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NEW FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WORK: A REVIEW OF THE SPANISH LITERATURE

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1. GENERAL PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

In order to analyse the literature published in Spain in the last decade on the new forms of employment and work, the elements that explain their configuration and the regulation mechanisms that have favoured their development, one must bear in mind several types of premise. Thus, there are reasons of a historical and of a theoretical-analytic order that indicate that the aspects considered in the analysis of the literature (see records of the materials dealt with in this document) often fall within a wider framework than the topic of our research.

Thus, a large part of the literature of greater interest deals with subjects of a general nature, such as the explanatory factors of the processes of managerial restructuring that took place from the mid-seventies, and only at a second level do they analyse the dimensions that constitute our object of study. At this second level the dimensions then serve as descriptive elements of the explanations for the changes that are taking place. This is the case even in some of the texts that are of most interest to us, such as those of Castillo (1996), Martín Artiles (1997), Palacio (1997) and Miguélez and Prieto, dirs. (1991 and 1999). The analysis that we make here regarding the scientific production on our object of study has therefore been based on those texts that, although at the second level, approach in detail the aspects that interest us concerning the new forms of employment and work. We have excluded, however, the literature that approaches such aspects tangentially or marginally, but does so secondarily and focuses on more general analytic viewpoints. Therefore, of the more than 400 texts that we selected initially, after reviewing the literature we included only slightly over a third part in the specific analysis that we develop on these pages.

We should also stress three features of our analysis of the literature. The first is that although our research focuses on Catalonia, the texts studied refer to different Spanish autonomous communities and regions, or to the whole of Spain. Although Catalonia has its own characteristics regarding the industrial and entrepreneurial fabric and some features of the labour market, it has so many common characteristics with the whole of Spain that research and reflections on the Spanish case are perfectly valid for Catalonia.

The second feature has to do with the scientific viewpoint of the texts that we have chosen, or rather with the discipline within which they are framed. Practically all of the texts considered fall within the disciplines of the Sociology of Work, Labour Economics and Labour Law. Due to the relatively low level of institutionalisation of these disciplines (especially the first two), the different areas of study are not always clearly defined. However, this should not be seen as a negative aspect in itself, and indeed an approach from diverse viewpoints frequently enriches the debate and the knowledge of the subject.

The third feature is that we do not approach questions here such as the definition or consideration, according to the literature, of certain new forms of employment or work, because we already defined them to a large extent in the document «Trends and situation of the forms of employment and labour market in Catalonia» of April 1999. The same document presented statistical and analytic data on the characteristics of Spanish employment and unemployment, among other questions that we do not reiterate on these pages.

Finally, we pointed out at the beginning of these general comments that there are reasons of a historical and of a theoretical-analytic order that indicate that the aspects considered in the analysis of the literature often fall within a wider framework than the topic of our research. Let us consider them more closely.

Reasons of a historical order

The employment policies designed by the public administration starting in the early eighties contributed greatly to the flexibilisation and often the precarisation of employment. They also affected the collective bargaining process and the mechanisms of social concertation at its most «macro» level. This effect has made industrial relations in Spain and in Catalonia far more problematic, favouring the development of new forms of employment and – to a lesser extent – new forms of work organisation, in which interaction between the social partners has been relegated and priority has been given to company strategies.

Other factors have also acted as decisive elements in this sense. This option of progressively favouring flexibilisation is one of the key lines in the definition of the policies of macroeconomic adjustment followed by the different Spanish governments. With very slight changes of emphasis, both the socialist and the conservative governments have followed this line. Within the scope of its powers with regard to employment, the autonomous Catalan government has also done so.

These adjustment policies have been developed and applied in the whole of Spain since the late seventies in order to tackle the economic crisis that had been detected in all countries of the immediate environment a few years earlier. Their starting point is that labour flexibilisation is in accordance with the more general objectives of monetary and fiscal policies to fight inflation, and secondarily to reduce unemployment, which has been growing for many years and is still very high. All of this led to the configuration of a model of industrial relations that during the first years of the transition was subject to, or at least clearly subordinated to, the dictates of the political arena (Espina, 1991a and 1991b), in an economic structure dominated by basically manpower-intensive production sectors with a secondary position in the international division of production and work.

Reasons of a theoretical-analytic order

In this order of the analysis of the literature published in the last ten years, we find a series of common aspects and agreements or coincidences:

- a) There is a greater amount of applied research than basic or fundamental research.

- b) Similar approaches to the definitions and contents of the forms of employment and work are observed in authors that respond to heterodox approaches or theoretical positions regarding the dominant neo-classical or functionalist paradigms in the economic and sociological fields. From this heterodox viewpoint, which is widely represented in Spanish theoretical-analytic works, the social relations of work that have to do with the new forms of employment involve changes in the duration and in the temporal extension of work contracts, changes in working hours, and a greater presence of industrial relations based on commercial contracts. The new forms of work organisation create ways of carrying out the effective work that can adapt to the new dynamics of production and business organisation, leading to organisational and labour strategies and policies that break (but only very partially in Spain) with the paradigmatic characteristics of the Taylorist-Fordist period. In general, the effects of these new forms of work organisation – and far more clearly the new forms of employment – tend to be valued negatively, though several studies that deal with the topic note some positive specific tendencies.

- c) One of the key factors for understanding the new forms of employment and work is the development of a progressively complex analysis of the labour market. This includes considering the main elements of the Spanish production system, the characteristics of the political-institutional structure that defines industrial relations, and the main defining features of the workforce. In this last case, of special importance are the diverse types and sources of mobilisation that the different groups have access to and the differentiated risk of exposure to unemployment that each one of them involves.

- d) Since the crisis of the debate on the suitability and peculiarities (many in the Spanish case) of the neo-corporativist model, we find fundamentally descriptive approaches to the institutional elements that present the configuration and operation of industrial relations. This tendency is contradictory with the consideration of the new forms of employment and work as an important phenomenon to be explained from the viewpoint of institutional factors.

On the other hand, the analysis showed the following *divergences*:

- a) They show different concerns and predominant emphases in each discipline, although they are sometimes developed on the same object of study and with similar theoretical focuses. Thus:

- Labour Economics is interested in refuting the neo-classical perspective, above all rejecting a reading of unemployment that understands it strictly as a phenomenon linked to the rigidity of the labour markets.

- The Sociology of Work is interested in refuting the numerous fragmented readings of the changes in the Fordist wage relationship that attempt to account for the crisis of work organisation by following specific analytic focuses simplistically (the model of the flexible company in network form, the model of flexible specialisation, Toyotism and lean production, etc.). This discipline underlines the importance of the company as a fundamental unit of analysis for interpreting the features of the new forms of organisation of production and the particular structuring of the internal and external labour markets.

- b) The research projects differ according to whether they emphasise institutional or structural variables or are based on microfounded arguments in empirical analyses of field work in production centres.

- c) They differ in the notions and assessment of the processes of social concertation (Espina 1991b and Roca, 1991 are an example of this divergence) and the structuring of the labour markets (Recio, 1994a and 1999 and Ruesga, 1997 are another example).

2. ANALYSIS OF THE LITERATURE BASED ON THE QUESTIONS AND OBJECTS OF THE STUDY ON NFEW AND THEIR REGULATION MECHANISMS

We will approach the analysis in two main sections. In the first one, the literature is dealt with in quantitative terms according to the typology of classification followed by all the groups of our research project. In the second, it is studied according to the three main structuring lines that we have detected in Spanish scientific production on the subject that interests us.

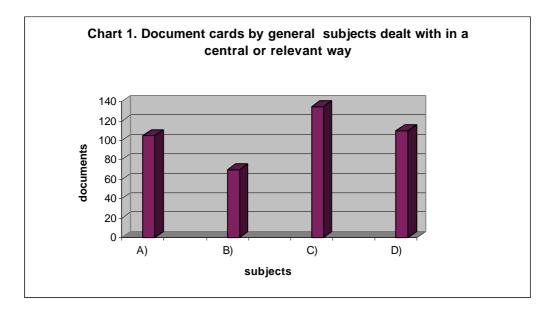
2.1. The Relative Importance of the Literature in Terms of Our Typology

Like all the teams working on this research project, we have based the analysis of the literature on four main areas (*The development of NFEW; The effects of NFEW; Reac-tions/new strategies of the actors towards the effects of NFEW; and Experimentations* and establishment of new rules), each including different dimensions. Of the over 400 texts dealt with, we have chosen 168 for their importance regarding the questions that we are investigating. These 168 are those that have been dealt with in the bibliographical cards that we include as an annexe. In these cards we have also stated whether the treatment given to the areas and dimensions of our typology is *central, relevant, or secondary* in the whole book, book chapter, article or document in question

In quantitative terms, considering only the topics dealt with in a *central* or *relevant* way, the following table presents the literature on our object of study according to our analytical typology:

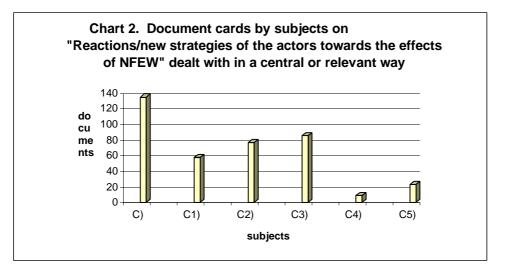
TOTAL	168
a. The development of NFEW	105
a.1 The development process	102
a.2 The adopted forms	83
b. The effects of NFEW	70
b.1 Expected positive effects &	
b.3 Observed positive effects	44
b.2 Expected negative/perverse effects &	
b.4 Observed negative/perverse effects	70
c. Reactions/new strategies of the actors towards the effects of NFEW	135
c.1 Workers' reactions	58
c.2 Employers' strategies	77
c.3 Unions' and workers representatives' strategies and orientations	86
c.4 The self-employed associations' or other new representative actors' strategies and orientations	9
c.5 Orientations of the institutions at the local level	24
d. Experimentations and establishment of new rules	110
d.1 The influence of European directives/pressures	36
d.2 The influence of new legislation, social pacts, tripartite accords, collective agreements at national (central) level	83
d.3 Search for new joint regulation within firms	30
d.4 Search for new rules al the local level outside/at the borders of firms	30

Table 1. Total number of cards by general and specific subjects of analysis dealt with in a central or relevant way



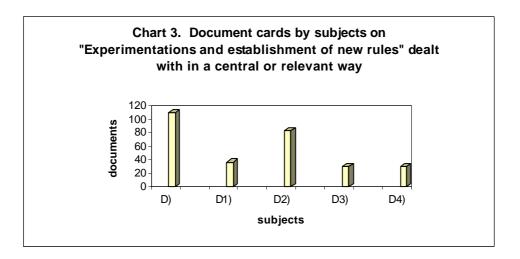
Analysis subjects:

- A): The development of NFEW
- B): The effects of NFEW
- C): Reactions/New strategies of the actors towards the effects of NFEW
- D): Experimentation and establishment of new rules



Analysis subjects:

- C): Reactions/new strategies of the actors towards the effects of NFEW
- C1): Workers' reactions
- C2): Employers' strategies
- C3): Unions' and workers' representatives' strategies and orientations
- C4): Self-employed associations' or other new representative actors' strategies and orientations
- C5): Orientations of the institutions at the local level



Analysis subjects:

D): Experimentation and establishment of new rules

D1): The influence of European directives/pressures

D2): The influence of new legislation, social pacts, tripartite accords, collective agreements at national (central) level

D3): Search for new joint regulation within firms

D4): Search for new rules at the local level outside/at the borders of firms

In general, there is a great deal of scientific production aimed at explaining the influence of employment policies on flexibilisation of the employment circuit and at analysing the processes of centralised collective bargaining and macroconcertation (which is very particular in the Spanish case) that were predominant during a large part of the eighties. This allows us to see that the most abundant literature is that which is aimed at institutional elements and their effects on the development of new forms of employment, and that which deals with the types of agreements and the social concertation aimed at dealing with employment. The first is characterised by an attempt to describe the evolution and direction of labour regulations. The second highlights many of the negative effects of the ways in which the new forms of employment have been established and also deals with the reactions of the different actors of industrial relations and with the experimentation of new agreements, mainly at a state level.

On the other hand, there are fewer works in the Spanish literature that analyse the structural variables or focus on a certain microfoundation of the explanations of the different points that interest us here, in the sense of a desire to contextualise the social processes and the social actions that order them, combining empirical plurality with methodological rigor and an attempt at generalisation.

From the table and the charts presented here, we should make some further specific comments:

- a) There are fewer studies that deal specifically with the *effect* of the new forms of employment and work. Also, all those that deal with this question consider the negative effects and very few also consider the existence of positive aspects. From this it can be deduced that there is considerable agreement on the existence of clearly negative effects arising from these phenomena for companies, and especially for wage-earners. These

effects therefore receive less attention, they are taken for granted and used as a demonstrated starting point.

- b) There are many works on the *reactions and new strategies of the actors towards the effects of NFEW*, mainly those that follow the reactions of the trade unions, although it should be pointed out that the reactions and/or strategies of the workers are not always clearly distinguished from those of their representatives. There are also many studies on employers' strategies. There is a tendency to agree that the strategies on new forms of employment and work are designed and specified by the company management, while the workers and the trade unions act reactively towards them – and sometimes not at all.

- c) In the analysis of the *experimentation and establishment of new rules*, the study of the influence of social concertation and centralised collective bargaining are predominant (including here sectoral negotiation for the whole of Spain, which is of great importance in this country). The number dealing with the influence of EU directives is not negligible, but they are clearly a minority. There are also relatively few works focusing on the company or on the local level.

- d) The shortage of studies of the indicated type on the local level coincides with that found in the dimension *«orientations of the institutions at the local level»*, concerning the area of the *«actors' strategies on NFEW»*. This is, however, a subject whose most relevant studies have appeared in the last few years (Vallvé, 1997; Vallvé and Caprile, 1998; Jiménez, 1997 and 1998; CIREM, 1998).

- e) As stated above, studies that we define below as microfounded are a minority, despite the interest that all social scientists assign to them in theory. Also, many of these studies are written by a limited number of authors (Miguélez, de Alòs, Lope and Martín) who are members of our own research group, QUIT.

- g) Almost none of the studies deal with the strategies and reactions of the new social partners or their representatives. Without doubt this is an important gap, though it is partly explained by the poor or non-existent articulation of these new social partners (the self-employed, the unemployed, etc.) in Spain and Catalonia, and therefore the fact that they do not have stable mechanisms for representing their interests.

2.2. The Three Structuring Lines of Spanish Scientific Production on the Topic

In addition to this filtering of the literature according to the type of aspects that it deals with and according to the typology established in the research, we feel that it should be analysed according to another criterion, that of the relevance of the different studies and documents to the different questions that are taking into consideration in the different disciplines and research programmes, especially the disciplines of Labour Law, the Sociology of Work and Labour Economics, although, as we have said, the distinction between them is not always clear. The research works should also be grouped according to their main concerns. We will thus be able to make a more rigorous review of the state and evolution of the literature on new forms of employment and work and on the mechanisms that regulate them.

In this order, our analysis of the information produced in Spain can be divided into three main lines:

1. Studies of the institutional elements and their effects on the new forms of employment and work.

- 2. Studies based on structural factors, effects and conditioning features of the phenomenon we are dealing with.
- 3. The more microfounded analyses based on the production centres and workplaces.

We will try, in each of these three lines, to observe the type of questions that the works attempt to answer, the evolution of the debate on these questions and the main results of the same.

2.2.1. The influence of institutional elements, their effects on the new forms of employment and work and their regulation mechanisms

After the great relevance of the theoretical debate (today already almost abandoned) on neo-corporativism and the processes and practices of social concertation at a «macro» level that took place in Spain during the eighties, the analysis of the institutional phenomena has since then been carried out on in descriptive rather than theoretical and explanatory terms.

- Types of questions:

The analysis of the process of configuration of the new forms of employment has been the object of study that has received most attention, far more than the new forms of work organisation.

During the eighties, Spanish scientific production framed its analysis in this area in the wider debate on the subject of neo-corporativism, mainly involving specialists in Labour Law (such as Baylos, 1994), although sociologists and economists also contributed to the discussion. Since the early nineties, the studies have focused on the effect of employment policies and the evolution of labour regulations on new forms of employment. A smaller number of works have dealt with the diverse types of concerted interaction between the social partners (meso- and micro-concertation, centralised and decentralised collective bargaining), which has a major influence on the characteristics of the new forms of employment. Experts in the Sociology of Work and Labour Economics (such as Bilbao, 1996; Alonso and Blanco, 1999) have been the main authors dealing with these subjects.

- Evolution of the debate, research topics and current situation:

The centrality attributed to the new forms of employment falls within the framework of historical factors characteristic of the Spanish political system that was inherited from the transition to democracy. These factors configure two relatively different institutional frameworks, and therefore two different thematic areas of analysis:

1 - The study of social concertation, labour legislation and centralised collective bargaining in the framework of a political exchange whose objectives are summed up as: wage moderation as a guide to incomes policy; flexibilisation of employment modalities and the channels associated with them (recruitment, dismissal, etc.) as a guide to labour policy; legislative specification of the mechanisms of union representation and the rights of union action; and delimitation of the guiding parameters of social policy. This type of study was carried out from the late seventies to the early nineties, and we could also include here some contributions aimed at dealing with the logic of collective action (in Miguélez and Prieto, dirs. 1991, or Jordana, 1994).

2 – Since the early nineties the analyses have tended to consider the plural mechanisms of concertation that are being established in Spain at different levels and in the content of agreements (Ojeda, 1990; Solans, 1995). An increasing number of studies have dealt with active employment policies and there has been greater interest in monitoring the employment clauses in collective bargaining, in a framework of growing decentralisation of agreements (García Murcia 1998a and 1998b; Del Rey Guanter 98; Martín and de Alòs, 1999, etc.). This also shows a greater desire to consider the interaction of the social partners from a more microfounded viewpoint (Miguélez 1991, 1995 and 1999; Lope and de Alòs, 1999; and Aguar et al., 1999).

- Contributions and results of the research:

In general, the four areas of our typology of classification and analysis of the literature are approached in this line, although in general the approach is more descriptive than theoretical-explanatory. There are many studies on unemployment, employment policies and social policies aimed at the unemployed and the less favoured groups in the labour market.

More specifically, the following results are observed in the research that has been carried out:

- a) Centralised social concertation (with the social agreements that were reached in Spain until the mid-eighties) has been seen as a support mechanism for the strategies of labour flexibilisation followed by entrepreneurs and encouraged by legislative and government action. These strategies and policies have been decisive for the appearance of new forms of employment (Roca, 1993). Other approaches see the practice of concertation as a necessary stage for the consolidation of the social partners and the industrial relations framework. It is also understood that it served to develop an income and labour policies in line with the demands of the economic and industrial changes of the seventies and the first half of the eighties (Espina, 1991b).

- b) Since the early nineties there has been an increasing decentralisation of collective bargaining and a clear tendency to move industrial relations to the company level (Miguélez, 1995a). This is characterised by a growing importance of the company in defining employment conditions above the regulations imposed by sectoral collective bargaining. Such tendencies are contrary to those observed until well into the eighties, which showed a clearly priority for centralised collective bargaining. At the same time, the studies show a growing autonomy of the trade unions and employers' organisations in defining their strategies, which has also been important for the current configuration of the new forms of employment.

- c) The influence of European directives is reflected in several areas of Spanish employment relationships. The National Employment Plans follow the agreements of the Luxembourg summit, which are in turn linked to the priority attributed to employment at the European Council of Essen and to the new chapter on employment of the reformed Amsterdam Treaty of the European Union. So far, two National Employment Plans have been implemented, one in 1998 (Plan Nacional de Acción para el Empleo del Reino de España – 1998) and one in 1999 (Plan Nacional de Acción para el Empleo del Reino de España – 1999), both approved by the community organs whose guidelines they claim to follow. These guidelines shaped the objectives of the Plans: 1) to improve the capacity of professional integration; 2) to develop the enterprise spirit; 3) to foster the capacity for adaptation of workers and companies; and 4) to reinforce equal opportunity policies. The specific measures taken in this direction have varied greatly, the most important being the ones laid down in table 2.

The most outstanding elements of the influence of the European directives on Spanish employment relationships pointed out by the researchers are the following:

- They have helped to counter the Spanish government's reluctance in the last decade to undertake important agreements at a state level.
- They have propitiated a change in the orientation of employment policies, fostering the introduction of active policies, which are progressively taking over from passive policies (Cachón and Palacio, 1999). The positive aspects of this change of orientation in terms of increasing employment opportunities must be balanced, however, against the increasing reduction of the periods and amounts of unemployment subsidies.
- They have reinforced the clear current tendency to flexibilise employment in Spain. The most relevant example is the reform of the stable part-time employment contract, aimed especially at women as a disadvantaged group in access to the labour market.
- On the other hand, measures of industrial and technological policy complementary to the National Employment Plans have not been fostered. Also, the efforts dedicated to vocational training and continuing training were already underway, so the community directives only reinforce the existing tendencies.

European directives that are transferred to Spanish labour legislation but are largely not applied are also detected in the literature. Examples of this are maternity leave, and especially the commitment to facilitate the setting up of European workers' committees, a question that has been seriously delayed in Spain due to the reluctance of companies.

Finally, there are great variations in the position of the social partners on the main expression of the influence of the community directives, the National Employment Plans (see Alòs, Lope and Martin, 1998). The government states, of course, that its measures are the appropriate ones to increase employment and that they are in agreement with the community guidelines. The employers' organisations support such measures moderately and demand a reduction in taxation of companies, moderation in wage costs and even greater flexibility in the employment circuits. The trade unions, on the other hand, criticise the following points: the government's failure to promote a reduction in working time; its indecisiveness in reducing temporary employment and in offering incentives for the employment of disadvantaged groups; its failure to adopt an expansive economic policy and the lack of definition of its industrial policy; the lack of a budget specifically devoted to employment; and the fact that many of the measures that have been adopted have led to an increase in subsidies to employers and a reduction in benefits to workers. They also criticise the lack of specific objectives and financial support for employment policies developed at an autonomous and local level, which also result partly from the community guidelines.

OBJECTIVES	0			STRAT	EGIES			
	Promotion investment in voca- tional training	Flexibility in work organisa- tion	Wage policies favouring intensive invest- ment in work	Control of the indi- rect costs of work	Fostering self-em- ployment	Improve- ment in the flow of informa- tion be- tween demand and sup- ply of work	Develop- ment of local employ- ment initiatives	Aid to groups threatened with exclu- sion from the labour market
Improvement in the capacity for integration in employment	 Individual- ised careers guidance occupational training training- subsidised employment improvement in vocational training New criteria for certifying professional competence and status 	- New legislation of part-time work		- Tax incentives in recruit- ment of groups with problems of integration - Reduction in the taxation of employ- ment: reform of personal income tax	- Promo- ting self- employ- ment	- Region- alisation of employ- ment services	- Specific plans for labour integration in 25 towns with high unemploy- ment - Promo- ting activi- ties related to new employ- ment locations	- Mobility plan for unemployed workers - Labour integration Law for the socially excluded (prisoners, drug addicts, immigrants)
Development of the enter- prise spirit	- Vocational training for the self- employed				- Promo- tion of a co- operatives law - Legisla- tion to facilitate adminis- trative procedures in company creation Legislation on taxation of the self- employed		- Promo- tion of activities related to the new employ- ment locations	
Fostering the capacity for adaptation of workers and companies Reinforcement of equal opportu- nities policy	- Promoting continuing training.	- New legislation on part- time work			employed			- Law on combining family life and work

Table.2. Most important practices of the National Plans of Action for Employment of the Kingdom of Spain (1998 and 1999), which are linked to the objectives and the main strategic areas of the European guidelines.

d - The development of territorial employment policies is another of the fields of interest in the research, and is related to the previous point insofar as it is wished, for example, to promote the development of «new employment locations» (in the area of «proximity services», improvement of dwellings, leisure, attention to the environment, etc.) as a European guideline, and in Spain this is translated into action at a local level. At this level, the municipalities combine the creation of infrastructures or the providing of services with the promotion of self employment or job creation. They act on the «new employment locations», design training plans for specific groups, create observatories of the local labour market, or promote certain entrepreneurial activities (Jiménez, 1997). For this they receive subsidies through European Union or Autonomous Community programmes to which they belong. These projects have been underway for only a few years and their effect is still small but increasing. They are usually projects («Local Employment Pacts») that are carried out by «meso-concertation» based on an agreement between the municipality and the local employers' organisations and trade unions, or at least with the knowledge and participation of the social partners in some phase of the project.

In a wider context, almost all the Autonomous Communities have also set up job creation initiatives, often linked to the community guidelines. The measures usually consist in economic aid, advice or training aimed at encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit and self-employment, and they are aimed mainly at groups who find it difficult to integrate in the labour market: the young, women, the long-term unemployed, etc. (CIREM, 1998). This type of action by regional governments is often carried out through tripartite agreements, and is usually achieved – at times with difficulty – as a result of trade union initiatives. Few Autonomous Communities promote action on the organisation or reorganisation of working time. This question is considered in Andalusia, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Castilla-León, but very modestly and above all in an attempt to reduce overtime.

Despite the growing importance of regional action at a «meso» level on employment, the research (Martin, 1997; Ochando, 1994) detects a series of problems that limit its effects. These problems include: little coordination between the public administrations (local, regional and state), with overlapping of regulations and incentives, inadequacy of funding to promote local employment policies; poor structuring of the social partners in specific regions; and weakness of the instruments (tax and other types) for promoting local or regional development.

2.2.2. Structural factors and effects: the conditioning features of the Spanish production system, unemployment and precarious employment

A large number of the works in this line have dealt with aspects of the theoretical and political debate on the links between the functioning of industrial relations and certain macroeconomic variables. The analysis, in dichotomous terms, of subordination of industrial relations to political authorities vs. autonomy also forms part of this group. This group also includes works that try to account for unemployment and the structure of the labour market in Spain based on clearly structural, and often economic, factors.

The study of the new forms of employment has been the other object of interest of the studies that fall within this line. In addition to the increasing presence of these types of employment, the fact that numerous research projects take them as a reference has served to revitalise the debate on this subject.

- Types of questions:

Some of the works included here problematise the analysis of the labour market, complexifying it into a dialogue between neo-classical assumptions and other contributions. Some of them underline the unsuitability of the analysis of the labour market in terms of a situation of partial equilibrium. Others make a general and radical refutation of the neo-classical premises, and point to the increasing importance (also in terms of empirical study) of the new forms of employment both for the analysis of the relationship between employment and unemployment and for the analysis of the mechanisms of employment precarisation. The majority of these works are by experts in Labour Economics, but there are also many contributions by sociologists of work.

- Evolution of the debate, research topics and current situation:

The specific research topics are diverse. By monitoring them we can see the situation of the debate in the terms fixed by the questions considered in this line:

- There are studies of the phenomenon of unemployment that emphasise two aspects: there are those which explain unemployment on the basis of structural elements, and those which do so based on the assumption of excessive rigidity (or little internal flexibility, including wage flexibility and external flexibility) of the labour market (Fina 1991 and 1997; Jimeno and Toharia, 1994; Segura et al., 1991).

- Other works on the structure of the labour market focus on the assumptions of the break with the Fordist wage relationship, highlighting the importance of the policies of labour flexibilisation of all types, and social policies aimed at fighting or palliating unemployment (Toharia, 1986; Bilbao 1998 and 1999a).

- Other works approach the structuring of the labour market from the viewpoint of the dynamics of its segmentation. They thus emphasise the centrality of the measures to flexibilise employment and of the characteristics of the Spanish industrial and entrepreneurial system, also stressing the relevance in this respect of the strategies of the social partners, mainly of the employers (Recio, 1988 and 1999). It is also worth mentioning the contributions that deal with the features of industrial relations in the underground economy; with exceptions (Jódar et al., 1998) this subject was mostly dealt with in the late eighties and early nineties (de Alòs, Miguélez and Recio, 1988 and 1990b), and the same is true of those that deal with the effect of economic internationalisation on the Spanish economy and on industrial relations (Recio, 1994b).

- How the characteristics of the Spanish production system and the key macroeconomic variables are related to the centrality of the policies of labour flexibility has constituted a major object of study, as have the links between production segmentation and labour segmentation (Bentolila and Doblado, 1993; Álvarez, 1994).

- Another object of study is the analysis of the changes in the volume of employment, and in particular of the cyclic dynamics of employment and unemployment (Fernández, Garrido and Toharia, 1991), as well as the importance regarding these questions of the measures of external flexibility, which are highly related to the mechanisms of temporary recruitment.

At present the last three of the above points are increasing in importance, though the previous ones have not been abandoned. There is also a certain «division of labour» between sociologists and economists, although on occasions the theoretical approaches that they use are similar and there are even studies which involve a great deal of inter-

disciplinary work (Grup d'Estudis Sociològics sobe la Vida Quotidiana i el Treball, QUIT, 1997).

- Contributions and results of the research:

In general terms, the works that we include in this line are more informative and more explanatory than those of the previous line. Also, most of them deal with subjects «a» and b» of our typology, aimed at studying the processes of development of the new forms of employment and work and their most outstanding effects. The main results of the research can be summarised as follows:

a - The structure of the labour market in Spain, and its evolution in the last few years, allows us to see the central importance of the features of the production system (Fina, 1991), though differences are established in the conditions of employment of different groups, according to their characteristics previous to labour integration and the entrepreneurial and sectoral structure in which they are included. Furthermore, research of this order (Recio, 1994a and 1999) results in the idea that the strong segmentation of the Spanish labour market leads to a series of disadvantaged groups (women, the young, the over 45s, etc.) whose poor situation stems from the criteria of flexibilisation – and at times deregulation – that have guided employment policies.

The main analyses of the Spanish labour market correspond to works belonging to this line, and are largely reflected in the document *«Trends and situation of the forms of employment and labour market in Catalonia»* (April, 1999), drawn up by our group for this same research project. This document presents the main characteristics of the labour market, which we feel do not need to be repeated on these pages. We might merely stress that in spite of the job creation registered in the last few years and the measures dedicated to promoting permanent recruitment, the unemployment rate in Spain at the end of 1998 was over 18% and the temporary employment rate showed that one out of three wage-earners was a temporary employee. Most specialists point out that the evolution of the labour market has been clearly marked by policies of labour flexibilisation and the creation of types of contracts that favour external flexibility, and these data provide them with strong support.

b - The flexibilisation of the employment circuit has perverse effects that are not necessarily desired by any of the actors and that go a long way towards explaining the increase in precarious employment. However, several authors stress the existence of entrepreneurial strategies implicitly aimed at making a large number of jobs precarious (Bilbao, 1998). As we indicated on analysing the literature in quantitative terms according to our typology, the perverse effects have been dealt with on the basis of common premises and in many works. This consensus shows the existence of negative effects of the flexibilisation that leads to certain new forms of employment. On the other hand, the positive ones are more doubtful and are the object of more discussion. We will deal with them in more detail in the third and last line. Here it should be stressed that the researchers agree that labour precariousness (of which temporary recruitment is only one element) is the result of the company practices that give priority to external flexibility over internal flexibility in employment, though they do not abandon the latter.

c - The strategies of the social partners have also been the object of study. From what has been stated so far it is clear that flexibilisation of employment has been an objective of entrepreneurs, taking several forms in the company and favoured by the labour poli-

cies of the different governments. As a general criterion, since the early eighties the employers' organisations have been demanding policies aimed at flexibilising the employment circuit, from the types of contract to the cost of dismissal (Aguar et al., 1999). Their successes in this respect have been evident. But they have not obtained as wide a deregulation of the labour market as they would have wished, especially with regard to dismissal: its cost has been reduced in the successive labour reforms, but the entrepreneurs still consider it to be too high. Their demands for flexible and subsidised recruitment formulas and for measures to develop employment promoted by the government have been largely satisfied. The limits to the employers' objectives have been imposed by the trade unions, and to a lesser extent by the government. Until well into the eighties the government was interested in social concertation, so its attention to the demands of the employers' organisations had to be conjugated - at least partially - with attention to those of the trade unions. Later, though they have still taken into account views of the trade unions to varying extents, the different governments have given priority to the wishes of companies. This means that in practice the question of employment has not been a priority in government policies, which have coincided with company strategies in favouring the adaptation of the production fabric to the new times in terms of company structure, production flexibility and the use of the manpower. For their part, the trade unions have obtained institutional recognition and compensations in social benefits, although the latter with difficulty and less than they would have wished (Jordana, 1998; Miguélez, 1999). Their attempts to fight precarious employment have been not very successful, and only in the last few years have they tried to confront the changes that are taking place in employment and in work, not through centralised political negotiation but through the companies. The change that has been detected in the last few years in the trade union strategy toward decentralisation of collective bargaining is related to this.

d - In the studies on the labour market there is also a more or less widespread agreement that flexibility involves a major alteration of the elasticity of the demand for labour in response to changes in the production situation. This aggravates the cyclic behaviour of employment and can also alter the dynamics of inflation, demand and investment due to the lower availability of income.

2.2.3. Microfounded analyses of the new forms of employment and work: employer policies of manpower management in the framework of changes in the organisation of production and work and the increase in precarious employment

This line is located in third position in the Spanish scientific production on our object of study, partly due to the low level of institutionalisation of sociologists of work and heterodox labour economists, for whom the phenomena that are studied in this line are essential to an understanding of the ways in which the new forms of employment are configured. Furthermore, in the last few years the social partners have begun to note (although the trade unions had been doing so for some time) the negative effects of the measures of labour flexibility, which the studies in this line stress by analysing the reality of the workplaces.

- Types of questions:

These works study the employers' strategies, particularly those that involve temporary employment, and the redefinition of the balance of forces between capital and work. The studies are often based on the theory of the segmentation of the labour market, and the fragmentation of the workforce and of employment situations that is observed in Spain and Catalonia.

- Evolution of the debate, research topics and current situation:

- The configuration of networks of companies, the distribution of the organisation of production and the criteria of flexibility in the use of the manpower that arise from such networks (Martin, 1993 and 1995; Castillo, 1989, 1991 and 1995).

- The effects and state of an increasingly precarious labour market (Alvarez, 1997; Bilbao, 1998; Cano, 1997; Recio 1988 and 1999; Alonso and Blanco, 1999).

- The impact of the most widespread measures of flexible use of manpower within companies, according to key factors such as: the employers' criteria and policies of workforce management, in particular with regard to recruitment (Cachón, 1997a; Prieto, 1991; Carrasquer, Coller and Miguélez, 1993; Grup d'Estudis Sociològics sobre la Vida Quotidiana i el Treball, 1997; Alòs et al., 1991); the relationships between technological innovation, training and employers' requirements (Lope, 1996; Lope et al., 1997; Lope and Martin, 1993a, Casal, 1997); and the economic situation (Fernández, Garrido and Toharia, 1991). With similar emphasis, the structure of the unemployed population (Prieto, 1994; Cantó, 1997, Torns, 1999; Torns, Carrasquer and Romero, 1995) and the importance of trade union action in the definition, correction or mitigation of measures of labour flexibility (Lope, 1990; de Alòs and Lope, 1991; Aragon, 1994; Lope and de Alòs, 1999; Martin, 1995, etc.) are studied.

- Negotiated exchanges of external or quantitative flexibility for internal flexibility in the use of the workforce in collective bargaining and in pacts of specific companies, generally large ones, are also studied (García Murcia, 1998a; Falguera and López Bulla, 1997; Martin and Alós, 1999; Martin and Jódar, 1999).

These are currently the most important aspects of analysis in Spanish Sociology of Work, and to a lesser extent in some of the literature of the economists. Furthermore, they are indissociable, in terms of analytical and empirical intelligibility, from the increasing autonomy of the actors of industrial relations, from the parallel importance of collective bargaining and plural concertation and meso-concertation, and from the structural phenomena that characterise the labour market and the Spanish production and entrepreneurial fabric.

- Contributions and results of the research:

The works that fall within this line deal mainly with areas «a» and «b» of our typology (those concerning the process of installation of the new forms of employment and work and their effects). However, they also analyse the reactions and strategies of the social partners at a «micro» level of the company and workplace, and the experiences of regulation of the new ways of using manpower in companies. The literature of this line has a greater theoretical-explanatory content than those of the other two lines that we have considered. Its main contributions are the following:

a - This type of literature insists that the production centre and workplace are the key units of analysis for studying the dynamics of the new forms of employment and work. It is pointed out that the employment characteristics of the diverse groups of workers and their risk of exposure to unemployment partially depend on the production sector in which they are employed. However, other questions bear an influence on this, such as the position of the company in the network of inter-company relationships of which it may form part, the qualifications and the training required by the management, the degree of technological innovation that is applied, etc., and also the strong influence that organised trade union action may have on employment conditions. These factors are basic for explaining the situation and prospects of the diverse groups and also affect the employers' strategies.

b – Employers' strategies are guiding the direction of the changes in the forms of employment and work. The positions of the trade unions and of the workers are usually reactive and defensive. They arise after the company management undertakes specific initiatives, frequently in the environment of contractual flexibility and outsourcing, and are based on trying to conserve the existing employment and part of the benefits associated with it. Most of the research works agree on these questions and also point to the prevalence in the managerial world of tendencies to minimise the cost of manpower by means of external flexibility.

c - The negative effects of the new forms of employment associated with flexibility include the high degree of rotation of the workforce in Spain (mainly due to temporary recruitment), which means that there are fewer stable workers with experience in the company. This is to the detriment of the possibility of increasing productivity and taking advantage of technological innovation or internal mobility (Prieto, 1991; Lope 1996a). It also involves the repetition of training costs and is without doubt one of the negative effects of the flexibilisation process that is not desired by any of the actors, even by the employers. The difficulty of training workers who remain in their job for a short time, the increase in the industrial accident rate (which continues to rise and particularly affects sectors in which temporary employment is higher), and the uncertainties regarding daily life that arise from casual employment (Lope and Martín, 1993a and 1993b) are other major negative effects. There is also an increase in commercial contracts that replace a salaried employment relationship, as a consequence of outsourcing and increasing flexibility in companies. This involves less regulation of working conditions and fewer possibilities of collective action and protection.

The positive effects are underlined far less in the studies. The greatest argument in this order refers to the idea that the contractual formulas used in the new forms of employment give access to employment to groups that would otherwise find it difficult to obtain productive employment. The increase, though slight, in the activity rate of women and the reduction in unemployment of young people in the last few years are data in favour of this argument, but it is usually accompanied by a complementary argument: flexibility as a necessary factor for companies to be competitive. The best adaptation between the use of time in daily life and time devoted to work fostered by some of the new forms of employment (such as temporary employment for students or part-time employment for women) are also indicated as positive effects. However, if this positive consideration is to correspond to reality, these forms of employment must be a matter of personal choice and not imposed by company strategies or the conditions of the labour

market (Grup d'Estudis Sociològics sobre la Vida Quotidiana i el Treball, 1997). Regarding the positive effects of the new forms of work organisation (greater qualification, job «enrichment», greater participation, etc.), the research points out that these practices are not very common, and that the beneficiaries are usually specific groups (technicians, middle managers and workers who occupy important jobs in the company) and are a minority.

Finally, though the research stresses the negative effects of the new forms of employment, at times this is not so much due to their design as to the way in which they are used in companies.

d - Particularly in the last few years, mechanisms of regulation of the forms of employment and work in which the trade unions intervene have been observed in some companies, although, as stated above, they normally act from a defensive position. This is related to the tendency to take industrial relations to the company level that we have already mentioned. In the negotiation between the social partners, mainly in large companies, a new dynamics is observed in terms of exchange of quantitative or external flexibility for internal flexibility (conversion of temporary workers into permanent workers in exchange for an increase in functional mobility or flexible working hours, for example), which attempts in diverse ways to deal with the negative effects of the widespread use of external flexibility and precarious employment. Thus, in company agreements or pacts since the mid-nineties there has been an increase in the number of clauses devoted to the conversion of temporary jobs into permanent jobs and, to a lesser extent, clauses referring to job maintenance or creation. The compensations for the employers are flexibility in working hours and working time, a greater number of shifts, lower wages for new employees (a double wage scale), improved productivity, etc. But agreements including these clauses are still a minority, affecting less than 10% of the workers who have a company agreement (García Murcia, 1998), and they are found mainly in large companies with a strong trade union presence and a favourable economic situation, and those that are undergoing important technical changes or changes in the organisation of the company and production.

This dynamics of regulation is related to the structural factors analysed in the second line that we have considered, and to another series of phenomena that are pointed out by the research works:

- the dualisation of the labour market promoted by the decentralisation of production and networks of companies, which favour outsourcing (Castillo, 1992 and 1995).
- the dual policies of workforce management that clearly differentiate between management of «central» workers in the environment of the company and «peripheral» works, an aspect which is very marked in the Spanish companies.
- the importance and influence of trade union action in the workplace, which is very low in the small companies that are predominant in Spain and Catalonia:.
- the slowness of Spanish companies in overcoming Taylorist-Fordist work organisation, which means that they tend to resort to external flexibility rather than promoting significant changes tending towards a greater use of the capacities of the employees in the workplace.

e - As a summary of many of the aspects dealt with in this line, it should be pointed out that research in this area shows that there is no direct relationship between the de-

velopment of the new forms of employment and the development of the new forms of work, especially when the latter involve significant changes from the Taylorist-Fordist criteria of organisation and management. It is true that there are companies that combine them, as in some forms of telework that also involve new forms of employment and work organisation. But the use of flexible forms of recruitment is far more widespread than the use of new forms of work, so it is not surprising that a study of this gives the name «good employment practices» (Martín and Jódar, 1999) to the few cases that are detected in which job creation is combined with organisational changes that tend to «to enrich» the work. This contradicts the discourse of employers, in which changes in the forms of employment and work are presented as mechanisms aimed at involving and motivating wage-earners. However, the results of the research (Lope, 1996a; Lope and Martín, 1993a) show that this involvement is only pursued for a very limited part of the workforce (the part which the company considers «central») and relatively few companies develop policies in this direction. Most of the changes points to the search for mechanisms of external flexibility or those of internal flexibility that do not involve major modifications to the more traditional criteria of work organisation.

4. SUMMARY: MAIN ABSENCES IN THE LITERATURE

In general, it can be said that Spanish scientific production on our object of study has increased progressively. The previous sections consider the main contributions that have been made. In this last section, we will consider the most importance absences and the excessive number of works using descriptive approaches in the three lines of this scientific production.

One of the major shortcomings is the lack of literature dealing specifically with the new dynamics of concertation on employment at a local level, though some texts do deal with these questions (Subirats 1987; Sanronma, 1990;, Martín and Jódar, 1999; Ochando, 1994 and Albers, 1994). However, it is also true that these texts are supplemented with more recent studies on the «new sources of employment» carried out at a local level, and frequently as a result of the interaction of the social partners at that level. These studies have become more common in the last few years (Cachón, 1997b and 1999; Casado, 1996; CIREM, 1997 and 1998), in a faithful reflection of the recent relevance of this question in terms of employment.

At a more specific level, the areas in which the volume of literature is relatively low in relation to the importance of the object of study could be schematised as follows.

One area is the analysis of the relationships between the collective actors of industrial relations and phenomena such as the recent exchanges between external and internal flexibility that take place in certain companies through bargaining, and to a lesser extent through sectoral collective agreements. Furthermore, the analysis of active employment policies is not usually linked to the analysis of structural phenomena or other aspects that would fill it with explanatory content.

Another important aspect is that the empirical studies on companies continue to favour the secondary sector. There are few studies on workplaces of the service sector, except for studies that are carried out on the most traditional ones such as the financial sector. However, it is also true that there is growing interest in the problem of the tertiary sector, and sectoral monographs and case studies on this have already appeared. In the same sense, though groups such as the young and women are increasingly being studied in more depth, especially the latter, there are other groups emerging from the new employment context that have received very little attention. Thus, self-employed workers and the collective action of precarious workers and the unemployed have received less attention than would be desirable.

In the last few years a series of tendencies have been detected that allow the explanatory quality of the research into some questions to be improved. This is the case with the (necessary) tendency to overcome dichotomous conceptions concerning the problem of social concertation. The opposition between pluralism and neo-corporativism is giving way to a focus on the networks that explain the agreements and the resulting public policies, at different levels and in different combinations of political exchange between the social partners. The same is true of the more specific study of the new forms of employment and work. There is a tendency to complexify the analysis of the negative effects of the widespread introduction of those changes in Spain, interrelating the transformations in the organisation of production, of the company and of work with the new forms of employment, a question that involves the analysis of the relationships between the construction of the internal and external segments of the employment markets with which the company interacts.

In conclusion, the Spanish scientific production fails to deal with some aspects that we approach in our research, or only deals with them in few cases. However, it is paying increasing attention to them and shows a greater degree of theoretical and analytic depth that increases the quality and explanatory rigour of the studies. The contributions and research results that we have indicated for each of the three lines of research are a good proof of this.

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