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#### **ABSTRACT**

The foreign language press in the United States serves three functions: (1) it provides a medium of communication for immigrant groups whose native language is not English; (2) it serves to publish news of the home country which would otherwise be unavailable; and (3) it aids the process of assimilation by offering information and advice on lifestyles in the new country. The spacial-temporal dimensions of foreign language publishing in the United States are closely associated with immigrant history and the settlement geographies of ethnic Americans. In New York, newspapers are published in 20 languages, in California, 12, and in Illinois, 10. The American South and the Great Plains, Northern Rockies, and Great Basin regions, on the other hand, do not support a single foreign language newspaper. The number of Romance (except for Spanish), Germanic, and Slavic language publications is declining. The future of the established newspapers and periodicals would be brighter, however, if they could become ethnic presses serving the needs of the third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation immigrants who neither know the mother tongue nor care about events in the "old country," but who do take pride in their ethnic heritage. (CMG)



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### PRINTING IN TONGUES:

## THE FOREIGN-LANGUAGE PRESS IN THE UNITED STATES

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The appearance of an ethnic press, typically a foreign language press, has been one of the universal concomitants of immigration to the United States, a country where freedom of the press is guaranteed and almost sacrosanct. Robert Park (1922: 7) found in 1922, for instance, that in New York City even the smallest of the immigrant groups had established a periodical of some kind. Roucek (Brown and Roucek, 1945), in surveying the status of the press in the 1940s found that newspapers in the United States were being printed in 39 different tongues. Even though the nature of the publications has changed since then, a tabulation of the entries appearing in the 1982 editions of Ayer Directory of Publications, Editor and Publisher International Yearbook, and The Media Encyclopedia (Transparency 1) showed that newspapers were published in 39 foreign languages in the United States (Transparency 2). Although each of these reference sources is incomplete and occasionally inaccurate, when used together they seem to provide a fairly comprehensive list of foreign language publications.

Focusing on ethnicity rather than language, Wynar in 1972 identified 43 ethnic groups which supported their own periodicals. Of these



<sup>\*</sup>Paper presented at the 1983 annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Denver, Colorado, April 26, 1983.

only 45 percent were in the native language while almost one-third were published totally in English. Wynar was able to list 903 ethnic publications. Those ethnic groups supporting 20 or more are shown on Transparency 3. The Jewish press can be seen to account for 19 percent of the total number of publications. These Jewish periodicals illustrate the difference between an ethnic press and a foreign language press. The Jews are a single ethnic group but their 170 publications appear in many languages, most notably Yiddish, Hebrew, and English.

Although Ukrainian publications are second in number to Jewish publications, the circulation of Spanish publications outpaces the circulation of Ukrainian publications by almost seven to one. In terms of circuation, only Jewish and Spanish accounted for more than one million circulation. Indicative of the contemporary economic climate and technological milieu under which the Spanish language press is evolving, it is characterized by fewer publications with larger circulations. Older ethnic groups on the other hand are characterized by a greater number of publications each of which has a declining number of subcribers as the traditional European ethnic groups abandon the periodicals which their parents and grandparents so actively supported. While the Jews, Ukrainians, Spanish, and other ethnic groups shown on the graph can all boast several dozen publications, some minorities support only one or two. Bringing up the bottom of Wynar's list are the Cossacks, the Luxembourgers, and the Welsh, with one publication each and a circulation of less than 1000.

## The Functions of a Foreign Language Press

What are the functions of the foreign language press which account for its ubiquity among first-generation immigrant groups and



its persistence in a country which is reluctant "to view language and ethnicity as consonant with modern social development" (Fishman: 1966, 633-34)? In general, it has served to both insulate and assimilate successive waves of immigrants into American culture. First, it has provided a medium of communication for groups whose native language is not English and whose origins are not in the United States. Even as English is mastered among first-and second-generation immigrants, the language of comfort and security is often the native tongue. Second, it has served to publish news of the home country which would otherwise be unavailable. The Italian press, for instance, gave priority to news from Italy rather than the non-Italian world (Jaret 1979: 51-53). Third, it has aided the process of assimilation by offering information and advise on lifestyles in a new country. Silverman (1963: 32), for instance, has called the Yiddish press one of the two 'most powerful Americanizing [agencies] operative on the Jewish scene." The other was the public schools.

## The Geographic Distribution of the Foreign-Language Press

American immigration history may be divided into three major waves of newcomers to the United States. The first wave of immigrants originated in northern and western Europe; the second wave in eastern and southern Europe; and the third wave in Hispanic America. In addition there have been major immigrant streams from Africa during the slave-trade era and from eastern Asia today. As each successive immigrant wave has rolled across the American landscape, these ethnic populations have become the sponsors of a multitude of major and minor ethnic newspapers, bulletins, journals, and other periodicals. The spatial and temporal dimensions of foreign language publishing in the United States are closely associated with immigrant history and the settlement geographies of ethnic Americans.



The 1982 Media Encyclopedia lists 33 languages in which newspapers are published. A cartographic analysis of their list by place of publication shows New York, California and Illinois to be the lands of linguistic diversity (Transparency 4). In New York, newspapers are published in 20 foreign languages, in California 12, and in Illinois 10. The American South, the Great Plains, the Northern Rockies, and the Great Basin region, on the other hand, are areas which support not a single foreign language newspaper. Those states which have served as gateways for immigrants from Europe, from Latin America, and from Asia, have also become the locus of the majority of foreign language presses.

Five foreign languages in the United States are sopken by more than 800,000 persons five years of age and older: Spanish, Italian, German, French, and Polish (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1982: Table 5). These languages represent the Romance, Germanic, and Slavic language groups. The newspapers which the Germanic language minorities support are listed in Table 1, the Slavic language minorities in Table 2, and the Romance language minorities in Table 3. These tables have been put together from the publications listed on Transparency 1. By place of publication, the newspapers listed in one of those sources, The Media Encyclopedia, are mapped out in Transparencies 5, 6, and 7 based on available circulation statistics. The languages which dominate these maps are the languages which are the most frequently spoken in the United States.

The Germanic language press, as displayed in Transparency 5, is dominated by the German language itself; it is today restricted to a handful of major metropolises. It was a German newspaper, however, that initiated foreign language publishing in the United States. The



short-lived Philadelphia Zeitung was published by Benjamin Franklin in 1732 (Wittke 1973: 2). Its successor, begun in 1739, attained a circulation of 4000 and served to unite an archipelago of German ethnic islands in New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia (Park 1922: 254). The first German language daily in the U.S. appeared in 1834 (Park 1922: 252) and the number of German publications peaked in 1893 at close to 800 when they accounted for over two-thirds of all foreign-language publications in this country (Wittke 1973: 282). As German-Americans and their Scandinavian counterparts have been successfully integrated into American culture, their patronage of foreign language newspapers has diminished.

The Norwegian press is even smaller than the German press and is restricted to two centers, Seattle and New York, quite distant from the original province of Norwegian settlement in the west north central states. From 1847 when the first Norwegian daily was founded in Norway, Wisconsin, through the 1870s, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota spawned a thriving Norwegian press catering to first- and second-generation immigrants. Today the locational pattern reflects two more recent chapters in Norwegian immigrant history. In the 1880s, the focus of immigration switched to the Pacific Northwest where both land and opportunities were abundant, and to New York City and other Northeastern ports where Norwegian seamen jumped ships by the thousands. The immigrant communities in Seattle and New York are not as many generations removed from the original immigrants; they are now the only remaining Norwegian language publishing centers.

The Slavic language press is depicted in Transparency 6. The proportional circles which appear on this map show Slavic publications to have a larger circulation than the Germanic publications shown on the



previous map. The Slavic nationalities constituted the second wave of immigration to the United States. Not only did they arrive later than many western and southern European groups, but their full assimilation was hampered by their different cultural, linguistic, and religious traditions. These eastern European nationalities did not start arriving in large numbers until the 1870s and 1880s when the growth centers of the United States were the heavy industrial cities of the northeastern quadrant of the country. Conspicuous on the map is the concentration of Slavic publications in that northeastern section, a distributional pattern that mirrors Slavic settlement patterns. In 1970, 80 percent of the first- and second-generation Slavic population lived in the Northeast and North Central census regions. Equally conspicuous on the map is the predominance of the Western Slavic languages, primarily Polish but also including some Czech and Slovak publications. Polish immigration dramatically increased after 1870 and during the succeeding decade Polish language newspapers appeared to serve ethnic Culumunities in Buffalo, Detroit, Toledo, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and several smaller cities (Kowalik 1978: 4). By 1888, the first successful Polish language daily was founded in Milwaukee. The only significant area of Slavic language-publishing outside the Northeast is the Austin and Waco area of Texas where several Czech language newspapers serve the Czech-American population which settled on the Texas prairies. The circle over San Francisco represents a Russian language daily.

The Romance language newspapers are depicted on Transparency 7 according to circulation statistics. Spanish language publications dominate this map. The recency of this immigrant wave and the settlement patterns of Hispanic immigrants are reflected in the size and distribution of the proportional circles appearing on the map. The 1980 Census



reported that over one-fifth of the population of New Mexico, California, and Texas were non-English speakers, a fact which helps to explain the growth of the Spanish language press in these states. In addition to the Hispanic borderlands, two northern metropolises, Chicago and New York, are major foci of Hispanic settlement and Spanish language publishing. Today there are Spanish dailies in Los Angeles, Miami, New York, El Paso, and Laredo.

Like the Spanish press, the Italian and Portuguese presses also mirror the settlement patterns of the immigrants. Italian newspapers are especially important in the Northeast, while Portuguese newspapers are to be found in New York and the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley area of California. What is surprising on the map is the absence of a Portuguese press in New England. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island are major centers of Portuguese settlement and the number of Portuguese and Azorean immigrants to this area actually increased during the 1970s.

A comparison of the three maps demonstrates the dominance of several key metropolitan centers as the focal points of foreign language publishing. New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, in particular, are characterized by a diversity of ethnic publications as well as a high volume of circulation. The Southeastern states, in keeping with the absence of an immigrant tradition, are notable for their lack of any ethnic presses except for the emergent Spanish press of Miami where the major metropolitan newspaper, The Miami Herald, has included a Spanish language section since 1976, and where one of the major Spanish language dailies in the U.S. was founded in 1954 (Sugg 1982).



### Alternative Futures

Except for the Spanish, the number of Romance, Germanic, and Slavic language publications is declining. As circulation drops off publication frequency is typically reduced and the publication is ultimately terminated. As of February 1, 1983, for instance, The Jewish Daily Forward, published in New York City, has become a weekly rather than a daily publication. The Forward was the last of the nation's Yiddish dailies. The trend in foreign language dailies portends a dismal future for many foreign language presses. According to Ayer Directory of Publications, their number declined from 71 in 1963 to only 28 in 1982; in two decades it has been more than halved. Daily newspaper circulation has historically been confined to urban centers where there is a high density of ethnic Americans. As the density of ethnic Americans thins out, daily newspapers become less practical. And as the number of first- and second-generation immigrants diminishes, as it has for the European nationalities, the use of the mother tongue in ethnic publications becomes less readable.

The future of the foreign language press may not be as bleak as these trends may lead us to conclude, however. In the first place, as long as there are immigrants to the United States there will be a foreign-language press. Simultaneously, the presses serving European immigrants of the first and second waves have declined and presses serving Latin American and Asian immigrants have grown. Just as the Philadelphia Zeitung provided a medium for the dissemination of news and information to the German ethnic islands of Pennsylvania and surrounding states, the news-oriented Spanish language press may soon serve the entire Hispanic community in the United States. In 1981 the Garmett newspapers acquired El Diario-La Prensa, New York's Spanish daily. It foresees a nationwide information network sering Hispanic



communities around the country using satellites to transmit full pages of news to any member newspaper of the network (Radolf 1980). By taking advantage of modern technology, the emerging ethnic presses may more efficiently serve the needs of a far-flung archipelago of ethnic islands.

The future of the established foreign-language presses may be as bright as the future of the emerging foreign language presses if they can make the transition to ethnic presses serving the needs of third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation immigrants who neither know the mother tongue nor care about events in the "old country," but who do take pride in their ethnic heritage. In 1979, 58 million Americans identified their ancestry as German, 44 million as Irish, 14 million as Scottish and as French, and 10 million as Italian, to name only a few (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982). By tapping only a fraction of these enormous markets, the foreign language press may be able to take advantage of the trend to 'harrow-casting' and make the transition to an ethnic press. As the editor of the Irish American has stated: 'Our readers are loosing touch with Ireland as a country and are becoming more attuned to their Irish identity. There are fewer people who have ever been to Ireland, and even fewer who have come from there. I think the press has to adapt itself to this new audience -- an audience of third and fourth generation Americans" (Kessler 1980: 519). This transition may mean publishing an increasingly larger proportion of the news and features in English. Even the largest Spanish language daily in the United States is debating whether to become a bi-lingual newspaper since 57 percent of the nation's Hispanic population speaks both Spanish and English (Radolf 1981). Many newspapers have already succumbed to pressures for more English-language coverage. The Jewish



Forward, for instance, includes an English language section which runs to about one-third of the newspaper. Nevertheless, a recent survey of 13 ethnic groups in Cleveland found that more than half read more than one ethnic newspaper and 30 percent read at least one ethnic magazine (Jeffres and Hur 1980).

Continuing immigration to the United States' advances in communications technology, undiminished diversity of foreign language in which newspapers are published, and the so-called ethnic revival in the United States may contribute to the sustenance of a press serving the needs of American ethnics. It may be a totally foreign-language press, in some instances, serving the needs of recent immigrants, or it may be an English-language press which sustains the comradery of ethnicity long after the native language has disappeared. Whatever the future of the foreign-language press, however, it has been an important part of American culture yet a neglected theme in American cultural geography.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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## SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT FOREIGN LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN THE UNITED STATES

(1)

AYER DIRECTORY OF PUBLICATIONS
BALA CYNWYD, PA: IMS PRESS

(2)

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER INTERNATIONAL YEARBOOK
NEW YORK, NY.: EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

(3)

THE MEDIA ENCYCLOPEDIA. Vol. 1: NEWSPAPER DIRECTORY
CHICAGO: NATIONAL RESEARCH BUREAU



# FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN WHICH NEWSPAPERS ARE PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES 1982

ARABIC

**ARMENIAN** 

BULGARIAN

CARPATHO-RUSSIAN

CHINESE

CROATIAN

CZECH

DANISH

**ESTONIAN** 

FINNISH

FRENCH

**GERMAN** 

GREEK

HEBREW

HUNGARIAN

INDIAN

IRANIAN

IRISH

ITALIAN

**JAPANESE** 

Korean

LATVIAN

LITHUANIAN

NORWEG IAN

PHILIPPINE LANGUAGES

Polish

Portuguese

ROUMANIAN

RUSSIAN

SERBIAN

SLOVAK

SLOVENE

SPANISH

SWEDISH

TURKISH

UKRAINIAN

VIETNAMESE

WELSH

YIDDISH

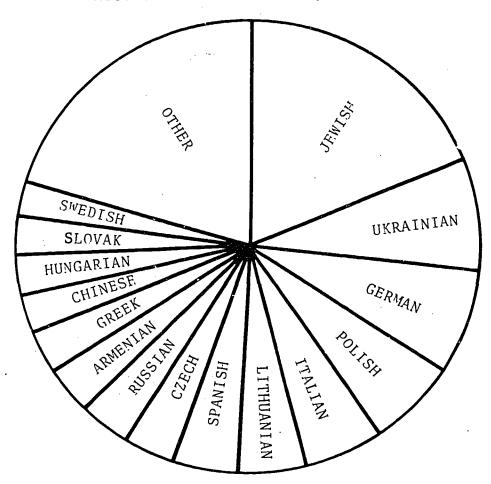




# THE ETHNIC PRESS IN THE UNITED STATES

1972

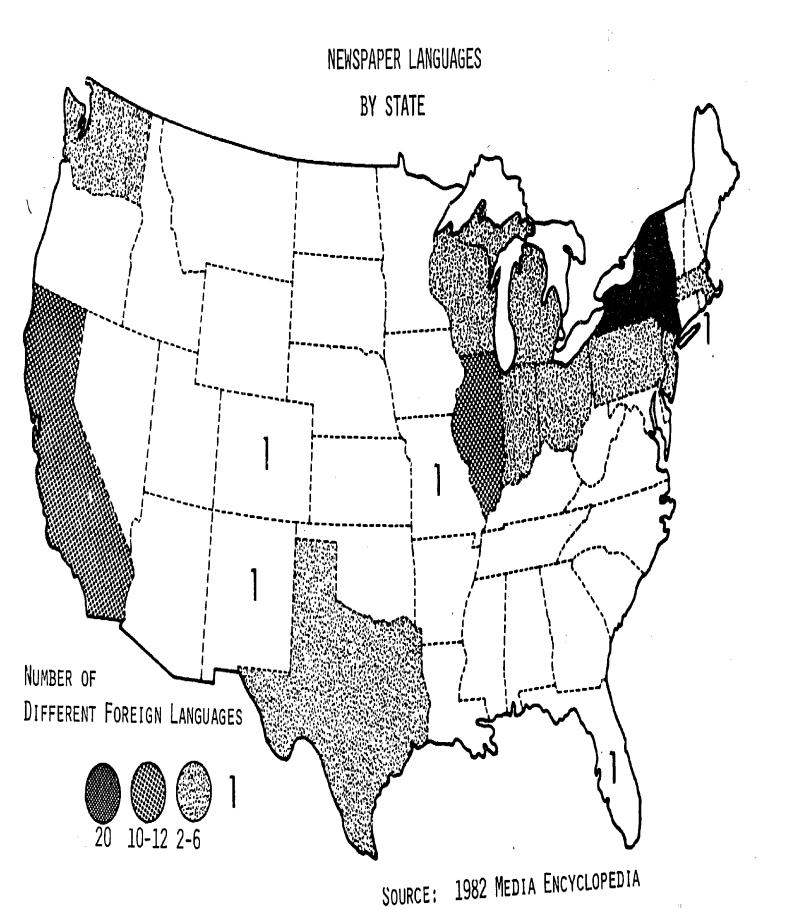
ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS



Total Ethnic Publications = 903

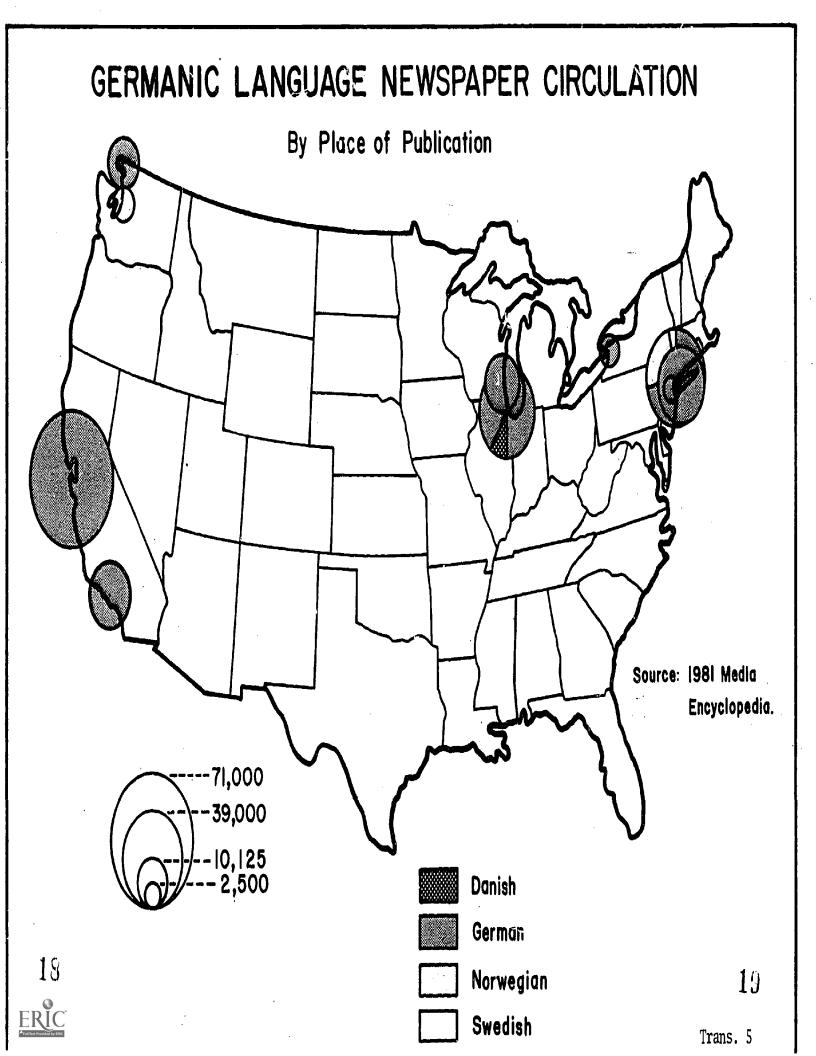
Source: Wynar, 1972

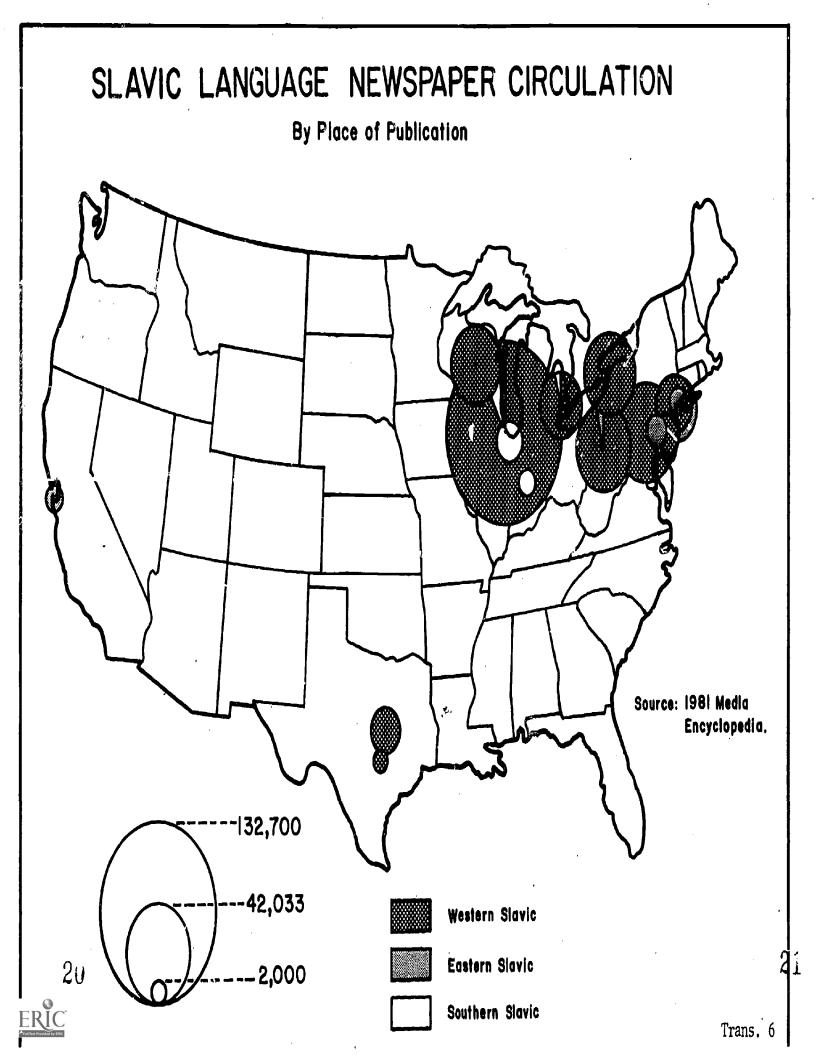




16

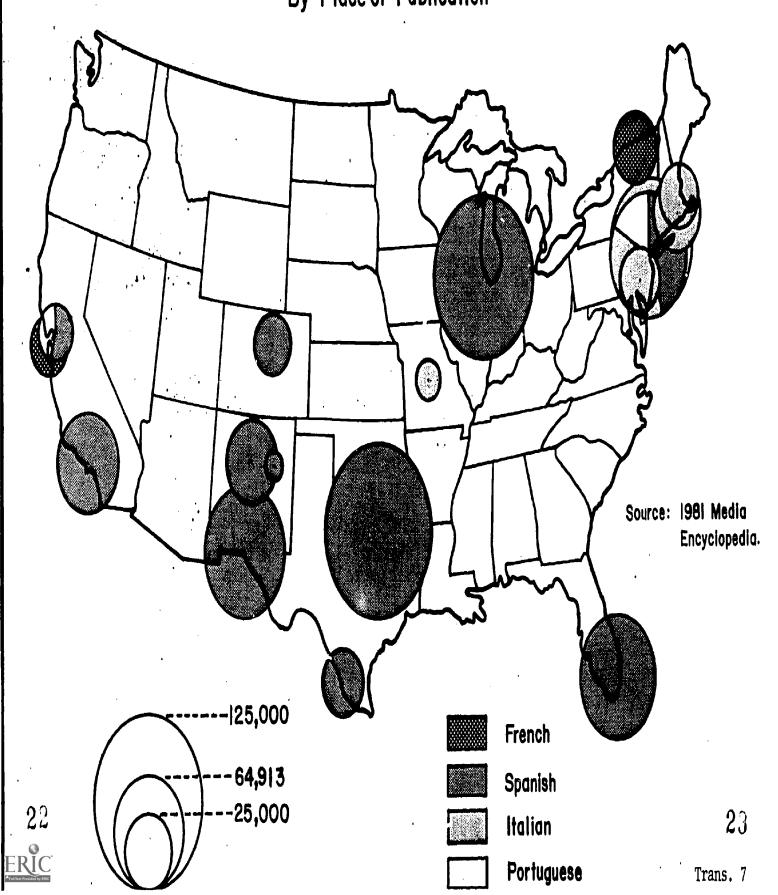
Trans. 4





# ROMANCE LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION

By Place of Publication



## THE GERMANIC LANGUAGE PRESS

LANGUAGE	NEWSPAPER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY
Danish	Den Danske Pioneer Bien (The Bee)	Chicago, IL Los Angeles, CA	bi-weekly weekly
Norwegian	Nordisk Tidende Western Viking	Brooklyn, NY Seattle, WA	weekly weekly
Swedish	California Veckoblad Vestkusten Svenska Amerikanaren Tribune Norden Nordstjernan Svea Texas Posten	Los Angeles, CA San Francisco, CA Chicago, IL Brroklyn, NY Brooklyn, NY Austin, TX	weekly weekly weekly weekly weekly weekly
German	California Staats-Zeitung Schweitzer Journal California Freie Press Washington Journal Adendpost Sonntagpost Der Deutsch-Amerikaner Eintracht Abendpost New Jersey Freie Zeitung Buffalo Volksfreund Staats-Zeitung und Herold Aufban Swiss American Review Plattdeutsche Post Cincinnati Kuner Waechter und Anzeiger Philadelphia Gazette-Democrat Pazifische Rundeschau Milwaukee Deutsche Zeitung Milwaukee Herald	Los Angeles, CA San Francisco, CA Milbrae, CA Washington, DC Chicago, IL Chicago, IL Mt. Pleasant, IL Skokie, IL Detroit, MI Kenilworth, NJ Buffalo, NY Long Island City, NY New York, NY New York, NY Staten Island, NY Cincinnati, OH Cleveland, OH Philadelphia, PA Blaine, WA Milwaukee, WI Milwaukee, WI	weekly weekly weekly semi-weekly semi-weekly monthly weekly



# The Germanic Language Press - (continued)

LANGUAGE	NEWSPAPER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY
Yiddish	Der Yid	Brooklyn, NY	weekly
	Yiddisher Kernfer	New York, NY	weekly
	Jewish Daily Forward	New York, NY	daily
	Morning Freiheit	New York, NY	semi-weekly



# THE SLAVIC LANGUAGE PRESS

LANGUAGE	NEWSPAPER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY
Bulgarian	Makedonska Tribune	Indianapolis, IN	Weekly
	Noradona Volya	Detroit, MI	monthly
Croatian	Croatian Weekly	Chicago, IL	weekly
	Danica	Chicago, IL	weekly
	Nasa Nada	Crown Point, IN	semi-monthly
Serbian	Amerikanski	Pittsburgh, PA	weekly
	Srbobran	Pittsburgh, PA	weekly
	Serb World	Milwaukee, WI	bi-monthly
Slovene	Prosveta	Burr Ridge, IL	weekly
	Ameriska Domovina	Cleveland, OH	5x week
	Amerikanski Slovenec	Cleveland, OH	weekly
Russian	Russian Daily Life	San Francisco, CA	5x week
	Novoye Russkoye Slovo	New York, NY	daily (ex. M)
	Russky Golos	New York, NY	weekly
Carpatho-Russian	VROBA Messenger The Truth	Pittsburgh, PA Pottstown, PA	bi-monthly monthly
Ukrainian	Ukrainske Zhittia Samostijna Ukraina Svoboda "America" Ukrainian Catholic Daily	Chicago, IL Chicago, IL Jersey City, NJ Philadelphia, PA	monthly monthly daily (ex. M)  5x week
	Ukrainske Narodne Slovo	Pittsburgh, PA	bi-monthly
	Narodna Volya	Scranton, PA	weekly
Polish	Dziennik Zwiazkowy	Chicago, IL	5x week
	Zgodo	Chicago, IL	semi-monthly
	Driennik Polski	Detroit, IL	5x week

# The Slavic Language Press - (continued)

LANGUAGE	NEWSPAPER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY
Polish - cont'd	Glos Ludowy Nowiny Minnescockie Post-Eagle Glos Narodu Obywatel Amerykanski Polak Amerikanski Am-Pol Eagle Nowy Dziennik Daily News Polish Star (Gwiazda) Sokol Polski Gazeta Readingska Pol-Am Journal Rola Boza Straz Gwiazda Polarna	Detriot, MI St. Paul, MN Clifton, NJ Jamesburg, NJ Jamesburg, NJ Jamesburg, NJ Buffalo, NY New York, NY Philadelphia, PA Pittsburgh, PA Reading, PA Scranton, PA Scranton, PA Scranton, PA Stevens Point, WI	monthly weekly weekly weekly weekly weekly daily (ex. S&M) weekly semi-monthly monthly monthly bi-weekly weekly weekly
Czech	Denni Hlasatel Novy Svet Nasinec Hospodar The West News	Cicero, IL Cleveland, OH Granger, TX West, TX West, TX	daily (ex. M) weekly weekly semi-monthly weekly
Slovak	Ludove Noviny Sokol Times Jednota Slovak v Amerike Narodne Noviny	Chicago, IL East Orange, NJ Middletown, PA Middletown, PA Pittsburgh, PA	weekly weekly weekly bi-monthly semi-monthly

## THE ROMANCE LANGUAGE PRESS

LANGUAGE	NEWSPAPER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY
French	Journal Francais d' Amerique L'Unite France-Amerique Lake Champlain Press L'Union	San Francisco, CA Lewiston, ME New York, NY Redford, NY Woonsocket, RI	bi-weekly monthly weekly weekly bi-monthly
Italian	Italo Americano L'Eco D'Italia Post-Gazette Il Pensiero Italian Tribune LaVoce Italiano Popolo Italiano Il Progresso Italo-Americano Sons of Italy Times The Echo Newspaper	Los Angeles, CA San Francisco, CA Boston, MA Saint Louis, MO Newark, NJ Paterson, NJ Ventnor City, NJ New York, NY Philadelphia, PA Providence, RI	weekly weekly bi-monthly weekly weekly monthly daily bi-weekly weekly
Portuguese	Voz de Portugal Jornal Portugues Luso-Americano	Hayward, CA San Pablo, CA Newark, NJ	semi-monthly weekly weekly
Spanish	La Opinion Imagen Belvedere Citizen El Mundo El Hispano Tiempo Latino La Voz Las Noticias de Hialeah Diario Las Americas Noticias Latinas The Voice La Gaceta	Los Angeles, CA Los Angeles, CA Los Angeles, CA Oakland, CA Sacramento, CA San Francisco, CA Denver, CO Hialeah, FL Miami, FL Miami, FL Tampa, FL	daily weekly weekly weekly weekly weekly daily daily weekly weekly
32	El Manana	Chicago, IL	weekly



# The Romance Language Press - (continued)

LANGUAGE	NEWSPAPER	PLACE OF PUBLICATION	FREQUENCY
Spanish - cont'd	La Voz La Tribuna de North Jersey La Nacion Americana El Hispano New Mexico Independent	Chicago, IL Elizabeth, NJ Newark, NJ Franklin Park, NJ Albuquerque, NM Albuquerque, NM	wookly wookly somi-wookly wookly wookly wookly
	Sandoval County Times- Independent Santa Ros'a News Diario-La Prensa El Continental El Sol de Texas The Laredo Times The Press	Albuquerque, NM Santa Rosa, NM New York, NY El Paso, TX Dallas, TX Laredo, TX Pharr, TX	weekly daily daily weekly daily weekly daily weekly