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In this study, a detailed exploration is carried out of the production of research and theory in social psychology in the Spanish context. The main research areas are: Work and organizational psychology, social health psychology, community and social services psychology, environmental research, judicial and political psychology, psychosocial theory and meta-theory, social psychology of language, research on emotion, group processes and social identity. The growing importance of social psychology within the framework of Spanish psychology is emphasized, and the relation with specific social problems from the national context, and the paradoxically scarce originality of the theoretical perspectives and the leading research, strongly influenced by Anglo Saxon social psychology, is commented upon.

Este trabajo realiza una exploración pormenorizada de la producción de investigación y teoría sobre psicología social en el contexto español. Las áreas fundamentales de investigación son: psicología del trabajo y las organizaciones, psicología social de la salud, psicología comunitaria y de los servicios sociales, investigación en medio ambiente, psicología jurídica y política, teoría y metateoría psicosocial, psicología social del lenguaje, investigación sobre emoción, procesos grupales e identidad social. Como conclusiones cabe destacar la importancia creciente de la psicología social en el entorno de la psicología española, la vinculación con problemas sociales específicos del contexto nacional y la paradójica escasa originalidad de las perspectivas teóricas y de investigación pujantes, fuertemente influidas por los patrones de la psicología social anglosajona.
Although not the main purpose of this work, the reader is once more reminded of the Lewin's "extending the object" hypothesis, in order to defend a concept of social psychology as a special way to approach the study of specific events in which humanity has been interested since time began: love, altruism, aggression, power, and so on. Psychosocial events are seen as a series of concepts and related theories, a way to address the eternal topics, using an interactive, interdependent, and relational framework. To quote what is probably Vygotsky's most distinctive hypothesis (thus, reclaiming it as a framework for our discipline), psychosocial phenomena are definitely mediated phenomena.

At the beginning of The Historical Meaning of the Crisis of Psychology, Vygotsky speculated that the development and decline of theories and concepts may be explained in connection with the sociocultural substratum of the times, the laws and conditions of scientific knowledge, and the demands of the phenomena studied, depending on their nature. This notion has been endorsed by the sociology of knowledge. Current historiography (see an excellent example in Rosa, Huertas, & Blanco, 1996) is also within this framework: Psychology and social aspects make up a twofold social practice that occurs within a context. The framework of Spanish psychosocial research in the last decade derives from our context of intellectual orphanhood, resulting from the Civil War (1936-1939), which turned the Spanish scientific panorama into a desert. Not till the sixties could we observe in the psychosocial scenario the presence of three research topics of great tradition: the study of attitudes, in which Torregrosa was a pioneer, group behavior, and mass media (Blanco, 2000). And not till 1980 could we celebrate the first contact with European Social Psychology at the “First Encounter concerning the Situation and Perspectives of Social Psychology in Spain,” held in Barcelona, with the collaboration of the “Laboratoire Européen de Psychologie Sociale de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme,” directed by Moscovici. Till then, orphanhood and isolation were our fate.

But these are not the only antecedents of the decade that has just ended. Current Spanish psychosocial research would be incomprehensible unless we take into account the spectacular increase in the demand of psychology studies that began in the mid-seventies, along with massive access of faculty members who teach topics of this area in the university. We must also take into account the legal context defined by the Ley de Reforma Universitaria [University Reform Law] of 1983, which consolidated the position of a large number of university faculty members dedicated almost exclusively to teaching and research (at the deadline of the this review –1999– there are 34 full university professors, 127 tenured university professors, 9 full professors from the university school, and 22 tenured professors from the university school). We also acknowledge the institutional sensitivity to the need to adapt to the times, to new social needs and to the labor market requirements, as can be seen from the profound renewal of the study plans carried out in the last decade; and the considerable but insufficient impetus that the authorities began to award to research at the beginning of the eighties.

**Topic Areas and Research Trends**

This is the setting and framework of this study and they must be taken into account, because social psychology in Spain could be also portrayed in different terms, such as those used by Pinillos (1965), and also especially, by Jiménez Burillo (1976), who laid down the foundation (perhaps excessively linked to biographical events) to trace the history of social psychology in our country. He anticipated the spectacular growth of social psychology at the end of his work: “The rapid development of the social sciences in our country, and the already solid consolidation of our discipline within the university setting, enable me to predict the beginning of a new era during which we will probably observe the extension of Spanish social psychology in search of more ambitious goals” (Jiménez Burillo, 1976, p. 264). This is precisely the era on which we shall center our analysis.

When directly addressing the psychosocial production of the nineties, using the methodology described in detail in Fernández (this issue) using the international databases MEDLINE, PsycLIT, ERIC, and PSICODOC98- the extension of research interests developed under the label of social psychology is noteworthy: 23 investigations traditionally related with this discipline, and 6 of a more transverse nature (having similar application settings), as can be seen in Table 1.

These research interests corroborate the concept of psychosocial studies removed from territoriality (social psychology as a discipline characterized by the study of a series of specific topics), with distinctive concepts and levels of analysis. These research interests are of a level of generality that goes beyond that of research trend as considered in this special issue, based on the recommendations in Fernández (this issue). In fact, each of the areas includes several research trends. The title of each trend, especially the more representative ones (work and organizational psychology, health psychology, community psychology, environmental psychology, judicial psychology, and political psychology), shows that we are dealing with areas whose content can become --and in some academic settings, it already has-- true training specialties. Within the strictly psychosocial areas, one could establish a twofold distinction: Some areas address the unavoidable applied vocation of social psychology (work and organizational psychology, health psychology, community psychology, environmental psychology, etc.), whereas others follow the prominent theoretical and basic research traditions within our discipline (social influence processes, group behavior, social identity, social foundation of emotion, or the ever-increasing interest in theoretical and meta-theoretical reflection on social psychology). Lastly, these data indicate
that basic and applied research are necessarily complementary in psychosocial research; in fact, they reveal that basic and applied research are just two sides of the same coin, two ways to approach one reality.

Taking as reference the 23 topic areas more strictly related to social psychology, the overview of the decade that has just ended is reflected in Table 2.

These are the topic outlines that define, and the research interests that characterize Spanish social psychology. A glance at Table 3, in which are displayed, grouped by topics, the papers and communications presented at the last five National Congresses of Social Psychology will corroborate this. Except for the educational field, which is addressed in another article in this special issue, (see Sánchez-Miguel & García-Sánchez) the seven most well-represented areas in the last congresses coincide perfectly, practically in the same order, as the research trends shown in Table 2.

Not all the topic areas will be reviewed here. In some cases, because of their scarce representation (cross-cultural psychology and mass media), and in others because the research trends are interrelated, with evident interdependency. For instance, history of social psychology, which would be divided into theory and method; psychosocial processes and gender, which, to a large extent, would be reduced to gender identity; the broad areas of stereotypes, attribution, and social representation, which provide theoretical framework to group processes, health research, and identity studies. Conflict and negotiation have been investigated in the Spanish psychosocial panorama preferentially within the setting of work and organizational psychology whereas violence and aggression come under community psychology, which also includes studies on the quality of life. All these factors reduce the overview of the areas we shall comment upon below.
As seen in Table 1, the first and most extensive research area refers to the work and organizational psychology setting. This area “has experienced a pronounced development in our country during the nineties […], which, although not exempt from imbalance, tension, insufficiencies, and maladaptations […], is the most important produced in the 20th century” (Peiró & Munduate, 1999, p. 372). The first research trends were developed under the direction of Peiró. First, is research strictly related to organizations, where two classical research trends can be identified: (a) one on work satisfaction (Gracia, Ramos, & Peiró, 1996), with special focus on health professionals (Peiró, González, Zurriaga, Ramos, & Bravo, 1990; Zurriaga, Bravo, & Peiró, 1990); and (b) a second trend on organizational management, specifically the management of sports facilities and tourist-services organizations (Peiró & Ramos, 1995, Peiró et al., 1997; Ramos, Peiró, & González, 1993). To these, we must add the study of work stress, where researchers have also addressed environments directly or indirectly related to health (Gil-Monte & Peiró, 1998; Gil-Monte, Peiró, & Valcárcel, 1996), prevention of labor risks, where the research trend by Meliá (Meliá, Arnedo, & Ricarte, 1996; Meliá, Sospedra, & Rodrigo, 1994) is noted. In other cases, social psychology is linked to a new social phenomenon such as the implementation of new technologies (Prieto, Zornoza, & Peiró, 1997), where the work carried out by Torre (1997, 1998) is noteworthy.

Regarding the problem of employment and unemployment, the area of social psychology of work offers three more research trends, most of them mainly interested in the relations of unemployment in the youthful population. These works seem to acknowledge that, even in young people, unemployment causes some decrease in psychological well being (Álvaro, 1992; Blanch & Salleras, 1990; Garrido Luque & Álvaro, 1992; Hontangas, Moret, Peiró, & Balaguer, 1990), according to various reliable indexes. Some of these researchers have also observed that there are various psychological characteristics (attributional style, social comparison tendency, repertory of daily activities, etc.) that may condition young people’s likelihood of working or willingness to work (Blanch & Salleras, 1990).

In the extensive field of organizational efficacy (Fernández-Ríos & Sánchez-García, 1997) is a research trend by Prieto, focusing on processes to evaluate posts and tasks, recruitment, personnel selection and training, and performance evaluation (Prieto, 1993) with special attention on person-to-job adaptation, the role of age-related individual differences, and personnel aging in work settings (Forteza

### Table 2

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<th>Research Trends and Percentage of the Total Number of Publications</th>
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<td>Works on Social Psychology</td>
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<td>Community social services psychology</td>
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<td>Environmental psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of social psychology</td>
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<td>Judicial psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political psychology</td>
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<td>Processes of social influence</td>
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<td>Theory and method in social psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychosocial processes and gender processes</td>
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<td>Social psychology of language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social foundations of emotion</td>
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<td>Stereotypes, prejudices, and social discrimination</td>
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<td>Group and collective processes</td>
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<td>Violence, aggression, and maltreatment</td>
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<td>Family and couple relations</td>
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<td>Social cognition, attribution and social representations</td>
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<td>Social identity</td>
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<td>Quality of life</td>
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<td>Cross-cultural psychology</td>
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<td>Mass communication media</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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& Prieto, 1994), and the implications of the new information
technologies in processes of personnel evaluation (Prieto &
Simón, 1997). A research trend by Salgado centers on
personnel selection, in which, in addition to advancing the
“Five-Factor Personality Inventory” (Salgado, 1998), has
shown how two of the important personality factors
(consciousness and emotional stability) predict job
performance in any profession (Salgado, 1997; Salgado &
Rumbo, 1997).

We must also refer to two more research trends: the
study of conflict and of organizational culture. The first
trend has been addressed in practically all its facets: In
negotiation and mediation, the work performed by
Fernández-Ríos (Fernández-Ríos, 1989, 1997; Fernández-
Ríos, Rico, & Rascado, 1999) is noteworthy. Conflict
management styles has been studied by Munduate, (Ganza,
Munduate, & Peiró, 1995; Munduate, Ganza, & Alcaide,
1993; Munduate, Luque, & Barón, 1998), and Serrano, while
not ignoring any of these fields, has focused preferentially
on collective negotiation (Rodríguez & Serrano, 1991), and
more particularly, on attitudes in the labor negotiation process
(Serrano & Remeseiro, 1990).

The topic of culture and socialization in organizations
is a broad chapter in this area that we cannot review in depth
(see Peiró & Munduate, 1999). However, we do note a
research trend, developed primarily on the strategies by
means of which organizations socialize their members
(Palací, Osca, Grau, & Bravo, 1995; Palací, Osca, & Ripoll,
1995); in other words, the transmission of a system of rules,
values, and relation styles that make up an organizational
culture. This is an area in which many investigations
converge, in some cases, with the aim of delimiting the
concept of climate (Rodríguez, 1990, 1993; Silva, 1992,
1994) and, in others, to study the relation between climate
and leadership styles (Alonso, 1993) –a classical social
psychology pairing– or to study climate and leadership styles
in professional services organizations (Alonso, Palací, &
Osca, 1993; Osca, Alonso, & Palací, 1995; Rodríguez, 1993).

Social Psychology of Health

The concept of health as more than the mere absence of
illness and the intimate conceptual relationship of health
with physical, social, and psychological well being lends a

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<td>Psychology of communication and marketing</td>
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<td>Attitudes, beliefs, and social values</td>
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<td>Social and collective memory</td>
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<td>Gender relations</td>
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<td>Individualism - collectivism</td>
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Table 3 Communications and Papers Presented in Various Topic Areas in the last Five Social Psychology Congresses
privileged position to social psychology when addressing
the study of these topics. The incorporation of Spanish social
psychology into the study of health dates from the early
eighties (Huici, 1982) but it is not until the end of that
decade that real research trends, as defined in this issue,
appear. The first trend is led by Rodríguez Marín about
various coping styles when faced with hospitalization
(Rodríguez Marín, López, & Pastor, 1989). Nevertheless,
the study of chronic pain is doubtless the most fruitful
psychosocial research trend. Some studies focus on
perception of pain and coping styles in rheumatic patients
(Pastor et. al., 1989, 1990; Pastor, López, Rodríguez-Marín,
Terol, & Sánchez, 1995), or in patients suffering from
fibromyalgia syndrome (Pastor et. al., 1993) and others,
on examining on the relation between chronic pain and social
support (Pastor et. al., 1994). Social support is also studied
within the hospital setting as a mediating mechanism in
hospitalized patients’ recovery, a topic also addressed by
the research group of Rodríguez Marín et al. (López,
Sánchez, Pastor, & Rodríguez-Marín, 1990; Rodríguez-
Marín, Pastor, & López, 1993).

In Spain, the study of social representations—a central
topic in European social psychology—related to health
and illness began in the mid eighties (see the empirical research
by Itza, Pinilla, & Páez, 1987) and since then, it has become
one of the most solid research trends within the health
setting. And, inevitably, AIDS has become the meeting point
of many trends (Basabe, Páez, Usieto, Paicheler, &
Deschamps, 1996). The study of individuals’ knowledge
about AIDS and how it is transmitted, its characteristic
representations and associated beliefs, and the attitudes that
individuals generate about persons suffering from AIDS, as
well as behavioral strategies to prevent infection are all
being studied by other research group (Echebarria & Páez,
1989b; Echebarría, San Juan, & Ozmiz, 1992; Páez,
Echebarría, et al., 1991; Páez, San Juan, Romo, & Vergara,
1991; Páez, Ubillos, & León, 1996). The guiding hypothesis
is that people will adjust their preventive behavior on the
basis of culturally provided prototypical scenarios, by means
of activation of ideology-based molar representations (Páez,
Ubillos, & Paichelier, 1994). This hypothesis is reinforced
in studies of the prototype of person who becomes infected
with a specific illness and the typical cause of infection
(Blanco, Páez, Penín, Romo, & Sánchez, 1993; Sánchez,
Romo, Páez, Blanco, & Lalljee, 1996), which is usually
revealed as a feeling of invulnerability (illusory optimism)
and is manifested as an unjustified low perception of risk
(Sánchez, Rubio, Páez, & Blanco, 1998).

The research trend carried out under the direction of
Barriga and León (1990, 1991) is also noteworthy when
referring to health within the Spanish social psychology
context. With regard to specific research trends, we note the
trends related to social skills assessment and training (Gil,
León, & Jarana, 1995), to improve social competence in the
mentally retarded (Ojeda, Pérez, Jarana, & León, 1989), in
blind people or in people with visual deficiencies (León &
Medina, 1994; Medina & León, 1995), or to provide health
professionals with social skills in order to perform their
professional role (León, Jarana, & Blanco, 1991; León et al.,
1997; Negrillo, Tirado, & León, 1994). See Sanz (this issue)
for more information about psychology of health in Spain.

Community Social Services Psychology

We can distinguish some research trends that have the
aim of intervention in community. The first one focuses on
social support, understood as the influence of social networks
on people’s well being, by means of reducing the
consequences of stressful events on mental health, like a
central mediator in social intervention strategies (Gracia,
1997). Here, we have included the research trend initiated
by Barrón (Barrón, 1996; Barrón & Chacón, 1990, 1992)
and the one by Gracia: social support as a resource for
psychological and social adjustment (Gracia, Herrero,
Musitu, 1996; Herrero & Musitu, 1998), for physical, social,
and psychological well being, as well as the potential
relevance of social support as a mediating variable between
stress and psychological adjustment in families with child-
maltreatment problems (Gracia & Musitu, 1997; Gracia,
Musitu, Arango, & Agudelo, 1995).

From the framework of social indicators and social
politics, Casas has examined the indicators of quality of life
(Casas, 1997), of social hazards in infancy (Casas, 1989),
and of boarding children with surrogate families as a possible
solution (Casas & Durán, 1996).

On the basis of his doctoral dissertation about altruistic
behavior, Chacón has addressed the psychosocial factors
that affect volunteers (Chacón, Menard, Sanz, & Vecina,
1998), volunteers’ tendency to remain in warfare situations
(Chacón, 1999), and of boarding children with surrogate families as a possible
collective (Chacón & Vecina, 1999).

A last research trend focuses on the study, phenomenology,
and psychosocial mediators of high-risk behaviors, such as
intergroup violence (Martín, Martínez, López, Martín,
& Martín, 1998), consumption of alcohol and illegal drugs,
dangerous driving, and risky sexual behavior (Martín &
Martínez, 1998). This group is also working on a trend to
identify and measure the psychosocial variables that affect
the attitudes of the Spanish population concerning organ
donation and transplantation (Martín, Martínez, & López,
1995; Martín, Martínez, & Manrique, 1991).

Environmental Psychology

For social psychologists, the Lewinian concept of
behavior as a result of interdependent relations between the
person and the environment is an unquestionable histori-
ographical axiom. This clears the path to research about the
physical environmental factors, not only as a framework of
behavior, but as determinants or instigators of behavior. The
first approximation by Spanish social psychology in this field was observed in Psicología y medio ambiente [Psychology and Environment], a book coordinated by Jiménez Burillo in 1982, followed by a second one, of a more psychosocial nature (Jiménez Burillo & Aragonés, 1986), in which appear the central topics of this field: cognition and environmental perception, cognitive maps, the effect of noise, environmental stress, responsible ecological behavior, etc. Since then, the field of environmental psychology has been one of the big issues in Spanish social psychologists’ concerns. This interest is not limited to the field of research, but also takes the form of a remarkable rise in teaching in Psychology Departments, and the celebration of the VII National Congress, which indicate the force with which environmental thought has appeared on the Spanish scientific scene, from the psychological viewpoint.

Taking as a framework the recent review by García Mira (2000), the research trends in this field follow a broad tradition in the study of urban environments (Corraliza & Aragonés, 1993), in dimensions such as knowledge and representation of cities, the meaning attributed by citizens to the elements that define and characterize these cities, and the evaluation of urban scenery. Residential environments constitute a second research trend, within the setting of a very specific interest, that of residential satisfaction (Amérigo & Aragonés, 1990, 1997; Aragonés & Corraliza, 1992), the most outstanding approach to which is doubtless the research carried out by Amérigo (1995). Along these lines, Hernández (Hernández, Correa, & Camacho, 1992; Hernández & Suárez, 1994), has made several noteworthy contributions. In the last decade, intervention and environmental management have also been a clear concern of Pol (Pol & Moreno, 1994; Pol & Vidal, 1996), a pioneer in the psychosocial study of environment.

In the last decade, researchers have focused on topics related to natural environment. (“green” environmental psychology), a recent research trend, coordinated by Corraliza (1998).

Judicial Psychology

There are various topical areas in research on judicial psychology. First, some noteworthy programs are aimed at increasing problematic adolescents’ social competence, thus preventing their entry into a future “crime career.” Cognitive behavioral treatment seems to produce significant results, even in short interventions (about 40 hours), considerably improving subjects’ capacity to reflect and to play a role, as well as their intellectual problem-solving skills.

In a second trend, researchers attempt to explore the feasibility of applying some of the main persuasion models to the judicial environment. Their data confirm the persuasive importance of certain peripheral cues of eyewitnesses, independently of the content of their statements, for instance, their physical attraction or status, or their rhetoric abilities (Sobral & Prieto, 1993). However, a jury meets all the necessary criteria to be considered a group, and, inevitably, decisions about the innocence or guilt of an accused person have preferentially attracted the attention of other group of social psychologists (Arce, Fariña, & Real, 1998; Arce, Sobral, & Fariña, 1990). The level of variability in the assignation of prison terms by Spanish judges was also analyzed. This group found enormous differences in the severity of sentences as a function of various aspects, all associated with judges’ different beliefs or “penal philosophies” (Sobral, 1994), based on their level of experience (Paúl, 1996), their ideology (Sobral, Arce, Fariña, & Vilán, 1991), and even taking into account their inferential biases (Arce, Fariña, & Sobral, 1995). In addition to theoretical reflections about the delimitation and nature of judicial psychology has developed a research trend about a topic of broad social impact: judicial sentences for sexual crimes (Garrido, 1995; Garrido & Herrero, 1996).

Also within judicial psychology are the noteworthy works on violence by Clemente. He sometimes studies violence in relation to the change of values in Spanish society (Clemente, 1998) and other times, focuses on the influence of television on children’s violent behavior (Clemente & Vidal, 1994), or the specific ways in which violence is carried out, for example, sexual violence (Clemente & Fernández, 1994).

Political Psychology

When Sabucedo reviewed the field of political psychology in Spain, he lent support to our orphanhood hypothesis, mentioned at the beginning of this article. Despite the works in this field, in some cases going back to the 19th century, and even to the closer seventies (Torregrosa, 1971), one cannot say that current Spanish political psychology is based on those authors, “our thesis is that those works [...] had no influence on the current political psychology” (Sabucedo, 2000, p. 185). In fact, what is currently the field of political psychology in Spain is a direct consequence of what occurred in the teaching area (introduction of political psychology as curricular content in the University of Santiago de Compostela in 1983), the institutions (I Congress of Political Psychology in 1987, creation in 1990 of the Revista de Psicología Política [Journal of Political Psychology]), and because of the publications mentioned in Sabucedo’s review.

As in other areas, in political psychology we can also find several research trends about the same topic. This is seen clearly, for example, in the case of the studies on political participation and its various psychosocial conditioners. Of special interest is the study of unconventional or non-institutionalized means of political participation (Sabucedo, 1989), which range from signing a protest note or participating in a legal demonstration, to participating in a strike, occupying a building, or committing an aggression. These actions, arranged in decreasing order of occurrence, may correlate directly with their perceived efficacy (Sabucedo, Arce, & Rodríguez, 1992). Other authors have noted the influence of several psychosocial variables (collective and social motives,
amount of interest in politics, reward motives, social class, anomia, degree of ideologyzation, social identity, according to Valencia, (1990) in a person’s willingness to become involved in unconventional ways of political participation.

In another trend, the attempt has been made to identify the population’s attitude about new social challenges and the way they are reflected in the structure and content of collective beliefs about certain issues, such as new environmental values, family and its relation to beliefs and political participation (Garzón, 1998).

In the nineties, social movements were the principal object under study within the sphere of Spanish political psychology (Sabucedo, Grossi, & Fernández, 1998; Valencia, 1990).

Lastly, processes of collective violence have given rise to two research trends. The first one studies the causes and possible alternatives to war or high-intensity conflicts, emphasizing the transcendence of warlike socialization processes and conflict-related factors (Moreno, 1991). The second one addresses images and categorization processes that occur in situations of collective strife (Herrera & Reicher, 1998).

Processes of Social Influence

The most distinctively psychosocial phenomena converge in the issue of social influence, simply because “influence phenomena refer to the processes by which, in the course of direct or symbolic social interactions, individuals and groups originate, maintain, extend, and modify the way they think and behave” (Pérez & Mugny, 1988, p. 1). On the basis of this assumption, Pérez has studied an extensive series of phenomena: from minority influence (Pérez & Mugny, 1990; Roux, Mugny, & Pérez, 1989) to the so-called phenomenon of validation, a psychosocial process by which a minority influence is generated. Subsequently, he has studied conflict (Pérez, Falomir, & Mugny, 1995), discrimination, prejudice, and racism (Moscovici & Pérez, 1997; Mugny, Sánchez-Mazas, Roux, & Pérez, 1991), in addition to the effect of influence on certain addictive behaviors (Falomir, Mugny, & Pérez, 1996; Pérez & Mugny, 1992).

Together with works based on the paradigm of minority social influence, we find a second research trend referring to the domain of rules or, more specifically, to what a group of Spanish researchers has called “perverse rules” (Fernández-Dols, 1993). This expression refers to a specific type of coercive rules that are broadly accepted but which, for some reason, people tend to transgress in a generalized manner. The perversity of these rules does not come from the rules themselves but from their social consequences, that is, demoralization and corruption. The term “demoralization” is used here to refer to a common tendency to discredit or “dislegitimize” persons who, from a position of authority, try to make others obey a coercive rule that is generally transgressed. On the other hand, as seems corroborated in some laboratory situations designed by this group of researchers, a perverse normative structure can generate corruption because it foments authorities’ favoritism regarding the irregular and partially arbitrary application of these rules (Fernández-Dols & Oceja, 1994).

Theory and Meta-Theory in Social Psychology

In the last few decades, Spanish social psychology has echoed Anglo-Saxon social psychology. One of the most outstanding aspects has been the scarce interest in theoretical and epistemological reflection, along with the uncontrolled reproduction of empirical studies, often carried out in a deplorable social vacuum, but claiming to be closely related to methodological artifacts, and at the same time completely ignoring the socio-historical context in which they are generated.

Meta-theoretical reflection in the last decade by social psychologists follows the line that Ibáñez (1990, p. 143-146) made explicit in his criticism of the accumulative nature, in the immeasurableness, and refutability that have characterized psychosocial theory and research carried out from the framework of logical positivism. This line of thought was followed by Torregrosa (1996), Munné (1997, 1999), Jiménez Burillo (1997), and Ovejero (1991) in various critical and meticulous analyses of meta-theoretical assumptions (epistemological, ontological, and methodological) of the discipline. From different viewpoints, all these authors express their opposition, or at least strong skepticism, to the hegemonic neo-positivist tradition of research and theoretical development, which still considers the experiment as the only sure path to rigorous scientific knowledge and which still rejects the well-founded reproaches aimed at the discipline, from that time of crisis.

Actually, instead of a united opposition to hegemonic social psychology, reference should be made to many fronts and various strategies for improving the course of the discipline or at least for creating their own traditions and theoretical focuses, thus extending the area of topics, problems, and research methods. Doubtless, the most numerous and influential works in this sense are those carried out by the group led by Ibáñez (1990, 1991). This group has an extensive research trend on the critical analysis of social psychology, which has evolved toward postmodern positions similar to Gergen’s social constructivism, with special interest in the development of a social psychology of scientific knowledge (Domènech & Ibáñez, 1998; Ibáñez & Íñiguez, 1996).

The sense of criticism of the actual state of affairs of the discipline has also produced much historiographic research. One of the obvious aims coincides with other attempts to rethink social psychology in the light of classical authors such as Mead, Lewin, or Vygotsky (Blanco, 1996), or of Spanish thinkers such as Ortega y Gasset, first introduced in Spanish social psychology by Torregrosa (1985), and followed by Ovejero (1992) and Corte (1997), and of outstanding figures from the recent history of social psychology such as Martín-Baró, one of the Jesuits who was assassinated in El Salvador in 1989 (Blanco, 1998; Corte, 1999).
Social Psychology of Language

Constitutional sanction of the unquestionable historical fact of the existence of differentiated linguistic communities in Spain cleared the way for the study of language in traditional social psychology topics. And for obvious reasons: In addition to an eminently social behavioral reality, language is a sign of linguistic and cultural identity, an indicator of comparative identity (Huici & Ros, 1993), a process of specific self-categorizing associated with certain representations and stereotypes in turn related to intergroup processes. These psychosocial topics are undoubtedly enriching.

Within this context, there are two clear research trends: the one carried out by Azurmendi within the context of Euskera-Spanish linguistic contact, and the one by Ros, more related to group processes of cultural and linguistic identity. Research by both Romay and González (within the bilingual Galician-Spanish and Catalan-Spanish contexts, respectively) can be sporadically added to these trends.

The first research trend is based on clearly psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic assumptions, producing psychosociolinguistics as “a result of the process of interdisciplinarization directed from and at social psychology” (Azurmendi, 1999, p. 17), and which is preferentially concerned with linguistic behavior in situations of contact between languages (Azurmendi, 1995). The second trend has focused on language as an indicator of social identity, a sign of group identity in bilingual contexts (Ros, Cano, & Huici, 1987; Ros, Huici, & Cano, 1990).

However, both trends have converged in the last few years in the ICALABE-1996 Project (“Identidades Culturales y Lingüísticas en la Comunidades Autónomas Bilingües de España” [Cultural and Linguistic Identities in the Bilingual Autonomous Communities of Spain]) with the aim of studying cultural and linguistic identities related to: (a) beliefs about the ethnolinguistic vitality of languages and of linguistic groups in contact with each other; (b) the individual network of linguistic and cultural contacts; (c) the competence level and use of languages in contact with each other; (d) intergroup relations: intergroup attitudes, social distance, discrimination, cooperation, and tension; (e) concepts of citizenship (Azurmendi, Bourhis, Ros, & García, 1998; Ros, Azurmendi, Bourhis, & García, 1999).

Social Foundations of Emotion

Similarly to social influence, within the context of Spanish social psychology, the study of emotional behavior (Fernández-Dols & Ortega, 1985) first attracted researchers’ interest in the mid eighties and has continued to do so led by Fernández-Dols (Russell & Fernández-Dols, 1997), based on experimental methodology.

The framework of this research is made explicit in a chapter entitled “Facial expression and context: Towards an ecology of emotional expression; Context as a Key Concept” in which the authors state: “if we briefly consider all the most important problems and achievements in the study of meaning and facial expression of emotion, we would realize that all of them have one concept as their key reference point: context” (Fernández-Dols, Carrera, & Mallo, 1989, p. 403). Context has provided a framework for the meaning of facial expression (Carrera & Fernández-Dols, 1994) and of recognition of emotion (Fernández-Dols, Sierra, & Ruiz-Belda, 1993).

A fairly original research trend related to emotions is the phenomenon of lies. A group of researchers has studied the possibilities of detecting lies by means of the analysis of patterns of emotional expression and of verbal and nonverbal behavior: physiological arousal level and its facial correlates, pupillary dilation, etc. (Becerra & Sánchez, 1989). These authors have also carried out a series of investigations about the knowledge of prototypical lie-situations in everyday life (Sánchez, Becerra, Caballero, & Amate, 1995).

We cannot conclude this section without mentioning the research trend on emotions led by Echebarría and Páez (1989a), in an attempt to overcome social constructivism and symbolic interactionism, by means of socio-historical theory (Adrián, Páez, & Álvarez, 1995; Páez & Adrián, 1993). The central hypothesis of this trend is that commonsense knowledge of emotions is closely related to sex, gender identity, and cultural values (Páez & Vergara, 1995).

Group and collective processes

The study of group behavior has made up a continuous research trend in Spanish social psychology ever since the seventies, and in the last decade, it seems to have acquired special protagonism, to judge by the proliferation of monographs and manuals about the topic (Ayestarán, 1996; González, 1995, 1997; López-Yarto, 1997). Although they are clearly related to teaching, they nonetheless indicate the growing interest in this topic among Spanish social psychologists.

Focusing on the setting of this article, a first research topic on groups is about leadership. From the perspective of the so-called charismatic leadership, issues such as the differential gender traits of a person who gains access to posts of responsibility in training organizations, the relation between charisma and certain cultural variables, and the efficacy of this type of leadership in Spanish business and health organizations have been identified (López-Zafra & Morales, 1999; Morales & Molero, 1995). Another of the most important trends and investigation topics in this area is training and formation of leaders (Gil, Rodríguez-Mazo, & Alcover, 1998).

However, the protagonists of the most fruitful research trend in the area of group behavior are no doubt the socio-cognitive variables, along the lines of the School of Bristol, led by Tajfel. Socio-cognitive variables have sometimes been used to study identity in general (Echebarría & González, 1993; Marqués, Abrams, Páez, & Martínez-Taboada, 1998; Páez, Arróspide, & Martínez-Taboada, 1992) and, more particularly, gender identity (Echebarría, 1992). At other times,
socio-cognitive variables have provided the theoretical framework for intergroup differentiation, under the concept of “comparative identity” to which we referred in the section on social psychology of language (Huici & Ros, 1993; Ros, Huici, & Cano, 1990), in order to “evaluate the comparison process of two or more social identities that vary in their degree of inclusion.” In addition to these studies of intergroup relations is the research trend by Rodríguez. He started with implicit theories, went on to analyze stereotypes and, subsequently, relations and intergroup conflict (González & Rodríguez, 1994; Morera & Rodríguez, 1994, 1997; Rodríguez, 1994).

Among the practical applications of the group techniques is the increase of discussion groups as an investigation and intervention procedure in various problematic settings, for instance, groups of violent youth, basically “ultra” sports fans and extreme rightist or neo-nazi groups (Fernández Villanueva, 1998), or subordinates or superiors in organizations (Abril & Musitu, 1995). Among the solid and continued applied research areas are also cooperative learning (Ovejero, 1996) in the educational setting, work programs in primary-attention areas (Peiró & González, 1990), and conflict management (Ayestarán & Reoyo, 1998).

Social Identity

To delimit the study of identity to research on group phenomena is not always easy, especially if, as noted above, many of the works on groups were inspired in Tajfel’s model. However, the context in which the studies on identity in our country were carried out have a decidedly macro-social framework. They focus preferentially on the growing interest in national identities, and, to a lesser extent, gender identity.

Given that Spain is a pluri-national state, the topic of national identity and nationalism is a necessary reference point that is inevitably parallel to political psychology. In this field, several research trends were identified, within the conceptual framework of national and regional stereotypes, a field in which several research groups are working (Javaloy, Cornejo, & Bechini, 1990; Rodríguez, Sabucedo, & Arce, 1991; Sangrador, 1996). However, in addition to the study of stereotypes we found some works directly related to national identity, both in more general aspects (Ovejero, 1997; Sabucedo, & Fernández, 1998) and in concrete aspects of the “historical” nationalities: the Basque Country (Valencia & Villarreal, 1992), Catalonia (Vivas, Muñoz, & Íñiguez, 1997), and Galicia (Sabucedo, Arce, & Rodríguez, 1992). Two more research trends should also be mentioned, which examine the processes of preservation of collective memory of various political events. Thus, some authors have studied mental narratives of the history of Spain and have shown how citizens conspicuously condition the content of these narratives according to their various political ideologies (Rosa, Blanco, Travieso, & Huertas, 1999). More specifically, ideology affects not only interpretations of the national past, but also evaluation of the present, and future collective prospects.

In an attempt to recover and operationalize Halbwach’s social memory hypotheses, a research trend was carried out under two basic assumptions: the normative nature of memory and its role in the defense of social identity. The biases of positiveness and consistency of informal recall of the collective past (Páez, Insúa, & Vergara, 1992) are associated with these assumptions. Apparently, according to the findings of this research group, social identity is associated with memory and selective oblivion of historical facts, so that potentially contrary social identities, such as “national-Spanish” and “ethnic-Basque,” determine the type and the meaning of recall of decisive historical events (Pennebaker, Páez, & Rimé, 1997).

A research trend on gender identity, somewhat disperse in its authorship but of notable relevance within the context of Spanish social psychology should also be mentioned. It is interesting to note that the studies on gender, with 19 publications, take the first place in articles published by the Revista de Psicología Social [Journal of Social Psychology] until 1999. López has worked on a research trend preferentially focused on stereotypes and gender identity, based on Tajfel’s theoretical framework of social categorization (López, 1993, 1994; Morales & López, 1994), which is common to Spanish social psychology. At times, López ventures into the topic of intergroup comparison: gender identity “as a modulating variable in the cognitive processes related to the categories of ‘man’ and ‘woman’” (López, 1993, p. 190).

Concluding Remarks

Spanish social psychology from the last decade is its own child, the orphan of the history of Spanish thought, having adoptive parents. It has repeatedly seen itself reflected in Anglo-Saxon social psychology and, to a lesser extent, in some of the theoretical traditions of European social psychology. Despite this, the presence of this discipline in the academic panorama —seen in terms of the number of professors dedicated to teaching social psychology, the amount of periodical publications (Revista de Psicología Social [Journal of Social Psychology], Revista de Psicología Social Aplicada [Journal of Applied Social Psychology], Revista de Psicología Política [Journal of Political Psychology], Revista de Psicología del Trabajo y de las Organizaciones [Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology], Intervención Psicosocial [Psychosocial Intervention], Interacción Social [Social Interaction]) – this last one has disappeared), the number of research trends, and even the amount of congresses and scientific meetings— places Spanish social psychology among the foremost in the European ranking, at least in numeric terms.

But this expansion has not been able to interrupt, as would have been expected and desirable, the traditional isolation that social sciences in Spain have undergone. Despite its enormous potential, Spanish social psychology is still lost in thought, with little presence on the international
scene, although its sources and frameworks have been, and still are, outside of our frontiers. This is seen clearly in the fact that out of the 218 references mentioned in this article, only 38 are published in English.

Summing up, we can come to two basic conclusions in our analysis about the state of Spanish social psychology in the last decade, which are naturally inter-related. First, as is prescriptive in the area of social sciences, the content of this social psychology is the outlines of “representative sample” of the series of issues that concern Spanish society, for instance, the realm of labor, health, ecological risks, political conflicts, national identity, or the current situation of women in our country. Nevertheless — and this is the second conclusion— there has been alarmingly little originality in the field of research and in generation of theories that should go together with research, as a consequence of the hasty and unthinking acceptance of theoretical, epistemic, and methodological assumptions imported from the predominant social psychology of Anglo-Saxon origin.

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