

New perspectives on Spanish-language narrative journalism: from the big bang of the present Boom to the emerging editorial models

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Abstract:

This article purports to demonstrate that print and digital publications offering high-quality narrative journalism in Spanish are gaining an increasingly wider readership. Furthermore, readers of magazines such as *Orsai* and *Jot Down* are willing to pay for long-form journalism that meets their aesthetic standards. What theorists such as Boynton and editors such as Kilman have asserted has now been confirmed: the key is creativity. This paper offers a chronological overview of the genre that helps explain why there is so much talk about a boom in Latin- American narrative journalism today and provides an in-depth analysis of how the combination of conventional and groundbreaking styles of journalism has spelled out success for two of these publications.

Keywords: Literary journalism, narrative journalism, journalistic genres, new editorial models, *Orsai*, *Jot Down*.

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1. Introduction

Although there is no doubt in the profession about the resurgence of narrative journalism in Spanish (a brand *new boom* for some),¹ publishing chronicles, spe-

¹ Spanish critics have seconded Jaramillo Agudelo's (2012) assertion that Latin America is enjoying a *new literary boom*. In the Colombian writer's words, 'The journalistic chronicle is a form of narrative prose that represents the most exciting reading and the best writing available today' in this region. This expression has cropped up in the cultural supplements of numerous Spanish newspapers, Internet portals and blogs, mainly in reference to two compilations published in 2012: *Antología de crónica latinoamericana actual* (Alfaguara), edited by the aforementioned Agudelo, and *Mejor que ficción. Crónicas ejemplares*, by Jorge Carrión (Anagrama). Both bring together pieces of narrative journalism

cial reports and literary profiles in conventional newspapers has never been more difficult than it is today. The writer Juan Villoro maintains that chronicle² now enjoys more prestige than ever before and ‘has succeeded as an ideology, if not as an employment opportunity in the world of newspapers’ (2012). There has been a proliferation of congresses, books and critics that attest to the genre’s vitality. Nonetheless, Caparrós definition of the chronicle frames it within its true context: ‘It is what our newspapers offer less and less often’ (2007). The emergence of the Internet and easy access to free digital outlets providing news and information are sinking conventional newspapers, which are progressively cutting back on both personnel and the number of pages they run. Their reduced formats do not afford space for the *great stories* in which narrative journalists weave a rich tapestry of the human condition full of the intricate and extraordinary details that common journalism leaves aside or works of literary realism³ that re-write the world in a way that allows us to see ourselves in a different light and come to know ourselves better.

The market is undergoing a shift in habits and paradigms; people are buying more and more online editions, tablets and e-books. On the other hand, digital technology has altered the way information is crafted and processed, and the owners, directors and editors of newspapers and periodicals have embraced the concept of journalism as a form of info-entertainment designed to appeal to as many readers as possible, an ideology that has practically done away with narrative journalism as a genre. Ambitious works of literary journalism do have a marginal presence in certain weekend supplements as well as in books and cult magazines; however, one place where their presence is growing by leaps and bounds is the world of digital publications, which are not subject to limitations of space and do not impose boundaries on creativity. This article sets out to explain how Spanish-language narrative journalism has forged its way in the

that have been appeared in a variety of formats over the past last years. Nevertheless, the validity of the chronicle is neither a recent phenomena nor does it exemplify a temporary or anecdotic trend in journalism in this part of the world. Chronicles and chroniclers of remarkable prestige and talent have always existed. The word ‘boom’ pertains more to the publicity surrounding the phenomena than to the work itself, given that Latin-American journalistic prose is only now beginning to be known in other parts of the world. There are various reasons for an increased awareness in this genre, including its delocalization via Internet, the emergence of publishers that publish books and anthologies, as well as other factors we will talk about in more detail further on.

² The term ‘chronicle’ covers a variety of genres in the context of Latin-American journalism. In practice, as Villoro (Agudelo, 2012) points out, the chronicler is considered the ‘platypus of prose’ because he or she embraces and catalyses the virtues of the tale, novel, report, interview, theatre and essay. Therefore, in the context of this article, the word ‘chronicle’ is not constrained by the definitions and rules that Spanish language manuals of style impose on this genre, but rather denotes a narrative that exemplifies a journalist’s extraordinary powers of observation, a high level literary virtuosity, a rigorous immersion in reality, and the author’s aspiration to write stories that remain in reader’s memory.

³ ‘The realist novel’ is one of terms used by García Márquez to describe the chronicle.

Internet era and offers an analysis of two paradigmatic magazines: the print publication *Orsai* and the chameleonic *Jot Down*, which cut its teeth online but now also publishes an edition in print. Our analysis has been based on interviews conducted with the editors of these magazines and an in-depth study of their editorial policies —from their marketing strategies to their criteria for the selection of content.

Although other high-quality magazines are being offered on the market, these two seemed to best illustrate a rising trend: they are examples of small publishers that challenge the establishment, have eliminated middlemen, have freed themselves from the pressures of depending on advertising revenues to survive and are not under the thumb of profit-oriented owners. They are not bound to editorial guidelines tied to ideological or commercial interests, and they interact with readers, who suggest topics and have a decisive role in such things as promotion. These magazines are windows that provide a view of a new terrain rich in opportunities to present high-quality writing. They are also daring bets that challenge the market and rely on the support of writers, the public, editors, illustrators, photojournalists and fans in general for their long-term survival and publications that use social networks to capture the attention of the greatest possible number of readers looking for good journalistic prose.

As we will summarise in our conclusions, the findings of our analysis show that emerging publications focusing on narrative journalism in Spain still lack the business and marketing skills necessary to ensure their mid —and long— term futures. Likewise, digital publications are not fully exploiting the resources the Internet offers to promote their content and give their websites a deeper relevance. In any case, if narrative journalism is still alive and kicking, it is largely thanks to the Internet, which was once believed to be its greatest nemesis, but has turned out to be its strongest ally.

This article is divided into three parts. The first, titled ‘More readers than ever’, compares data that tells two divergent stories: on the one hand, that of a print crisis and a drop in the traditional media’s advertising revenues, and on the other hand, that of an increase in the number of readers, who continue to demand creative, rigorous and high-quality content. Although it is true that business-minded newspapers have responded to the crisis by reducing staff positions (which has implied a withering of some of these publications’ best attributes), there is still a market demand for innovative journalism and, as Boynton (2011) has asserted, narrative journalism might well turn out to be a viable alternative, because at the end of the day, the essence of this profession continues to be telling a good story.

The second part of this article, titled ‘The boom’s big bang’, provides an overview of the principal milestones in the history of narrative journalism in Latin America and its characteristics that have laid the foundations for its emergence as the macro-genre, which are somewhat similar to those that emerged as part of the New North American Journalism movement some time ago (cult characters and magazines, schools, trends, editorial activity, loyal readers, etc.). The third, as outlined previously, offers an analysis of two magazines that throws light on two main issues: how narrative journalism is creating a niche for itself in Spain (a country with a time-honoured tradition of literary journalism) and how journal-

ists have been able to connect with those previously mentioned readers who are interested in this kind of writing and create aesthetic, graphically outstanding products using a range of strategies that include the use of new technologies to keep their low overhead and production expenses low.

The present work is part of a larger study being carried out by a research group at the Universidad San Jorge under the title 'Journalism as a creative space in Aragon: from print to Web 2.0. —Narrative strategies and techniques of narrative journalism', which focuses on the relationship between journalism and literature. We conclude this article with a table that provides a country-by-country list of the main Spanish-language magazines currently specialising in narrative journalism and their URLs.

2. *More readers than ever*

Larry Kilman (2012), president of the World Association of Newspapers and New Publishers (WAN-IFRA), states that the greatest challenge news organisations face today is finding profitable business models. Although there is an audience for journalism —if fact, a very healthy one— there is, nonetheless, a print crisis, which has led to a drop in advertising revenues that has heavily reduced these companies' incomes. In reaction, these organisations continue to cut staff positions, a strategy that has created a crisis in the labour market for journalists who are being dismissed en masse. Neither crisis has anything to do with the quality of journalism or readership: there is no crisis in terms of content production or reader interest. There were never so many readers or so much information for them to consume. WAN-IFRA data reflect this trend:

The global audience for newspapers has increased 4.2% since 2007. Likewise, the circulation of print newspapers around the world that charge subscription fees has also increased by 1.1% between 2010 and 2011, although this increase varies from region to region. Readership has increased in Asia (3.5%) and the Middle East (4.8%) and declined in Europe (3.4%), North America (4.3%) and Latin America (3.3%). Parallel to this decline in the sale of newspapers, the advertising income perceived by print newspapers worldwide has dropped 40.6% since 2007, and to date, it is not being replaced by advertising income generated by digital media (...). Overall, the world newspaper industry has an annual turnover of 158,765 million Euros, of which 60,332 million Euros is generated by advertising.⁴

Despite the glaring drop in advertising revenue, which is the main source of income for news organisations,⁵ it is not at all surprising that in view of data

⁴ 'Los periódicos cuentan con más lectores que nunca'. Retrieved from <http://www.el-mundo.es/elmundo/2012/09/04/comunicacion/1346754527.html>

⁵ According to Infoadex, investment in newspaper advertising in Spain fell from 1 124.4 million Euros in 2010 to 967 million in 2011, and investment in magazine advertising decreased from 397.8 million to 381.1 million during the same period. Advertising

indicating a rise in audiences, narrative journalism writers and theorists such as Robert Boynton see a bright future ahead, because, ‘however imperilled journalists feel, the big story is the fact that never before have so many people had so much access to such a diverse and enormous supply of information. And never before have they consumed so much of it. This is undeniably true, and of great benefit to mankind’ (2011). According to Boynton, the trouble is not on demand end, but rather on the supply end, because to date, newspapers (both print and digital) have not known how to respond to their readers’ thirst for well—crafted, segmented content. Readers are not the problem; the problem is that the newspaper industry has failed their readers by trying to make them consume information the same way they did in the past, ignoring the vast potential of the Internet and opting not to differentiate between consumers of short-form and long-form journalism.

Print or digital content? Boynton (2011), who is director of New York University’s magazine journalism programme, claims that both traditional newspapers and cyber media can coexist as long as they offer high quality information, because the public is interested in reading in-depth columns and special reports. The American author maintains that newspapers should avoid serving up a mix of short-form and long-form news (long-form referring to longer, high—calibre journalism). He points out, however, that a commitment to long-form journalism requires time and money. He also observes that not all businessmen are willing to invest in quality journalism in spite of the existence of a public interested in consuming in-depth products that are stylishly designed (print publications), convenient, accessible and portable (digital content) and illustrated with arresting photographs regardless of the medium they are produced in.

Large publishing houses have taken note of this demand and are turning out more and more nonfiction books offering profound, original, and human stories of substantial length. Readers now search elsewhere for what was long the hallmark of newspapers: depth and reflexion as opposed to the superficiality and ephemerality of radio and television news. Therefore, it is not surprising that

a lot of the creativity in journalism is taking place in books and magazine publishing. Although print book sales fell by ten percent this past February [2011], e-book sales increased by 202%. They now represent over twenty percent of total book sales. Downloadable audio book sales also increased by thirty-six percent in February [2011], which I interpret as evidence that people are eager to engage books when these are presented in a convenient form (Boynton, 2011).

On the other hand, reputable narrative journalists on both sides of the Atlantic are demonstrating that readers appreciate (and are willing to pay for) high quality prose journalism: prose that simultaneously inspires reflection, invites debate and arouses delight. Contrary to prevailing business opinion, narrative journal-

investment in Sunday magazine supplements also fell 7% over this two—year period. See *Estudio sobre la Inversión Publicitaria en España en el año 2011*. Published in 2012. Available at: <http://www.infoadex.es/RESUMEN%202012.pdf>

ism could turn out to be what saves newspapers and attracts a new generation of readers, making editions published on any platform more profitable (Rodríguez & Albalad, 2012). It is true that the most successful cases have taken advantage of the momentum of new technologies; it has been observed that ‘thanks to a new business model, the news chronicle —the new literary boom that is happening via blogs, digital portals, and new online publishing houses— is beginning to make narrative journalism profitable’ (Avilés, 2012). Leila Guerriero (2012) thinks that newspapers are no longer the best place to showcase narrative journalism, nor are they the place one should be waiting for the slightest opportunity to put it into practice to come round; therefore, ‘we must take our place in journalism by assault. We must offer something that meets the highest of expectations. We must diversify in what we do’.

The challenge facing journalism described above by Larry Kilman is in large being taken up by literary journalists rather than mass media technocrats. That is to say, those who know that what journalism does better than any other medium is *telling good stories*. According to editors of emerging magazines, they take a trial— and— error approach, relying on their instinct and sense of smell, rather than mathematical and managerial thinking, because they know perfectly well how to blaze a trail, adopt a unique perspective to cut straight to the heart of reality and construct exceptional scenarios. However, at the moment, they lack the managerial experience and financial backing they need to guarantee the survival of their projects over the long run. Notwithstanding, they persist on their crazy adventures with enormous passion, creating new digital and print magazines that they edit at home or in garages or small offices with almost no staff and using alternative distribution channels outside the tradition circuits that suffocate and squeeze the juice out of writers, editors and readers alike. The latter are proactive consumers who often voluntarily collaborate in the promotion and even the sale of the magazines, driven only by the pleasure of keeping a nearly extinct species alive, which with their help, is now showing the miraculous signs of resurrection.

3. *The boom’s ‘big bang’*

Spain has not bucked the general tendency to sweep narrative journalism under the rug. As in other parts of the world, very little investment is made in investigative journalism projects that offer both rigorous reporting and exceptionally good writing. Such projects require experienced and talented journalists with the time and means to devote themselves exclusively to a given topic —something can’t be done without financial commitment. It is cheaper to hire ‘multimedia journalists’, who tend to be underpaid entry level employees or even unpaid interns who are expected to carry out the tasks of several senior editors as quickly as possible with little consideration for quality. The results can be seen in any daily edition, more often than not digital: numerous texts riddled with misspelled words and inaccuracies, not to mention the ambivalent quality of the writing itself. Online pressrooms have resignedly accepted the fact that journalists seldom go out in search of their own material —an unthinkable eventuality at newspapers that take their

roles seriously. In addition, we are witnessing the exaltation of the supposed 'civilization of the spectacle', whose citizens, in Vargas Llosa's (2012) own words 'read little and prefer trashy, easily consumed, decaffeinated and entertaining texts'.

Salaverría (2010) sees these factors as the root causes of an unprecedented crisis for journalism as a profession:

Job insecurity, a lack of interest in ongoing professional training, a low level of specialisation, public suspicion that news writers are vulnerable to the pressures of politicians and their employers, the trivialisation of content... All these highly recognisable negative factors are at play in every newsroom today and constitute a scenario, often fostered by the news organisations themselves, wherein the journalist has been stripped of many of the traditional attributes of his or her profession (240).

This set of circumstances affects the overall quality of journalism as a profession; however, as stated previously, they have had the greatest negative impact on narrative journalism, which was already fading from the pages of daily newspapers. Why then, is there talk about a 'boom in narrative journalism' in the era of the Internet? In order to gain a greater comprehension of the object of this study, one needs to look beyond the commercial utility of this label and undertake a brief review of some of the factors that have provided leverage for the rising prestige of literary journalism in Spanish.⁶

1. Narrative journalism enjoys a long and rich tradition that goes back to the second half of XIX century in both Spain and Latin America, each of which developed a form that reflected its own cultural contexts and modes of narrative writing. In any case, the most outstanding Spanish-speaking narrative writers have always published a part of their best work in newspapers. In Spain, article writing, the most popular form of literary journalism in Europe, was the most common form (León Gross, 2005; López Pan, 2011), whereas Jaramillo Agudelo (2012) citing Eloy Martínez, points out that writers on the other side of the Atlantic chose the 'crónica' (chronicle), which constituted the backbone of Latin American literature. The big bang of the current boom in narrative journalism can be traced back to volumes lining the shelves of newspaper archives that preserve examples of the literary journalism produced by Larra, Mesonero Romanos, Maeztu, Pardo Bazán, Cavia, Azorín to González Ruano, Sánchez Mazas, Paco Umbral, Trapiello, Vicent, Millás, Rivas, Montero and Pérez Reverte and range from Martí to Rodó, Amado Nervo, Gómez Carrillo, Arlt, Walsh, González Toledo, Germán Pinzón, García Márquez, Salcedo Ramos; Poniatowska, Monsiváis, Villoro, Tomás Eloy Martínez, Caparrós, Ricardo Palma, Fernando Ampuero, Eloy Jáuregui, Jaime Bedoya, Julio Villanueva Chang, and a host of others.⁷

⁶ We refer to the Spanish language, as the resurgence of narrative journalism has not been confined to Latin America. In fact, there has been a recent proliferation of Spanish publications dedicated to narrative writing and reporting, although literary journalism has traditionally focused on column and opinion writing rather than news and analysis.

⁷ The list is endless. However, the literary journalists mentioned here are examples of the rich tradition of this genre in Spanish.

In short, a strong tradition of literary journalism in Spanish has been sustained since the nineteenth-century.

2. The genre's popularity gained momentum during the literary boom in Latin America during the 1950s, during which a number of famous literary lights, the most famous of whom was García Marquez, also practiced journalism. The chronicle was consolidated as a form of journalism in the mid-twentieth century, a period during which stories were released in instalments following nineteenth-century tradition. Latin American daily newspapers put their faith in the chronicle and reporting for three decades. This was the heyday of the marginal and yellow press, which specialised in articles about drug dealers, terrorism and consequences of migration from the country to large urban areas and gave birth to a counterculture that took hold throughout Latin America and had a lasting impact on the economy, architecture, security, gastronomy, religion, music, clothing, speech, how people dressed and even their perspective on life in general. These chronicles provided an X-ray of the social magma of burgeoning Latin-American cities. Spanish-language narrative journalism never managed to have the resonance and international projection later enjoyed by what is referred to as the New North American Journalism. Nevertheless, it was the 'silent avant-garde or discrete prologue' (Carrión, 2012: 24) for what Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese and many other North American authors from the sixties onward would transform into a worldwide literary phenomenon. For Carrión, one of the main reasons for the lesser projection of Latin-American narrative journalism was the absence of

any magazine in Spanish comparable to *Esquire*, *The New Yorker* or *Rolling Stone* (...). At that time, all bets behind the boom were placed on the fiction novel, which was considered its flagship genre, and the non-fiction novel became a genuinely North American product (24).

According to Fabricio Mejía Madrid (2012), narrative writing in Spain declined and fell into oblivion after the 'arrival of democracy and the openness it entailed (...), but continued in Latin America, where it served to express what was going on in a continent under the thumb of dictatorships'.

3. At the end of the nineties and the beginning of the new millennium, newspapers made an ambitious attempt to restructure themselves in blocks in reaction to the emergence of cybermedia and the ongoing competition of audiovisual journalism. Newspapers tried to imitate their digital counterparts and began to churn out editions with designs that relied heavily on a visual format, a strategy that doomed any initiative to publish in-depth articles longer than one thousand words. Newspapers' desire to cede ever more space to photographs, nut graphs, illustrations and infographics, resulted in narrative articles being ruthlessly carved to the bone. The best narrative writers wrestled with the limited column inches they were given and continued to produce magnificent pieces, if perhaps, principally driven by the desire to prevent the chronicle from devolving into an anecdotal genre devoted to the humorous and unusual. Even today, newspapers continue to run articles that make for light reading conceived to provide generally bored readers with a bit of colour and entertainment. Short-form articles

have been used as a means of boosting circulation. Therefore, long-form writers not content to bow down to signs of the times stopped regarding daily newspapers as their best outlet and decided to turn their problem into a new opportunity. They began to publish anthologies of long-form prose, chronicles and reporting on their own, which were well received by the public. However, the best tactic for the survival and subsequent renaissance of the genre was probably the creation of a number of emblematic magazines that copied editorial models provided by Anglo-Saxon literary journalism.⁸ The most influential were *Lateral* (Barcelona, 1994-2006), *El Malpensante* (Colombia, 1996), *Letras Libres* (México, 1999), *Gatopardo* (Colombia, 2001) and *Etiqueta Negra* (Peru, 2002).⁹ These innovative publications than spanned the turn of the century served up the best of narrative journalism in Spanish, achieving what their predecessors fell short of doing: the creation of international benchmarks for the genre. Thanks to the titanic efforts of their editors, these magazines won recognition for literary journalists from around the world.¹⁰ Although all of them are disseminated in print (except for the vanished *Lateral*), they have taken advantage of the Internet to reach an international public, as well as to create offices that are more often online than in physical locations from which they gather articles from every corner of the Spanish-speaking world. They have achieved visibility in record time and become cult magazines, offering a visually stunning product in the midst of a severe publishing and advertising crisis with the help of established writers who frequently contribute without any expectation of remuneration.¹¹

⁸ Especially the paradigmatic *The New Yorker*, although they have also been influenced by other magazines including *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's* and *Mother Jones*.

⁹ Similar magazines have followed on the heels of the pioneers that have paved the way for the recognition of the new Latin-American chronicle: the Venezuelan *Marcapasos* (2007), which first appeared in print but a year later was forced to publish exclusively online due to insufficient advertising revenue, and the Bolivian *Pie Izquierdo* (2010). The erotic magazine *SOHO* (Colombia, 1999) was a special case. It started out as a men's magazine and was instantly became controversial for running photographs of naked women as cover illustrations and interior content. However, it later began to feature high—quality narrative writing and became a reference in this genre.

¹⁰ These magazines published Spanish translations of both fiction and non-fiction works written by authors from around the world. In addition to its Mexican edition, *Letras Libres* launched an edition for Spain in 2001. *Gatopardo* moved its headquarters from Bogotá to México in 2006. From there, it was distributed to Argentina, México, Colombia, Panamá, Venezuela, Chile, Perú, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Miami and New York.

¹¹ Lino González Veiguela (2012) observed, 'Dorothy Parker used to say that the most beautiful words in any language were «Enclosed find check». In regard to the Latin-American chronicle, it's an expression that 1) is almost never heard, (even in its postmodern translation to 'see file attached to this email'), or else 2) the figure on the check is so low that it it's somewhere between almost nothing and absolutely nothing. Most Latin-American chronicler writers treat their work as a sideline to other jobs that allow them to make a living'. See: *Diccionario de la crónica hispanoamericana*, at <http://fronterad.com/?q=diccionario-cronica-hispanoamericana>

4. In 1994, Nobel laureate Gabriel García Márquez created the Fundación García Márquez para un Nuevo Periodismo Iberoamericano (FNPI)¹² to foster high-quality journalism in Latin America. The FNPI has made a great effort to train journalists from twenty-one different nations in four essential areas: quality narrative journalism, ethics and media sustainability, rigorous investigative journalism and innovation in digital media. This training is carried out through workshops and seminars conducted by highly recognised journalists who write for major world newspapers. The foundation offers scholarships to qualified candidates. Through this organisation, García Márquez spearheads the most ambitious project focused on the conservation and continued validity of Spanish-language narrative journalism and innovation in this genre today. The best and brightest narrative journalists have passed through its doors either as professors¹³ and/or workshop participants. The foundation has supported all kinds of editorial initiatives that promote excellence in journalism¹⁴ including the CEMEX-FNPI prize, the foremost award in Latin America for professionals in this field,¹⁵ whose juries have included the author of *Cien años de soledad* as well as other great writers such as Ryszard Kapuscinsky. The foundation also compiles and publishes summaries of the workshops it offers and organises forums for debate on the present and future of the reality novel, one example being the first and second editions of 'Encuentro de Nuevos Cronistas de Indias' held in Bogotá, Colombia in 2008 and Mexico in 2012, which brought together eighty chronicle writers¹⁶ and promoters of the chronicle form in Latin-America.¹⁷ Hence, today's high standards for journalistic prose are inextricably linked to the ongoing efforts of the FNPI, which serves as a sort of United Nations of the old and the new in Latin-American journalism.

5. The decisive contribution of literary journalists who write for the mainstream press and publishing houses in Spain is another factor. The work of the first group goes beyond the column writing that predominates in the daily press and includes magnificent pieces of narrative journalism that have appeared in books and magazines published in Spain and Latin America. It must also be said that newspapers make an effort to issue stylishly designed weekend supplements that offer the type of narrative pieces, reporting, interviews and profiles that no

¹² See <http://www.fnpi.org/>

¹³ Narrative journalists such as Alma Guillermoprieto, Jon Lee Anderson, Gumersindo Lafuente, Francisco Goldman, Juan Villoro, Alberto Salcedo Ramos, Leila Guerriero, Cristian Alarcón, Martín Caparrós, Santiago Gamboa, Julio Villanueva Chang, Héctor Abad, Tomás Eloy Martínez, Ryszard Kapuscinsky, Sergio Ramírez and García Márquez have conducted workshops in narrative journalism in various Latin-American cities.

¹⁴ The online magazines *Anfibia* (<http://www.revistaanfibia.com/>) and *Cosecha Roja* (<http://cosecharoja.org/>) are two examples.

¹⁵ Winners include Josefina Licitra, Leila Guerriero and Alberto Salcedo Ramos.

¹⁶ A roster of current chronicle writers that includes both experienced authors and young new talents is available at: <http://nuevoscronistasdeindias.fnpi.org/nuevoscronistas/?type=autores>

¹⁷ See <http://nuevoscronistasdeindias.fnpi.org/cobertura-2012/>

longer fit the format of weekday editions. The newspaper with the most solid tradition of producing high quality weekend supplements is *El País* (owned by Grupo Prisa), which has published *El País Semanal* since 1976. Others with similar weekend editions that have national circulations include *Crónica (El Mundo)* and *XL Semanal* (the newspapers published by Grupo Vocento). To these one must add a group of English-language magazines that maintain editions in Spanish such as *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone*, *Granta* and *Vanity Fair*. It is not unusual to see reporting and articles written by Latin American narrative journalists in these publications, which constitutes an ongoing exchange of stories between both sides of the Atlantic. On the other hand, there are publishers that have always believed in quality narrative journalism such as Barcelona-based *Anagrama*, which has offered many non-fiction works written by foreign authors, some of them from Latin-American countries, under the category *Crónica Anagrama*. The Spanish publishing houses *Grijalbo* and *Mondadori* pioneered this market in the 1970s. *Alfaguara* features works of literary journalism in its current catalogue by such authors as Gay Talese and Leila Guerriero as well as the highly notable *Antología de crónica latinoamericana actual*. Although *Planeta* focuses on fiction in Spain, its branches throughout Latin America publish a wide range of chronicle writing and reporting in book format that has been well received by readers. Recently, new labels specialising in narrative journalism have emerged, such as *Libros del KO* and *eCicerolibros*, which even organize virtual meetings between literary journalists in Spanish America and Spain.¹⁸

6. To the above factors, one must add the interest shown by journalists and scholars who have studied the relationship between journalism and literature, a area of research that emerged during the period between the mid-1980s and the end of the 1990s parallel to the consolidation of narrative journalism as a genre in Anglo-Saxon countries that was to have an impact on journalism in the Spanish-speaking world. The most consistent and innovative initiative towards the systematisation of these studies was the work of Barcelona-based academic Albert Chillón, who wrote *Literatura y Periodismo. Una relación de relaciones promiscuas* (1999), which proposed that comparative literary journalism studies be christened as a discipline in order to undertake a serious analysis of this hybrid genre using the tools of related disciplines such as history, philosophy, linguistics, anthropology and sociology. Journalism faculties and schools throughout Latin America and Spain have picked up on the work of Chillón and brought the subject into the arena of scientific meetings and monographs that have addressed such topics as collaborations of literary authors with newspapers, fiction literature published by newspapers and magazines, newspaper and magazine treatment of literary movements, literary criticism, literary journals and magazines as forms of journalism, journalistic initiatives launched by authors and the genres within

¹⁸ For example, 'Langostas y Periodismo', a *YouTube* video recorded on July 27th, 2012 by *Libros del KO* to mark the June 2012 publication of *Día de visita*, a book by Marco Avilés about the Santa Mónica women's prison in Chorrillos, Lima. This discussion featured the following writers from Peru, Chile and Spain: Marco Avilés, Toño Angulo, Juan Pablo Meneses, Pepe Cervera and Héctor Juanatey.

narrative journalism.¹⁹ Journalists and writers have also taught the subject at universities and schools in both the Americas and Europe, organising related research groups, workshops,²⁰ seminars,²¹ meetings and master and doctoral courses. Therefore, there is a constant cross-pollination and reflection that enriches the dialogue on narrative journalism that is producing interesting scholarly production in Spanish. It is no coincidence that the two anthologies published by Alfaguara and Anagrama that mention the 'boom of chronicle' were coordinated by writers who are also university professors: Jorge Carrión from Spain and Darío Jaramillo Agudelo from Latin America. The perspectives and work of researchers are needed to systematise and strengthen the practice of literary journalism and give it rigour. They are also essential to the maintenance, assessment and the categorisation of the immense legacy provided by article writers, chroniclers and reporters who have worked in this genre that forms the basis of further analysis as well as the publication of books, manuals and classes at universities where hundreds of thousands of students continue to study journalism with the dream of telling stories, whether they be short-form or long-form.²²

4. *Two windows that offer another view*

Only a few months ago, at the most recent Congress of the Spanish Society of Journalists held in June 2012, Phil Bennet, former managing director of *The Washington Post* posed the theoretical question 'Does investigative journalism have any future in the Twitter era?', to which his answer was blunt and to the point: narrative journalism, with its compelling and revealing stories that uncover the human side of information, 'has a lot to say in these hard times. We must make the most of the current crisis to discover new ways of doing things' (2012). A substantial number of publications in Spanish have taken on this challenge and

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Of those in Spain, the *Hotel Kafka* Project, which even offers a Master in Creative Writing, is particularly notable.

²¹ Two ongoing events that provide forums for narrative journalism studies are the summer courses offered by Fundación Santillana and the Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo (Santander) and the conferences on journalism and literature organised by the Universidad de San Jorge (Zaragoza). The latter published a book on the topic in 2010. In addition to the Encuentros de Nuevos Cronistas de Indias organized by FNPI, there is another outstanding event related to narrative journalism in Latin America, the Festival Malpensante, which is sponsored by the magazine of the same name. The Hay Festival also organises relevant activities, including meetings of narrative journalists in Spain, Latin America and other parts of the world.

²² At the presentation of the book *Periodismo Narrativo* by writer and university professor Roberto Herrscher (2009: 18), Constanza López, Vice-rector of Universidad Finis Terrae School of Communications in Chile, reiterated the point that journalists and professors who teach must urge students to 'read, re-read and enjoy great works of fiction and non-fiction' because the essence of journalism, which remains unchanging regardless of medium employed, is to tell stories'.

now stand as shining examples of how superb, international literary journalism can be published in both print and digital formats. These include outstanding titles such as *Orsai*, *Jot Down*, *Panenka*, *FronteraD*, *Anfibia*, *Periodismo Humano*, *El Faro*, *Provincini*, *The Clinic*, *Marcapasos*, *Radio Ambulante*, *Cometa*, *Números Rojos*, *Líbero*, *Arcadia*, *Pie Izquierdo*, *El Puercoespín*, *Cuarto Poder*, *Cuadernos de Básquet* and *Quality Sport*. As we stated at the beginning of this article, we will analyse the first two of these publications in order to explain how they successfully function in the era of *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *YouTube*. To that end, we conducted in-depth interviews with their editors and promoters, who provided insight into how these enterprises function.

Both of these publications were founded in 2011 and have a considerable number of followers through social networks: thousands of users support these projects through *Facebook* and *Twitter*. Generally speaking, each one has a well-defined identity: *Orsai* is a benchmark in that it has successfully incorporated a model that does not depend on advertising revenue. On the other hand, *Jot Down* demonstrates that a magazine can achieve a level of online popularity via social networks rather than paid promotional efforts and use that medium as a stepping-stone to publishing in print. We will now analyse each of these publications.

4.1. *Orsai*, Or how to kill the intermediary

‘No middlemen’ is the byword of *Orsai* (<http://www.editorialorsai.com>), a magazine published by Editorial *Orsai S.L.* that has offered readers a novel experience since January 2011. This initiative, which has set a groundbreaking precedent for the publishing industry, was the brainchild of Hernán Casciari, an Argentinean writer living in Barcelona, and fellow countryman Christian Basilis. This innovative project that draws on the potential of both print and digital media might resemble a print-era publication, but it would not be feasible without Web 2.0 technology.

The magazine grew out of Hernán Casciari’s successful blog novel titled *Más respeto, que soy tu madre*. The author asked readers who followed the online saga the following question: ‘What do you think about us being the ones who decide how long a publishing venture lasts?’ The response he received was tremendous. For Casciari (2012), it was a logical thing to do, given that ‘accordingly to traditional wisdom, the first thing one does when one launches a publishing business is talk to businesspeople —individuals who aren’t necessarily readers and who only want to make money. These are the people who traditionally decide when a gig is up. In contrast, we have direct contact with our readers. With no advertisers in on the deal, they’re the ones who have the power to say it’s time to put the project to bed. *Orsai* will cease to exist the day that readers decide that it’s no longer important to them’.

After conducting a favourable survey, Casciari launched an intrepid project with his childhood friend and journalist Christian ‘Chiri’ Basilis. *Orsai* would require all Casciari’s time and energy, which implied ending his ongoing col-

laborations with *El País* and *La Nación*. He later reflected on this professional crossroads on his blog: ‘My experience with both newspapers taught me that I can only have fun working in a media that isn’t dependent upon advertising, and that I can only sleep in on Fridays without being interrupted by a series of phone calls if I’m involved with a media that isn’t driven by an ideology’. He then went on to explain that his decision was based on the ‘overpowering desire to go back to devoting time and thought to the texts he worked with and let each collaborator write as long a piece as he or she wanted to’. To sum it up, ‘return to the world of the chronicle and quality illustration, where pictures tell you a story and each line and section is crafted by passionate people instead of bureaucrats, interns, people with money and assistants’.

The project started out with an initial investment of 100,000 Euros. Thousands of people paid for the first issue in advance without fully knowing what it would offer. The scheduled launch date for *Orsai* was January 2011, but by November 2010 an avalanche of orders had already poured in: during the first two days it was on sale, a copy was sold every thirty-nine seconds. Nonetheless, despite the positive public response, the project ended the year 50,000 Euros in the red. The partners believed that the shortfall was a result of their lack of experience in distribution; ‘We wanted to reach every corner of the world without considering shipping costs, which varies a lot according to the destination’, Hernán Casciari explained.

To overcome this initial setback, they decided to collect subscription fees in advance. ‘Since 2012, we have imposed an annual subscription fee in order to ‘educate’ our readers. Although advanced payment is not obligatory during 2013, the formula will be in place and we’ll have a considerable subscription base’, the Argentinean writer observed. Based on the results for *Orsai*’s second year of publication, it looks as though its editors have turned the ship around and the magazine is on its way to being profitable. Taking previous experience into account, on December 12, 2011 the magazine sent out the following direct appeal to readers through its blog: ‘We need five thousand subscribers to ensure that *Orsai* becomes an unprecedented cultural experience. This means five thousand readers need to make advance payment for six issues of the magazine’. Six months later they could report good news to their readers: the goal had been reached. Casciari says that collecting subscription fees prior to distribution was a way of avoiding delays in receiving payments. ‘There is no free lunch here. We expect this to be a sincere collaboration», he adds.

In terms of the magazine itself, contents are selected by the managing editor and editor-in-chief, who try to satisfy their followers’ tastes. Following this premise, the question quickly became ‘What does everybody want to read?’, which inspired a theme-based format that covered humour, comics, stories, in-depth interviews, profiles, chronicles and reporting. Along the same lines, readers were given the opportunity to make their own contributions, which appear in the ‘Mail from readers’ section.

Editors rely on writers to suggest possible topics. The magazine has no strict editing policy. Casciari explains, ‘I don’t have it in my head or my heart to make an author crazy. We don’t want to torture anyone. We want for everyone to have

their own voice'. Forty people collaborate on each issue, which is pulled together online. According to Cascairi, 'the first year, we featured some authors who were well known to readers as well others whose work was only familiar to us'. This formula has since changed: 'Fifty percent of our writers are now part of a stable staff that collaborates on every issue. The other fifty percent are unknown authors with a lot of talent who contribute chronicles, essays, profiles, etc.' The design is purposefully simple. For example, the magazine only uses two fonts: Times New Roman and Helvetica. This does not imply, however that the graphic and literary elements aren't considered to be important; illustrators and writers are chosen on the basis of 'their commitment and talent'.

Figure 1. Orsai covers, The New Yorker style illustrations



The cover of the magazine is uncluttered and features a single, high-quality illustration: it never includes headlines or captions describing its contents because it is understood that, due to the very nature of the publication, there is no need to attract readers in this manner. *Source: Orsai.*

Orsai is sold outside of traditional distribution channels. Any person, regardless of his or her geographic location, can become a distributor. Cascairi explains: 'We don't want to get involved with distribution and publishing mafias; from an ideological point of view, we are tired of them. We think that new self-publishing channels outside the orbit of conventional publishers must be opened up. When I say this, I'm referring to multinational corporations, not hard-working small presses'. Using this formula, the magazine attracted over 5.000 subscribers around the world in 2012.

Argentina, Spain, Uruguay, Mexico and Chile top the list of countries with the highest number of readers. Interested readers can subscribe through the website. The cost of an individual subscription depends on purchaser's location. Upon payment, the magazine is shipped to a home address or a nearby distributor, who may be either an *amateur* (a reader) or a contact at a commercial outlet (a bookstore). In any case, each issue is always available for review on the website in PDF

format ten days after its initial release. There is a strategy behind charging for the print version and later releasing a digital version —the ten-day delay has been factored in as a way of rewarding paying subscribers. This practice, which could be interpreted as a two-edged sword, reflects the editors' personal philosophy; as Casciari says, 'The print run is geared to pay everyone's salaries. Purchasing Orsai is not as simple as going to a store and laying your money down. Since the run of each issue is limited (profitability acts as a filter), readers feel that they are in a privileged position'. To enhance the chic of this relationship, a bar sporting the name of the magazine was opened in Argentina in 2011, which within a year's time, became a regular meeting point for nearby readers.

Right from the start, *Orsai* has been able to bank on Hernán Casciari's media pull. This advantage and his personal philosophy of publishing have freed him from the necessity of developing a defined social network strategy. According to Casciari, advertising has been left to the magazine's readers; they spread the word on the basis of their own experience. 'We really lavish care on our blog, which was tailor-made to meet our needs. We have just one and we're going to stick with it'. Whatever the magazine's prevailing zeitgeist, what the magazine has accomplished is another matter. Its use of the digital tools available is more than remarkable. The magazine's presence on *Twitter* and *Facebook* has been crucial in raising awareness of its existence, specially the latter platform, where the magazine has racked up more than 25,000 followers. In contrast, as of December 2012, it had only approximately 4,000 followers on *Twitter*. In any case, the cornerstone of its visibility is its own website, which social network profiles complement. Readers cannot get their hands on the magazine if they don't visit the website.

Orsai is a magazine that bucks the general trend and bets on narrative journalism. Its strategy of offering a flagship print edition produced in colour on glossy stock has proved that there is a niche market of readers who are not only willing not to pay for high-quality content, but even willing to support a magazine that offers this content free-of-charge online. Thanks to 'these crazy people' as Casciari affectionately describes them, the magazine became viable solely on readership support. Faithful to his philosophy, Casciari is not concerned about the magazine's future: as long as the readers' want it there, *Orsai* will survive.

4.2. *Jot Down: from Internet to paper*

Jot Down (<http://www.jotdown.es>) is a magazine conceived as a print publication but initially launched online. It is another example of how the Internet can serve as a springboard for jumping from digital to print. To lower their upfront investment costs, the magazine's founders temporarily shelved their plans to launch a print publication and opted to build an audience via the less expensive Internet. Created in May 2011 taking cues from *The New Yorker*, *Jot Down* has become a prestige magazine. It grew out of the dissatisfaction of a group of people —none of them from journalism sector— with what was available on the market at the time. As Ángel Luis Fernández (2012), the co-founder, manager and editor of the magazine explains, 'We were looking forward to creating a publication that

expressed our common cultural interests'. According to Fernández, 'In order to be able to read everything that interested us, we would have needed to create a series of different publications, which, in addition, wouldn't have functioned the way we wanted them to' (2012). As an alternative, the nine pooled their resources as partners and formed *Jot Down Cultural Magazine* as a limited company. All of them felt that what they lacked the most was access to high-quality examples of long-form writing.

Fernández explains that the magazine's philosophy rests on several key concepts. 'Regarding contents, we opted to develop interviews and articles to ensure that what we offered wouldn't be superficial. This has sometimes implied publishing texts that have run beyond 10,000 words, but our readers have been grateful for this decision. In terms of design, we placed our bets on black and white with a special emphasis on photography'. In line with their general philosophy, they decided 'not to make an exclusive product for a specific group of users, but rather to bring culture closer to the maximum number of people possible'. Despite the group's desire to see the magazine in print, they created an initial version online. Otherwise, the project wasn't feasible. 'Today it's necessary to create a community in order to gain visibility and Internet is the way to do this,' the editor assured us.

During its first year of publication, the magazine has been available free of charge online. It has also been bolstered by an active presence on social networks. This strategy raised sufficient public interest to warrant the creation of a print version, which was launched with a special, first anniversary commemorative issue released in June 2012 followed by a theme-specific issue that focused on television series released in October, 2012. These issues paved the way for the magazine to start off 2013 as a quarterly print publication. Fernández observes, 'once we could confirm the existence of a readership that connected with our approach, we could sit down and develop a firm business model'. He also adds that although the magazine is now published in print format, 'the online version will also be maintained'.

Two people are responsible for the contents of the digital edition of *Jot Down*. They set up collaborations and are in control of publication schedules. The three to five articles published every day, and the two in-depth interviews released each week are the fruit of a collaboration that can involve up to eighty people. According to Ángel Luis Fernández, 'Practically everything is accomplished without a physical editorial unit by the initial core team we started out with, although we've had to look for help to cover operational tasks. In terms of collaborators, many people work with us on a steady basis and others rotate in and out. One of the things we're really proud about it is that many people who started out in publishing by collaborating with us have been hired by huge media companies-precisely due to the visibility we've given them'.

The topics the magazine addresses are quite diverse. The editor takes pains to emphasise that 'the only criterion for the online edition is quality'. Content includes interviews, reporting, narrative writing and opinion pieces. These genres allow for a cataloguing of pieces according to their nature. Offering a variety of sections (Opinion, Humanities, Movies-TV, Sports, Science, Music, Leisure, Blogs and Interviews) makes it easy for readers to find what interests them. Long-

form pieces (up to 15,000 words in length), which contain very little multimedia content, immediately stand out. These may be illustrated with one or more pictures, but video and audio components are never added. Contributors of long-form pieces have included renowned authors such as Enric González, former press correspondent for *El País* in Jerusalem, Rome and New York, and writer Fernando Savater.

As far as fees go, Fernández observes that ‘there are collaborators who refuse to accept payment for their work’. All others, apart from the founding partners who do not receive fees for their contributions, are paid. The price paid per article hovers around 50 Euros; for photographic essays, the fee rises to 75 Euros. Despite statistics published by OJD Interactive²³ (Spain’s circulation audit bureau) in August 2012 that showed the digital edition of the magazine had registered a total of 656,709 unique visits, 1,267,236 page views, had a 37.84% rate of new visitors and was trending upwards during its first 15 months of publication, the website is not profitable on its own.

Fernández reckons, ‘if I hired a team to sell advertising on the basis of the traffic the online edition has registered, the magazine could rake in more than 100,000 Euros in advertising revenue.’ Nevertheless, due the exorbitant commissions that advertising agencies cover for their services (50%), the magazine’s partners prefer not to rely on advertising. Most of the magazine’s income comes from sales of the print edition, ‘that up until now,’ Fernández assures, ‘has allowed us to keep the online edition going.’

The Internet was a game-changer for this enterprise, in that it brought the magazine to people’s attention and generated a base of fans (readers willing to pay for content) without which the print edition would never have been feasible. The magazine’s print and digital issues complement each other; that’s why the editor insists ‘we’ll continue to maintain the website because it’s the best vehicle for keeping our community active and getting the feedback we need to continually improve the magazine’. To date, financing for the magazine has come from its own funds — the initial capital partners contributed when they founded the enterprise. It is hoped that this will change once a tipping point has been reached. ‘We expect that our principal financing will eventually come from the sales of the print edition of the magazine and contents offered by our publishing division *Jot Down Books*’, Fernández insists, ‘Nevertheless, print publications will be a sideline: our focus continues to be online content’.

The website’s homepage contains direct links to social network sites. *Twitter*, *Facebook*, *Flickr* and *YouTube* —especially the first two, which had approximately 60,000 and 20,000 followers respectively as of late November, 2012— play an outstanding role in the day-to-day dynamics of the magazine: they provide vehicles for promoting content, bring it to the attention of the public and allow it to maintain constant interaction with its readers. As the magazine has no financial resources to invest in traditional advertising, all marketing strategies are designed around them.

²³ *Orsai* magazine is not tracked by OJD Interactive; therefore no statistics for this publication can be provided.

The print and online editions of the magazine share a common philosophy regarding content-building. *Jot Down* prefers to put a greater focus on content than on the media it employs. Ángel Luis Fernández explains that the print edition is subject to only two conditions: ‘that the subject of a contribution follows the theme of a given issue and that authors comply with stipulated guidelines’. Apart for these two considerations, ‘there is no difference between the print and digital editions’. The first print issue (which, as mentioned earlier, cannot be viewed online) celebrated *Jot Down*’s first anniversary. It featured 320 pages in black and white and did not contain a single advertisement. More than 23 well-known authors contributed to this issue, which also contained two ‘star’ interviews with Arturo Pérez Reverte and Xavi Alonso. It could be purchased for 15 Euros and was initially sold through the official website. The price covered delivery via express courier service to any part of Spain and shipping by ordinary post to the rest of the world. As of July 16, it could be purchased in various bookstores throughout Spain.

Figure 2. Readers feel that they’re part of the project



With more than 60,000 followers on Twitter, *Jot Down* has become an online sensation. *Source: Jot Down (Twitter profile).*

Launching a commemorative number to an already established community of readers was a winning strategy. It was such a big success that the magazine was obliged to follow up with another issue. Fernández explains that for *Jot Down* 'It was a gratifying experience because the edition sold out in just fifteen days. This first issue was a pilot, a trial balloon we launched to find out if our model squared with what readers were looking for, and the response was beyond all our expectations. This encouraged us to make the most of this media going forward'. It seems that both print and digital technologies have a place in the future of *Jot Down*: a classic case of making the most of all available resources. On one hand, the magazine demonstrates how a publication that might be not initially be feasible in print can eventually become successful by establishing an online identity. On the other hand, it also provides proof that it's possible to create a digital readership for narrative journalism. Even though it doesn't fully exploit the vast potential of the Internet, *Jot Down* has become a benchmark by demonstrating that there is an online audience for long-form narrative writing.

5. Conclusions

1. The emergence of the Internet has altered the models traditionally employed to publish literary journalism. Until recently, special reports, chronicles, profiles, interviews and articles that fused comprehensive reporting and good writing were published exclusively in weekend magazine supplements of the print editions of mainstream Spanish newspapers such as *XL Semanal*, *El País Semanal* and *Crónica* or in cult magazines that appealed to a limited public —*El Malpensante*, *Gatopardo* and *Etiqueta Negra* being a few examples of this genre in Latin America. However, the boom in narrative journalism in Spain that has followed the emergence of new digital technologies has contributed to the construction of new models based on dual digital and print editions that challenge the four classic variables of marketing mix: price, product, distribution and promotion. These new models have opened up ways of doing business that would not be feasible without the Internet by offering:
 - a) A free or low-cost means of promoting start-up projects. Thanks to the Internet, it is now possible to publicise a project and establish a target public without investing in traditional advertising, which is often unaffordable to businesses starting out. The ease with which information can be disseminated online allows start-ups to increase public awareness of what they have to offer through periodic viral campaigns or the implementation of consistent, ongoing communication strategies.
 - b) A means of strengthening readers' loyalty by making them feel they have an active role in the project, primarily through social network activity (especially *Facebook* and *Twitter*). Besides having access to the latest content released by editors and writers, the public also enjoys the ability to respond: consumers belong to a virtual community that provides a forum for their comments. This model attracts consumers who ask questions,

make suggestions, share opinions and offer praise and criticism whenever they want, rather than passive users, and therefore strengthens the bond between the publication and its readership.

c) The implementation of distribution channels that involve few intermediaries —the only middlemen being bookstores interested in promoting print editions at their points of sale. The most outstanding advantage of this model is the possibility of selling a publication directly through a magazine's website.

The possibility of marketing a higher-quality product, which in the case of digital publications can incorporate interactive, multimedia and hyper-textual features. Furthermore, online models are free from the time and space restrictions that conventional media are subject to and are viewable using any device with an Internet connection. Taking advantage of all the possibilities of digital technology requires significant investment of time and money, a fact that explains why online enterprises rarely fully exploit this medium.

2. These emerging models provide a showcase for products created by people who are passionate about what they do —journalists and non-journalists alike— who claim to rebel against the mediocrity that professional publishing often settles for: they reject the model embraced by the mass media and place their bets on providing content that goes beyond late-breaking headline news. Despite their success in launching publications that offer high-quality literary journalism, the editors of these fledging enterprises readily admit that they lack of a sound background in business and marketing, a weakness that makes it difficult for them to achieve short —and mid-term profitability and raises certain questions about their sustainability over time.
3. Narrative journalism has found a great outlet with the popularisation of devices such as hand-held tablets that are ideal for extensive reading sessions. Since these devices are intended to serve as a support for reading long texts, they must be easy on a reader's sight and comfortable to use. Until now, the visual quality afforded by digital devices used for reading has been markedly inferior to that of print. Nevertheless, the newest generation of digital devices are capable of producing a steady high-resolution image without emitting the extraneous light that causes visual fatigue and therefore offer the serious reader a more pleasurable experience.
4. The publications we have analysed in this paper —*Orsai* and *Jot Down*— provide evidence that there is a niche market of customers willing to pay for reading material presented in conventional formats. They refute the claims that the people no longer read, or that those who do are only interested in on-the-spot news and content, and stand as proof that a public for serious long-form texts in both print and digital formats does exist.

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Table I. Outstanding projects in Spanish²⁴

SPAIN		
FronteraD	Digital	http://www.fronterad.com/
Panenka	Print and digital, by subscription	http://www.panenka.org/
Jot Down	Print and digital	http://www.jotdown.es/revista-en-pdf/
Números Rojos	Print	http://www.revistanumerosrojos.com/
Líbero	Print	http://www.revistalibero.com/
Cuadernos de Basket	Print	http://www.cuadernosdebasket.com/
Cuarto Poder	Digital	http://www.cuartopoder.es/
Quality Sport	Print	http://www.qualitysport.org/
Periodismo Humano	Digital	http://periodismohumano.com/
ARGENTINA		
Orsai	Print and digital	http://www.editorialorsai.com/
Anfibia	Digital	http://www.revistaanfibia.com/
El Puercoespín	Digital	http://www.elpuercoespín.com.ar/
La Balandra	Print and digital, by subscription	http://www.la— balandra.com.ar/
Vlov	Print	http://www.revistavlov.com/
COLOMBIA		
Sole	Digital	http://www.revistasole.blogspot.com.es/

²⁴ Digital publications allow public access unless otherwise indicated. Likewise, it may be assumed that printed version magazines must be purchased.

Soho	Print and digital, by subscription	http://www.soho.com.co/home
El Malpensante	Print	http://www.elmalpensante.com/
Arcadia	Print and digital	http://www.revistaarcadia.com/inicio
MEXICO		
Gatopardo	Print	http://www.gatopardo.com/
Letras libres	Print and Digital (includes Spanish version)	http://www.letraslibres.com/
Nexos		http://www.nexos.com.mx/
PERU		
Cometa	Print	http://cometacomunicacion.com/
Etiqueta Negra	Print	http://etiquetanegra.com.pe/
Buensalvaje	Print	http://buensalvaje.com/about/
VENEZUELA		
Prodavinci	Digital	http://prodavinci.com/
Marcapasos	Digital	http://revistamarcapasos.com/
CHILE		
The Clinic	Print. There is a website, but it is independent of the magazine.	http://www.theclinic.cl/revista/
El Faro	Digital	http://web.upla.cl/revistafaro/13_inicio.htm
BOLIVIA		
Pie Izquierdo	Print and digital	http://www.revistapieizquierdo.com/