

# Cultural slow journalism in Spanish: Case studies from Spain, Mexico and Colombia\*

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## Abstract

This article analyses four journalistic projects focusing primarily on cultural content: *Arcadia* (Colombia), *Jot Down* (Spain), *Yorokobu* (Spain) and *Gatopardo* (Mexico). The analysis is based on case studies and in-depth interviews with directors and journalists at these media outlets. Among the results, we can see the priority given to a type of journalism with content that is far removed from the agenda of the mass media: literary, cultural, creative, free-thinking, open journalism in which information is narrated from other perspectives. This is innovative, high-quality journalism practice that serves to interpret culture and society in the midst of a profound digital transformation.

**Keywords:** slow journalism; cultural journalism; *Arcadia*; *Jot Down*; *Yorokobu*; *Gatopardo*

**Resum.** *Periodisme reposat cultural en espanyol: estudis de cas d'Espanya, Mèxic i Colòmbia*

Aquest article analitza quatre projectes periodístics basats en contingut preferentment cultural: *Arcàdia* (Colòmbia), *Jot Down* (Espanya), *Yorokobu* (Espanya) i *Gatopardo* (Mèxic). L'anàlisi es fonamenta en estudis de cas i entrevistes en profunditat a responsables i periodistes d'aquests mitjans. Entre els resultats s'observa la prioritat d'un periodisme de con-

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tingut allunyat de l'agenda mediàtica. Un periodisme literari, cultural, creatiu, de pensament lliure, obert, on les informacions es narren des d'altres enfocaments. Són pràctiques innovadores d'un periodisme de qualitat que serveix per interpretar la cultura i la societat enmig de la profunda transformació digital.

**Paraules clau:** periodisme reposat; periodisme cultural; *Arcadia*; *Jot Down*; *Yorokobu*; *Gatopardo*

**Resumen.** *Periodismo reposado cultural en español: estudios de caso de España, México y Colombia*

Este artículo analiza cuatro proyectos periodísticos basados en contenido preferentemente cultural: *Arcadia* (Colombia), *Jot Down* (España), *Yorokobu* (España) y *Gatopardo* (México). El análisis se fundamenta en estudios de caso y entrevistas en profundidad a responsables y periodistas de estos medios. Entre los resultados se observa la prioridad de un periodismo de contenido alejado de la agenda mediática. Un periodismo literario, cultural, creativo, de pensamiento libre, abierto, donde las informaciones se narran desde otros enfoques. Son prácticas innovadoras de un periodismo de calidad que sirve para interpretar la cultura y la sociedad en medio de la profunda transformación digital.

**Palabras clave:** periodismo reposado; periodismo cultural; *Arcadia*; *Jot Down*; *Yorokobu*; *Gatopardo*

## 1. Towards a quality journalism with a cultural perspective

The major financial and economic crisis afflicting the world since 2008 has left a profound mark on the journalism profession. This profession is currently characterised by, among other aspects, an abundance of news, by newsworthy facts and events subject to topicality and immediacy, by the hybridisation of genres and formats, technological convergence, news distributed not only via traditional channels but notably via social media platforms; and most definitely by the precariousness of the working conditions of its professionals, and the trivialisation of the news and the truth. Meanwhile, receivers are less passive and have become creators/producers and propagators (also known as 'prosumers') within the online universe. Inside this great news bubble, journalism is increasingly awash with *fake news*, *bots*, *trolls* and *clickbait*.

And yet, in this digital ecosystem where immediacy, speed and brevity are the vital signs of a large part of the journalism profession, a need has also arisen to cultivate a slow, unhurried journalism which informs and analyses deeply and creatively. We are talking about work that is carried out rigorously, that verifies information and treats its audience with respect (Blumtritt, David and Köhler, 2010). The need to practise this type of journalism has been mentioned by authors such as Whitworth (2009), Rosenberg and Feldman (2008), Juntunen (2010), Rauch (2011), Brabazon (2013), Neveu (2014), Barranquero-Carretero (2013) and Rosique and Barranquero (2015), among others. It is a journalism which takes sides in the old debate about news quality, although "there is no agreement on what quality journalism actually means" (Gutiérrez Coba, 2006: 32). Even so, many authors have

studied this question: Pellegrini and Múgica, (2006), Gripsrud and Weibull (2010), De Pablos and Mateos (2004), Deuze (2005), Amado (2007), Gómez-Mompart, Gutiérrez-Lozano and Palau-Sampio (2013) and Beck, Reineck and Schubert (2010), to name but a few.

In fact, this preoccupation with rigorous practice within journalism is nothing new. In the 1960s the so-called *new journalism* or *literary journalism* arose in the USA from the pen of Tom Wolfe, in an atmosphere of social and cultural change. Also, in Colombia, Peru, Argentina and Mexico a strong literary and journalistic current was set in motion, in which literary journalism took its first steps. This new journalism was cultivated by young professionals who told stories in a literary language based on the use of adjectives and figures of speech that appealed to people's emotions, and with a clear, defined style. These were journalistic currents that championed quality journalism.

It is in the digital context, and also in the interests of responding to quality standards, that journalistic projects encompassed within the currents of slow journalism have (re)arisen with considerable force. The *slow journalism* current believes that the journalism of immediacy leads to a loss of quality (*low journalism*), as different studies have confirmed (Gómez-Mompart, Gutiérrez-Lozano and Palau-Sampio, 2015; González-Gorosarri, 2011; Ramírez de la Piscina et al., 2014; 2015).

In today's digital communicative ecosystem, with its abundance of information, standing up for quality appears to go against the idea that cultural production has an expiry date, and against the agglomeration of transmedia artefacts designed to become blockbusters (Moragas, 2017). But digitalisation has also provided new forms of creation, circulation and cultural participation; the Internet has also become a giant store of present and past content, freely available to users (Busquet, 2017).

## 2. Cultural journalism and its importance in current society

This article focuses on slow journalism from a cultural perspective. We are talking about long-format journalism, with a meticulous style that cultivates interpretation and opinion genres, with the aim of analysing and understanding the current social, political and cultural changes.

The concept or definition of 'culture' provokes conflicting opinions, and the views of theorists, arising from the different branches of knowledge, may coincide or may be very different (Busquet, 2008 and 2017). One of the most extensive interpretations of the term – and one which most probably has the highest consensus – is that formulated by UNESCO. According to this organisation, culture

(...) encompasses - apart from the Arts and Humanities - lifestyles, basic human rights, values systems, traditions and beliefs and the fact that culture furnishes people with the capacity to reflect on themselves. It is what makes us specifically human, rational, critical and ethically committed beings.

Through it we discern values and form opinions. Through it, humankind expresses itself, becomes conscious of itself, recognises itself as an unfinished project, questions its own achievements, searches untiringly for new meanings, and creates things which transcend it. (World Conference on Cultural Politics; Mexico, 1982. See more on <[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)>)

Therefore, culture has an important place in society and is the basis of its development and transformation: “Culture is the oxygen of a country’s mentality and lifestyle; without it, it would suffocate and succumb” (López Garrido, 2019: 9).

Thanks to the appearance of the Media, particularly audiovisuals and above all the Internet, citizens no longer necessarily participate in culture within the ‘theatrical paradigm’, and consequently, culture is not only produced and consumed in person, first hand but is also shared with other consumers and creators (Busquet, 2017).

Despite the importance attributed to it in individuals’ and societies’ education and identity, culture has not traditionally been given the most noteworthy place in the usual media (appearing on the last pages in the press, and at the end of TV news bulletins, if at all). The arrival of the Internet, price reductions in mobile devices, and the specialisation of professionals are all contributing to the creation of digital cultural journalism projects of quality, above and beyond the traditional cultural supplements we have been used to.

We understand cultural journalism as a specialised branch of journalism, and as Ramírez de la Piscina (2009) demonstrates, it is a necessary instrument against the degradation, the (hyper)repetition and the trivialisation of content, one that responds to these three fundamental requirements: to combat information overload and the disproportionate resonance of the same subjects in all the Media, to go deeper into subjects and express them in all their complexity, and to bring an end to the lack of communication and secrecy, building bridges between the different aspects of life. Publicising cultural information and/or cultural productions via the knowledge and specialisation of professionals contributes to all of this.

To summarise, the aim of cultural journalism is to rebuild its social standing through its link to the field of communication and through its contribution to the idea of human development from different angles, above all from culture.

### 3. Research aims and questions

We believe that the current digital environment allows Internet and social media users to experience a new spatial-temporal participation. With reference to our object of study, we would agree with Busquet (2017), that it favours diverse forms of creation, appropriation and cultural participation. Among other considerations, it should be highlighted that this context also allows for the creation of new relationships, not only between the medium and its users but among the users themselves. Thus, the exchange of knowl-

edge and of symbolic and cultural commodities among receivers contributes to the formation of active communities that are always looking for quality cultural content in different formats.

The evolution of journalism in the coming years will involve concepts derived from personalisation, updating, adaptation to readership segmentation, taking full advantage of the potential of mobile technology and the search for new formats. A *silent revolution* is afoot in which digital journalism has encouraged the transformation of content.

A high number of followers is the first challenge, not only to remain in the digital media arena but also to enable them to improve their projects, interact with each other, and actively participate in narratives with cultural content, thus contributing to personal growth in a free and democratic community. And therein may also lie the success of these publications.

The main aim of this study is to define the characteristic features of the magazines *Arcadia* (Colombia), *Jot Down* and *Yorokobu* (Spain), and *Gatopardo* (Mexico). The digital versions of the four publications were examined: the idea being to identify such characteristics as the subjects they cover, the kind of texts they include, the teams that make up their staff, the resources at their disposal, the use of new technology and their presence on social media.

To respond to the proposed aims, we posed the following research questions:

- RQ1- What was the purpose of creating the publications studied in this research?
- RQ2- What kinds of companies lie behind the projects?
- RQ3- What teams make up the projects?
- RQ4- What are the characteristics of these digital magazines?
- RQ5- What kind of content do the magazines publish?
- RQ6- How do these magazines approach the subject of quality?
- RQ7- Do all the projects have print versions? What is the relationship between them and the digital magazines?
- RQ8- What is the readership of the magazines and what is their presence on social media?

#### 4. Methodology

This study forms part of a wider project about quality slow journalism in Spanish, in which different qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The research team identified ten websites that practise slow journalism in Spanish: *5W*, *Contexto*, *Jot Down*, *Panenka* and *Yorokobu* (all from Spain), *Gatopardo* and *Letras Libres* (both from Mexico), *Arcadia* and *La Silla Vacía* (Colombia) and *Anfibia* (Argentina).

Regarding the case that concerns us here, in the first phase a qualitative methodology was used, based mainly on case studies and in-depth interviews.

There is a long tradition of using qualitative methodology in Sociology

(Coller, 2000), and it has been gaining ground in the field of Media Studies (Castillo, Almansa and Álvarez, 2013). One of the advantages of case studies is that of obtaining a large quantity of descriptive and explanatory information about a particular subject (Wimmer and Dominick, 1996).

The body of research was completed with qualitative interviews with the journalistic, economic and/or technological directors of each media outlet:

**Table 1.** Interviews carried out with Media directors

Media	Interviewee	Date and place of interview
<i>Arcadia</i>	Camilo Jiménez, Director	31/07/2018, Bogotá
	Sara Malagón, General Editor	31/07/2018, Bogotá
	Felipe Sánchez, Digital Editor	31/07/2018, Bogotá
<i>Jot Down</i>	Ángel Luis Fernández, Editor	15/03/2018, Seville
<i>Yorokobu</i>	Juanjo Moreno, Director	15/04/2019, E-Mail
	Fermin Abella, Comercial Director	22/03/2018, Bilbao
	Mar Abad, Chief Editor	16/04/2018, Madrid
	Marcus Hurst, Chief Editor	16/04/2018, Madrid
<i>Gatopardo</i>	Felipe Restrepo, Director	13/07/2018, México D.F.

The comments quoted are taken from the in-depth interviews shown in this table.

Source: HGH Research Group.

In-depth interviews are extremely valid as a method of qualitative analysis: “The main advantage of the in-depth interview lies in the wealth of details it provides, in addition to its incomparable precision in comparison with other survey methods where delicate subjects are concerned” (Wimmer and Dominick, 1996: 158). Furthermore, it offers a degree of flexibility when forming the questions in order to most effectively obtain answers to those posed in the aims. Finally, it allows for a more rigorous interpretation of the obtained results via direct observation (Gaitán and Piñuel, 1998).

## 5. Results

The four magazines studied define themselves as cultural magazines or ones with eminently cultural content. They are all published in Spanish and practise slow journalism.

Published in Colombia, *Arcadia* was founded in 2005 as a cultural supplement to the magazine *Semana*, although today it is an independent publication. It was an eminently literary magazine but in 2016 it began approaching culture more globally and started to pursue new readership. This coincided with the peace process<sup>1</sup>, an extremely important time for Colombian society which was felt within the cultural sphere.

*Jot Down* was born in 2011 through the Internet forum *Aerópago*, which

1. The peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the FARC-EP was signed on 26 September 2016. Following the referendum on 2 October, the final agreement was signed on 24 November of the same year.

brought together people who did not know each other but who shared a certain boredom with the cultural news offered by the mainstream media. They created a product which was fun, attractive and different at the same time.

*Yorokobu* was created in 2009, right in the middle of the economic and journalistic crisis, by four people from the mainstream media looking to create something which would fulfil them professionally, whilst offering readers a new product which did not exist on the market at that time.

*Gatopardo* is a publication with readership in many Latin American countries, although its current headquarters are in Mexico. It came into being in the year 2000 in Colombia, as part of the Media group *Publicaciones Semana*. Around 2002-2003, the magazine set out to find its own strategic partners, initially with a small Argentine group, but above all forming a solid alliance with *Travesías* in 2006. The magazine is committed to narrative content, thinking beyond the immediacy of the journalistic agenda.

### 5.1. Editorial staff and contributors

*Arcadia* shares its headquarters, designers and audiovisual team with the rest of the *Semana* group. The staff of *Arcadia* itself is made up of four people: Director (Camilo Jiménez), Commercial Director (Marcela Chaverría), Editor (Sara Malagón) and Digital Editor (Felipe Sánchez). In addition, they hire a paid trainee on a six-monthly basis. Most of its content is created by contributors: freelance professionals with expertise in different cultural areas. The average number of contributors is between twelve and fifteen people.

Among the founding members of *Jot Down* are Carles A. Foguet, Ricardo J. González, Ángel Luis Fernández and María Jesús Marhuenda (none of whom have qualifications in Journalism). The latter two have a 50% stake in the partnership *WabiSabi Investments*, which produces the website and publishes printed magazines and books connected to the same brand.

María Jesús Marhuenda, also known as *Mar de Marchis*, is the Director of *Jot Down*. By the middle of 2018, *Jot Down* had 14 people on its staff (9 full time and 5 part time), carrying out the following duties: management, editing, administration, communication, distribution, design, content, promotion and contributor liaison, among many others. According to its editor, their salaries are similar. In addition to the staff, *Jot Down* has around a hundred regular contributors, which has become one of the magazine's hallmarks.

*Yorokobu* is a publication directed by Juanjo Moreno, together with Mar Abad, Marcus Hurst, and Fermín Abella. They are the four founders of the magazine and also the managers of Brand & Roses, a company whose content, among others, is published by the magazine *Yorokobu*. It is a Limited Company (SL) with its headquarters in Madrid, although it does not have its own news office as such. The company has grown steadily over the years, and by the end of 2018 had a staff of 21 people. They also have an extensive "talent network", as their founders like to call them, some of whom are regular contributors whilst others work more sporadically.

It would be impossible to talk about the *Gatopardo* team without mentioning its parent company *Travesías Media*, led by its founder and president Javier Arredondo. The editorial board is the same for all *Travesías Media* products. In 2014 the company employed 60 full time staff and had a national and international network of 235 contributors.

Since 2014, Felipe Restrepo has been Editorial Director of the magazine. Rigoberto de la Rocha is the Creative Director, Diego Berruecos is the Photographic Director, and Leila Guerriero is the Editor in Latin America, while the Editorial Coordinator is Guillermo Sánchez Cervantes.

## 5.2. General characteristics

Currently, *Arcadia* covers different aspects of culture: literature, film, photography and the visual arts among others. Together with an expansion of the cultural disciplines, the magazine has introduced a major shift in the perspective used to tackle the subjects: “We see art as a filter for looking at reality. (...) It is about seeing cultural subjects in social and political terms”, says its editor Sara Malagón.

The print version is subject to a very careful publishing process, similar to that of a book in terms of storage. The digital version is still being perfected – there are still notable differences in terms of resources and the unequal attention given to it compared with the print edition. Since Felipe Sánchez was appointed director in 2018, the aim has been to rethink the relationship between the online and print versions, so that the online edition ceases to be more of a distribution channel and becomes a distinctive medium with its own character. Another aim is to make the most of digital tools and resources to practise a different type of cultural journalism that promotes artistic creation and production.

*Jot Down* was born breaking every online rule that until then had seemed untouchable, such as the following: *online texts must be brief, light and easily digestible*. Well, the pieces in this magazine are usually long – very long. They are far removed from the content of the texts in the printed press whose length has gradually been reduced, and also from that which predominates in the usual online dailies. The texts in this magazine flee from the current servitude. They often use literary narrative techniques, but without crossing into fiction (except in erotic stories). They have found their own niche in the market, through a different way of telling stories that reaches diverse people who were demanding something different. Among other factors, it could be said that their narrative forms have increased their readership exponentially since the project was launched in 2011.

The star genre of *Jot Down* is the interview. As its Communications Director, Carles A. Foguet, explained in 2012<sup>2</sup>, they are very clear that the quality

2. KOCH, Tommaso, *Parrafadas de éxito 'online'*, *El País*, 30 August 2012. Available online: <[https://elpais.com/cultura/2012/08/29/actualidad/1346226060\\_676549.html](https://elpais.com/cultura/2012/08/29/actualidad/1346226060_676549.html)>.



of the texts must be a top priority, along with the length of the interview (at least an hour of recording), its non-promotional nature (not talking about the next book, album, political campaign, etc.) and always remaining distanced from celebrity journalism. Leading figures from the world of culture, the arts, humanities, journalism, politics, science or sport appear in its pages. The interviews are conversations marked by the need for an in-depth reflection on topics that never go out of date, such as ethics, dignity, love or hate.

Although the magazine's reach is based mainly on its digital content, its promoters believe it is fundamental that the two formats complement each other (Ángel Luis Fernández). Even though the interview might be the most popular genre among *Jot Down's* readers, it does not always coincide with the most read articles.

The type of content published in *Yorokobu* revolves around creativity, innovation, culture, thought and tendencies: the fundamental aim being to inform, inspire, empower and entertain<sup>3</sup>. Creativity, inspiration and thought are keys in the *Yorokobu* environment. Apart from knowing what is happening in politics and in the economy, it is about training in critical thinking, which is what helps us mature: "It makes you freer, more critical, even braver. In the end, culture is what enables you to cope better in life, to be more independent, to be better able to make a living for yourself" (Mar Abad).

In *Yorokobu* they have believed in paper from the beginning, "but in a very qualitative way" (Fermín Abella): good content, accompanied by good design and illustration. Good visual support is basic for attracting people to reading.

The website is open to everyone, and about six articles are published daily because publishing more would mean "wasting information": in reality "there isn't so much time for reading" (Mar Abad). In terms of the intersection between the pieces in print and online, the same work and concept philosophies prevail in both formats. The intention is that the magazine articles should be more timeless and lasting, that they should be conducive to thinking.

*Yorokobu* first appeared in digital format, in the middle of the Internet and technology boom. It was unthinkable not to do so, and nowadays it is impossible to survive otherwise. But they are clear that they must continue publishing in paper format too, at least as long as the Internet alone does not provide a satisfactory income.

The aim of *Gatopardo* is to show what is currently happening in culture, politics and lifestyle in a magazine which is a trend setter in Latin America. When Restrepo became its director, they began to diversify subjects (previously, in the times of Guillermo Osorno, too much attention was placed on violence and drug trafficking, due to the situation the country was in at that time under Felipe Calderón), and also to give more space to local people from Latin America on the front page: a decision taken because the magazine, "in order to survive in the hostile world of printing had to be very com-

3. Falta nota ????????

mercial and had to have a consumer section, about fashion, but one that is treated very carefully” (Felipe Restrepo). Ignoring criticism, they carried on with the project in order to finance what was really important – the narrative content of social and political current affairs.

The digital publication also diversified with the redesign undertaken in 2014: a more news oriented profile was sought, with daily updates. They would include exclusive material in addition to the content in the printed magazine. The idea was to create a dialogue between the two platforms.

I don't believe in confrontation between print and digital, they are two platforms and you have to take advantage of whatever the two can give you. The print version gives you a reading experience, it gives you an object that you want to preserve, to collect, while digital, on the other hand, well it is no great secret that that is where the big audiences are. Even if we did do a large print run, most of our readership is obviously digital, because we are read all over the world. (Felipe Restrepo)

Restrepo explains that an in-depth debate took place in the *Gatopardo* newsroom about the future of printed publications. The magazine concluded that in order to face the challenge of digital immediacy they must go down the opposite route, that of long format journalism.

### 5.3. Quality through resources

The visual quality of *Arcadia* magazine is very high. The images and design of both the print and digital versions are meticulous and it is very common to find reports built around the weight and communicative strength of the image. Computer graphics and even illustrations are also a habitual resource. The high quality of the audio-visuals can be explained by the sharing of resources within the group *Semana*. Although they would like to increase the number of audio-visual pieces, *Arcadia's* commitment is to the quality of the print version. Sara Malagón explains: “I have no desire to fill up *Arcadia's* website with video, but if we have the chance to make a great video, then we do. It is better to make one good one than thousands of half-baked ones”.

There is a bigger commitment to audio: it is more economical and less laborious than video. There is an extensive production of podcasts about culture: they create an audio piece every ten days.

All the analyses carried out on *Jot Down* highlight the quality of the photography both in the digital and in the print version. Another graphic aspect to be highlighted is the artwork done by prestigious illustrators that accompanies many of the articles.

The digital edition of *Jot Down* includes little in-house-produced audio-visual content. The ones that do exist are of an acceptable quality. *Jot Down* also inserts hypertexts in some of its pieces: links that redirect to information from other media or to YouTube videos. Such links are common

above all in reviews in the music sub-section. The digital magazine is an invitation to discover the paper versions. The design of the print versions is a prolongation of what you can find on the website. The front page is a large black and white vertical photograph.

In *Yorokobu* they use high-quality colour photographs in both the print and the digital formats. They favour good graphics and, when the subject calls for it, the content is accompanied by illustrations and/or cartoons which are of the same high quality. They also upload videos to the website, although much less frequently than in the first few years. As for *Gatopardo*, in the words of Felipe Restrepo:

*Gatopardo* is a magazine printed on very fine paper, with high printing costs, complex photography and design work, which requires a lot of planning. All the photographs and each report published in the magazine involve an editorial process which hardly anyone does; it takes five or six months from the idea being conceived to the report being written and edited. We place a lot of trust in the editor. The editor is not someone who merely receives a note, and changes a comma and the title. An editor is someone who accompanies the author, who helps them to conceive the story.

The digital version of *Gatopardo* is equally impeccable in its design. The quality of its photographs, both in black and white and in colour, and also its videos, made in-house for the website and social media, is particularly noteworthy.

#### 5.4. Readership and social media

*Arcadia* is the cultural publication of reference in Colombia. It is the magazine of the Media group *Publicaciones Semana* with the highest subscription renewal rate and a distribution of 80,000 copies every month. Since the project was launched on Twitter in 2009, its followers have grown to a current 131,000, with an additional 178,000 on Facebook and 88,700 on Instagram (July 2019). The magazine is also on Google Plus and YouTube.

Since its birth in 2011, *Jot Down* has been a digital-native media outlet, being present in social media like *Menéame*, *Twitter* or *Facebook*. At the end of September 2018, *Jot Down* Magazine had 273,000 followers on *Twitter*. On the same date, its followers on *Facebook* numbered 293,000. The evolution of the *Jot Down* website readership over the last six years clearly shows two tendencies in two three-year periods: a meteoric rise in the first (2012-2015), when they tripled their user number of users and visits, and a stagnation with a downward trend in the second (2015-2018).

*Yorokobu* used to be published in print format monthly, with the exception of August (11 issues per year). They stopped publishing the January issue in 2019, reducing the number to 10 a year from then on. There has been no variation in the print run (around 30,000 copies) in 6 years, accord-

ing to Fermín Abella. The magazine has a significant presence on social media: in May 2018 it had almost 499,000 followers on Facebook, just over 110,000 on Twitter and over 131,000 on Instagram, with a clear upward trend in the latter case.

*Gatopardo* is a monthly magazine, with 10 issues per year, some double. According to the magazine's Fare System of 2018, it has a circulation of 60,000 copies in Mexico, although Restrepo mentions 30,000. Furthermore, it has 500,000 users on social media (the total of Instagram, Twitter and Facebook): Twitter, with 285,000 visits per issue; Facebook, with 215,000; and Instagram, 9,000 visits.

## 6. Discussion and conclusions

All the publications studied, whilst coming about in different circumstances, stand out for their innovative role in the digital journalism panorama in Spanish in periods of profound crisis within journalism. In all these projects we can see their creators' desire to produce a publication which they themselves were missing within their own context (Latin American or Spanish), and which would quench their informative, creative and cultural thirst.

They are committed to the pursuit of telling well contextualised stories, giving significant space to the protagonists, but nearly always from a perspective which does not hide the journalist's subjectivity. It is a signature journalism, whose narrative approach leads to the hybridisation of structures and genres, engendering innovative forms of style and tone which are always subservient to the story itself.

They are also characterised by their small newsrooms, of between 4 and 15-20 staff, except *Gatopardo*, which has more. However, all the magazines count on a wide network of contributors, generally specialists or professionals specialised in a specific cultural subject.

Their content is in line with the definition of this practice coined by Gloria Rosique-Cedillo and Alejandro Barranquero-Carretero (2015): "[Slow journalism] is that which emerges as a reaction to the dominant tendency of immediacy and scoop, and that calls for a rethink of the time needed to produce and consume rigorous, creative, quality news". We have seen from the interviews that in the in-depth journalism practised in these magazines they try to cover interesting subjects, attempt to find people and stories that readers can identify with, and they also wish to transmit a passion for and dedication to rigorous journalistic work and careful narration, also demanded by the public. Broadly speaking, the four magazines analysed are clearly committed to a quality information narrative to portray reality, using literary tools. It can be seen that it is an immersive journalism, one of experiences, that generates an echo among its readers and makes them think; it is a way of contributing to the formation of committed citizens. The texts tell stories with many nuances to aid an understanding of the facts, phenomena and situations. They are texts which offer both factual data and sentiment, but

without resorting to fiction. The extraordinary is favoured over the ordinary, and emphasis is placed on a scene by scene build-up, always with a marked relationship between form and substance.

Similarly, it is noteworthy that each of these projects offers a digital version but also publishes the magazine in print, each version with different aims and content, although they are complementary. Whilst realising that they could not turn their backs on the Internet and social media, their commitment to a print version is, in any case, laudable.

In the interviews, all the executive teams highlighted their unconditional commitment to the Internet, for a variety of reasons. For one thing, it allows them to report the facts with the freedom to use the best genre to fit the narrative, without worrying about the length of the text. Secondly, online journalism can use multimedia tools which allow form and substance to be reinvented and, thirdly, the directors have realised that readers access the digital version more easily than the print one: the public in general prefers the Internet for reasons of habit, price, sustainability and accessibility; and even for the opportunity it presents to form part of communities and conversations in line with their tastes.

In fact, the success of these publications is reflected partly in their digital readership, mainly on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, which has grown exponentially. All the magazines have around 500,000 users on social media, from where most of the content and visitor traffic comes. The corporate website offers a (large) part of the content from the printed magazine (available as open content), and also daily posts, so the websites continue to be the magazines' main point of reference.

Within the new digital environment, readerships have moved further and further away from the conventional Media and ever closer to social media as an information medium. According to Oxford University's Digital News Report 2019 in collaboration with the University of Navarra, 43% of Spanish Internet users regularly trust this news, against 31% who don't. From a total of 38 countries, Spain lies halfway down the world credibility table. On the other hand, despite a growing use of them as sources of information, only a minority trust the news distributed via social media (25%) or search engines (34%) (Vara-Miguel et al., 2019).

What distinguishes the Media in this study the most is their business model: some were born under the wing of existing large, traditional publications (*Arcadia* and *Gatopardo*). One of the most substantial challenges of this innovative digital current is that of creating journalistic companies and communities online, given that they lack a clear, viable business model.

The experts are optimistic about the future of narrative journalism, in that they see a growing space in which to differentiate themselves from a Media focussed on immediacy. In view of all this, we can conclude that we are dealing with a type of cultural digital journalism, slow in nature, with a vocation for offering new viewpoints and placing them within the reach of thousands of global followers.

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