

The Biographical Dictionaries in Europe*

Urquijo, Mikel

UPV/EHU. Social Sciences and Communication Fac. Contemporary
History Dept. Sarriena, s/n. 48940 Leioa
mikel.urquijo@ehu.es

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Espainian oraindik orain ez da egin parlamentarioen hiztegi biografikorik. Lan honetan 1810tik gaur egun arteko hiztegi biografiko parlamentarioaren egitasmoa aurkezten da. Europan Erresuma Batuko eta Frantziako hiztegi biografikoak dira bibliografiaren baitan premiako erreferentziak.

Giltza-Hitzak: Biografia. Parlamento. Hiztegia. Espainia. Europa.

En España no se ha producido hasta la fecha un diccionario biográfico parlamentario. Se presenta el proyecto en curso del diccionario biográfico parlamentario desde su nacimiento en 1810 hasta la actualidad. Los diccionarios biográficos del Reino Unido y de Francia representan la referencia bibliográfica referencial.

Palabras Clave: Biografía. Parlamento. Diccionario. Spain. Europa.

En Espagne, aucun dictionnaire biographique parlementaire n'a été produit jusqu'à présent. On y présente le projet en cours du dictionnaire biographique parlementaire de sa naissance en 1810 à aujourd'hui. Les dictionnaires biographiques du Royaume-Uni et de France représentent la référence en matière de bibliographie.

Mots-Clés : Biographie. Parlement. Dictionnaire. Spain. Europe.

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Over the last two decades there has been a renewed interest in biographical studies within European historiography. This period has seen an increase in the number of biographical books published and sold. A study made in the United Kingdom in 1994 reported that 19% of the books read that year had been biographies, while in the United States research carried out by the Library of Congress confirmed that biography was the most widely read genre and that it was one of the four subjects most watched on the A&E cable TV of that country; this had encouraged the creation of a “mini-industry of biographical programs”¹.

At present some authors even speak about a “culture of biography”², which would include biography in a broad sense, covering an interest in the lives of people and intruding into the private sphere. Justin Kaplan has rightly called this “a fascination with the singularity and surprise of individual existences”³.

But not all the works that are published as biographies should be considered in the same way. Already in 1928 André Maurois spoke of “biography as an art”, “scientific biography”, “biography as a means of expression”, “autobiography” and “biography and the novel”⁴. Amongst these types we can define biography as historical if it arises out of a serious cognitive requirement, considers the interrelationships between the individual and his reality, contributing in this way to the study of society, and comparing oral and written sources⁵. J.E. Neale pointed out the importance of understanding the individual in order to understand the group within which he develops his life:

I state the obvious when I say that we cannot fully understand the nature and functioning of any human group without knowing about the individuals who compose it⁶.

But this biographical work can be aimed at the analysis of one person or of a group of persons, in the form of a serialised biography. Such series of biographies must include the same questions in all of them, that is to say, a research scheme must be created that is common to all of them. This makes the serialised biographies into something different from individual biographies. In this way: “When the same questions are asked and –if possible– answered in each biography, the results can and should be summarized and given in tabular form

1. BACKSCHEIDER, PR. *Reflections on Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999; p. XIII. In the Spanish case a considerable number of biographies have been published in recent years, see CARTAÑA, E. DEVESA, D. “Algunes notes sobre la biografia històrica a Espanya, 2000-2005”; In: *Cercles*, n. 10. 2007; pp. 301-306.

2. SALWAK, D. (ed.). *The Literary Biography. Problems and Solutions*. London: MacMillan Press, 1996; p. 1. This is the title of the chapter prepared by Justin Kaplan; pp. 1-11.

3. WALTER, J. “The utility of short lives”. In: *Biography*, n. 29-2, 2006; p. 329.

4. MAUROIS, André. *Aspects de la biographie*. Paris, 1928. These are the titles of the chapters of the book.

5. POZZI, R. “Genere minore o impresa da maestri?”. In: *Contemporanea*, n. 2, 1999; pp. 289-294.

6. NEALE, J.E. “The Biographical approach to History”. In: *History*, 1951, october; p. 196.

as statistics”, in order to extract valid conclusions about the groups studied and the institutions to which the personages belong:

As we construct these group biographies significant points emerge as common elements in the evidence; points which were not likely to reveal their significance in a non-biographical approach. (...) Very many questions in their nature presuppose biographies: the facts are unobtainable without at least skeleton biographies. Then again, the tables showing the prevalence of the phenomena in which one is interested postulate a biographical basis⁷.

1. BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARIES: THE RETURN OF WHAT NEVER DEPARTED

One expression of the serialised biographies of which Neale speaks can be found in the biographical dictionaries. Not all of them, however, respond to the premises established by this author. In contrast to the ups and downs in the production of individual biographies, the genre of biographical dictionaries has not fallen off at any time and their publication continues. It is however true that their characteristics have changed over time.

In our exposition we shall use the classification of K. Thomas⁸, which divides them into three groups: universal biographical dictionaries; biographical dictionaries referring to a specific geographical area, amongst which national dictionaries are outstanding; and biographical dictionaries of groups.

In the first case, the criterion for inclusion of the personages whose biography is to be written is their pre-eminence. In the second, their place of birth or relationship with a territory is added to pre-eminence. And in the third, the criterion is the profession or occupation carried out by the personages about whom the biography is written.

1.1. The origin of biographical dictionaries: universal biographical dictionaries

We can date the origin of biographical dictionaries to the work: *The Biographia Britannica, or the Lives of the most Eminent persons who have flourished in Great Britain and Ireland from the Earliest Ages down to the Presente Times*⁹, which started a flourishing line of work that has continued down to the present day.

7. NEALE, J.E. “The Biographical approach to History”, pp. 196 and 203.

8. THOMAS, K. *Changing conceptions of National Biography. The Oxford DNB in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge: University Press, 2005.

9. Published between 1747 and 1766 in 7 volumes. A second edition was prepared between 1778 and 1793, which was left incomplete at the letter “F” of the fifth volume (LEE, Sidney. “The Dictionary of National Biography. A Statistical Account”. In: STEPHEN, Leslie; LEE, Sidney (ed.). *The Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973 (8th ed.), vol I, p. LXII).

The novelty of this work resides in its posing the biographical work as a dictionary which brings together a series of biographies defined by a common criterion. This is one of the basic questions to bear in mind when analysing biographical dictionaries: What is the criterion for the inclusion/exclusion of personages?

Following this pioneering work, we find the project directed by A. Chalmers *The General Biographical Dictionary: containing an historical and critical account of the lives and writings of the most eminent persons in every nation; particularly the British and Irish; from the earliest accounts to the present time*¹⁰, published in 32 volumes in London between 1812 and 1817. This biographical dictionary aimed to include outstanding people from all countries and all professions (politicians, writers, religious figures, etc.) Its introduction poses the difficulty inherent in correctly selecting the personages whose biography is to be written; in this recourse is taken to the authorities on the subject, that is, to other dictionaries. This is very interesting as it points out our idea of utilising a clear and objective criterion for selecting the biographies.

Another interesting work was that edited by M. Hoefer, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, avec les renseignements bibliographiques et l'indication des sources à consulter*¹¹. Its most important innovation was the inclusion of the sources, which must be considered innovatory with respect to earlier models¹².

1.2. National Biographical Dictionaries

From 1835 onwards the projects for great universal biographical dictionaries were replaced by national biographical dictionaries.

In the XIX century, the construction of the new liberal states in Western Europe gave a new impulse to biography. The emergent bourgeoisie called for the preparation of new cultural instruments in order to legitimise the new model of society and to spread the principles of liberalism. It is within this framework that we must understand the proliferation of histories and national biographical dictionaries.

These dictionaries, unlike individual biographies, have continued to be elaborated throughout the contemporary period. The countries that undertook this task

10. CHALMERS, A. *The General Biographical Dictionary: containing an historical and critical account of the lives and writings of the most eminent persons in every nation; particularly the British and Irish; from the earliest accounts to the present time*¹¹ / A new edition revised and enlarged by Alexander Chalmers, F.S.A. London, 1812-1817, 32 vols. (reprint in New York, AMS Press Inc. & Kraus Reprint Co., 1969).

11. HOEFER, M. *Nouvelle Biographie Générale depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, avec les renseignements bibliographiques et l'indication des sources à consulter*. Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, Fils et Cie éditeurs, 1857-1866, 46 vols. (reprint Copenhagen, Rosenkilde et Bagger, 1963-1969, 23 vols.).

12. HOEFER, M., vol. I, p. I.

have given it continuity by publishing new editions, extending the originals or preparing new dictionaries. This has meant that the editions of national biographical dictionaries reach down to the present day¹³.

In the preparation of these works we can observe two different models, connected with their origin. The continental European model and the Anglophone model.

In the countries of continental Europe the original impulse was provided by the governments, which wished to make known the lives of persons of merit of their countries, offering the citizens a model to follow in the process of national construction. Following this model, national biographical dictionaries were prepared in Sweden, Holland, Austria, Germany, Belgium, France, Denmark, Norway, Luxembourg, Italy and Spain.

Facing this list of national biographies publicly promoted by governments, academies of sciences, etc., the Anglophone world was to see the primacy of projects funded by private individuals. The best known of these is the English *The Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1885-1901).

National Biographical Dictionaries

When analysing these dictionaries we can formulate the following conclusions. One of the fundamental questions to be born in mind when analysing biographical dictionaries is: What is the criterion of inclusion / exclusion of the personages? This criterion is also conditioned by the material possibilities of the project. This question is clearly exemplified in the Italian case. The project of the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*¹⁴ was begun with an initial list of personages whose biography was to be written that numbered 200,000. Given the enormous extension and cost of this work, they decided to limit the number of biographies in the *Dizionario* to 40,000, and to create a second work, the *Repertorio*, in which the entries excluded from the former would be included¹⁵.

13. A more detailed account of the appearance and evolution of biographical dictionaries in the contemporary period can be found in AGIRREAZKUENAGA, J.; URQUIJO, M. "Biographical Dictionaries of Parliamentary Members in Southern Europe: History Starting from its Actors". In: *Parliaments, Estates & Representation*, n. 25, 2005; pp. 227-232.

14. Some of the most outstanding precedents, dictionaries and biographical repertories, can be found in DIONISOTTI, Carlo. "Biografia e iconografia". In: VIVANTI, Corrado (a cura di). *Storia d'Italia. Annali 4. Intellettuali e potere*. Torino: Einaudi, 1981; pp. 417-426 and in ROMANI, Valentino. "Élites allo specchio: notabilato e repertori italiani di biografia corrente tra Otto e Novecento". In: *Le Carte e La Storia*, n. 1, 2001; pp. 22-30.

15. *DIZIONARIO biografico degli italiani*, vol. I, p. XVII.

Country	Title	Vols	Edition
Suecia	<i>Biographiskt Lexikon öfver namnkunnige Svenskamän</i>	23	1835-1857
	<i>Svenskt biografiskt lexikon</i>	10	1857-1907
	<i>Svenskt biografiskt lexikon</i>	30	1918-2000
Holanda	<i>Biografisch Woordenboek Der Nederlanden</i>	24	1852-1878
	<i>Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek</i>	11	1911-1937
	<i>Biografisch Woordenboek Van Nederland</i>	5	1979-2001
Austria	<i>Der grosse Oesterreichische Hausschatz: biographisches Lexicon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich</i>	60	1856-1891
	<i>Neue Österreichische Biographie Ab 1815: Grosse Österreicher</i>	22	1923-1987
	<i>Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon 1815-1950</i>	10	1957-2001
Bélgica	<i>Biographie Nationale</i>	28	1866-1944
Alemania	<i>Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie</i>	56	1875-1912
	<i>Neue Deutsche Biographie</i>	22	1953-2005
Reino Unido	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>	22	1885-1901
	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>	60	2004
Noruega	<i>Norsk Biografisk Leksikon</i>	19	1921-1983
EEUU	<i>Dictionary of American Biography</i>	20	1926-1937
	<i>American National Biography</i>	24	1999
Francia	<i>Dictionnaire de Biographie Française</i>	20	1933-2004
Dinamarca	<i>Dansk biograhisk Leksikon</i>	27	1933-1944
	<i>Dansk biograhisk Leksikon</i>	16	1979-1984
Luxemburgo	<i>Biographie nationale du Pays de Luxembourg depuis ses origines jusqu'a nos jours</i>	11	1949-1975
Italia	<i>Dizionario biografico degli italiani</i>	66	1960-2006
Canadá	<i>Dictionary of Canadian Biography – Dictionnaire Biographique du Canada</i>	14	1966-1989
España	<i>Diccionario biográfico de los españoles</i>	20	2010

Given that the inclusion of personages in a national biographical dictionary can make them into an object of study, since those included supposedly make up the elite of that country¹⁶, the way in which the process of selection of the personages whose biography is included in such works can be highly relevant.

16. An interesting reflection on the importance of the criterion of inclusion in biographical dictionaries and the transcendence of the exclusion of personages can be found in BELL, Colin. "Some Comments on the Use of Directories in Research on Elites, with Particular Reference to the Twentieth-Century Supplements of the Dictionary of National Biography". I: *British Political Sociology Yearbook*, vol. I Elites in Western Democracy, 1974; pp. 161-171.

Another serious problem is deciding on the starting date: When does a country start to be one? Was France a country at the time of the Gauls? When did Italy start to exist?

Nor is it easy to establish a clear geographical framework: What should be done with the colonies or with territories that have passed into the hands of another state? Should Rosellón be considered Spain or France? Does Nice form part of Italy? Should Alsace and Lorraine be included in the dictionary of France or that of Germany?

A fourth question to be considered in this type of work is that they are never finalised, since they must be constantly renewed. This situation has led to a serious problem with some works given the numerous appendices and new series that must be consulted. This is why the option of publishing on computer formats has been adopted by many of them, since extensions can easily be integrated into the original work and the cost of republication is less.

In this evolution of the biographical dictionaries the compilation of the lives of eminent personalities has been acquiring a scientific character to the degree that two requirements are met:

In the first place, the works must be elaborated with first-hand information and in general from archive documents. This is to say they cannot be a mere re-elaboration of previously published articles. An example of this condition being met is found in the *Dictionary of National Biography* of the United Kingdom, where it is an indispensable requirement for all of its entries¹⁷.

In the second place, the incorporation of the sources employed in each of the entries must be obligatory, as is normal practice in any scientific work, which enables the reader to check what the author asserts¹⁸.

1.3. Biographical dictionaries by subject or group

But the biographical dictionaries we have cited are only a small part of what this type of study can offer. There are numerous biographical dictionaries of groups or by speciality, which are tools for the study of a specific subject or of a concrete group of personages, defined by objective elements. Such is the case with *A Biographical Dictionary of Dissenting Economists*¹⁹ or *The Biographical*

17. LEE, Sidney. *The Dictionary of National Biography. A Statistical Account*, vol I; pp. LXI-LXXXIV.

18. This requirement was first introduced in the XIX century in the work HOEFER, M. Le Dr. (dir.). *Nouvelle Biographie Générale depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, avec les renseignements bibliographiques et l'indication des sources à consulter*, vol. I, p. I.

19. ARESTIS, Ph.; SAWYER, M. (ed.). *A Biographical Dictionary of Dissenting Economists*. Hants: Edward Elgar, 1992.

*Dictionary of British Feminists*²⁰. Given that it would be an interminable task to enumerate all of the possible group or subject orientated dictionaries, we shall concentrate on those that are closest to our object of study, that is, the biographical dictionaries referring to members of parliament.

2. BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARIES OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Within this group of biographical dictionaries the two most complete studies that have served as referents are those of the United Kingdom and France.

The first large-scale project in Europe concerning the study of parliamentarians was that begun in France on the centenary of the French Revolution. The *Dictionnaire des Parlementaires Français*, made up of three series, which includes the period 1789-1958²¹.

From the outset this dictionary established a methodology of work that we can qualify as scientific. The first consideration was to include “all” the parliamentarians “*sans en omettre un seul*” (p. I) of the assemblies elected after 1789. That is to say that the selection criterion employed is that of being an elected parliamentarian, not an evaluation of the parliamentarian’s importance, which might be made by the author of the dictionary.

The second methodological contribution of this work is the use of original archive sources in order to avoid the errors included in many of the biographies published about parliamentarians. The authors work with the parliamentary archives on electoral documentation, personal files and all of the personal information concerning the personages. An outstanding aspect in their library work is the research using the press of the period, biographies already published on the personages, family genealogies and the catalogues of the departmental or local archives. Finally, they work with the collections of manuscripts concerning the personages, using family archives and civil registers in order to support the biographical data. That is to say, a whole range of sources –general and local, public and private– that makes it possible to offer a complete view of the personage.

There is one question that in our opinion is not considered by this dictionary and its continuations, and that is the specific analysis of parliamentary activity.

20. BANKS, Olive. *The Biographical Dictionary of British Feminists. Volume One: 1800-1930*. New York: University Press, 1985.

21. ROBERT, Adolphe; COUGNY, Gaston (dir.). *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français, comprenant tous les membres des assemblées françaises et tous les ministres français, depuis le 1er mai 1789 jusqu’au 1er mai 1889, avec leurs noms, état civil, états de services, actes politiques, votes parlementaires, etc.* Paris: Bouroloton, 1889-1891, 5 vols.; JOLLY, Jean (dir.). *Dictionnaire des Parlementaires Français. Notices biographiques sur les ministres, députés et sénateurs français de 1889 à 1940*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960-1977, 8 vols. and BARBIER, F.; BERGOUIGNIUX, M.A.; CHARLE, M. Ch. (dir.). *Dictionnaire des Parlementaires Français. Notices biographiques sur les parlementaires français de 1940 à 1958*. Paris: La Documentation française, 1988-2001, 4 vols. The first two dictionaries can be consulted in PDF format at <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/biographies>. Besides, the database on parliamentarians created by National Assembly offers the same biographies.

They do however follow the political evolution of the personage, which includes the work developed in parliament.

As a complement to this work we can consider a partial work dedicated to the Revolution, the *Dictionnaire des Constituants (1789-1791)*²². This is a dictionary of biographies of the members of the Constituent Assembly. The biography makes a brief reference to their biographical data, their family, their professional career and their parliamentary career, a section which is given greater importance.

But the most ambitious project in existence for the study of parliament is probably *The History of Parliament*²³. Its aim is the study of the British parliament from its origins in the XIV century to the present, and the work is being carried out in a research institute dependent on the House of Commons²⁴.

It originated in 1936, during the crisis of parliamentarianism of the inter-war period, when the project was set up to strengthen the democratic institutions: "The aim was as much a celebration of this 'peculiarly English' institution, a consolation in the face of chaos and dangers abroad, as it was a piece of scientific history"²⁵. In the same sense David Hayton adds: "[the] history of the 'mother of parliaments' (...) would prove to be an inspiration to democrats in other countries, and somehow turn back the rising tide of totalitarianism"²⁶.

It was initiated by Josiah Wedgwood, as Speaker of the House of Commons (he occupied the post between 1929 and 1942), and the great driving force behind the project was Lewis Namier. For Namier the basis of the project was to be the Dictionary of Parliamentary Biography, formed of "biographies grouped, stratified and analysed in a number of self-contained, manageable sections to form in aggregate a motion picture film of the House of Commons"²⁷. In short, a biographical dictionary that should give rise to a prosopographic analysis²⁸.

22. LEMAY, E.H. (dir.) *Dictionnaire des Constituants (1789-1791)*. Paris: Universitas, 1991, 2 vols.

23. There is a presentation of the project in SEAWARD, P. "The history of Parliament Project and the future of parliamentary history". In: SOBREQUES, J.; AGIRREAZKUENAGA, J.; MORALES, M.; URQUIJO, M.; CISNEROS, M. (eds.). *proceedings of the 53rd Conference of the ICHRPI (Studies presented to the ICHRPI. Volume LXXXII)*. Barcelona: Palament de Catalunya- Museu d'Història de Catalunya, 2005, vol. II; pp. 1583-1593.

24. This project receives funding from the two Houses of the British Parliament. Twenty-five researchers work on writing the project. In principle they have no outside collaborators. Their office is located in London (15 Woburn Square, London, WC1H 0NS). More information can be found at their website (<http://www.history.ac.uk/hop>).

25. DAUNTON, M.J. "Virtual representation: the *History of Parliament* on CD-ROM". In: *Past & Present*, 2000, n. 167; p. 240.

26. HAYTON, David. "The History of Parliament". In: *History Scotland*, 2002 Sept-Oct., p. 20.

27. DAUNTON, M.J. *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

28. It should be recalled that contemporary historical prosopography was born with this author, and was centred on the study of parliamentary life. See NAMIER, L. *The structure of Politics at the accession of Georges III*, London, 1929 y NAMIER, L. *England in the Age of American Revolution*, London, 1930.

In the inter-war years this project received less support due to the scarcity of funds that were available for it, but after the Second World War it received fresh impetus with the contribution of more funds from the public institutions and the creation of a publishing committee to give it impetus²⁹. For many years it has received funding from the House of Commons and since 1993 it has also received funding from the House of Lords.

At present 28 volumes have been published, dealing with the House of Commons between 1386 and 1820³⁰ and with the House of Lords between 1660 and 1832³¹. The first 23, dealing with the Commons and containing 17,000 biographies, were revised and republished on CD-ROM in 1998³². At present the elaboration of four more series is underway that will close the period 1386-1832³³ and work is being done on planning the periods prior to 1386 and subsequent to 1832³⁴.

Besides these two big European projects, we can find some smaller scale initiatives.

In Italy there is no biographical dictionary of parliamentarians, but there is the work *Il Parlamento italiano 1861-1992*³⁵ (24 volumes and 2 atlases), which offers a biographical approach to some of the parliamentarians. There is also a small dictionary dealing with the parliamentarians of Sardinia included in a broader work on the island³⁶, although this has less depth than the models cited previously.

29. HAYTON, David. *Op. cit.*, pp. 19-23.

30. Twenty-five volumes have been published that are structured in eight series: 1386-1421, 1509-1558, 1558-1603, 1660-1690, 1695-1715, 1715-1754, 1754-1790, 1790-1820.

31. The reason for starting the study with the House of Commons is that there was already a work on the members of the House of Lords: *Complete Peerage*. It was also due to the interest of the project directors in deepening knowledge of the process by which the Parliament adopted its present form. In this respect it was essential to study the Commons rather than the Lords, as the promoters of the process of democratisation of British political life.

32. DAUNTON, M.J. *Op. cit.*, pp. 238-261.

33. The series that are being elaborated are 1422-1504, 1604-1629, 1640-1660, 1820-1832.

34. On the evolution of this work see SEAWARD, P. "Local history in the *History of Parliament*". In: *The Local Historian*, vol. 32, 2002, n. 3; pp. 173-177.

35. BUCCOMINO, Pasquale (ed.). *Il Parlamento italiano 1861-1992*, Milano, Nuova CEI, 1989-1993, 24 vols. y 2 Atlantes. This is a work on the Italian Parliament (1861-1983) and an Atlas (in 2 volumes) of the institutions from 1848 up until 1990. The Atlas offers a description of the state institutions, while the work on the Parliament analyses their history: it includes chronologies of their work, the composition of governments, various articles on parliamentary debates and some biographies of the protagonists of parliamentary life and lists of the members of parliament of each legislature. The final volume includes the composition of the republican governments and the composition of parliament by parties. In a certain way, this is a biographical dictionary of parliamentarians and politicians, but it does not include all of the elected parliamentarians of the period studied.

36. ORRÙ, Tito. "Dizionario biografico dei parlamentari sardi". In: BRIGAGLIA, M. (a cura di) *La Sardegna*. Cagliari: Ed. della Torre, 1988; pp. 336-402.

In the United States there is no printed biographical dictionary, instead the Congress has created the *Congressional Biographical Directory*³⁷, which can be consulted on Internet. On this database it is possible to access a brief biography of the parliamentarians that does not include a specific section about their parliamentary activity.

Another model of a database for the study of Parliament is that of *Indbio*, which contains biographical material for the study of the parliamentarians of India since 1977. The aim in this case has not been to produce a dictionary but a database as an empirical tool for studying the Parliament and representation³⁸.

A work of greater interest was elaborated in Switzerland on its Federal Parliament. The work is in two parts. A biographical dictionary³⁹, which contains the biography⁴⁰ of all the Swiss parliamentarians elected between 1848 and 1920, and a study of the parliamentarians on the basis of their biographical data⁴¹, which is not strictly speaking a biographical dictionary.

In Portugal a project has been set underway by the *Instituto de Ciências Sociais de la Universidade de Lisboa*⁴² in collaboration with the Parliament to prepare a *Dicionário biográfico Parlamentar (1834-1910; 1935-1974)*⁴³. The biographies are excessively brief and simple, without entering into any detail about the parliamentary aspects of the personage.

In Spain, to date, we do not have a biographical dictionary of the Spanish parliamentarians. In contrast with this lack of a Spanish project, several works of a regional scope have been prepared which do not always coincide in their methodological approach. Notable in these works is the interest in evaluating the parliamentarians and their work from a national and local perspective, to thus

37. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp>.

38. DAWES, I. "Studying India's Leaders: Potential and Pitfalls of an Electronic Database". In: *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 17, 1994, n. 3; pp. 119-123.

39. GRUNER, Erich (dir.). *Die Schweizerische Bundesversammlung 1848-1920. Band I Biographien / L'Assemblée Fédérale Suisse 1848-1920. Volume I Biographies*. Bern: Francke Verlag, 1966, 2 vols.

40. The file used has fourteen headings: the first four are data concerning life and family, the rest cover religious belief, education, military career, professional career, political career, membership of political parties, economic relations and economic associations, public activity, works and sources. This data is the source for analysing the parliamentarians included in volume II. An original element of this work is that the biography is written in the mother tongue of the personage, except in the case of the Romansh language. In this way a solution is provided to the choice of language in a plurilingual country.

41. GRUNER, Erich (dir.). *Die Schweizerische Bundesversammlung 1920-1968 / L'Assemblée Fédérale Suisse 1920-1968*. Bern: Francke Verlag, 1970.

42. The team that is preparing it is formed by Maria Filomena Mónica, Manuel Braga Cruz, Maria de Fátima Bonifácio, Nuno Monteiro and Rui Ramos.

43. FILOMENA MÓNICA, Maria (dir.). *Dicionário biográfico parlamentar (1834-1910)*. Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa – Assembleia da República, 2004-2006, 3 vols. and BRAGA DA CRUZ, M.; COSTA PINTO, A. *Dicionário biográfico parlamentar (1935-1974)*. Lisboa: Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa-Assembleia da República, 2004-2005, 2 vols.

understand their political activity in its totality, since their activity in parliament is related to their activity in their areas of origin and their legislative proposals are related to their regions and to regional interests⁴⁴.

The first work, prepared by our team, had as its object of study the parliamentarians who represented *Vasconia* [The Basque Country] in the period between 1808 and 1876⁴⁵. In this work we began to elaborate a model of biographical dictionary that we have been refining in subsequent works and that has served as the basis for the *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios españoles* [Biographical Dictionary of the Spanish Parliamentarians]. We opted for a clear criterion of selection of the personages whose biographies would be written: the parliamentarians. The biographical research scheme we chose is based on the proposal of life circles, elaborated by Julio Caro Baroja⁴⁶. With respect to sources we opted for searching in original archive sources as the basis of work, which was complemented by existing printed sources. On the basis of these proposals we prepared this work, which will be continued with another Dictionary that ends in 1939. This work was carried out thanks to the financial support provided by the Basque Parliament between the years 2002 and 2006⁴⁷.

In Castilla y León, a team directed by Pedro Carasa (University of Valladolid) published a work on the political elites of Castilla y León during the Restoration, which includes a biographical dictionary of the parliamentarians who represented these provinces between 1876 and 1923⁴⁸. The biographical research scheme and the sources are similar to those employed in the work dealing with the Basque Country. What is notable about this work is that together with the volume of the biographical dictionary they include a prosopographical analysis of the parliamentarians. This same group is at present preparing the *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios castellanos y leoneses (1834-1874)* [Biographical Dictionary of the Parliamentarians of Castilla y León (1834-1874)].

44. On this question see SEAWARD, P. "Local history in the *History of Parliament*". In: *The Local Historian*, vol. 32 (2002) n. 3, pp. 173-177 and CRAGOE, M. "A Cheaper Short of Member? Welsh MPs, Select Committees and the Representation of Local Interest in Parliament 1852-1865". In: *Parliaments, Estates & Representation*, vol. 14, 1994, n. 2; pp. 133-148.

45. *DICCIONARIO biográfico de los parlamentarios de Vasconia (1808-1876)* [Biographical Dictionary of the Parliamentarians of Vasconia (1808-1876)], Vitoria-Gasteiz, Parlamento Vasco – Eusko Legebiltzarra, 1993.

46. CARO BAROJA, J. *Biografías y vidas humanas* [Biographies and Human Lives]. San Sebastián, 1986.

47. In the year 2002 an Agreement was signed between the University of the Basque Country and the Basque Parliament in order to finance the research project that made it possible to prepare this new work: *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios de Vasconia (1876-1939)* [Biographical Dictionary of the Parliamentarians of Vasconia (1876-1939)]. Vitoria-Gasteiz: Parlamento Vasco – Eusko Legebiltzarra, 2007, 3 vols.

48. CARASA, Pedro (dir.). *Élites castellanas de la Restauración. Vol I. Diccionario biográfico de parlamentarios castellanos y leoneses (1876-1923). Vol II. Una aproximación al poder político en Castilla*. Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 1997, 2 vols.

In Galicia, a group coordinated by X.R. Barreiro Fernández has prepared a work dedicated to the study of the parliamentarians of Galicia⁴⁹. Unlike the two works cited previously, it covers the XIX and XX centuries, but the biographies are briefer, the sources consulted are less exhaustive and it does not include a section dedicated to the analysis of parliamentary activity.

In Cantabria, a team at the University of Cantabria under the direction of Aurora Garrido, and funded by the regional parliament, is developing a project for a biographical dictionary of the parliamentarians who represented this Community. In the first place, they published the volume dedicated to the XX century⁵⁰, and in 2006 they published the volume dealing with the XIX century⁵¹. Besides including the parliamentarians in the *Cortes Generales* [Spanish parliament], it also includes parliamentarians of the autonomous parliament and representatives to unelected assemblies such as the National Consultative Assembly of the Dictatorship of Primo de Rivera and the *Cortes* of the Francoist Dictatorship. The biographical research scheme contains the different aspects of the life of the personage, although it does not dedicate a specific section to the analysis of parliamentary activity. With respect to sources, great importance has been given to local and oral sources for the parliamentarians of more recent periods.

Finally, there are several projects underway to prepare biographical dictionaries of parliamentarians. In Catalonia, Borja de Riquer is directing a project to draw up the *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios catalanes del siglo XX* [Biographical Dictionary of the Catalan Parliamentarians of the XX Century]. In Almería, Fernando Martínez is directing a team that is finishing the *Diccionario biográfico de diputados, senadores y procuradores en Cortes de Almería (1810-1977)* [Biographical Dictionary of the Deputies, Senators and Lawyers in the Parliament representing Almeria (1810-1977)]. And in Cadiz, Diego Caro is directing the project for the *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios del primer liberalismo en Andalucía (1810-1869)* [Biographical Dictionary of the Parliamentarians of the First Liberalism in Andalusia (1810-1869)].

3. THE BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF THE SPANISH PARLIAMENTARIANS

As we have indicated there are significant methodological differences in each of the works cited. This leads us to propose the need for preparing a *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios españoles* [Biographical Dictionary of the Spanish Parliamentarians] that will coordinate the tasks of the different research groups that have been working in the different Spanish universities.

49. BARREIRO FERNÁNDEZ, X.R. *Parlamentarios de Galicia, biografías de deputados e senadores (1810-2001)*. A Coruña: Real Academia Galega, 2002, 2 vols.

50. GARRIDO, A. (dir.) *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios de Cantabria (1902-2002)*. Santander: Parlamento de Cantabria, 2003.

51. GARRIDO, A. (dir.) *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios de Cantabria (1813-1901)*. Santander: Parlamento de Cantabria, 2006.

To this end we set out from the individual experience of each of the existing groups, the experience of our relationship with the International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions and the knowledge of the French experience of the *Comité d'histoire parlementaire et politique*. With this experience we proposed to proceed from work in individual research groups to the formation of a network of groups, thus advancing to the new form of knowledge production⁵².

On the basis of the cited reflections on the production of biographical dictionaries and the experiences mentioned in the previous paragraph, we formed a group of six lecturers⁵³ from five different universities and we have started to structure a research network, coordinated from the University of the Basque Country. Each of these lecturers is responsible for directing the preparation of the works in an area of Spain. Starting from these groups, the network has been extended to forty Spanish universities that are collaborating in the research tasks.

To carry out this research an Agreement of collaboration has been signed between the University of the Basque Country and the Spanish Parliament⁵⁴, in which the periods and aims of the work are regulated and the Parliament agrees to finance the project for the first five years (2006-2010).

3.1. Object of study

The dictionary that we are presenting has as its aim to provide a biography of all of the parliamentarians of the two Chambers of the Spanish Parliament from the origin of the liberal Parliament in 1810 until the present day.

But given the high number of personages, we have started the project with a first phase that covers the period 1810-1854. This will involve the preparation of 3,744 biographies.

3.2. Research methodology

Having defined the object of study and the scientific context in which it is situated, we will explain the biographical structure that we have employed and the sources with which we are working to carry out our task.

52. GIBBONS, M. et al. *The new production of knowledge*, London, 1994.

53. Joseba Agirreazkuenaga and Mikel Urquijo (University of the Basque Country), Borja de Riquer (Autonomous University of Barcelona), Pedro Carasa (University of Valladolid), Javier Moreno (Complutense University of Madrid) and Maria Sierra (University of Seville).

54. Agreement signed in Madrid on June 26th 2006.

3.2.1. Biographical research scheme

The internal structure of each of the biographies is similar to that employed in earlier works⁵⁵. With the inclusion of the different sections of the life of the personage we aim to fill the existing vacuum that is due to the non-existence of general biographical dictionaries and, on the other hand, to present the personage in all of his complexity⁵⁶, attempting to analyse the relationship existing between his family, his education, his patrimony, etc., and his public activity.

The biography begins with the heading. This contains the Christian name and surnames of the personage, his noble title should he possess one, the date and place of his birth and of his death, the districts he represented, together with the year of the elections when he was elected as a parliamentarian or senator, or the year when he was appointed senator for life or became one by right.

Next, the first section is a description of his family circle, which contains his personal data and his family relations: the names of his parents, grandparents, etc., and their political, economic or cultural activities if these might be important for understanding the biography of our personage.

The second section is the socio-cultural circle, in which his training, both academic and professional, is analysed. We should not forget that regulated training was not very extensive in professions like commerce and was complemented in the family businesses themselves or in those of corresponding companies in other parts of Spain or Europe. In this section we also include the professional activity in which the personages were involved.

The third section, closely linked to the previous one, is the material basis: his patrimony and the source of the personage's income. Here we find his remunerations due to his political dedication, if he held positions remunerated by the public administration, together with the income from his profession and the income from his patrimony.

In the fourth place his political circle is analysed, that is, his political activity and his participation in the local, provincial or national institutions. Within this section special attention is paid to the analysis of his work as a parliamentarian: both his election and his activity in the *Cortes* (Houses of Parliament), through his speeches and his participation in the commissions of the *Cortes*.

The study of the parliament in general, and of his parliamentary activity in particular, is carried out by attending to the sources and to his activity in the Parliament and in his district. As Paul Seaward points out the study of parliamentarians must include the two spheres –the national and the local– because their activity in the Parliament is related to their activity in their districts, where they had their property and their business interests, since these personages pro-

55. *DICCIONARIO biográfico de los parlamentarios de Vasconia (1800-1876)*, pp. 20-22.

56. STONE, L. "Prosopography". In: *Daedalus*, vol. 100, 1971, n. 1; pp. 46-79.

moted legislation that was related to their districts and modified projects depending on local interests⁵⁷.

In the fifth place, a collection is made of his writings and of the sources and biography used for preparing the biography of the personage⁵⁸. Amongst the sources we only cite in each biography those that contribute something significant to the biography. Other works that have provided information are cited in the bibliography at the end of the work, either because these have not been so outstanding, or because they duplicate some of those works cited, or because they are less relevant for the specific case, although they might be important in placing the personages in their social, political or economic context.

Nor do we cite the diaries of sessions of the Congress of Deputies and of the Senate, in order to avoid excessive reiteration, although they have been used as a source in all cases for the analysis of parliamentary activity.

All of the above is completed with a portrait and a signature of the personage, in the cases where it has been possible to obtain these. The image and signature are not decorative elements, but rather references of great utility for identifying the personage in cases of confusion between fathers and sons, or other relatives, who share the same Christian name and surnames.

3.2.2. The sources used

The starting point for producing the biographies is that they must be prepared from first hand information. This criterion, used by all of the great biographical dictionaries, was clearly established in the model that has inspired many of them:

the principles of the Dictionary obliged contributors to seek information from first-hand authorities, and often from unpublished papers and records. It was made an indispensable condition that writers should append to each article a full list of the sources whence their information was derived⁵⁹.

Once the list has been established of the personages about whom biographies will be prepared, an examination is made of existing encyclopaedias and general biographical works, the *Indice Biográfico de España, Portugal e*

57. SEAWARD, P. "Local history in the *History of Parliament*". In: *The Local Historian*, vol. 32, n. 3; pp. 173-177.

58. This is not done in all of the biographical dictionaries, although since the XIX century it has been considered as an addition that confirms the rigour of the work, see HOEFER, M. Le Dr. (dir.). *Nouvelle Biographie Générale depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, avec les renseignements bibliographiques et l'indication des sources a consulter*, Vol. I, p. I.

59. LEE, Sidney. "The Dictionary of National Biography. A Statistical Account". In: STEPHEN, Leslie; LEE, Sidney (ed.) *The Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973 (8^a ed.), vol I; p. LXIV.

*Iberoamérica*⁶⁰ [the Biographical Index of Spain, Portugal and Iberoamerica] and compendiums of biographies of parliamentarians, as well as the specific monographs on different personages.

The work in the archives has two phases: the first aimed at seeking information in the general archives and the second in the local archives.

The general archives in which work will be done are:

- Parliamentary Archives: Archive of the Congress of Deputies and Archive of the Senate.
- Archives of the Civil Administration of the State: National Historical Archive (Madrid), General Archive of the Administration (Alcalá de Henares), Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Central Archive of the Ministry of Justice.
- Military Archives: General Military Archive of Segovia, Archive of the “Don Álvaro de Bazán” Museum (El Viso del Marqués. Ciudad Real).
- Archives of other public bodies: General Archive of the Royal Palace (Madrid), Archive of the Bank of Spain (Madrid).
- Archives of the Academies.

The principal local archives in which work will be done are:

- Archives of the Universities.
- Historical Provincial Archives.
- Archives of the Provincial Deputations.
- Municipal Archives.

3.2.3. The system of documentary information: the database

This information is organised into a system of documentary information formed by three databases. The system is articulated around a principal biographical database from where the information contained in the other database can be accessed through links.

The databases designed in the establishment phase are: the Biographical Database, the Bibliographical Database and the Archival Database.

The design and structure of these databases is flexible and open to modifications and changes that the fieldwork might make necessary: incorporation of new fields or sub-fields, etc.

60. HERRERO MEDIAVILLA, V.; AGUAYO NAYLE, D.R. (ed.). *Indice Biográfico de España, Portugal e Iberoamérica*. München - New Providence - London - Paris: K.G. Saur, 2000, 10 vols. (3rd ed.).

The computer program that permits the documentary management of the different related databases is WINISIS 1.5 (December 2003). This is a high level documentary management system (DMS) designed by the Unesco⁶¹ and distributed in Spain by the *Centro de Información y Documentación Científica* (Centre of Information and Scientific Documentation - CINDOC) of the CSIC.

The biographical database structures the information gathered on each parliamentarian grouped in different areas: personal, professional, academic and parliamentary data and sources of information.

The assignment of a single registration number to each parliamentarian, which identifies him within the system, makes it possible to interrelate this database with the other databases that have been designed.

Interrelation and “surfing” between different databases makes it possible to obtain the biography, bibliography and most representative documentary sources for each parliamentarian. From the main screen of the biographical database specific information on each parliamentarian can be accessed through different hyperlinks to:

1. The same database (Personal data, professional and academic data, parliamentary data).
2. Other databases:
 - a. Bibliography and written works.
 - b. Documentation localised in the different archives consulted.
 - c. Electronic documentation (websites [HTML documents], Internet links [URLs], images, entries in digitised dictionaries, etc.).

The bibliographical database collects and describes both the bibliography and/or the printed work localised by the research team on the parliamentarians and the work written by them.

The Archival database collects and describes the archive documents (files and documentary units) localised on each parliamentarian in the different collections and archives consulted in the project.

3.2.4. Plan of work

The work will be structured over a period of five years (2006-2010).

61. http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=2071&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1035195531.

- **Year 2006:** organisation of the structure of the Network, elaboration of the list of personages about whom biographies will be prepared and start of the work in the national sources.
- **Year 2007:** continuation of the work in the national sources.
- **Year 2008:** work on the local sources.
- **Year 2009:** all of the researchers who are going to write the biographies will carry out research to complement that already done by the group, in order to finish the work on the personages.
- **Year 2010:** writing of the biographies and the digitisation of signatures and images of the personages.

The final result of this work will be the publication in different phases of the Biographical Dictionary of Spanish Parliamentarians⁶² and the creation of an open database on these personages that will serve as a source for other types of work that might be proposed in the future.

62. In September of 2010 will be published the *Diccionario biográfico de los parlamentarios españoles (1810-1814)* by the Spanish Parliament (Cortes Generales).