circulate the periodical among their friends to help increase the number of paid subscriptions.²² Muchachas (1937), mouthpiece of the Unión de Muchachas Madrileñas [Union of Madrilenian Girls], even cast readers in a proselytizing role, urging them to become 'una active propagandista' ['an active propagandist'] for the periodical.²³ Some editors were quite inventive in their methods to attract subscribers, setting up competitions, raffles, and voucher systems. La Violeta offered a book and a photograph in a wellknown studio for an annual subscription; La Mujer offered prints and engravings; Asta Regia offered lottery tickets.²⁴ Mujer promised a one-year free subscription to those who could attracted six new subscribers, a set of books for an annual subscription, and 1,000 pesetas to the winner of a crossword puzzle competition. 25 Aspiraciones accepted lottery tickets as an alternative form of payment.²⁶ Others accepted donations or relied on more traditional methods to keep afloat, such as advertising, regularly publishing readers' letters to encourage their loyalty, or seeking the support of prestigious figures. Spanish Queen Isabel II, for instance, subscribed to La Violeta (1862-66) and Eugenia de Montijo, Empress of France, supported Baroness de Wilson's La Caprichosa (1857).

Another way to increase the number of potential subscribers was to target markets outside of the main Spanish publishing hubs. An estimated eighty to ninety per cent of magazines published in Madrid were intended for the provinces.²⁷ Title pages also frequently listed subscription prices 'ultramar' ['overseas'], in Central and South America and the Philippines (notably Havana, Mexico, Buenos Aires, Puerto Rico, Manila), and the names of bookshops that sold the periodicals. Distribution and exchange across the Atlantic could, in fact, be facilitated more easily, from the ports of Cádiz, Santander, and La Coruña, than with the geographically smaller area generally referred to as 'extranjero' ['foreign'], meaning mainly Europe. This was one of the main reasons why some Spanish women editors built careers that spanned two continents. Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda (1814-73) was born in Cuba, lived and worked in Spain for over two decades, and founded Album cubano de lo bueno y lo bello (1860) shortly after her return to Havana. The Baroness de Wilson funded and edited magazines such as La Caprichosa (1857) in Paris, El Último Figurín (1871-72) in Madrid, El Semanario del Pacífico (1877) in Lima, and La Nueva caprichosa (1906–12) in Havana. Eva Canel joined her exiled husband in Bolivia to edit *El Ferrocarril* (1875), followed by *El Petróleo* (1875) in Buenos Aires, Las Noticias (1876) in Lima, and Kosmos (1904) and Vida española (1907) in Buenos Aires; they also collaborated with magazines in New York and Cuba.²⁸ Belén Sárraga (1874–1951) edited El Liberal (1900) in Montevideo and Rumbos nuevos (1925) in Mexico City. Their efforts often faltered not only because of lack of funds

²¹ María Valle R., 'Una carta más a los lectores', La Mujer y el trabajo (February 1925), 24–26 (p. 24).

^{22 &#}x27;Suplicamos á nuestros suscritores', La Madre de familia (8 July 1875), 8.

²³ Muchachas, 3 (1937), back cover.

²⁴ See La Violeta (15 January 1865), 4; La Mujer (8 June 1871), 8; Asta Regia (4 December 1882), 8.

²⁵ Mujer (26 August 1925), 31.

^{26 &#}x27;Nuestra imprenta', Aspiraciones (13 July 1932), 18.

²⁷ Mercedes Cabrera, Antonio Elorza, Javier Valero, and Matilde Vázquez, 'Datos para un estudio cuantitativo de la prensa diaria madrileña (1850–1875)', in *Prensa y sociedad en España (1820–1936)*, ed. by Antonio Elorza, Manuel Pérez Ledesma, and Manuel Tuñón de Lara (Madrid: Edicusa, 1975), pp. 47–148 (p. 92).

²⁸ Sánchez Dueñas, pp. 242-43.

but also because there were simply not enough readers for all of these publications and finding contributors was a constant struggle, both in South American and in Spain, a country with a literate population of only thirty-three per cent in 1900.²⁹ In a short autobiographical account, María Teresa García Banús (1895–1989) recalls: 'We also produced a periodical, *Emancipación*, which was difficult to publish because there was a lack of female editors, since most of the workwomen who could offer us information found it difficult to write; but with the notes they supplied we could produce articles.'³⁰

As a final, crucial business strategy, women editors took market demands into account when establishing and running their periodicals, at least to the extent that their budget allowed. While many could not afford attractive colour illustrations, cover designs, and large publication formats, careful attention was paid to typography and layout. This was not only the case for mainstream magazines such as El Correo de la moda, El Álbum Ibero-Americano, and Fernanda Gómez's La Mariposa (1866-67); even during the hard times of the Civil War, the editors of Mujeres, Y, and Companya (1937-38; edited by an all-woman editorial team) relied on visually striking covers, among other strategies, to engage readers and encourage them in the struggle. In addition, in order to avoid censorship and heavy fines, Spanish periodicals edited by women generally limited themselves to a very specific, traditional market niche: that of instruction and entertainment, both in a moral and cultural sense. Only the most politically committed, such as utopian socialist Pérez de Celis, spiritist Domingo Soler, and Teresa Claramunt (1862–1931) of the anarchist newspaper El Rebelde (1907–08) dared to produce publications that violated censorship regulations and press laws. Others regretted the narrow range of subjects they could present to their readers, but catered to their demands nonetheless. Isabel Oyarzábal reflected in her autobiography I Must Have Liberty (1940):

I struggled to keep [La Dama] going for over three years and had enjoyed the experience but, somehow, I felt we had outgrown it. Life seemed so much bigger than we made out on those shiny, lustrous pages on which nothing new or progressive could be published. Sometimes we tried to introduce a different line but our young readers or their mammas immediately protested. They loved the pictures of charming society women and pretty brides and the descriptions of balls and parties and the sickeningly sentimental novels, generally translations from the British mid-Victorian period. We had introduced four pages of classical music and an occasional reproduction of a famous picture to leaven the mediocre material, but even these did not stimulate anyone's curiosity. Nudes, however famous, were of course carefully avoided.³¹

Oyarzábal's comments also serve to explain the proliferation of specialized fashion magazines in Spain from the late 1820s onwards.³² These magazines offered female readers, both literally and figuratively, the 'pictures of charming society women and pretty

²⁹ The literacy rate was 5.96% in 1803, 19.27% in 1860, 28.49% in 1887, and 33.45% in 1900, according to Luis Sánchez Agesta, *Historia del Constitucionalismo Español* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales de Madrid, 1990), p. 507.

^{30 &#}x27;Hicimos también un periódico, *Emancipación*, difícil de sacar porque faltaban redactoras, ya que la mayor parte de las obreras que podían ofrecernos informaciones les costaba mucho escribir; pero con las notas que nos facilitaban podíamos hacer artículos.' María Teresa García Banús, 'Una vida bien vivida', *VientoSur*, 93 (2007), 9–19 (p. 11).

³¹ Oyarzábal, p. 114.

³² For more about the proliferation of fashion magazines in nineteenth-century Spain, see Laura González Díez and Pedro Pérez Cuadrado, "La Moda elegante ilustrada" y "El Correo de las Damas", dos publicaciones especializadas en moda en el siglo XIX', doxa.comunicacion, 8 (2009): 53–71.

brides' they were so eager to consume. As a result, the fashion press was one of the most competitive sections of the women's periodical market, attracting a lot of male publishers and editors in search of lucrative business opportunities. Spanish fashion magazines from the pioneering *El Periódico de las Damas* (1822) and *Cartas Españolas* (1831–33) to the long-running *La Moda elegante* (1842–1927) and *El Hogar y la Moda* (1909–87) were all directed by men.³³ While women may have done editorial work behind the scenes, men were more likely to have the financial and legal resources needed to attract advertisers and import fashion illustrations from abroad.³⁴ On the rare occasion where a fashion magazine entirely run by a woman did well, male competitors were quick to respond. This happened with Baroness de Wilson's *El Último figurín*, which was sold to Abelardo de Carlos in 1871 to thwart competition with his own *La Moda elegante*, the periodical he had built up practically from scratch.

Social Strategies

In the period that we examined, Spanish female editors not only had limited financial power and autonomy, they were also largely excluded from the social circles in which their male counterparts participated. Men benefited from what we now call 'old boys' networks': the formal and informal homosocial ties that bound them together as friends and colleagues in the context of male activities and spaces, from schools, universities, men's clubs, and athenaeums to hunting parties and brothels. Proposals, contracts, and appointments were negotiated — not in tidy offices but, rather, in these institutional or leisure areas that women editors could not reach, by men who supported each other because they had known each other since childhood or their student years. This raises the question of what social strategies female editors, who had to operate outside these circles, used to establish and run their periodicals. What kinds of professional or social support could they find? To what extent did they rely on national and international networking? Did these women actually know each other? Were they able to share experiences and protect each other?

Transnational exchanges were possible when women editors emigrated or had the means to travel, as did Gimeno de Flaquer in Mexico, Wilson in Paris, and Pardo Bazán in Havana and Buenos Aires; or when they maintained international contacts in Spain, such as Oyarzábal working as a correspondent for the American news agency *Laffans News Bureau*. For the majority, however, intellectual and professional exchanges took place in the context of salons, such as Emilia Serrano de Wilson's, or metropolitan spaces. A case in point, examined in detail by Pilar Vega Rodríguez, is Patrocinio de Biedma (1858–1927), who compensated what she lacked in personal financial resources with clever social networking. The immediate success, against all odds, of her miscellaneous magazine *Cádiz* (1877–80) (Fig. 2) can be attributed to her personal involvement in selecting collaborators and establishing connections with, for instance, the Illustrirte Zeitung in Leipzig and the *Pictorial World* in London; her ability to

³³ See Danièle Bussy Genevois, 'Aproximación metodológica a la prensa para mujeres en España (1931–1936)', in Carmelo Garitaonandía and Manuel Tuñón de Lara (coord.), La prensa española de los siglos XIX y XX: metodología, ideología e información. Aspectos económicos y tecnológicos (Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, 1996), pp. 99–109 and Jean-François Botrel, 'Abelardo de Carlos y la Ilustración Española y Americana. El empresario y la empresa', in La prensa ilustrada en España. Las Ilustraciones (1850–1920), ed. by E. Trenc (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry, 1996), pp. 91–96.

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ See, for instance, Christina Bezari, 'Emilia Serrano de Wilson: Entre los salones literarios y los periódicos femeninos', *Confluencia*, 33.1 (2017), 118–127.

³⁶ Pilar Vega Rodríguez, 'Periodismo y empresa periodística: el Cádiz de Patrocinio de Biedma', Arbor, 190.767 (2014), a143.



Fig. 2 Front page of *Cádiz* (10 May 1877), edited by Patrocinio de Biedma (1858–1927). Hemeroteca Digital, National Library of Spain

bargain for advertising contracts; her active search for subscribers, associates, and benefactors; and her decision to move from Cádiz to Madrid, the intellectual centre of the Spanish-speaking world.³⁷

Some evidence of group consciousness among Spanish women, and among women editors in particular, can be found in the second half of the nineteenth century. Awareness of a common mission can be detected in early feminist periodicals such as

37 Ibid.

the Pensiles edited or co-edited by Margarita Pérez de Celis (1840-82) and María Josefa Zapata (1822-78) — El Pensil Gaditano (1856), El Pensil de Iberia (1857), El Nuevo Pensil de Iberia (1857-58), La Buena Nueva (1865-66) — and in La Mujer (1871), edited by Faustina Sáez de Melgar. As Judith Rideout has shown, many of these and other women editors met each other socially and called on each other to contribute to their magazines.³⁸ At the same time, they were not yet organized in any formal way, and in their editorials they tended to use the third-person singular pronoun 'ella' ['she'] or 'mujer' ['woman'] when referring to women as a group. It was not until the early twentieth century, with the emergence of the first feminist organizations, particularly in Madrid and Barcelona, that Spanish women editors across the political spectrum began using the first-person plural 'nosotras' ['we, women'] widely to unite women in a common emancipatory project.³⁹ Still, on the business side of things, many found themselves alone: neither brotherhood nor sisterhood responded to their financial or professional requests. When Benita Asas Manterola (1873-1968), editor of El Pensamiento femenino (1913-17), called upon the daily press to help her find women to assist her, she only received the answer of one woman, Pilar Hernández Selfa, who would serve as editor-in-chief. 40 When in 1919 Consuelo González founded the first Escuela de Tipógrafas [School of Women Typographers] in Spain, whose students would contribute to the production of La Voz de la mujer for many years to come, both the Madrid City Council and the unions, with their exclusively male membership, refused to support the initiative and cast women as stealing men's jobs. 41

It was perhaps as a result of this isolation and of the direct opposition they faced in their immediate surroundings that Spanish women editors at the turn of the twentieth century paid tribute in the periodical press to predecessors and colleagues abroad. In an 1897 article on female journalists in La Correspondencia Alicantina, Emilia Pardo Bazán mentioned, among others, the French editors Juliette Adam (1836-1936) of La Nouvelle Revue (1879-1940) and Madame Rattazzi (1831-1902), the Portuguese editor Guiomar Torrezão (1844-98), and 'un periódico alemán [...] exclusivamente redactado por señoras y consagrado a la defensa de la causa feminista' ['a German periodical (...) edited exclusively by women and devoted to the defence of the feminist cause']. 42 Pardo Bazán was most likely referring to Die Frau (1893–1944), whose chief editor Helene Lange (1848-1930) was named by Concepción Gimeno de Flaquer in a 1900 article in El Álbum Ibero-Americano that reads like a Who's Who of European female periodical editorship. Among the many, mostly feminist, editors listed are the French Juliette Adam, Madame Rattazzi, Maria Martin (1839-1910), Paule Mink (1839–1901), Louise Koppe (1846–1900), Hubertine Auclert (1848–1914), Marya Chéliga-Loevy (1854–1927), and Marguérite Durand (1864–1936), the German Lina Morgenstern (1830–1909), the Italian Gualberta Alaide Beccari (1842–1906), and the Polish Paulina Kuczalska-Reinschmit (1859–1921), whose life and work are discussed

³⁸ Judith Rideout, 'Women's Writing Networks in Spanish Magazines around 1900' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 2017).

^{39 &#}x27;Nosotras' in this context appeared for the first time in 1897, according to Danièle Bussy Genevois, 'Inscrire les femmes dans le champ de la sociabilité', in *Les Espagnoles dans l'histoire une sociabilité démocratique (XIXe-XXe siècles)*, ed. by Danièle Bussy Genevois (Saint Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 2002), pp. 5–2. However, we found an earlier example in 'Paso a la luz', *La Luz del porvenir* (11 September 1880), 1.

⁴⁰ María C. Seoane and M. D. Sáiz, Historia del periodismo en España. 3. El siglo XX, 1898–1936 (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998), p. 195.

⁴¹ See 'Nuestra escuela', Las Subsistencias (1 December 1924), 6, and Ivana Rota, 'Celsa Regis, La Voz de la Mujer (1917–1931) y la formación de la mujer tipógrafa y periodista', in Escritoras españolas en los medios de prensa, 1868–1936, ed. by Carmen Servén and Ivana Rota (Sevilla: Renacimiento, 2013), pp. 207–36.

⁴² Emilia Pardo Bazán, 'La mujer periodista', La Correspondencia Alicantina (22 October 1897), 1.

in Alicja Walczyna's contribution to this special issue. ⁴³ Five years later, in a public lecture that was later published in *Unión Ibero-Americana*, Carmen de Burgos widened the scope even further, giving the names of numerous American as well as European female editors and journalists. ⁴⁴ Even if Spanish women editors were excluded from the professional and financial support networks that underpinned the careers of their male colleagues, through articles such as these some of them were able to identify themselves publicly as a group and to situate their work in the larger tradition of women's periodical editorship in Europe and beyond.

Conclusion

The group consciousness evoked in the articles by Pardo Bazán, Gimeno de Flaquer, and De Burgos is exceptional rather than representative of how Spanish female editorship was shaped and experienced around the turn of the twentieth century. The vast majority of Spanish women did not have enough personal connections to build the national and international networks of contributors, (foreign) correspondents, and influential investors needed to establish a periodical of their own, let alone run it successfully over a long period of time. Working with male as well as female journalists, as Concepción Arenal did for *La Voz de la Caridad* and Carmen de Burgos for *Revista crítica*, was not enough to break the homosocial circle of men and establish a heterosocial one instead. As Lola Alvarez argues, women also generally lacked female leadership and management models with which they could identify and, conversely, established women editors rarely used their names or positions to support or validate the work of female colleagues. Unlike some male contemporaries, no Spanish woman in the period that we examined was catapulted into the spotlight of political, cultural, or financial power by means of the periodical that she edited.

In the early twentieth century, technological innovations such as the telephone, the emergence of large news agencies, and the capitalist expansion of lobbies and monopolies transformed journalism into big business. When this happened, Spanish women — who were also excluded from property rights and political rights until 1931 — were disproportionately affected. The number of female journalists may have continued to rise, but the number of female editors decreased significantly, with important consequences for the editorial projects that women had developed previously. For instance, when María Luz Morales retired from her position as editor-in-chief of *El Hogar y la moda*, her male successor, Tomás García Larraya, reinstated a more traditional view on femininity.⁴⁶

This is not just a trend of the past. What drove us, a literary historian with expertise in Digital Humanities and a former CEO of several media businesses in Spain, in co-authoring this article was not only the question of how the use of digital periodical databases can contribute to a more accurate understanding of the history of Spanish women's periodical editorship. We also believe that bringing women's present-day media management experiences to bear on the past may shed new light on their

⁴³ Concepción Gimeno, 'Mujeres contemporáneas', El Álbum Ibero-Americano (30 December 1900), 566-68

⁴⁴ Carmen de Burgos, 'Misión educadora de la mujer en el periodismo', Unión Ibero-Americana (31 December 1905), 85–89. See also Ángeles Ezama Gil, 'Las periodistas españolas pintadas por sí mismas', Arbor, 190.767 (2014), a136.

⁴⁵ Lola Alvarez, Ex Umbra in Solem. Sobre el poder de las mujeres en las empresas de comunicación (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2013), pp. 45–79.

⁴⁶ Carmen Servén, "La labor de María Luz Morales en El Hogar y la moda (1921–1936)", in En prensa: escritoras y periodistas en España (1900–1939), ed. by Margherita Bernard and Ivana Rota (Bergamo: Sestante, 2010), p. 93.

historical experiences, and vice versa. More particularly, scholars of the historical press do not always sufficiently acknowledge that serial print media are commodities produced by companies seeking profit, subject to the laws of institutional bodies as well as the laws of the market. This is often due to a lack of sources: financial records, such as account ledgers and annual balance sheets, are less widely available than, for instance, legal records.⁴⁷ Yet even if much of this information is lost to us, the financial aspects of periodical editorship are crucial to understand the social and professional strategies that Spanish women editors adopted in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Conversely, insight into the reasons why so few women gained prominent positions in the field of journalism while many others failed (or were unable to even try) helps us draw attention to the significant work that remains to be done. Two decades into the twenty-first century, the number of women pursuing careers in the press industry is still growing, but the number of women in leading editorial and management positions is not increasing at the same rate. Now as much as in the past, women who succeed in breaking the glass ceiling are caught in velvet ghettos and excluded from the old boys' clubs that are at the heart of the media industry.

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⁴⁷ An example of a study focusing on legislative aspects is Seoane and Sáiz.

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