

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF WORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN SPAIN

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### 1.- THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

An adequate understanding of the recent developments of work and organizational psychology in Spain needs some references to the economical, political and social factors and changes experienced throughout the last decade.

The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) led to a dictatorial regime under the leadership of General Franco which lasted until 1975. Many years had to pass before the beginning of an economical and industrial development and a progressive recovery of scientific activities at the Universities. The increase of the standard of living as in other european countries, was an important factor which contributed to the modification of the spanish social structure, building up a wide middle class lacking in its previous history.

The beginning of a democratic regime, after Franco's death (1975) was supported by a great majority of the spaniards with the resistance created by extremist groups at both extremes. Anyway, during this last decade spanish society appears as a modern and democratic society in the mediterranean area, with a very prestigious Crown, not very large political parties, and carrying on an administrative

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decentralization process that gives place to regional autonomous Governments instead of the old centralization,

Nevertheless, terrorism, a strong economical crisis, and a high level of unemployment (about the 20 per cent of its active population) are the main real problems of the present spanish social life.

Spanish industries, needing technological or organizational changes and more competitive structure, are suffering a process of reconversion and with it, high levels of conflict leaded by new and influential trade unions.

It is also noteworthy the new developments of universities with the introduction of new and more technical studies that are creating a new framework for the relationships between industries and universities and the development of applied research. All of these events are framing the present activities of organizational and work psychologists. But before introducing ourselves into its study it is necessary to take a short look to the long tradition of industrial psychology in Spain.

## 2.- THE BACKGROUND OF WORK PSYCHOLOGY IN SPAIN

From a historical perspective it is easy to find important antecedents of Scientific Work Psychology in Spain. In the XVI Century the work of Juan HUARTE *Examen de los Ingenios* (1575) aimed to study "the way people use their talent to choose the more helpful science" that made of him a clear "father" of the psychology of human differences and of the professional and vocational guidance psychology (PINILLOS, 1975, GERMAIN, 1980).

Nevertheless, it was only at the ending of XIX Century when scientific psychology was introduced in Spain by some progressive groups of intellectuals (CARPINTERO, 1980; 1982; SIGUAN, 1981; YELA, 1976) specially interested in a pedagogical renovation. Soon after, the developments of psychiatry and neurology by authors such as Santiago RAMON y CAJAL, Ramón TURRO or Gonzalo RODRIGUEZ LAFORA, propitiated the development of the mental hygiene movement interested in the problems of work safety and hygiene.

## 3.- WORK PSYCHOLOGY IN THE FIRST THIRD OF THE XX CENTURY

At the beginnings of the XX Century the needs of a country with increasing industrialization and with pressures to a more just socioeconomic order (CARR, 1966) found a first answer with the creation of some public institutions in which work psychology developed. Barcelona, the first industrial city in Spain was the best place for a "Museo Social" (directed by José TALLADA) soon enlarged with the creation of a "Secretariat d'Aprenentatge" (1914) under the direction of RUIZ CASTELLA, that finally became the "Institut d'Orientació Professional" (1917) where TRIAS FARGAS DE BES and Emilio MIRA y LOPEZ began to work in 1919. Since 1920 the *Anal's of l'Institut d'Orientació Professional* begun to be published. Latter on, the "Institut d'Orientació" had an increasing development and in 1927 E. MIRA was appointed as its director carrying on research about selection and vocational guidance, profesigraphic profiles, temperament and personality differences (KIRCHNER, 1979; 1981).

Also in Barcelona two International Conferences of Applied Psychology took place in 1921 and in 1930.

Meanwhile, in Madrid an "Instituto de Reeducación Profesional para Inválidos del Trabajo" at Carabanchel (Madrid) was established under the direction of César de MADARIAGA and G.R. LAFORA. It aimed at the professional rehabilitation (CALATAYUD, 1978) and a service of professional guidance was soon established (1924) creating the basis for the new "Instituto de Selección y Orientación Profesional" (Madrid, 1924) under the direction of GERMAIN, a student of MYERS and BARTLETT. Selection and professional guidance, psychological measurement, road security and driving behavior attracted the attention of researchers during the 30's. Linked to that Institute a "Comité Nacional de la Organización Científica del Trabajo" was also functioning since 1928 integrated in the International Committee of Scientific Organization founded at Praga in 1924.

At this time some specialized journals began to be published as the *Memorias Científicas del Instituto de Madrid* (since 1924) the *Revista de Medicina del Trabajo e Higiene Industrial* (since, 1930) and the *Revista de Organización Científica del Trabajo*.

Both Institutes were in close connection with foreign centers; the influential presence of CLAPARÉDE, LAHY, MYERS, PONZO, PIERON and many others can easily be detected here.

#### 4.- THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR AND POST-WAR PERIOD

The war represented a strong cut of cultural and scientific life in our country. In the case of Psychology both Institutes (Madrid and Barcelona) were closed and many intellectuals had to go into exile as E. MIRA, G. RODRIGUEZ LAFORA, J. ORTEGA, G. MARAÑÓN, J. XIRAU, L. LUZURIAGA, among others.

Under Franco's regime psychology was oriented within philosophical lines and a thomistic conception supported by the Catholic Church was dominating the Universities. In this framework the scientific psychology moved with difficulties. Activities were slowly reinitiated by the Institute of Madrid under the direction of a physician, Dr. IBARROLA, who edited the new journal *Psicotecnia* (1939-1945). In Barcelona, the Institute renewed their activities under the direction of BORRAS PARIS. Nevertheless, the absence of some eminent psychologists and the recent breaking of the scientific tradition created an impoverished climate only to be overcome after many years of efforts.

#### 5.- THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TRADITION OF SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY IN SPAIN

In 1944 a course in psychology was introduced in the curriculum of medical studies and also in the philosophical and pedagogical ones. In 1945 Experimental Psychology was incorporated as a subject matter in the teacher's curriculum. This fact promoted, little by little, the basis for the recuperation of Experimental Psychology in Spain. In the same direction are to be mentioned the incorporation of several psychological courses related with commercial function at the High Mercantile Studies School in 1948, requested by the VI Congress of these professionals held at Barcelona

during that year (*R.P.G.A.*, 1949).

Dr. GERMAIN, linked again to the Institute of Madrid went on with the transformation of the Journal *Psicotecnia* into a more general publication which would include more theoretical and experimental papers together with those of applied character. So the *Revista de Psicología General y Aplicada* was found in 1946 being Dr. GERMAIN its editor. It is at present, the oldest of our living journals.

As long as a philosophical psychology was dominating the universities the scientific psychology began to recover, under GERMAIN's leadership, in a small Department created in 1948 at the C.S.I.C. in Madrid. This is the true seed to the later recovery of the psychological tradition and the basis of its present development in our country, M. YELA, J.L. PINILLOS, M. SIGUAN, J. PERTEJO, F. SECADAS, A. ALVAREZ-VILLAR, J. FORTEZA, and UBEDA were its members and some of them have later played a decisive role in the academic institutionalization of this discipline.

In 1948 an "Instituto Nacional de Racionalización del Trabajo" was also created in the frame of the C.S.I.C. (*R.P.G.A.*, 1952) and in 1950 GERMAIN initiated the requirements for the constitution of the Spanish Society of Psychology, finally approved in 1952, he being elected as its first president (GERMAIN, 1980). By the same years the "Latin American Association for Efficiency and Work Satisfaction" was established (1951). Their aims were welfare, safety, health and work satisfaction as the basis of creativity and productivity. This Association published monthly monographies related to practical questions of organizational and industrial psychology and also published a book series on Scientific Organization at work and ergonomics (MALLART, 1981).

An important step was taken with the creation of a professional School of Psychology and Psychotechnics (1953) for postgraduate students. This school offered 2 years of specialized training with three specialties in school, industry and clinical psychology. "The idea was to establish the undergraduate studies of psychology that could lead to a degree and after to graduate studies...The bachelor's degree would give to the students the basic formation and a first step in the specialized studies. The School would offer later the professional training and practice in different fields of applied psychology. So far, in 1953 the authorities approved the creation of the School but not the creation of the previous course of studies, the bachelor's degree. So we started "to built the house by the roof" (YELA, 1982, 290).

A few years later, another similar School of Psychology was also created in the University of Barcelona directed by SIGUAN and only with educational and industrial specialties. Clinical Psychology was taught at the same time in the School of Clinical Psychology attached to the Faculty of Medicine and directed by Prof. SARRO.

In short, by the sixties Spanish Psychology could exhibit a research center the Department of Experimental Psychology in the C.S.I.C., two centers of applied psychology, the Institutes in Madrid and Barcelona with agencies distributed among all the provinces; two teaching centers focused on post-graduate training in Madrid and Barcelona; a scientific society, the Spanish Psychological Society with its branches of educational, clinical and industrial psychology and a specialized journal:

The *Journal of General and Applied Psychology*. All together they created the conditions for a new consolidation of research, teaching and professional activities of spanish psychologists.

## 6.- THE COMING OF AGE OF SPANISH WORK PSYCHOLOGY

Along the sixties a progressive development of the academic and research activities of Psychology took place at the Universities and made possible the creation of a degree in psychology in 1968 at the Universities of Madrid and Barcelona.

I will try to summarize here some of the more significant contributions due to spanish researchers during those years. Within the field of industrial psychology, as in other fields, we can find important contributions made by GERMAIN, YELA, SIGUAN, PINILLOS, and also by FORTEZA, PASCUAL, MALLART or CERDA.

GERMAIN played an important role in the introduction of Psychology into the Spanish Air Force specially for the selection of pilots in cooperation with the Air Forces psychologists of the USA (GERMAIN, 1980).

YELA worked also on selection (YELA, 1956), productivity, motivation and capacity (YELA, 1953) and general aspects of human work in organizations (YELA, 1954, 1974, 1977, 1978).

SIGUAN played an important role in the introduction of the Human Relations movement in our country (SIGUAN, 1963) he has also contributed to the knowledge of recent works of industrial and organizational psychology (MAIER, GARDNER, WHITE, KNOWLES, BRECH, GUION, MILLER and FORM, etc.) as editor of a specialized book series.

PINILLOS also cooperated with GERMAIN and PASCUAL on selection of personnel for the Air Forces (GERMAIN et al. 1958) and did important research on human relations in Industry (PINILLOS et al. 1959), work motivation (PINILLOS, 1963), on human consequences of technological changes (PINILLOS, 1977) and on the social industrial psychology (PINILLOS, 1965).

FORTEZA is a well known psychologist by his studies on motivation at work (FORTEZA, 1971; 1975) ergonomic aspects of work (FORTEZA, 1975) and developmental aspects of labour activity, specially in old people (FORTEZA, 1983).

MALLART has worked in organizational psychology from a psychotechnic approach and paying attention to the problems of the scientific organization of work. He has also played an active role in the Spanish Society of Psychology and in the Latin America Association of Efficiency and Work satisfaction.

We shall also mention here the work done by E. CERDA (1960) who contributed to the spreading of the knowledge on applied psychology in our country.

In general, the research developed in Spain between 1950 and 1965 has been grouped by PINILLOS (1965) in the following topics: a) studies on attitudes in the labour world, b) studies on group dynamics in the companies, c) studies on human aspects of the industrial development, d) human problems in industrial work, and e) motivation at work. The authors mentioned by their contributions are mainly

psychologists as SIGUAN, MALLART and FORTEZA or sociologists as CASTILLO, LINZ or Amando de MIGUEL.

Together with these contributions it is necessary to have in mind the increasing number of professionals trained in the Psychology Schools of Madrid and Barcelona who worked as industrial psychologists in different spanish organizations. A review of the *Proceedings* of the early three Congresses of Spanish Society of Psychology could show the level of implantation and development of work psychology during the sixties and the begining of the seventies.

## 7.- RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

During the last decade psychological research in Spain has reached an important development. This is also true in regard to the specific area of work and organizational psychology, although it has not been paralleled by the university courses. This research is being carried out in various centers.

### 7.1.- MAIN RESEARCH CENTERS AND GROUPS

#### A) UNIVERSITIES

In the last years spanish universities have developed some research activities of theoretical and applied interest on this subject matter.

First, in the Psychology and Psychotechnics School of the Complutense University of Madrid directed by Mariano YELA and José FORTEZA heading the Industrial and Work psychology section (3) some doctoral dissertations and research projects on motivation at work, stress, work satisfaction and organizational change has been carried out.

Also in the Department of Social Psychology (headed by professor JIMENEZ BURILLO) has been made some doctoral dissertations on organizational development; and the Differential and Developmental Psychology Department, headed by professor FORTEZA has carried on some research projects and doctoral dissertations on work motivation, stress at work, absenteeism and work accidents. Dr. TORREGROSA professor on Social Psychology at the Faculty of Political Sciences and Sociology has carried on some research on unemployment, safety and accidents ar work.

In the Central University of Barcelona and within the General Psychology Department, professor MATEU and their colleagues (S. QUIJANO and E. QUIÑONES, the later now at the University of Murcia) have studied organizational development, management development, and other aspects of quality of working life.

At the University of Valencia some doctoral dissertations on Traffic and Road Security Psychology and on the theoretical perspectives of organizational psychology as reflected by *Annual Review of Psychology* (1950-1977) have been directed by professor CARPINTERO; their authors are currently doing specialized research; so Dr. SOLER, with Dr. TORTOSA have continued studies on road security and traffic psychology. Dr. QUINTANILLA has developed studies on work satisfaction

and on personnel selection. Finally, professor PEIRO, head of the Department of General Psychology is carrying on some research about role behavior and its effects for role incumbents and their organizations. He also is starting a research project on stress at work.

At the Autonoma University of Madrid, Dr. P. RIDRUEJO, professor on Social Psychology has directed a doctoral dissertation on organizational conflict and has developed some research projects on ergonomics and their usefulness for integrating handicapped people to work and organizations.

In other universities there are also current research programs in this area. So in Granada, within the Social Psychology Department, under the direction of professor MORALES, some works are being done on social applied psychology (unemployment, cooperatives, etc.) by A. RODRIGUEZ. In Sevilla, we also find similar efforts at the Social Psychology Department headed by professor S. BARRIGA. In Salamanca, E. GARRIDO and J.L. FERNANDEZ-SEARA have done some studies about unemployment, professional guidance and road safety. At the University of La Laguna, FUERTES and QUINTANA are working on job evaluation within the framework established by McCORMICK.

As we can see, there is recently a widespread interest on organizational psychology, but time must pass before we may evaluate their results.

#### B) GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTES

Some governmental agencies, generally dependent of the Ministry of Labour are also carrying out applied research. So the Instituto Nacional de Empleo (National Institute of Employment), that enrolls many psychologists from all over the country, studies problems of youth unemployment, the effects for workers of industrial reorganization, personnel recruitment and selection.

Other than this, the Instituto Nacional de Seguridad e Higiene en el Trabajo (National Institute for Safety and Work Hygiene) has developed some studies on ergonomics, work psychopathology (intoxications, alcoholism, etc.) and accident prevention.

#### C) PRIVATE INSTITUTES

Some of these centers have developed minor and occasional research but we must here mention T.E.A., with a well known research department where a great number of psychological tests and other organizational assessment instruments have been translated and adapted to the spanish population.

There is also a Transactional Analysis Institute (directed by SENLLE) that has developed its own techniques on human relations and conflict resolution. Other centers as ESADE (with HUSERMMAN) or Bernard KRIEFF Consultants (with MERINO) have also made some contributions.

#### D) PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISES

It is hard to evaluate the research done by enterprises and consulting centers, as their reports are of confidential nature and have very restricted diffusion. In the most cases their research is occasional and not framed in very strict conceptual lines but this fact does not necessarily remove them from worth and merit. We will detect some of these works through the analysis of the Proceedings of recent congresses dealing with these subject-matters.

We shall mention works related to health and work hygiene and personnel selection problems in a time of economic crisis (by IRAETA and ZUFIAUR in RENFE, Spanish Railways Co.). There are also some studies on training, personnel selection and organizational climate done at the CTNE (Spanish Telephone Co.). The Spanish car industry (FASA-Renault, General Motors, Citroen, Talbot, Ford and Motor Iberica) has developed psychological work on quality circles; FASA-Renault has also been interested in more general questions of organizational development.

IBM has developed studies on work climate, survey feedback and quality circles; Roberto ZUBIRI S.A. has studied semiautonomous groups of work (POBLETE); Tecmaton has focused on technology and organizational change and learning (GARIJO) and Sevillana de Electricidad (with DOMINGUEZ) has payed attention to conflict and work accident prevention.

Other than this we have to mention Insurance Companies such as Mapfre or Cyclops that have developed an important activity on work psychopathology and accident prevention.

In brief, we can find two large orientations of research on work and organizational psychology in Spain: the once rooted into the academic world, and the other coming from public and private agencies and enterprises. Although there in some relationships between both lines (some people act as academic members and professional psychologists) this interaction is still weak and not well institutionalized. Efforts are to be made to establish new research and service contracts between universities and industry.

#### 7.2.- RESEARCH SUBJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS

This information must be completed with the study of the papers presented on our subject matters at the psychology congresses in Spain during the last decades (3). The results offer an adjusted view of the differential weight of its main topics (TABLE I).

The main topic appears to be Development and Change in Organizations. Within it we find many papers influenced by the Organizational Development Movement, other by the transactional analysis point of view and other by Tavistock approach. There are also papers influenced by the behavior modification approach and recently, the Japanese organizational psychology (specially quality circles) has been taken here into account.

**TABLE I : SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION OF PAPERS ON WORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY DELIVERED IN RECENT SPANISH CONGRESSES OF PSYCHOLOGY\***

	N	%
<b>Selection and Training</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>16.73</b>
Selection	10	
Guidance	7	
Training	25	
Professional Socialization	1	
Human Recourses	1	
<b>Motivation, Satisfacion, Life Quality</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10.64</b>
Motivation	14	
Satisfacion	3	
Attituds	5	
Work climate	3	
Quality working life	3	
<b>Behavior at work, psychopathology, and work accidents</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15.20</b>
Productivity, performance and absenteeism	5	
Role performance and their effects	3	
Accidents prevention	2	
Work psychopathology	6	
Ergonomics	4	
<b>Human Relation and Conflict</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10.26</b>
Leadership and Supervision	4	
Industrial relationships	3	
Conflict, tension and bargaining	18	
Communication in organizations	1	
Power in organizations	1	
<b>Unemployment and industrial reconversion: Psychological effects</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8.74</b>
Stoppage and industrial reconversion	23	
<b>Organization and environment</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.76</b>
Organizational structure	1	
Environmental organization	1	

TABLE I (Continuación)

	N	%
Psychological Assessment in organizations	5	1.90
Organizational Development and Change	68	25.85
Organizational change	11	
Technological change	6	
Analysis and tasks redesign	10	
Behavior modification	4	
Organizational Development	17	
Management Development	7	
Semiautonomous groups, participation and cooperativism	4	
Quality circles	6	
Consultings (internal or external)	3	
Specific Areas	26	9.88
Commercial Psychology	7	
Traffic Psychology and Road Security	13	
Military Psychology	2	
Psychology of penitentiary organizations	4	
Total	263	

\*Source: See Note 3

The second area is personnel selection and training, which has a long tradition in Spain. In recent decades new instruments and technologies have been incorporated. Nevertheless, there are no relevant theoretical contributions in the field.

Third, we find the topics related to work behavior (like absenteeism, productivity, accidents, etc.). We see here an important influence of French work in psychopathology and ergonomics (LEPLAT, CUNY, SIVADON, DORNA, and others).

There is a large number of papers dealing with motivation and work attitudes. Here humanistic theories are predominant (HERZBERG, MASLOW, ALDERFER...), need achievement (McCLELLAND) but those of expectancy (VROOM, LAWLER) and goal setting (LOCKE) theories are also present. More recently, studies on work climate and quality of working life (DAVIES, DE CHERNS) have been developed. The area of human relations and conflict has also received attention. The study of conflict levels, collective bargaining and the role of third parts in it have also been considered, within the models of THOMAS, PONDY, WALTON or FAUVET (FERNANDEZ RIOS).

A great number of studies are also dealing with the psychological effects of unemployment. Other recent specific developments are the works on traffic psychology and road security, commercial psychology and marketing.

There are very few studies on organizational structure, relations between organizations and environments, decision making, power, and communication processes and networks.

As far as the research on work and organizational psychology consolidates in Spain, studies on methodology are currently appearing (MORALES, 1981; PRIETO, 1982; ANGUERA, 1983).

Briefly, organizational psychology in Spain is being developed but needs consolidation. In this task the University Departments may play an important role.

## 8.- FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

It is difficult to predict the future of organizational psychology in Spain although some trends could be inferred from the facts already mentioned. First of all there is a social group of active professionals and trained psychologists working in the field and promoting the consolidation of this specialty in Spanish enterprises.

The recent transformation of the Spanish universities may favour a greater development of teaching and research in the field, but here we are only at the beginning. The specialized training of professionals should not be left to instances outside the University. In my opinion, the dissociation between academic and professional worlds is disfunctional and impoverishing. On the contrary it is necessary to intensify the weak relationship between the research centers (at universities) and psychologists working in organizations in order to increase the development of applied psychology research.

The research in this area should take into account theoretical advances, new conceptual models and methods recently developed and not limiting itself to occasional efforts.

An enlargement of research topics also is needed; some important aspects are lacking in Spanish research (communication processes, decision making, power and hierarchy, groups in organizations, technology and structure, work and women, etc.). Finally, a close connection of Spanish researchers and professionals with foreign research centers, and scientific societies is needed.

#### NOTES

- (1) The author gratefully acknowledges the contribution of Dr. Carpintero who made many useful comments on an earlier draft of this manuscript. Thanks also are due to Dr. Prieto and Mateu for their help and informations and to Monleon for his help in translation task.
- (2) Other lecturers specialized in work psychology are Linaza (psychopathology at work and labour accidents), Medina (Sociotechnological aspects mainly from the Tavistock perspective), Ordoñez (training and motivation), V. Pérez (job enrichment and cultural and anthropological views) and A. Yebra (work conflict and bargaining). All these authors combine their teaching and research activities with professional practices at big public or private enterprises (CEPSA, La Estrella de Seguros; FEMSA, Dragados y Construcciones, etc.).
- (3) The congresses considered are: VI National Congress of Psychology (Pamplona, 1979); VII National Congress of Psychology (Santiago, 1982); I National Congress on Work Psychology (Madrid, 1983), I Congress of the Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos (Madrid, 1984); I Congress of Psychological Assessment (Madrid, 1984).

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