

Qualitative Social Research in Spain: Past, Present, and Future. A Portrait

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Abstract: Cartographic work has always gone hand in hand with the effort for the advancement of knowledge in many fields. In this paper we will sketch a cartography of qualitative methodology in Spain. Just like a painter who works on a portrait, we will proceed to add layers, colours, perspectives and depth as we go on with our description. The final picture will serve as a window through which the past, present and future of qualitative social research in our country can be observed.

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1. Introduction: Short History of this Article, Metaphorical and Conceptual Bases of a Research Program

Every written item has a short history behind it. The knowledge of that past helps the reader understand and put into context what is being narrated. In our case, the call for papers on "The State of the Art of Qualitative Social Research in Europe" transmitted two ideas, both of which were expressed in metaphorical language. One of those ideas referred to a pictorial project which remains to be done, in concrete to an overview of qualitative research in each of the European

societies. The second is the recognition of initiating something similar to a "cartography of qualitative methods in Europe". Our contribution would be a first approximation to a pictorial-cartographic representation of the case of Spain, within the project of the European map. [1]

When we began working, we immediately noted that our work was more like that of the painter who paints a scenery and people on a canvass than to that of the cartographer. We understood that the words "painting" and "portrait" did not have the connotation of precision that the word "photography" has. Neither did these words suggest the meticulous documentary work of the historian. The metaphor of the painter served us better to transmit our methodological position, on which our actual procedures are based. Like a painter, we wanted to proceed by adding different layers, colours, perspectives (depth, in one word) as we went on with our description and understanding of the case of Spain. [2]

We would like to note that this is the first result of a research project which does not end here. It must be made clear that the picture we show here should be considered as one among many possible windows through which the past, present and future of qualitative social research in our country can be observed. That is, a painting with a sense of time, place, social and cultural contexts as the scene of a chain of lives formed by generations of yesterday, today and tomorrow. It is a *subjective and partial* outline. This is not only so because of the tasks of documentation, conversation and polling that remain to be done, but also because the work of portraying (like that of writing biographies or autobiographies) has an artistic, subjective component. In order to understand this last point better, we can return, for example, to the testimony of a sociologist who faced the task of tracing the portrait of an eminent intellectual of his society who also happened to be his father. We are talking of the case of Eduardo LÓPEZ-ARANGUREN (1992) who wrote the prologue to the autobiography of his father, José Luis L. ARANGUREN, on old age. The sociologist warns us that the portrait he draws is "subjective" and "partial". However, he goes on to say:

"I hope that the portrait that follows is not like those paintings on which the painter has made innumerable changes until the person who is being portrayed felt completely satisfied. My father would be the first to express his dislike if I did such a thing." (p.13) [3]

We, as authors of this panoramic view of qualitative social research in Spain, feel that we are in a similar situation. We have embarked on the arduous task of making a family portrait. There are all types of family ties (some closer, others not so close) between the painters and the people whose portraits are being made. In addition, we are conscious of the fact that part of this work includes our self-portrait, or at least a profile of it, as well. It is known that the author of a work of art leaves in it a trace of himself, whether he explicitly appears in it (like VELÁZQUEZ in *Las Meninas*) or not. [4]

In order to make this approach more concrete, we make a proposal of historical-biographical nature which will help understand social-qualitative research in Spain

in relation with its history and with the generations of masters and disciples that the field has seen¹. We have judged it appropriate to consider the social and historical contexts as well as to give the names of groups of individuals who make up the network of the *scientific relationships and friendships*². We do not pretend here to make a full inventory; our aim is to identify the most relevant names in qualitative methods. Our overview of the past focuses most of all on the recent past; "the immediate past", in the words of IBÁÑEZ, who was a great master of the Spanish qualitative researchers as well as of a great many Latin American ones. Our analysis of the recent past leads us then to some of the main tendencies for the future. [5]

In the *abstract* handed out to the organisers of the Berlin meeting (see KNOBLAUCH, FLICK & MAEDER 2005), we expressed our willingness of narrating the known and the experience, though we also noted that all research ends up producing surprises and discoveries.

"Our work is intended as an exercise of methodological reflection and inquiry. We start from prior knowledge, built up through years of teaching and research experience in Spain. We also hope that new findings emerge as a result of this effort of portrayal and cartography. When a map is drawn or updated there is always a surprise effect. It is not by chance that Columbus' Indies turned out to be the Americas." [6]

In the final edition of this paper we came across a reference to the discovery of America made by Ian DEY (2004) in a chapter dedicated to the *grounded theory*, in order to illustrate the concepts of *deduction*, *induction* and *abduction*. The author points out that the notion of abduction gives a "different twist to the logic of 'discovery' in grounded theory". The reason for this is that, less than the facts, what is discovered is the way of connecting them.

"(...) Rather like the 'discovery' of America, what is discovered through re-contextualisation is not so much a new phenomenon per se as a new meaning or interpretation. America became the New World through the 'discovery', not of a continent which was already well inhabited, but of its new connections with what became the 'old' world." (DEY 2004, p.91) [7]

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- 1 We are conscious of the existence of visible *and invisible schools, as well as knowledge and power relationships*, in this field. In respect to those, the works of DE MIGUEL (1974) and of ALVAREZ-URÍA and VARELA (1992, 2000), among others, provide interesting background to our picture.
 - 2 The expression "scientific relationships and friendships" (OLTRA 1978, p.3) means that these two types of relationships can be mixed in real-life research. In fact, that combination can be advantageous and even "necessary for the work to be productive". Those are the words used by Benjamín OLTRA to describe his long relationship with MARSAL, who was his friend and master in the research project on intellectuals under Franco. In his more recent writings (OLTRA et al. 2004), with the perspective of the passing of time, he makes a better description of the whole network, and part of the document becomes a memorial to all of them: "*To Luis Díez del Corral, José Luis Aranguren, Juan Francisco Marsal, Esteban Pinilla de la Heras, August B. Hollingshead, Pierre Bourdieu and Lewis A. Coser, in memoriam. To Juan J. Linz, Amando de Miguel, Francisco Murillo, José Jiménez Blanco and Johan Galtung, salve. To all of them, in recognition to their moral and intellectual mastery and in proof of old and good friendship*".

For us, in this particular discovery and re-contextualisation of the Spanish case for the Americas and the Europe of today, the new connections are the network map of outstanding researchers, masters and disciples. We would like this cartography to be a relevant reference in the sense of complementing other existing or possible narratives. [8]

The authors of this paper belong to two generations of sociologists in Spain. We hope to contribute with an open gaze into a territory with blurred boundaries, inhabited by sociologists, social psychologists and anthropologists among others³. But our main focus here is the field of sociology. [9]

2. On the Genesis and Chronology of Qualitative Social Research

Our priority is on re-thinking individual and collective history through autobiographical testimonies and research made by sociologists, historians, or from related fields.⁴ The more numerous the contributions, the better it is. This is, without a doubt, a hard and risky task; but that is not a reason for not embarking on it. It is not a mere exercise in erudition. Among other things, the researchers' capacity of introspection, self-criticism and internal evaluation in their fields is in play here. There is also, in this enterprise, an intention of honouring, of bringing other possible memories, and of becoming conscious of the place and time where we are. In the beginning of 1997, a Spanish handbook on qualitative social research warned of the need to combine at least four types of historical perspectives on the origin and development in this field (VALLES 1997, pp.21-34). Three of those (those which are best known internationally) had been published in the handbook of DENZIN and LINCOLN (1994), by HAMILTON, VIDICH and LYMAN; and by the editors just mentioned. At that same time, the Spanish sociologist Fernando CONDE published, in a Spanish manual, a perspective which traced the origin of the qualitative (as opposed to the quantitative) to the Aristotelian (as opposed to the Platonic) view of the world. VALLES did note then that the four types of narratives mutually enriched each other, that none of them could separately transmit the cognitive effect obtained by the reading of the four. The historical itinerary proposed by VIDICH and LYMAN might be easier to follow: it goes from the remotest origins of North American sociology and anthropology in the 15th century (the encounter with the "other") to the present. The same happens with the definition of five key moments of the 20th century made by DENZIN and LINCOLN. Both narratives, however, tend to oversimplify. [10]

Today we know that in the second edition of their manual, DENZIN and LINCOLN (2000) increase the number of their key moments to seven, in an attempt to describe better the main events of the last years of the 20th century. In our opinion, a deeper analysis of the composition of the chapters of this unusual re-

3 On scientific and institutional overlapping in the use of qualitative methodology in social anthropology and sociology, see SANCHEZ PEREZ (2005). This anthropologist points out that epistemological reasons play a subordinate role to the pursuit of the disciplines' identity and survival.

4 "Why is History being re-written continuously?" is the title of the first chapter of the posthumous book by Esteban PINILLA DE LAS HERAS *La memoria inquieta. Autobiografía sociológica de los años difíciles 1935-1959*.

edition (where some collaborators disappear and new ones appear) reveals more than the hardly renewed classification into periods. In any case, this effort of *upgrading* is in general a positive one. The historical itinerary that it proposes has provoked a variety of reactions. On one hand, the proposal of DENZIN and LINCOLN has doubled the efforts towards thinking critically and comparatively about one's own history in countries like Germany (FLICK 2004)⁵ or Finland (RYEN 2004). FLICK, for example, sees the history of qualitative research in Germany⁶ as an interesting sequence of six phases, which he contrasts with the seven moments defined by DENZIN and LINCOLN for the United States⁷. The result of the comparison reveals marked differences. FLICK (2004, p.24) clearly reproaches the North American case to have "given the most importance to presentation in the research process, to the representation crisis and to the relativity of what is being presented" at the expense of leaving "the attempts to formalise and canonise the methods" at a subordinate level. [11]

On the other hand, a new handbook jointly edited by SEALE, GOBO, GUBRIUM and SILVERMAN (2004, pp.1-2), goes beyond the criticism of the classification by periods done by DENZIN and LINCOLN. It not only warns against the undesired effects of the "progress narratives" category, but it also strongly affirms that "this approach to understanding the vast and various enterprise of qualitative research is, we feel, mistaken". The reason for these misgivings has to do with the "great diversity of theoretical approaches, practical problems and local research traditions" which exist in the wide spectrum of researchers who come from very diverse fields or professions. As a consequence, in the opinion of the aforementioned editors, "any categorisation of qualitative research practice into a series of progressive stages is likely to be experienced as unhelpful because of being too ideological"; it is even "likely to prevent people from learning from each other". This last sentence is the one with which we would tend to agree most. We do not consider that the possible ideological interpretations that a classification into periods can cause is reason enough for refraining from the intellectual exercise of writing the history and judging (the present and future scientific community), which is what is done in the publication. It is equally probable that a non-historical presentation of research practice, which is without a doubt a less risky and more comfortable option, cause undesired ideological effects. This is

5 In respect to attempts to divide the qualitative experience in Germany in periods, the one by LÜDERS and REICHERTZ in 1986, broadened by MRUCK, in collaboration with Günter MEY (2000) should be cited here.

6 The names (and dates) of these phases are literally as follows:

Phase 1: "First studies (end of 19th century)";

Phase 2: "Importation phase (beginnings of the 1970s)";

Phase 3: "Beginning of original debates (end of the 1970s)";

Phase 4: "Development of original methods (1970s and 1980s)";

Phase 5: "Consolidation and questions of procedure (end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s)";

Phase 6: "Research practice" (FLICK 2004, p.24).

7 The seven "moments", according to DENZIN and LINCOLN (2000), are: 1st, "traditional" 1900-1950; 2nd, "modernist" until 1970; 3rd, "blurred genres" 1970-86; 4th, "representation crisis" 1986-90; 5th, "post-modern" 1990s; 6th, "post-experimental writing" 1990s; 7th, "the future".

not, however, the case of the work edited by SEALE, GOBO, GUBRIUM and SILVERMAN (2004), thanks mainly to the excellent final chapter by Pertti ALASUUTARI from Finland. Let us briefly outline its contribution. [12]

The criticism here is accompanied by a conceptual proposal of historical narrative which brings an alternative to the narrative of DENZIN and LINCOLN. According to ALASUUTARI (2004) it is necessary to go beyond the ethnocentric narration of progress and modernisation based on temporal metaphors and base it on a spatial metaphor which rests on the concept of *globalisation*. The aim here is not to get rid of the temporal focus, but rather to take advantage of a complementary framework which would facilitate the exploitation of "multiple routes of influence in the world of scholars, books and scholarly institutions" (p.601). The origin and development of qualitative research is no longer analysed from only one centre; instead, the notions of *simultaneity* and *interconnectivity* are considered. The background for this is an international stage characterised and conditioned by asymmetric relations (or structural ones of the type centre-periphery) in the emission of theories, models and research. Its analysis is subtle and penetrating, as the following simple definition indicates: "the theories and methodologies formulated from a centre position are more easily heard and seen" (p.601). In our specific case, it confirms to us that the focus chosen for our narration of Spain can not be too mistaken.

"Very rarely do we witness a wholly new tool being developed, although each user leaves their marks on the tools they use. The same goes for qualitative research as a special area. Instead of assuming the unidirectional progress of science, we should perceive the qualitative research scene as consisting of interconnected networks. Because human disciplines typically address locally important problems, theoretical and methodological ideas are either discovered from the global collective 'archive' or invented anew each time there has been a use for them" (ALASUUTARI 2004, p.602). [13]

The pertinence of our approach to the cartographic or pictorial depiction of qualitative social research (in this case in Spain) can be deduced from the above lines. However, there is also some implicit self-criticism in these same words. In concrete, the vision of a network of influences between groups of researchers who are situated in time and in space seems to contradict the idea of a research *corpus* specific to each country or group of countries⁸. However, the society in which the sociologist lives and works ends up conditioning his lines of research and even his way of doing research. That does not exclude outside influences, or the belonging to international schools of thought. In addition, there is also the factor of the generation to which the sociologist belongs, which is determined by his/her birth date, and which places him/her in the particular social context of his/her times⁹. The insistence of LINCOLN and DENZIN (2000) in connecting the past with the present and the future to the point of opening and closing his new

8 It is said that the German sociologist George SIMMEL had greatest influence on the United States, for example. The intellectual migration of Germans to the United States has been studied by David Earl SUTHERLAND as a "forgotten episode in the history of American sociology" (cited by DE MIGUEL 1975b, p.235).

edition with "the metaphor of the bridge" should be reconsidered, since it gives orientation and shows the extent in which they react to their critics.¹⁰ [14]

3. Sketching the Spanish Case

As has been mentioned in the oral presentation of this *paper* in Berlin, there are political events which have singularly marked the individual and collective lives of the Spaniards in the past century. Above all, this is the case of the Civil War (1936-39), the Franco Dictatorship (1939-1975) and the following democratic transition. The great transformation of contemporary Spanish society, which has extended itself to the economic and cultural spheres, has taken place under the conditioning of this fact. It is difficult to understand the practice of social qualitative research in Spain out of this context. As we will see, it is not only the biographies but also the intellectual quests of those who have been dedicated to thinking about the society (among them, sociologists) that are interwoven in that history. Spanish qualitative sociologists found their objects of study in specific milieus. Their methodological framework is also embedded in that context. [15]

Our proposal draws from the writings of SARABIA and ZARCO (1997), among others¹¹, especially in the first three stages. However, we choose to name them differently, we propose alternative dates and we include a sixth moment or phase. In addition, we underline the role of the master of the Barcelona school of thought (MARSAL) in the fourth period and that of some of his disciples in more recent stages. We also define the last two phases with more emphasis on the practice of qualitative social research than on mere methodological reflection (Figure 1).

9 The turbulent history of Spain in the past century has caused thinking and art to be situated, in the words of ORTÍ, "within generational historical spaces". Spanish literature classifies its authors in terms of generations (of 98, of 27, of 52). Among the sociologists, ORTÍ, based on his own experiences, writes on the generation of 56 and the awakening of the vocation for sociology in a youth which asked questions in the middle of an environment which "blocked any kind of reflection on social reality" (2001, p.123).

10 The reader who is interested in this debate may find more elements of interest in the article by ATKINSON, COFFEY and DELAMONT (1999).

11 Especially of the works of DE MIGUEL (1974) and of ALVAREZ-URÍA and VARELA (1992, 2000).

Time frame	Stage QSR name	Second brushstroke
I. Late XIX-1924	Remote social reform and literature roots	Research by Instituto de Reformas Sociales
II. 1913/17-1939	German philosophical roots	Neokantism, phenomenology, philosophical sociology
III. 1940-1953/59	Post-Spanish Civil War and Exile parenthesis	Research at a minimum, maximum social experience
IV. 1953/59-1975	Near sociological research roots	Late Franco Regime and end, psychoanalysis, marxism, etc., USA sociology reception
V. 1974-1993	QSR boom: use and abuse?	Democratic transition, institutionalisation, etc.
VI. 1994-2004/2010??	QSR specialisation and systematisation	Old and new: generations, theories, practice, etc.

Figure 1: Stages of qualitative social research in Spain [16]

3.1 Stage I: Remote roots in the social reform and the novel (end of 19th till beginning of 20th century)

In what concerns this first moment, we partly agree with some authors (ORTÍ 1984; SARABIA & ZARCO 1997) in that it presents very few real instances of qualitative social research. The exception that is usually mentioned is the work of the Instituto de Reformas Sociales (Social Reform Institute)¹². It was founded in 1903, though it already existed before that date under the name of Comisión de Reformas Sociales (Social Reform Commission)¹³ and was closed in 1924. Similarities between its works and those of LE PLAY in France, BOOTH or WEBB in England have been mentioned. In Spain, the works of COSTA are also notable¹⁴. So is the role of the Ateneo de Madrid, where COSTA presented his study in 1902. This study emerged from the social sciences section of this institution. [17]

On our part, we also consider relevant the role of the writers, some of which have special intellectual, political or philosophical importance. PÉREZ GALDÓS is one

12 On the role of the Instituto de Reformas Sociales in Spanish sociology, see the most recent work by ZARCO (1999).

13 See the section on the importance of this institution in the birth of Spanish sociology in ALVAREZ-URÍA and VARELA (2000, pp.35-45). These authors distinguish up to five groups or schools. All are interested in the so-called social question. One of them is the Oviedo School (AZCÁRATE, BUYLLA and POSADA), whose sensitivity for social reforms is related to the labour conditions of the workers from Asturias, especially the miners. Santiago CASTILLO (1984, 1985) has conducted research on this period and this institution.

14 Clearly he is not the only intellectual of that time, he has a special importance due to works like *Reconstitución y europeización de España* (1899), *Oligarquía y caciquismo* (1902) or *La tierra y la cuestión social* (1912). The influence of Joaquín COSTA on the generations of UNAMUNO, MAEZTU or of ORTEGA Y GASSET has been pointed out by those who have studied his work, by PÉREZ DE LA DEHESA for example.

of those. We also include here the *social* and *intellectual novel* of authors like BAROJA, UNAMUNO, PALACIO VALDÉS or CLARÍN, who have contributed to the understanding of Spanish society and to the creation of subsequent generations of thinkers and researchers¹⁵. Rather than giving a detailed list of those authors, what most interests us in this brief synthesis is to point out an aspect, which illustrates the influence of this excellent literature on the masters of the sociologists who would be active from the '60s to our days.

"When I was still a student, I became aware of a piece of advice by Arboleya¹⁶. In order to get to know well the secrets of the Spanish society at present it was necessary to penetrate the thick material of the novels which were written in the period of the Restoration" (DE MIGUEL 2002b, p.1104). [18]

In Section 2 (centred on MARSAL and his disciples), when we refer to the work of Amando DE MIGUEL, we add a note on how the above recommendation was put into practice in the qualitative social research in Spain. For the moment, it is convenient to observe—having in mind the reader who comes from other national contexts, that the relation of anthropological and sociological ethnography with literary genres is well known and recognised in other latitudes as well (ATKINSON et al. 1999, pp.465-466). [19]

3.2 Stage II: Roots in the German philosophy and in the sociological philosophy of ORTEGA Y GASSET

This second period lasts from the parliamentary and socioeconomic crisis (1913-1917), the dictatorship of Primo de RIVERA (1923-1930), the Second Republic (1931-36), until the end of Civil War, 1936-39; although this is a matter of dispute and some believe the period also includes the last years of the 1950s. Anyhow, one of the relevant characteristics is the greater influence of two German streams of thought: neokantism and phenomenology (SARABIA & ZARCO 1997). But, as these authors note, for some Spanish sociologists it means a sort of decline or withdrawal of the true sociological perspective (understood as empirical studies); while for others the evaluation of this influence is positive. [20]

On our part, we think that these streams of thought are important in the search of the roots of qualitative methodology all over the world. But *principles* should have their corresponding *practice* in social research, something missing or lacking at this stage. Finally, the second touch of the painting of this period is the intellectual figure of the Spanish philosopher ORTEGA Y GASSET. His sociological contribution is also a matter of dispute: his philosophy took an elite and idealised turn, it is said from a critical position; others affirm it woke up sociological

15 Fernando ALVAREZ-URÍA suggests the need to study the resource of photography by some of the authors of the social novel in this period. BAROJA, for instance made use of pictures.

16 Enrique GÓMEZ ARBOLEYA is a key name in the "definite institutionalization of sociology in Spain" (MESAS DE ROMÁN 2004). The proposal of taking advantage of literature (and even of art), as sociological research material and method was also made by LÓPEZ-ARANGUREN (SOLDEVILLA 2004). The "sociology-literature game" also appears in the works of Francisco AYALA (RIBES LEIVA 2004) who was another eminent sociologist of post-war Spain.

awareness, as Bernabé SARABIA and Juan ZARCO point out¹⁷. A recent resource on the sociology of ORTEGA Y GASSET (and his disciples) is the work of José CASTILLO CASTILLO (2001). This article can be helpful in evaluating the deeper knowledge about the roots of qualitative social research that are identified here. [21]

3.3 Stage III: Post-Spanish Civil War and exile parenthesis

The third period goes from the end of Spanish Civil War (1936-39) to the Spain-USA Treatise (1953) that made possible the economic Plan of Stabilisation (1959), although this is a matter of dispute too and some authors prefer the year 1953, others 1959, and yet another group prefers 1956 (SARABIA & ZARCO 1997). Certainly, this third moment represents a further step in the process of decline and interruption of social research started in the previous stage (ÁLVAREZ-URÍA & VARELA 2000, pp.153-156). But from our point of view it is important to stress a paradox. The periods II and III give some of the main themes or phenomena to qualitative social research in the next periods until today. That is, the experience of Spanish Civil War and post-war, the Franco Regime ideology and repression, the opposition of the workers and students movements, the exile (of intellectual minorities) and the emigration (of many people) to Latin America and Europe. [22]

3.4 Stage IV: Near sociological research roots

The fourth period (we have called it *near roots* and *sociological research*¹⁸ roots), goes until the death of Franco in November 1975. We emphasise that, although the German and other European universities lose their traditional primacy (that the USA ones win), to understand the qualitative perspective of those years in Spain (and the years afterwards until today) one has to remember the influence at least of psychoanalysis, Marxism and semiotics. That is, in short, the French universities. The main figure is Jesús IBÁÑEZ, founder of an Institute of Market Research in 1958 and master of an extraordinary research group around the discussion group technique, applied first to market research in combination with survey, then to more general sociological research. The so called Madrid School of Qualitative Social Research. [23]

17 Amando DE MIGUEL (1974, pp.74-81) refers to the "school of thought which was not possible"; and suggests that "in a way the real Ortegian sociological school would be the one which continued in the exile" in those years (AYALA, RECASENS SICHES, MEDINA ECHEVERRÍA). Fernando ÁLVAREZ-URÍA and Julia VARELA (2000, pp.48-49) point out that in that period (1917-1936), despite the tense social environment which was unfavourable to the creation of university faculties, "translations of works by important European sociologists continued to be published" in Spain. They refer to the translation of SPENCER by UNAMUNO; and to the connection of ORTEGA Y GASSET with the elitism of MOSCA, PARETO and MICHELS. These authors mention, among many other details, the translation (by some of Ortega's disciples) and publication in *Revista de Occidente* (founded by ORTEGA in 1923) of some of the works of SOMBART, SIMMEL or MANNHEIM.

18 "Sociological" means, in this context, that we refer to qualitative research practice done mainly by sociologist responding to sociological demands of study. Of course, the analytic or interpretive perspectives used are from the broad area of disciplines we generally refer to as social sciences.

The reception of the sociology done in the United States is not only MERTON and LAZARFELD and their macro-sociological and quantitative perspective¹⁹. In the young Spanish sociologists of this period, we can also trace the reception of the sociology of THOMAS and ZNANIECKI, MILLS, GOFFMAN, GOULDNER or GLASER and STRAUSS, to mention only a few. One of these Spanish sociologists is Juan F. MARSAL, the first master of the sometimes called Barcelona School of qualitative methods, specially the life history methodology in sociology²⁰. His teachings are well remembered by disciples and friends such as the well-known sociologists Jesús M. DE MIGUEL and Amando DE MIGUEL: the former being head of an outstanding research group at the Universidad de Barcelona today, the latter at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid since 1981 (after some years in Valencia and Barcelona). Amando DE MIGUEL's influence also reached OLTRA, VALLES and others who are still continuing with the teachings of the master MARSAL. We give a more detailed account of this group in the next section. The masterpiece of MARSAL is *Hacer la América: Autobiografía de un inmigrante español en la Argentina*. First published in Buenos Aires, in 1969, where MARSAL became Director of the Centre of Social Researches. Then published in 1972, in Barcelona, where he returned and lived until his death in a car accident in 1979. So we could say that this branch of qualitative Spanish sociology suffers very soon from being an orphan. [24]

3.5 Stage V: Qualitative social research boom: use and abuse?

The fifth period goes from 1974 to 1993. The former date is of the first complete sociology curriculum in a public university. The latter date is of the reform of that curriculum. Within the general process of institutionalisation of sociology, there is an increasing official recognition of QSR by the first democratic governments. The proofs of the cake are two studies. First was the Investigación Cualitativa Continua (ICC) (Qualitative Continuous Research) of television audience (1977-1979), followed by a study of current social and political events (1979-1982). Both studies were based on the discussion group technique. They conducted 264 discussion group meetings from 1979 till 1982, about eight a month, the main researcher being José Luis DE ZÁRRAGA. The second study included the analysis of social attitudes towards abortion with discussion groups in 1983, a few months after the Socialist Party won the general elections and with the purpose of changing the law). Authors who partook in the study included: Angel DE LUCAS and Alfonso ORTÍ, masters of masters today. DE ZARRAGA, ORTÍ and DE LUCAS belong to the IBÁÑEZ school, which is also called the Madrid Qualitative School²¹. Starting from the seventies till today, the French sociology represented by FOUCAULT, CASTEL or DONZELOT has been taking place. This occurs mainly

19 On the "reception of other critical and phenomenological streams" in these years see RODRÍGUEZ IBÁÑEZ (2001).

20 The first translation into Spanish of the abridged edition of *The Polish Peasant* was done in 2004. Regrettably this late and partial introduction of the THOMAS and ZNANIECKI's study comes without any recognition for MARSAL's work.

21 The studies referred to were never published. This being a characteristic of this school in this period, with some exceptions. Fortunately the reports, and even some of the primary documents of these studies, are archived by the public Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) that ordered them.

through the works of ÁLVAREZ-URÍA and VARELA, who "did" historical sociology from a genealogical perspective²². [25]

In this period, nearly all the qualitative methods and techniques have their special issue in a journal, a handbook or relevant study. It would take much space here to refer to them in detail. Clients from both the public and private sector ordered studies with the known survey and the novelty of qualitative field work, based mainly on indepth interviews and discussion groups. And sometimes the job assigned was a qualitative social research on its own. The sketch of this period becomes more complete with two more rapid brushstrokes related to the institutionalisation aspect. First, in 1983 the first three Chairs of Social Research Methods were established at the Spanish universities and IBAÑEZ held one of them. Secondly, in 1986 two disciples of MARSAL organised the Session 4 of the Research Committee 38 (Biography and Society) on the theme *Cultural Models of Identity*, in the XI World Congress of Sociology. But the main trend is an increasing use of qualitative methods in general sociological research, not only in market research, which is a challenge for techniques such as the discussion group, whose experts recommend to use it in combination with other sources of information, both qualitative and quantitative. Some of these experts, like Luis E. ALONSO, have pointed out that its increasing use has made the method somewhat more tribal. Something similar to that had also occurred to the survey some years before. [26]

3.6 Stage VI: Qualitative social research specialisation and systematisation

The sixth period goes from 1994 until today, so far, but probably until 2010 (the horizon of the European system or area of higher education). The former date is of the first academic course after the Reform of the Plan of Sociology Studies (at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid at least) in 1993, where it was decided to create two twin subjects (Quantitative Methods and Techniques of Social Research and Qualitative Methods and Techniques of Social Research). We can synthesise by saying that this is the coming of age period for qualitative applied research and methodology. One can observe a step further in the processes started in the previous stage. For instance, we have various comprehensive and specific, made in Spain, qualitative methods handbooks²³. There were separate sessions for qualitative and quantitative social research in three of the National Spanish Congresses of Sociology (the fifth, sixth, and the seventh congress in 1995, 1998 and 2001 respectively). Although in the last Congress celebrated in 2004 there have been joint sessions, closing the circle of a cycle. [27]

22 ALVAREZ-URIA and VARELA coordinate the book series "Genealogía del Poder" (Genealogy of Power) since the late seventies. They stand out for its translation and presentation of classical works of relevance for qualitative methodology. Both completed their Ph.D. in sociology at the University Paris VIII, and have contributed with relevant research from this socio-historic and genealogic perspective since then. (ALVAREZ-URIA and VARELA: 1979, 1991, 1997, 2004; ALVAREZ-URIA 1983, VARELA 1984, 1997).

23 Among the general "made in Spain" handbooks: DELGADO and GUTIÉRREZ (1994), RUÍZ OLABUÉNAGA (1996), after his pioneer textbook with Marian ISPÍZUA in 1989; VALLES (1997), ALONSO (1998). Among the specific texts: Jesús DE MIGUEL (1996), SARABIA and ZARCO (1997), COLLIER (2000), GARCÍA JORBA (2000), CALLEJO (2001) or VALLES (2002).

The key words that represent the trend are QSR specialisation and systematisation. But it can be expressed in other words. The same as *The discovery of grounded theory*, by GLASER and STRAUSS in 1967, was the methodological sub-product of a social research practice (Awareness of dying, 1965 and other QSR studies), in Spain we can trace a similar process more visible today (starting in the previous stage or near past, but more clearly *circa* 1991) which may be called of *intense methodological awareness* (SEALE). That is, of specialisation in the various quantitative and qualitative methods²⁴. And that is the fruit of an intense social research practice in the near past and in the present. More detail about this stage and on present and future trends is given in the last section. [28]

4. Methodology and Biographical Research Practice in Spain: MARSAL's Teachings and Network as Main Reference

Twenty years have passed since the publication by BERTAUX and KHOLI (1984), of a work on the question of the use of life *stories* ("i.e. oral, autobiographical narratives"). In the "continental" panorama that they offer they include a brief reference to the Spanish case, where they mention Juan F. MARSAL's research on Spanish emigration to Argentina²⁵. There is also a mention of the works of his two successors (HERNÁNDEZ 1982 and MERCADÉ 1982), who have continued the research on nationalism and intellectuals that MARSAL had initiated before his death in 1979²⁶. The inclusion of these bibliographical references to the article by BERTAUX and KHOLI contrasts with the accustomed absence of bibliography in languages other than English, which has been an unwritten rule in English-language periodicals or books. The authors, being respectively of French and German origin, thus deserve special credit for that inclusion. [29]

At the present moment, we believe that the Spanish focus of our article will serve to complete and update the most relevant contributions made to the field of biographical research in Spain and, above all, those coming from the field of sociology. Having renounced to making an inventory, we have opted for a visual approach which would describe the scientific relationships (and friendships) which have been leaving a documentary trail behind them. As in the *making-off* in anthropology, not only the *field notes* but also the *head notes* (OTTENBERG 1990) are important. In our case, we prefer that the author of the narration be visible as well. There is no pretension of writing the history; the aim is to recuperate the memory and to avoid that what is close to us is forgotten.

24 Good examples are in the "Cuadernos Metodológicos" series, also in the series conducted by ÁLVAREZ-URÍA and VARELA "Genealogía del Poder", as well as in the series published by several public institutions (INJUVE, IMSERSO, Woman Institute, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture) and private entities (Juan March Foundation, La Caixa Foundation).

25 BERTAUX and KHOLI cite the Spanish edition of 1972, which does not include the three appendices of the original publisher in Argentina, in 1969, by the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella. It is an example of *life story of unique narration*, which talks about the drama of the immigrants who return to their home countries after failing to fulfil the *Indiano* dream. That is, to come back as rich men.

26 As has been mentioned in the introduction, the research on the intellectuals is shared by MARSAL and OLTRA, who were united by a narrow "scientific relationship as well as friendship".

BERTAUX and KHOLI (1984, p.217) did warn us on the mutual lack of knowledge between France and Germany; today ALASUUTARI (2004)²⁷ makes the same kind of warning. They all refer to the centre-periphery structure which is the result of having had a tighter relationship with the United States than with neighbouring countries. Coming back to the subject of narration, we would like to give a more complete picture of MARSAL's contribution to biographical research and methodology than the one given by BERTAUX and KHOLI in 1984. Though the life of Juan F. MARSAL came to an end in 1979, the author of *Hacer la América* published in 1977 a self-critical methodological reflection of his own application of the THOMAS and ZNANIECKI model of life story of single narratives. He then recognised that the methodology taken from positivist psychology and anthropology, and its definition of the *case method* were not the most adequate ones. He emphasises the connection between the case method of North American sociology of the '20s and the ideology of the sociology of *common man* (MARSAL 1977, p.187). He criticises the lack of socio-historical context of the protagonist of the life story beyond his placement within statistical frames. This methodological awareness would then become concrete in the form of a research practice based on the autobiographical genre, where his epistemological evolution would become explicit (MARSAL 1979, p.5). A key passage follows:

"Preface: Why did I write this book?"

This book is the result of two types of dissatisfactions I had with myself: one was intellectual, and one, say, vital, if such a separation can be made. The first of those comes from the first book I wrote in the socio-anthropological life stories genre: it was the autobiography of a Catalan immigrant in Argentina. I wrote it within the positivist line which was dominant fifteen years ago, keeping a distance, as if I were talking of a neutral object which was foreign to my life, which had nothing to do with me. Today I am aware that this is not correct, since I also am Catalan and immigrant, and thus I come from the same place as the sad protagonist of my story. I told myself then, and I was also told by some of my critics, that if I ever wrote another life story in the future it would be about something of which I would definitely be a part."²⁸ [30]

This posthumous work, which is not well-known in Spain nor outside Spain, represents a kind of culmination in his study series on the intellectuals and politics. His evolution from positivism to interpretativism, to existential phenomenological positions and to critical theory is clear, as is the influence of Oscar LEWIS, MILLS, GOULDNER, WEBER or FREUD (in this book and in the rest of his works). Especially interesting is MARSAL's defence of "the adequacy of this type of

27 One tends to think that at times this is due to just lack of knowledge. How else can we interpret, for example, the absence of any kind of recognition for BERTAUX in the collective works of DENZIN and LINCOLN (2000) or of FLICK et al. (2004)? While we were writing these notes we also came across the book *Otra memoria es posible (A different memory is possible)*, subtitled *Estrategias descolonizadoras del archivo mundial (Decolonising strategies of the world archives)* (GARCÍA GUTIÉRREZ 2004). The fact that it was published in Argentina reminds us of the fact that MARSAL spent twenty years of his life in that country; the same is true for BALÁN (1974) who published a *reader* in Spanish on life stories.

28 This is the reason why the book starts with his own autobiography, as a threshold to the autobiographies of the 11 other intellectuals, which make up this work. MARSAL is an intellectual of the generation of the '50s, of the same society and the same historical period as the intellectuals that he studies.

biographies and testimonies given where Spain stands politically at the present". Though the dictatorship is formally over (1939-1975), he warns of the prevalence of a collective memory in which the unfavourable facts are repressed. [31]

The study of the intellectual life under Franco regime is not done from a "macro-sociological or macro-political" but rather from a "psychosocial" perspective; like "life condition", according to the expression used by the author. The autobiographical material comes from eleven intellectuals who were selected for their important collaborations to the most relevant youth cultural periodicals of the '50s in Barcelona and Madrid. All of them belong to what came to be called the generation of the 50s: they were born in the 20s and were children or adolescents during the Civil War (1936-39). At the beginning of the book MARSAL gives a brief autobiography of himself along with an extensive introductory chapter which serves as theoretical threshold and in which he outlines his analysis and interpretation of the testimonies of the people who were interviewed. [32]

By then, *Testimonio de un rebelde (Testimony of a rebel)* (MAESTRE 1976) had already been published in Spain: "an excellent life story (...) on a marginal worker born in 1930" (MARSAL 1979, p.34). Though the social position of the protagonist of this narration is different, his generation, time and society of reference are the same as those of the interviewees in MARSAL's work. At a more recent date (2003) Juan MAESTRE wrote *Politicus interruptus*, an unpretentious autobiographical narrative without any academic formalism which gives a retrospective view of his political, intellectual and professional activities. This may be considered to be his way of documenting a methodological transition similar to that undergone by MARSAL, since in this work he ends up making an intellectual self-analysis as well as self-confession²⁹. He makes himself visible as the author. It is not the only revelation of the book. After thirty years, he also reveals the real name of his informer of the '70s, who is no longer living: he was a political militant (like MAESTRE himself) whose story was representative of the attitudes of political rebelliousness of a whole epoch, of the "long night of the Franco regime" (p.14). MAESTRE today expresses his wish of giving "critical testimony which will be useful in evaluating the part of history which a sector of my generation has had to represent and to put it into its context" (p.16). Though MAESTRE is closer to the circle of IBÁÑEZ in terms of personal relationships, he shares with MARSAL the halo of exemplary practice in the terrain of biographical methodology and the experience of having lived and investigated outside of Spain, namely in Latin America. [33]

Who follows the steps of MARSAL? We close this section with that question. We have already mentioned some names: OLTRA, MERCADÉ, HERNÁNDEZ. We do not pretend to make a detailed list. Our intention is to only signal the most influential cases. In particular we are interested in naming the most established authors in the field of sociological research in Spain, with special emphasis on

²⁹ It is true that the MAESTRE of 2003 seems to evolve against the current due to his insistence on oral narrative or the use of his pseudonym from his clandestine days. All of this seems to give his present narrative more of a testimonial (of the narrator) character than an autobiographical (of the author) one. See BEVERLEY (2000) for an analysis of this distinction.

those who, in their writings, have recognised the influence of MARSAL in aspects of qualitative methodology. We leave to future publications to address other research results (some already exist) on MARSAL and his network of colleagues, disciples and collaborators in Spain as well as outside Spain (in Argentina, for example). [34]

Here in Spain, it is enough to consider the work of Jesús DE MIGUEL in order to find repeated references to the master and to the friend. To illustrate this, we select two of his prologues which have to do with biographical methodology and research. Their lecture puts us on the track of the human group, of the network of intellectual influences whose story can sometimes partially be seen. I am referring, above all, to the posthumous book by Esteban PINILLA DE LAS HERAS titled *La memoria inquieta (The restless memory)* (1996), edited by Jesús M. DE MIGUEL and Xavier MARTÍN PALOMAS with material from the diary and sociological notebooks of PINILLA. The author of the prologue meditates on the sociological and methodological value of the intellectual autobiography of a person who has shared the same generation (that of the 50s), trade (sociology) and university life (in the United States, Argentina and Spain) with MARSAL.

"... It represents one of the few serious sociological studies which we have about those difficult years—from 1935 to 1959—and which are autobiographies. The book uses a technique that the author himself describes as alternating two types of text: personal testimony in descriptive language, and the logical analysis of the social reality³⁰. It is an analysis of the social processes in Spain by an invaluable witness.

It is an excellent mixture of memory and research or, in the words of C. Wright Mills, of biography and history. It is, above all, a book which bears testimony" (DE MIGUEL 1996, p.vii). [35]

This prologue does a good job explaining the intellectual relationship as well as the friendship between PINILLA and the following generations: Benjamín OLTRA, Francesc MERCADÉ, Pep RODRÍGUEZ, Joan BELLAVISTA. These, as well as many other scholars, have had Barcelona as the epicentre of their academic activities. Their later influence, though, has reached a much broader radius. The prologue confirms what is documented in other sources on the drama of this group of sociologists, which is sometimes referred to as the "Barcelona school" or the "Catalan school", which have put into practice their sensitivity on qualitative methodology in their research. Here is Jesús DE MIGUEL's testimony (1996, p.xv):

"Catalan sociology possibly had bad luck. Some of its best sociologists returned from abroad in the seventies, with the death of Franco. They all came to Barcelona full of hope, after a long transatlantic voyage or a more or less voluntary exile to Europe, precisely when Spain was experiencing enormous political and social changes. Juan F. [Pancho] Marsal, one of those cosmopolitan sociologists, died in an accident in 1979 while driving from Bellaterra to Barcelona. A few years later, Amando de Miguel and Benjamín Oltra were 'self-exiled' to Madrid and Alicante respectively. Pinilla died in 1994 after a long illness. In the space of a few years, the most important members

30 A similar technique can be found in the more recent work (written in 2003, also sociological, autobiographical and on the same basic theme) by Amando DE MIGUEL titled *El final del franquismo. Testimonio personal (The end of the Franco era, a personal testimony)*.

of this generation of *senior* sociologists thus left Catalonia. As a follow up, fifteen years later there is a rich crops of sociologists and intellectual works which are influenced by them. Their work has thus not been in vain." [36]

In fact, this influence does not have a unique centre; it does not come from one master only. Neither is it fixed in a specific moment in time. The allusion to the *succession of generations* or to "generation ties" (DE MIGUEL & BARBEITO 1998, p.13) is clear. This can be easily checked by looking at, for example, the earlier (1976)³¹ or more recent works of OLTRA (2004), among others. [37]

The second prologue (to which we cannot dedicate here all the commentaries that we would like to) is in *El médico enfermo (The sick doctor)* (PONCE DE LEÓN 1997). Jesús DE MIGUEL ends up confessing: "I wanted to narrate the intellectual history of a group, not only of a book". He is referring to the "consolidation" of a large group of professors and researchers connected to the doctorate programs in social and health sciences, in photography and in sociology, as well as to masters in various fields (organisations, professions, networks etc.) The time and place of reference include the Universidad de Barcelona, in the nineties. In the group just mentioned are included the authors of important works in methodological reflection as well as in the practice of qualitative research.³² [38]

Finally, the longest reference is to Amando DE MIGUEL, despite his proximity of age to MARSAL (9 years of difference) and his special condition of master or *senior* in this circle. MARSAL's influence on him left this document in one of the most representative academic publication of sociology in Spain: "I owe Juan Francisco Marsal my changed conception of sociology as a critical, responsible type of work, sensitive to the problems of my time and driven by qualitative methodology" (DE MIGUEL 1979, p.5). [39]

This declaration will perhaps come as a surprise to the colleagues who still have in mind the cliché which equates Amando DE MIGUEL to a sociologist of surveys. It will perhaps be somewhat less surprising to those who have pejoratively qualified him as a journalistic sociologist. Both of those perceptions are biased. While the first one is incomplete, the second one ignores or looks down on the crucial role played by the journalistic model in the making of qualitative methodology in sociology (VALLES 1997, pp.53-54, 145). In the interconnected biographies of MARSAL and DE MIGUEL, columns in the press are an element of interest that the two authors share. In the case of Amando DE MIGUEL, his facet of sociological columnist took him to prison in 1971. While in prison, he wrote in his diary:

31 In *Pensar en Madrid (Thinking about Madrid)*, an original title to which the words "under Franco" could have easily been added, OLTRA studies the intellectual elites on the basis of an extraordinary field work which consists of documents and interviews. He recognises that he owes a lot "Amando de Miguel, Panxo Marsal y Juan Linz", among whom there are solid bonds of profession and friendship. In 2004, OLTRA writes a book with his present disciples and dedicates it to his masters.

32 Reference should be made, among others, to the writings of MARTÍN FERNÁNDEZ (1994), GUASCH (1997), COLLER (2000) and GARCÍA JORBA (2000).

"To my surprise and joy, I have come across a column by Pancho Marsal in *El Correo Catalán*. It is impossible not to recognise him by his prose and his Anglo-Latin American jargon. I feel really influenced by this great man and his strange pragmatic-idealistic philosophy. To re-discover him now in these months of crisis has been like finding myself." (DE MIGUEL 2003, p.168) [40]

The passage is excerpted from *El final del franquismo. Testimonio personal (The end of the Franco regime. A personal testimony)*, where, with the distance and calm which are the result of the years that have passed, (he was 34 in 1971, and 66 in 2003) he insists: "the influence of Pancho on my way of seeing the world still continues" (p.194). This is not the only work by this author which enters the field of autobiographical testimony (DE MIGUEL 1997, 2001). The use of very different types of documents (speeches³³, memories or literary testimonies³⁴, novels³⁵, handbooks on good manners³⁶, refrains³⁷, etc.) constitute precisely his more original contribution to qualitative social research in Spain. We could sum it up as the sociological use of documents as *material culture* (HODDER). The distinction between *personal documents* upon order (where the researches asks for or rewards the preparation *ex novo* of autobiographical narratives) and *personal (and social) documents* which are produced without that sort of interference: novels, memories, speeches, private documents (letters, photos, diaries, etc.)³⁸. Amando DE MIGUEL's originality in this respect lies in the time perspective he brings (about three generations) to his studies. This is a key decision which strengthens his capacities of comparison, analysis and interpretation, always directed at a better understanding of Spanish social life. [41]

The best way of understanding the contribution of this author to qualitative methods of research, however, is by applying his manner of doing sociology to his own case. If the scope of observation is widened and the beginnings of his intellectual itinerary are compared with its late stages, it is today easy to see a common idea behind them. In my opinion, the metaphor of the closing circle is the one which best explains an itinerary which goes from GALDOS ("the first book I published was an anthology of Galdós", DE MIGUEL 1995, p.15) to CERVANTES (DE MIGUEL 2004a). The novel is taken as a sociological object and even as a genre which he uses to express his identity as writer-sociologist. GALDÓS (as well as

33 The speeches of Franco's ministers, in *Sociología del franquismo* (DE MIGUEL 1975a, cited in VALLES 1997, p.124). Franco's speeches in *La herencia del franquismo* (DE MIGUEL 1976).

34 The texts of the "regenerationist" writers and those of the "generation of 98"; that is, the first generation of intellectuals (DE MIGUEL & BARBEITO 1998).

35 The novels of the Restoration period in Spain (1875-1931), in *La España de nuestros abuelos* (DE MIGUEL 1995, cited in VALLES 1997, pp.126, 134-35); also in *El sexo de nuestros abuelos* (DE MIGUEL 1998) and in *Historias de amor. Las novelas sentimentales del primer tercio del siglo XX* (DE MIGUEL 2002a).

36 Texts on good manners published in Spain in the past century, in *Cien años de urbanidad* (DE MIGUEL 1991).

37 The refrains and literary testimony on the eating habits of the Spaniards throughout the years, in *Sobre gustos y sabores. Los españoles y la comida* (DE MIGUEL 2004b).

38 A complementary discussion which would be worth discussing can be found in TIERNEY (2000, p.541): it is on the difference between *testimonies* (active) and *autobiographies*. Our exposition is closer to BEVERLEY's (2000, pp.555-556) point of view on this question.

other novelists and intellectuals) are references which he ends up imitating. The author of *Sancho Panza lee el Quijote* (*Sancho Panza reads El Quijote*) makes a transition from the sociologist who in the novels looks for material which helps him understand Spanish society at present from a historical perspective, to the practising sociologist-novelist³⁹.

"I am not a Cervantes expert, nor a Quijote expert, nor a professor of literature or history. However, I do have curiosity in knowing how Spanish society is and how it has been. If the *Quijote* is the book which is most read by the Spaniards, it must be because it has something special. I try to interpret the *Quijote* as a simple, ingenuous reader. I use the word ingenuous in the sense of literally ingenuous, that is born free. I use more the imagination than the knowledge, as Cervantes himself preached. The *Quijote* is a reality which cannot be measured: it is so strong that it is able to say something different to every reader. We, the present readers, cannot justifiably interpret the work following a strict positivist cannon. Why not use imaginative irony when interpreting the Bible of Spanish culture?" (DE MIGUEL 2004a, pp.17-18). [42]

The celebration of the four hundred years of CERVANTES' masterpiece (in 2005) does not fail to draw the attention of this Spanish sociologist. Just like his other works, which show a growing interest for qualitative aspects, this book includes methodological reflections on the advantages and disadvantages of documentary material. The combined use of literary texts and surveys has excellent examples too (DE MIGUEL & BARBEITO 1998, p.11), where surveys "not only give percentages, but also induce interpretations". [43]

The impression that one has after reading part of his extensive bibliography and collaborating in some of his research is that he is influenced by North American training beyond merely receiving it (LAZARFELD, MERTON, LINZ, etc.). A reflection which is still valid on this singular case of sociological practice in Spain comes into mind: can we speak of an *Amando DE MIGUEL style* in sociological research, the way WAINERMAN (1998) talked about "the Germani model", in which the qualitative methodology has been gaining more presence, singularity and even innovation? It is worth noting that Gino GERMANI was the mentor of MARSAL in Argentina. The investigations continue. In re-reading the words of DENZIN and LINCOLN (2000, p.376) on the future ("in the 21st century the testimony will continue to be an important form of critical interpretative writing"), we think of the testimonies of MAESTRE (2003) and DE MIGUEL (2003). [44]

There have also been important contributions outside MARSAL's circle which we can only mention briefly here. We have already referred to the works of

39 In his more recent writings he has been referring to fiction in an increasingly firm manner (DE MIGUEL 2004c, 2005). This evolution has been pointed at by other authors, among which internationally by DENZIN and LINCOLN (1994, 2000), who refer to the "post-modern moment" of "experimental" or "post-experimental" writing in the field of qualitative research. In the case that we are studying, it is perhaps more adequate to talk about "re-modern moment", following the metaphor of the circle which closes. MARSAL (1969) qualified the work of Oscar LEWIS as "life-novel". Among established Spanish novelists who today are writing their memories, CABALLERO BONALD repeats the same sub-title every time he finishes a part: *The novel of memory*.

SARABIA⁴⁰ and ZARCO in the previous sections. José M. MARINAS and Cristina SANTAMARINA (1993) have accomplished a valuable task in introducing to Spain and translating the main European methodological debates on oral history and life stories. They have also contributed to those debates in qualitative methodology handbooks (SANTAMARINA & MARINAS 1993), monographic works (MARINAS 2004); and empirical works with biographical methods (MARINAS & BANDERA 1996). These authors employ the term "biographical symptom" to refer to the popularity of biographical and autobiographical genres in contemporary culture. This symptom makes itself present on a general level (journalism, literature⁴¹, testimonial TV genres), as well as in social research (multidisciplinary), with an unprecedented interest in collective memory, which is approached through life stories. For instance, reference should be made to the work of MARIE JOSÉ DEVILLARD et al. (1995, 2001) on the Spanish "children of the war", who were evacuated to the Soviet Union during the conflict. Through biographical research this projects analyses the reconstruction of symbolic and social processes of identity construction and finds revealing intersections between individual and collective memory. Regarding oral and visual history endeavours, scholars of several Spanish universities have recently started the MEDEA project (acronym for Active and Democratic Memory) in cooperation with the Asociación Recuperación de Memoria Histórica, a grassroots organisation that investigates the locations of mass graves of the dictatorship's repression. Spanish historical memory is also the subject of study of the Seminario de Fuentes Orales (Oral Sources Seminar⁴²), at the Universidad Complutense's History Department, which has been conducting a wide array of studies since 1984 (women during the civil war, the schools under Franco, memory and political identity), as well as particular seminars on oral history methodology. In the field of sociology of communication, Spanish researchers have also addressed the issue of "mediated memory". The narratives that audiences generate by remembering specific media contents related to Spain's past (media events, commemorations, and a popular TV series called "Cuéntame" (Tell me) were obtained with focus groups and life stories (SAMPEDRO & BAER 2004). A journal with an interdisciplinary seize on these topics and a well established academic reputation is *Historia, Antropología y Fuentes Orales*, that is published by the Universidad de Barcelona since 1984. This journal focuses on thematic analysis on oral history methodology, biography and memory, violence and conflict, fieldwork, as well as the methodological intersections of sociology, history and anthropology in the biographical research realm. [45]

Finally, in the context of the "biographical symptom" and reflexivity of the social sciences of the late 20th and early 21st century, we can also find a growing interest in the biographical and socio-historical study of masters and institutions of social

40 In Spain, the contributions of SARABIA, beginning in the '80s, as well as those of PUJADAS, in the '90s, have been mentioned by us elsewhere (VALLES 1997).

41 More autobiographical writing (autobiographies, memoirs, diaries) has been published in Spain since 1975 than in all the centuries before (see for example the introduction to the work by LEJEUNE 1994, *El pacto autobiográfico y otros estudios*. Madrid: Megazul-Endymion). Although some recent investigations point out the enormous task to be done: identification and study of "popular autobiographical texts written during the Modern Age" (AMELANG 2003, p.257).

42 Available at <http://www.ucm.es/info/hcontemp/fuentesorales.htm>.

research (CASTILLO 2001; CASTILLO & CASTILLO 2004; GARRIGÓS 2003; SARABIA 2001, 2004; TORRES ALBERO 2003; VALLES 2000b; ZARCO 1999, 2004). In conclusion, the biographical approach is present, from a wide array of orientations, objects of research and documentation, but always as a result of a *desire of history* (TOURAINÉ)⁴³ of memory and archive. [46]

The list of theoreticians and applied scientists using the biographical method in Spain does not end here. However, as we have noted in the beginning of this article, our purpose here is not to make an inventory of them. We have left out many research works, some of them doctoral theses,⁴⁴ which achieve different levels of excellence in terms of methodology. We leave their detailed analysis for other occasions. [47]

5. Methodology and Qualitative Social Research with Discussion Groups in Spain: the Teachings of IBÁÑEZ and his Disciples

The task of spreading the work of a maestro is always somewhat pretentious, especially when one does not belong to the genealogical tree of the master's disciples. An added challenge lies in the heterogeneity of the people who are targeted by the writings. In any case, our particular narrative has the advantage of being backed up by documentary sources which can help the interested reader confront and broaden the quick sketch which is being drawn. We begin our composition with Jesús IBÁÑEZ (1928-1992) who was born the same year as Juan F. MARSAL (1928-1979). Towards the end of their lives, both became directors of university departments. However, the position that they occupied in the map of Spanish sociology was, in both cases, marginal. Despite that fact (and to their credit) they each managed to transmit their intellectual and human legacy by their teachings to colleagues and disciples of very different origins and generations. [48]

The international outreach of IBÁÑEZ is not limited to Latin America. He himself recognises that he is an "importer" and "exporter" of *technology*. The following is an autobiographical note published in November of 1990:

"From the point of view of distribution, I have been an importer of technology: in parallel with Amando de Miguel, I introduced the survey in Spain. From the structural point of view, I have been an exporter to various countries: (Chile, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Morocco, Senegal ... all of them in the periphery) through ex-students of mine, they use the discussion group" (IBÁÑEZ 1990b, p.22). [49]

There is, however, another type of international outreach which is less peripheral and also less explicit, but which has left a written and oral documentary track. It

43 It is not a simple *wish*; it is also "the use of history, or rather of *genealogy* as method of knowledge" (ALVAREZ-URÍA & VARELA 2000, p.29). In this genealogical perspective, promoted in Spain by these authors, some dissertations on sociology of art have been published, under the supervision of VARELA (VAL CUBERO 2002). The dissertation of Raúl RUANO, based on life histories of anarchist old men and women, is in preparation.

44 As examples, we could mention the theses by Gabriel ALVAREZ SILVAR and by María Jesús CRIADO, read in 1996 and 1999 respectively in the Faculty of Political Science and Sociology of the UCM. They were published in 1997 and 2001 by their respective authors.

includes, on one hand, his conferences and seminars⁴⁵ and on the other, his students who study in universities throughout Europe—especially France—and in the United States. There are influences from all those sources in the works of IBÁÑEZ, sometimes in the form of suggestions by collaborators or disciples who have studied abroad. This is the case, for example, of MILLS and ADORNO, through Alfonso ORTÍ. The influence of BOURDIEU; of MORIN and CICOUREL, "through conversations and reading", is also recognised by IBÁÑEZ himself. He confesses to having read "with fascination" about fields, which are out of the bounds of sociology: philosophy, cybernetics, linguistics, semiotics, dialectic materialism, psychoanalysis, physics, biology, anthropology. He also comes to the conclusion that, in order to make progress in social research, it is necessary to go "beyond sociology". That phrase is, at the same time, the title of his opera *prima* in methodology. The following is a more detailed expression of his intellectual contribution:

"(...) Lefebvre (in *Language and Society*) gave me the first ideas. I read the linguists (Saussure and Benveniste, Chomsky, Bajtin) and the semiotics people (Barthes, Eco, Greimas). I got into structuralism (...) Lacan, Levi-Strauss, Althusser, Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze ... (...) were my guides. That stage allowed me to found the discussion group methodologically and justify it epistemologically" (IBÁÑEZ 1990b, p.22). [50]

Today it is also accepted that the Argentine sociologist and philosopher Pablo NACACH (2003)⁴⁶ had an important contribution recently on the intellectual work of IBÁÑEZ. However, what we would like to focus on here is mainly the singularity and originality of IBÁÑEZ when it comes to the practice of qualitative social research. [51]

A first clue can be found in the later writings of the master. "My only more or less original contribution to the methodology of social research is to have set the methodological bases of the discussion group technique and to have justified it epistemologically" (IBÁÑEZ 1990a, p.22). In one of his last conferences (Granada 1991, recorded in video), he notes that he developed the discussion group in the context of market research "along with Alfonso Ortí, Angel de Lucas, Paco Pereña, José Luis de Zárraga and others" (IBÁÑEZ 1990a, p.22). We have already made a brief but important mention to the research of three of those names in Section 1, while describing the fifth stage. We would like to talk now about one of those "others", namely about Luis J. MARTÍN DE DIOS. His portrait of IBÁÑEZ, with whom he worked in the '70s, is centred on the twenty years of professional practice by his master on market research. From the end of the '50s, when he was expelled from the university for political reasons, to the end of the

45 As an example, the paper *Discussion group in the perspective of new cybernetics*, presented in the Support, Society and Culture Conference. Mutual uses of Cybernetics and Science, University of Amsterdam, Institute for Andragology, 1989, March 27-April 1, pp.98-139. See Bibliography of and on Jesús IBÁÑEZ in *Anthropos*, 113, 1990, pp.26-30.

46 NACACH (2003) distinguishes between three stages: the first is marked by the influence of the Frankfurt School (ADORNO) and of C.W. MILLS; in the second, *French structuralism* has importance; and in the third there is a visible enthusiasm for cybernetics and the *social research of second order*.

'70s, IBÁÑEZ did social research applied on consumption "from a commercial perspective". It is precisely those biographical antecedents or accidents which make him (as well as his first collaborators and some of his later disciples) "a kind of *practical or empirical researcher* which is very rare in Europe". MARTÍN DE DIOS (1990, p.51) makes that description more precise by establishing a more concrete comparison at the European scale.

"Perhaps France could offer us the closest examples. However, as far as we know, the Baudrillards and the Moles, the Barthes and the Lyotards, the theoreticians of Social Sciences with their critical perspective, have in no way had a specific dedication to empirical social research during years, not to mention to its commercial applications. They have rather been centred on strictly theoretical work (...) In Spain the gap between academicians and empirical researchers is today very perceptible⁴⁷. Ibáñez is one of the most significant links between them and surely the most important exception." [52]

According to MARTÍN DE DIOS, IBÁÑEZ's research on consumption has a style in which social discourses are analysed and interpreted from a critical perspective. Furthermore, "the group technique leads necessarily to a specific methodology of analysis (the structural one)" (p.53). The theoretical reflection ("techno-methodological theory-building") on the group, both as technique and method, is only done when the market research stage is over. [53]

Though this portrait is illuminating and well-founded, the figure of IBÁÑEZ is still an enigmatic one even for the best-documented and most passionate experts on the subject. It is the case of Alfonso ORTÍ, master of masters in this methodology and in this group. While he pays tribute to IBÁÑEZ as "master and genius" and "great friend", ORTÍ (1990, p.40) does not withhold some criticisms either. The most important one of those, in our opinion, is that "the History and conflicts of class continue to be absent" in the master works of IBÁÑEZ (1979, 1985). It is a criticism, which at the same time points in the direction of the risks (*rhetorical absolutism, fetishism*) which have been detected by other authors in the evolution of *French structuralism*. According to ORTÍ (1990, p.41), "the work of Ibáñez (...) is saved by (...) its direct link with the empirical analysis of daily social life and the life of its protagonists (real subjects or groups of consumers or voters, political parties, social movements ...)". It can fairly be said that this is the part of his empirical analyses which has not been published entirely, according to the conventional bibliographical format. Despite that, his writings have had influence (had *impact*, to use a current expression). This is true not only for the technical reports or internal documents (to which the collaborators and the clients who order them have access) but also for articles published in newspapers⁴⁸. There

47 This point of view touches an old question which has been analysed in depth by other authors. On *visible and invisible schools* of Spanish sociology, from Franco until today, see ALVAREZ-URÍA and VARELA (2000). An equally important contribution on *schools* and their influences, elaborated at the beginning of the '70s, is by DE MIGUEL (1974).

48 It is worth mentioning two posthumous works here. One of them is *Por una sociología de la vida cotidiana (For a sociology of daily life)*, which is at present in its third edition (1994, 1997, 2002). The collaborators include Gérard IMBERT, an admirer with outstanding contributions to qualitative social research in Spain. The second one is *A contracorriente (Against the Current)* (1997), a

exists an IBÁÑEZ who is a columnist, just as there exists a MARSAL or a DE MIGUEL who are also columnists.⁴⁹ The daily press has been, just as the novels, a vehicle for the diffusion of the ideas of the *intellectuals* of the past century as well as of the most careful and critical *observers* of daily life. [54]

For all these reasons, re-thought at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century, the works of IBÁÑEZ and MARSAL may be considered already masterpieces. However, the best proof of their mastery is without a doubt in their disciples. Jesús IBÁÑEZ could count on a big group of them including people from various generations, which made possible an optimal connection between past, present and future. We have already mentioned some of the components of the first generation. A more detailed work would necessarily have to include also the names of Ignacio FERNÁNDEZ DE CASTRO, Narciso PIZARRO, Fernando ALVAREZ-URÍA and Julia VARELA (and their disciples as well)⁵⁰. The scope of this article makes it impossible for us to place them, with all the due details, on the general map of qualitative social research in Spain. However, the interested reader will surely know how to pursue the clues that we introduce here. There follows a generation which has a variety of publications in applied (COLECTIVO IOE, Fernando CONDE⁵¹, Cristina SANTAMARINA), as well as academic social research (Luis E. ALONSO, Félix RECIO). Their qualitative or mixed studies have included the fields of immigration, health, housing, consumption, work etc. We can also talk about a third generation with varying degrees of experience in social studies and market research and who are also established within the university

compilation of articles published in magazines or newspapers, together with some unpublished articles, all of which are presented by experts on the intellectual work of IBÁÑEZ.

49 MARSAL's book (1975) *Revoluciones y contrarrevoluciones (Revolutions and counterrevolutions)*, compiles articles which have been published (between 1971 and 1974) in *El Correo Catalán*, of Barcelona, and in *Informaciones*, of Madrid. We can read the following there: "if I lived in England, Germany or France I would not bother writing in the newspapers. Living in Spain, I have followed the path of the increasing number of intellectuals who write in the newspapers whenever and wherever they can. The reason for this is that in Spain there exist no equivalents, in diffusion and influence, to the social science magazines of the countries of the centre" (p.10). In the case of Amando DE MIGUEL (1972, 1996), we bring two examples of his numerous publications in newspapers, which have still not been compiled. In the second of those references, one comes across a passage which reinforces the argument which has been made: "What I have been practising since finishing my studies without even being aware of it has been the small sociology of common sense. It consists in applying professional concepts and data to the understanding of small, everyday events. In my opinion, the greatest sociologist ever is Simmel, precisely because he had to mainly stay away from the academical aspects. His writings are quite untidy, even chaotic, but they have had influence in many systematic research works." (DE MIGUEL 1996, p.10)

50 To this generation belong (with new research lines) Félix DÍAZ and Angel J. GORDO (analysis of the discourse in the health context and in cyberspace, respectively).

51 The figure of CONDE is especially relevant to our map because he has made a significant contribution to qualitative methodology with the design of the "triangular group" (three people and the moderator). Just like the canonical discussion group which was created by IBÁÑEZ, the *triangular group* is formed within the framework of empirical market research. Its particularity is in that it allows working with communication codes and obtaining more depth in the discourses of the participants than would be obtained in canonical groups. According to CONDE, "the triangular groups give clues, symptoms of what is not yet in the discourse" (interview done in Project PIE 99). Basing himself on the psychoanalytical theories of WINNICOT, CONDE thinks of the discourse space of the *triangular groups* as a transitional space which gives the researcher the possibility of proposing hypotheses that bring different light on subjects which appear to be unapproachable in discussion groups.

(Javier CALLEJO, Araceli SERRANO, Enrique MARTÍN CRIADO, Juan de Dios RUANO)⁵². [55]

To conclude this overview of IBÁÑEZ's circle, we would like to acknowledge of a hitherto unpublished research work done in 2000 by a team from the Department of Sociology IV of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (of which the authors of this article are part), chaired by IBÁÑEZ in the last years of his life. The most tangible product of this work, which was itself the fruit of an "innovation in education" project financed by the UCM, was a series of videos. There were, on one hand, eleven open interviews with experts on the methodology and research practices of the discussion group technique in Spain, all recorded audio-visually; and on the other, three videos produced in the Qualitative Techniques Laboratory of the Faculty of Political Science and Sociology in which excerpts from the eleven interviews are combined with slides and other inserted visual material. In the video on the analysis of the discussion groups' discourse, emphasis is put on the idea that the basic concepts are transmitted from generation to generation with continuity, changes and criticism⁵³. The importance of *continuous qualitative research* in Spain (the ICC of television programs and of political news) is made clear through interviews with José Luis DE ZÁRRAGA and Javier CALLEJO. The analytical style used by Angel DE LUCAS while practising and teaching is also explained in depth. [56]

There are no similar contributions to methodology and research practice in Spain through discussion groups outside IBÁÑEZ's circle. We have noted elsewhere (VALLES 1997) VILLASANTE's (1994) proposal of combining this technique with similar ones (group interviews in determined situations, brainstorming, etc.)⁵⁴. We have warned the readers then that the unorthodox use of the term "discussion groups" by different authors should in fact be taken to mean techniques of group interviews. As in the previous section, we would like to finish by noting that the list of theoreticians and applied scientists of the discussion group technique in Spain does not end here. However, as previously mentioned, our goal here is not to make

52 The large and diverse group of qualitative researchers initiated by IBÁÑEZ, which already counts with several generations of professors, social and market researchers, has a clear *school* vocation through the graduate course *Praxis de la Sociología del Consumo. Teoría y Práctica de la Investigación de Mercados*, hosted by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid since 1992.

53 The case of MARTÍN CRIADO is especially illustrative. Our interview was centred on his study called *Producir la juventud (Producing Youth)*, where he declares: "The technology used for this research will be the discussion group. This technique was developed epistemologically by Jesús Ibáñez (1979). However, the theoretical bases used for the development of this technique by Ibáñez—fundamentally, the psychoanalytical theories of groups—are very different to those that we propose here" (MARTÍN CRIADO 1998, p.94). In this book, a theory is proposed on sense production in conversation: it takes as starting point the structural linguistics of SAUSSURE and follows various authors, fundamentally the works of GOFFMAN and BOURDIEU among others.

54 The research on participatory social research and discourse analysis in the study of local development, citizenship and environment of Tomás R. VILLASANTE et al. (2000, 2001, 2002) and the group formed around him in Spain and in Latin America are examples of methodological innovation and creativity. Their significance deserves surely more than a short mention. Their interaction with IBÁÑEZ's Madrid group or LOZARES' Barcelona group has been very fruitful, which we cannot describe in detail here. Also beyond the scope of this article is the analysis of the pioneering contributions of Félix REQUENA and José A. RODRÍGUEZ in this field.

a full inventory of them. Many research works, with different levels of methodological excellence, are left beyond the scope of this article. We leave their in-depth analysis to another occasion. [57]

6. Present and Future of Qualitative Methodology in Spain

The mentioned boom of qualitative methodology in social research has increased exponentially its uses and contexts of application. We are aware of leaving much aside, but would still like to highlight some current trends that, in our view, are shaping a certain course. For this purpose we have followed an explicit as well as arbitrary criteria: research which falls into the area of specialisation of the two authors of this article. Namely, the field of "methodology and technology", denomination of the fourth session of the Working Group 01 on Methodology at the VIII Spanish Congress of Sociology (2004). This encompasses, mainly, research on and with computer software for qualitative analysis of texts and discourses and the so-called visual methods: photography, film and video and multimedia technologies employed as heuristic instruments. A network perspective applied to text and discourse analysis with a heavy and original use of CAQDAS⁵⁵ software like Atlas/ti is mainly represented by Carlos LOZARES's group at Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona⁵⁶. The new software and hardware tools for the qualitative researcher have also been explored by Miguel S. VALLES (1997, 2000a, 2001, 2005) from the perspective of the rediscovery of grounded theory. That is, specifically investigating how GLASER and STRAUSS's theory served as methodological fundament in the development of these programs, which are designed not only to assist in the qualitative (or mixed) final analysis but also along the entire research process. [58]

Visual methods within the Spanish social sciences experience the eclecticism and shortcomings that a new field with unclear boundaries within the academic disciplines inevitably comprises. What follows is an incomplete account of an emerging development within the qualitative social research scene in Spain. The selection is based on how this methodology was, either developed or applied to particular Spanish objects of study. For instance, Elisenda ARDEVOL (1996, 1998, 1999, 2003) has specialised on methodology for ethnography and audiovisual data construction in legal settings. She conducts research within the Group for Socio-juridical Studies (GRES), a multidisciplinary group at the UAB devoted to the study of law in everyday practice and the analysis of discourse in relation to institutional organisation and cultural patterns. Jesús DE MIGUEL and Carmelo PINTO (2003) are the authors of the book *Sociología Visual*. This work incorporates the primary (Anglo-Saxon) debates on sociology of photography, and places emphasis on interesting epistemological questions regarding the use of the camera as a tool to document social reality. It pursues a diachronical study of a legendary photographic essay, by Eugene SMITH—*Spanish Village, it lives*

55 CAQDAS stands for *Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software*.

56 We only mention the recent contributions by this group (LOZARES, VERD, MARTÍN & LÓPEZ 2003), which has been involved in many R+D projects which have produced doctoral theses and contributions to congresses. We are unable, for lack of time and space, to describe them in detail here.

in ancient poverty—which appeared in *Life* magazine on April 9, 1951 (see also BUXO & DE MIGUEL 1999). Regarding the uses of photography as research technique, we would also like to shed light on a recent project involving visual documentation and analysis via CAQDAS of the so-called "popular sanctuaries", improvised memorials that followed the March 2004 terrorist bombings (CHULILLA 2004). This project was accomplished by a team at the Facultad de Ciencias Políticas "León XIII", Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca. [59]

Collaborative work on visual studies has been done by the TALLER DE ANTROPOLOGÍA VISUAL⁵⁷ and the COLECTIVO UNIVERSITARIO DE PRODUCCIÓN AUDIOVISUAL EN CIENCIAS SOCIALES (CUPACS), Madrid based groups of scholars and activists, who authored ethnographic/sociological film and video. Both as a valid and coherent research in itself or as a visual synthesis of broader research projects, these groups completed several audiovisual materials on immigration, unemployment and political communication⁵⁸. [60]

In the intersection of visual studies and qualitative research on collective memory, Alejandro BAER (2005; BAER & SANCHEZ PEREZ 2004) of Universidad Complutense de Madrid, has conducted research on the audiovisual testimony as a research tool, specifically in the reflexive inquiry and representation of traumatic events. Javier IZQUIERDO (2003, 2004), from the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia has conducted ethno-methodological research on hidden-camera pranks and everyday audio-visual recording and broadcasting machinery. [61]

Here ends our trail. The rich and diverse development of qualitative social research, in Spain in the last years, is of such an extraordinary scope that makes an assured portrait or cartography almost an impossible task. Thus, we cannot escape the comparison to BORGE's map, a map so detailed that it ends up covering exactly the territory and which, inevitably, obscures the real territory underneath it. This paper tries to avoid that metaphor. Our map or portrait remains open for other researchers and scholars to complete this picture with their areas of expertise, perspectives, standpoints and special emphases. [62]

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57 A member of this group is Ana MARTINEZ (2002), who is developing new ethnographic research focusing on the intergenerational transmission of gendered sensory knowledge about domestic practices and additionally explores themes of new and old media and changing configurations of kinship.

58 Among the productions of the Taller de Antropología Visual: *Jornaleros* (1998), *A buen común* (1999), both audiovisual reflections on identity and working culture of day labourers in Andalucía, *Mujeres Invisibles* (2000), a biographic approach to the gender problem. CUPACS authored the research projects and documentaries *Televisión y urnas* (2000) on the interrelation between politics, journalists and advertisers during electoral campaigns, and *Oasis en Tierra Extraña* (2003) a film and a qualitative research project on Ecuadorian immigrants in Madrid.

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