From Unamuno to Ortega y Gasset and D’Ors, a majority of the most influential Spanish thinkers of the first half of the twentieth century used the newspaper as a preferred medium to convey their ideas to their audiences. The lecture explores the reasons for this development that is grounded in the shift that takes place in the European epistemological paradigm of the turn of the century from systematic to fragmentary thought and the specific circumstances of the Spanish national discourse at the time. The lecture also analyzes the public profile of these figures as civic mentors and the complex set of relations that emerged between them and their readers as a consequence of the expanded role of the intellectual in the social and political scene. The lecture will also provide a contrasting view of the current public role of the intellectual in the postnational age.

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