

Work Ethos or Counter-ideology of Work?

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Abstract

While attempting to answer a question in the title of this paper first of all, basic intentions that inspired to formulate such a topic should be explained. The bottom line is whether in the reflections of representatives of sociology of work or sociology of economy, referring to contextual perception and analysis of labour relations in Poland, some focus should be put on the issues concerning redefining the essence and content of work ethos, or rather on an analysis of a set of factors, both of endogenic and exogenous nature, which contribute to a broadly understood counter-ideology of work. Therefore, this paper presents an attempt to indicate twofold types of phenomena and processes; on the one hand, those that influence a process of individualization and fragmentation of work ethos in Poland; on the other one, those which affect content of major motivation and interpretation schemes mentioned by employees, which may become presumptions to the development of counter-ideology of work. In such circumstances, a role of work ethos in creating economic harmony, which is a special case of axionormative harmony, decreases significantly and loses its explicitly social character while increasingly becoming only one of dimensions of individual identity, professional biography or a personality profile of an individual.

Key words: work ethos, counter-ideology of work, market labour system, work content, form of work, form of employment, freelancing

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Introduction

A basic problem that arises while trying to identify such phenomena and processes, particularly while attempting to show their moderating impact on work ethos and counter-ideology, is that a repertoire of leading notions and terms used so far in the analysis of opinions, attitudes and behaviour patterns referring to work, understood as a set of relatively systematic, sequentially undertaken by an individual, activities, perceived and undertaken by both, representatives of employees' world as well as employers' world, is no longer sufficient. It, first of all, results from the fact that significant changes have occurred, both in the content of contemporary work as well as in forms of work or employment (see more in Walczak-Duraj, 2011a, 2011b, 2014). That is why increasingly often in social sciences (sociology and economics, in particular) one can observe two distinct approaches to defining and analyzing work as such. In one of these approaches work is perceived subjectively and individuals performing work are treated mostly in a category of human resources that have to be managed appropriately. In the other approach that can be described as humanistic, yet, not in a traditional meaning, one can find more diverse interpretations referring not only to social effects of work, but its treatment it as a form of human activity that not only changes a man and diverse social micro-worlds of specific categories or professional groups, but it also serves to build own identity. What constitutes, first of all, a characteristic outline of this approach is a language referring to a description of work, full of marketing and auto-creative stylistics, in which quite incidentally, relations to a group and ethical perspective appear. What must be also indicated are polysemy and extent of the notion of work used in numerous sociological sub-disciplines, in particular in contemporary interpretative sociology that develops e.g. a concept of work over identity (see, inter alia, Strauss 1985). In that last approach a notion of work is treated as a set of actions connected with using specific interactive strategies by an individual, whereas individual's biography is treated, above all, as a specific *case study* of a life career (including professional career) – see, inter alia, E. Hughes (2009).

A separate and extremely important issue here are methodological matters that result from multiparadigmatism of sociology related mainly to the development of the most adequate research methods and techniques used to diagnose broadly understood issues relating to experience of work of an individual, including a place of work in an individual's system of values. The basic problem is that quantitative, standardized research methods and techniques that often fulfill a requirement of

representativeness (e.g. a survey or a questionnaire interview used by majority of institutions conducting surveys) for various reasons are not able to provide sufficiently deepened results so that processes or phenomena that on the one hand, concur to individualization of work ethos, and on the other one, to explicit symptoms of counter-ideology of work, could be identified on their basis.

1. From Social to Individualizing Work Ethos

In current traditional approaches, usually in line with etymology, a notion of ethos was generally of culture and group nature. Work ethos referred mainly to relatively consistent system of values, norms, group attitudes and behaviour patterns, in which highly valued work and its leading attributes were the basic criterion of moral evaluation of an individual and a basic rule organizing social life. Here, a classic example is an autobiographical and at the same time, ethnographic study by Jan Szczepański entitled *Korzeniami wrosłem w ziemię* (2003), in which that prominent figure of Polish sociology wrote about work in the following words (many a time using a term – labour): ‘A man lived in order to work i.e. to perform work allocated to them. Labour was the most significant part of their life. ... It was also a measurement of individual’s value, everyday test of their capabilities. ... Besides labour was a confirmation of a moral value of a chieftain and his family. A hard-working man was a good man. It was labour that constituted religious alliance with God... Labour that was too exhausting was a torment offered to God. Fruits of labour that brought wealth and satisfaction, richness and comfort were signs of God’s kindness. Additionally, labour determined a place of a man, particularly, a family, in a local community’ (Szczepański 2003: 34–35). A complement to these analyses, in which work ethos represented a general framework of community lifecycle, habits, life style in its various forms, can be a fragment concerning such a simple activity, nowadays deprived of any additional meanings, as washing: ‘Washing – it was an activity of washing linen and a word „prodło” meant all washed items but first of all, washing was a sublime ritual performed according to tradition, carefully, accurately, almost reverently. Cleanness of body, underwear, linen, floors, cleanness of whitewashed walls – everything altogether became almost a symbol and indicated purity of a man’s soul. Cleanness of worn items was a kind of a measurement of a man’s value. Hence, one can talk about the dignity of washing’ (Ibidem: 58).

A similar style was applied to describe contemplations concerning harvest: ‘That word meant a lot. It meant hard work but also fulfillment (Ibidem: 38), or rest that ... was justified by work and fatigue ... and which ... was not only regeneration of energy for further work, but also a break for social life ...’ (Ibidem: 64). Moreover, as Jan Szczepański puts it, relaxation had another, deeper meaning consisting in a process of integration of local community, in keeping disinterested bonds between neighbors and family members. ‘Relaxation was not only about ... stiffness of joints or torn muscles. Relaxation was necessary for other alliance – with people. If labour constituted grounds for humanity, relaxation among fellow human beings was its fulfillment’ (Ibidem: 65–66). It proves absolutely obvious while taking into consideration both, a historic time and contents of social ethics of Protestantism, which were dominant in Cieszyn Silesia where Jan Szczepański spent childhood and early youth, and where work was perceived in ethical-sacral categories, linked with a rule of predestination that such a distinct and coherent work ethos was virtually of ‘island’ nature. However, its leading contents organized a community life of many socio-professional groups in other areas of Poland and also at a later date. Yet, it is difficult to refer to results of sociological studies from the interwar period and concerning that issue as such studies were not conducted and results of the other ones, e.g. carried out by Ludwik Krzywicki from 1930’s of the 20th century, based on biographical method (competition in diaries) and concerning the unemployed of the times of Great Depression, can present only highly borrowed sources of information which may present a basis to conduct diagnosis and interpretations concerning work ethos in interwar Poland. Furthermore, one may risk a thesis that bigger opportunities of reconstruction of contents of work ethos in various socio-professional groups at the end of the 19th century and interwar period when the fundamentals of industrial society were created in Poland, were described in the literature or other, more or less common forms of mass media (press in particular) rather than in scientific papers, especially in the papers of just developing Polish sociology.

Hence, when in interwar period, within a new political system, a systematic promotion of work ideology was introduced and work ethos resulting from its leading assumptions, mainly work ethos of working class, there was no consent among researchers concerning both, what the content of previous work ethos was, and even, whether any work ethos could have been discussed earlier at all. Simultaneously, as an increasing number of dysfunctions and pathologies appeared in the socialist system, many researchers and thinkers not only raised an issue concerning negative transformations within a formed and forming work ethos (*ethos in statu nascendi*), but also a problem of its crisis. A characteristic example can be an opinion of

Józef Tischner, a Catholic philosopher who in the second half of the 1980's of the 20th century raised a fundamental issue of necessity to form work ethos of such socio-professional categories whose work, as he put it, is of national work nature. In other words, he indicated such professional categories that should be treated as ethos groups: 'There is a beautiful notion in the Polish tradition: national work. It is such a part of work that must not be done badly. Work of farmer, teacher, doctor. **There is a certain substance of work that must function without any disruptions in any situation** (boldface by D. W.-D.) as disruptions jeopardize the national matter' (Tischner 1986: 15).

Therefore, although ethos as a sociological notion is generally used in a purely descriptive meaning, or to indicate characteristic values, ideals, objectives of a certain culture, or a set of basic motivators or ways of assigning different values to them (Reading: 1977), it is necessary to refer to an axiological dimension of social life every time, to elements of axio-normative order and its specific suborders (see, inter alia, MacIver, Page 1983; Sztompka 2002). However, axio-normative order of every society has not only a specific structure and dynamics, but what can be observed while analyzing e.g. the process of system transformation in Poland, it also constitutes a particular dimension of a broadly-taken social order understood as a way of organizing and functioning of the society (Mariański 2006: 346) based on a specific system of social norms and values as well as its relations with specific levels of social life functioning (see, inter alia, Dyczewski 1993; Gilejko 1999; Ossowski:1967, 2001; Świątkiewicz 1986; Walczak-Duraj 2002; Wódz: 2010). So, axio-normative order is, in a slightly broader perspective, a certain system (structure) of values and norms whose aim is to regulate mutual behaviour between an individual and collective (institutionalized) entities related to striving to achieve certain goals, both of substantial (material) as well as symbolic-cultural nature (e.g. respect for worker's dignity). Therefore, it proves logical to use a notion of work ethos that in model assumptions should be eufunctional, not only in view of economic order but also other suborders. The problem is, however, that work ethos is also influenced by diverse and non-identical processes and phenomena, and a lot of various types of work ethics can be identified within this category. Work ethics that is based on a dominant ethical system is generally an application of general ethical principles to solve particular issues related to working. Work ethics, in general sense, consists in ethical approach to another man in work conditions (subjective treatment, individual's autonomy, etc.). It is only within dominant work ethics that various forms of professional ethics can be distinguished and which have both, a group and an individual dimension. On the one hand, they represent a system of values and norms determining specification of

general ethical norms, on the other one, a system of values and norms determining their particular consequences for typical situations in which people exercising specific professions can be.

The process of system transformation in Poland and in other Eastern European countries is explicitly related to a disintegration of systems of values that accompanied former, monocentric social order. Axio-normative dilemmas concerning primary values and norms of social life accompanying transformation are a consequence of changes observed in former ownership relations, entering market economy, unemployment, changes in work organisation within an enterprise, changes in legal systems, etc. Owing to that fact there are permanent, not only partial redefinitions of current group ideologies, including professional ones, and additionally there is a development of new forms of professional ethics that are poorly characterized by group contents. This occurs because the process of transformation in Poland is mainly a process of transformation from monocentric to polycentric order. That process comprises changes resulting from e.g. transfer from industrial economy of fordism and taylorism era to knowledge economy. Despite the fact that fordism took various forms, e.g. communist or global fordism (Gardawski 2009) it consisted of a few crucial elements that also had a sociological context: male breadwinner employed full-time; long-lasting work in the same company and doing one or a few similar jobs; coherent and normalized style of work; explicit work-life balance; a relatively short life expectancy after retiring; mostly industrial (sometimes company) trade unions and industrial collective agreements (see, inter alia, Inagami 1998/1999: 661–692).

While taking into consideration consequences of globalisation process and development of new teleinformation technologies, demographic changes and increase of significance of female labour force, it must be noted that nowadays one can indicate very deep transformations of work world of the post-fordism era related also to a crisis of fordism (Gardawski 2009). According to Lesław H. Haber, since the very beginning of transformation in Poland one can observe ‘... a lack of interest in promoting work ethos in its moral and utilitarian dimension ... that process increasingly deepens within the development of market economy ...’ and in the Polish society ‘... there are trends for a real decrease in the value of work ethos as a factor that strengthens moral value of work in employee environment’ (Haber 2003: 9). The phenomena of particular importance according to Lesław H. Haber that constraint ethos functions of work include: lack of conditions to fulfill ethos character of current jobs and tasks – a short lifecycle of companies, new enterprises and specializations that do not have developed traditions and generation continuity; restructuration of old sectors of industry, extractive industries whose closure is connected with disappearance of

professional traditions, their symbolism and rituality linked with a type of particular work; decrease in collective attitudes and growing individualization of organizational cultures which to an increasing extent exhibit a role of an individual worker than a team they come from or with which they cooperate, which, as a result, leads to selfish attitudes among workers; exhibiting demand side of market in relation to applying workers (value of worker's usefulness is determined in categories of labour force); marginalization of big professional groups connected with working class of large-scale industries that in the past represented the avant-garde of observed changes; conflicting character of employee relations both in executive and hierarchical system, which causes that employees at risk of unemployment do not react to bad working conditions as well as to exploitation methods used by their employer because quite frequently, the only value (principle) that is binding at work for all workers is maximization of profits and all actions within a company are subjected to it (Haber 2003: 10).

All abovementioned processes constitute not only a transformation of current organisation and institution management but also changes in employment relations, work relations and contents of dominant work ethos, which according to the Author becomes increasingly declarative, individualized, dispersed (new forms of work and employment) and free of, previously fairly clear for a worker, ethical contexts that did not need to be determined, as it is the case now, in forms of official documents which are only of pseudo-legal nature. What I mean here are more or less developed ethical programmes, including codes of ethics in particular, which very often play mostly an instrumental role, embedded in the logic of companies' communicative marketing, in public relations' logic, in particular. Changes in postmodern labour market that is characterized by far-reaching flexibility, according to many researchers, such as Richard Sennet (2006) encouraged workers to develop specific strategies in the area of multi-work that was to present a relative sense of safety, particularly in a situation where, just like in Poland, a third of workers are employed based on civil law employment contracts depriving an employee of many privileges, one is entitled to while being employed under an employment relationship. It obviously results in many problems of ethical nature, such as e.g. some connected with a necessity to live up to non-identical or contradictory, ethical standards related to specific professional roles. As a result, it often causes professional alternation understood as such an employee attitude whose essence is functioning in various organisation worlds with a different organizational culture and various forms of professional ethics.

Twelve years ago Leszek Gilejko (2004) compiled a long list of questions (problems) concerning labour system in Poland that urgently needed answers understood as elaboration of such solutions that will make it possible to overrule these questions. Unfortunately, that list is still, to a greater or smaller extent, valid. So are also the processes and phenomena occurring within a redefined work ethos aiming at greater individualization. One of those questions concerned a fundamental issue, the essence and status of work as such, both in substantive and axiological sense in conditions of developing globalisation, technical and technological advances of revolutionary nature, and simultaneously in conditions of retained reserves and demand for cheap labour force. An attempt to find a solution and at least to indicate a dominant trend in this regard would certainly enable enterprises to formulate more adequate development strategies.

Another question was related to possible variants of choice in postindustrial societies between civilization of unemployment and sharing work, variants of choice among developing new forms of employment, or also new relationships between work and education. Poland's experience, in this regard, shows that willingness to share work is not very high, and civil law forms of employment, definitely causing lowering of unemployment rate, are permanently described in categories of junk job contracts. Such a situation results from both, underdevelopment of other solutions, or from their lack, concerning possibilities for employees on such contracts to use on general terms e.g. bank loans as well as from a mind-set of potential employees, university graduates, in particular, who mostly expect that they will function in labour market within an old employee paradigm. Indeed, a crucial factor here is to find a solution of basic dilemma concerning leveling out chances and attractiveness between a traditional employment status and spheres of flexible labour market. It, first of all, concerns practical solutions concerning relations between flexible (*flexibilis*) and secure labour market in a situation of continuous evolution of flexi-time, getting increasingly liquid character (work time based on trust, task-work time, etc.) That evolution is linked simultaneously with the erosion of a job-for-life system, which in combination with flexibilisation processes often results in a collapse of local labour markets. A sense of insecurity in labor market is growing, mostly due to the fact that protection against unjustified dismissal or regulations concerning employment and dismissal as well as bearing costs of these actions, both by an employer and the state (by means of grants and subsidies) are significantly reduced.

Protection against accidents and illnesses as well as availability of lots of protection measures such as sickness benefits are also significantly reduced. Moreover, reduction of working time functions only in some industries and possibilities of professional

training and retraining are limited although a demand of continuous acquisition of new professional skills is embedded in logic of fast revaluation of work contents. According to OECD data from 2014 we are one of the most overworked societies among the developed countries. Two years ago (in 2014) a Polish employee spent at work on average 1923 hours a year; a German on average 1371 hours, a Belgian - 1576 hours, an Australian - 1664 hours, a British - 1677 hours, a Spanish - 1689 hours and an Italian 1734 hours (after: Szumlewicz 2016: A 12). Poland is also one of the EU countries where remuneration is the lowest. According to the Central Statistical Office data in 2014 1.1 million people were self-employed and did not employ any workers on the basis of employee relationship in their enterprises. Earnings are the lowest in microenterprises and a scale of violation of employment rights was the biggest. In 2014 average remuneration in companies employing maximum nine workers amounted only to gross 2257 PLN i.e. about net 1640 PLN; it is over 1700 PLN less than average earnings in bigger economic entities (after: Andrysiak 2016: A10). Protection of earnings and incomes by means of minimum wages is also limited and protection of employee representation (including the right to strike) in many countries, not only in Poland, is markedly restricted (see Standing 1997: 8–9). All these processes are accompanied by asynchronous presence at work due to diversified work time of employees and separation of individual employee work time from overall work time of an enterprise. Therefore, a fundamental question arises here, whether and to what extent making work forms more flexible and diversification of forms of employment (employee and non-employee) are unequivocally pro-worker solutions?

Apparently, the simplest way of taking advantage of labour force is not to pay salaries to workers or payment with delays of several months, which in Poland is quite a constant practice (see, inter alia, Guza 2015a: A 8). While writing about new nuances of instability of employment in contemporary labour market the abovementioned author indicates that: ‘... a dream of employers is no longer a temporary employment contract. An ideal employee is the one that does their job only when a company needs it’ (Guza 2015b: A 10). Generally speaking, ways of such employment are many, starting from using temporary employment agencies that ‘lend’ a worker that is needed at a given moment by means of so-called ‘zero-hour contracts’ where employees are called only when they are needed and are paid only for actual working time, which means that it may be full working time in a given period, but there may be a month when they will not earn anything. As Łukasz Guza, puts it, invoking data of the British Statistical Office (ONS), at the end of 2014 700 thousand people in Great Britain were employed that way. Furthermore, in certain sectors (e.g. gastronomy, hotel industry, health care or education) such workers account for 10 per cent of all

employees, and in some companies even up to 90 per cent of all employees (e.g. in McDonald's and Sports Direct). Definitely, such trends of using 'zero-hour contracts' will develop in Poland and will, in a significant way, contribute to further diffusion and individualization of work ethos.

Another problem that cannot be solved at the level of a business entity concerns a problem whether, if at all, and how an individual can be compensated for insecurity in labour market, and even, as Leszek Gilejko claims how to transform it from fear and threat into new opportunities? Apparently, a serious public discourse in Poland (and other countries) on that issue has not started yet. There arises an additional question that proves equally important: whether new opportunities facing an individual that will devote less time to work, will be used mainly to develop human capital, as it used to be so far, or to develop the potential of social capital? Going beyond a list of further crucial questions concerning ways of solving problems resulting from a process of re-evaluation of work contents, forms of work and forms of employment, it must be added that since the first reflections of J. Szczepański on dual attitude of Poles to work and, at the same time, to an idea of taking care of many workers by the state within full employment policy (Szczepański 1987) in sociological reflections concerning changes in work ethos contents, there are two leading approaches.

One of them concentrates on conditions constricting or preventing a process of forming work ethos in contemporary Poland (system, ideology deficits, individual strategies, etc.), whereas the other one, on conditions generating a crisis of current (in research and interpretative assumption) work ethos that is generally defined in a very diversified way. On the one hand, only a perspective of an individual is evoked here (attitude towards work, workplace in a declared system of values, behaviour in work situations, etc.), whereas on the other one, group or system perspective (work ideology, corporate ideologies, corporate culture, professional ethics, professionalization, organizational solutions, social expectations towards representatives of professions and social trust institutions, etc.). In case of referring not only to an individual perspective that is relatively easy to describe, diagnose and interpret based on quantitative research, work still occupies a high position in a system of values of Poles. So, according to representative research conducted by GUS (Central Statistical Office) (2015) professional work is of great importance for one third of respondents at the age of 16 and older (37.7%) and big importance for 39.7% of Poles. Only for 8.6% work is of medium importance; for 2.3% small importance and only for 9.8% work has no importance at all (Ibidem: 6).

However, only getting to the level of analysis of *case study* and starting a group perspective that refers to the clash of two worlds: the world of work and the world of

capital, might enable to undertake a more successful attempt to systematic rebuilding of mass imagination on what principles (values) both individualized and group contents of work ethos in the society, in which work in a traditional meaning, as far as contents, forms of employment, work time are concerned, becomes less and less frequent treasure. Moreover, processes of work ‘destandardisation’ (a term by Ulrich Beck 2000) as for instance with respect to *freelancers* evoke justified concerns whether their explicitly individualized attitude to performed work, characterized by concentration primarily on objectives and their achievement (excluding a relational treatment of work) will not contradict the reasonability of talking about work ethos in a group sense. *Freelancing*, as Agnieszka Cybulska-Michalska (2009: 35) puts it, is characterized with a strong sense of emotional independence and markedly slighter care for traditional forms of mutual loyalty observed in employee groups. What is more, it can be assumed that other people sharing community of employees’ fate in that new form, can be treated purely instrumentally as one of available ways of accumulation of competency capital, free of ethical contexts.

Returning to the figure of two social worlds, it is worth mentioning, as an example, that at the heart of the last economic crisis, on the one hand we deal with almost abstract greed of numerous financial institutions, including one of the most powerful investment banks – Goldman Sachs, whose Chief Executive Officer in 2012 awarded himself a 43 million-dollar bonus i.e. three times as much what the bank paid to the public purse (Lubowski 2012: 28), on the other hand, we deal with an example of nomadic segment of the Polish labour world whose numerous participants commute to work every day, spending on that more time than a half of their work time. As a reportage made by Andrzej Sowa (2012) illustrates it, workers who every day cover the distance Łódź-Warsaw and back by train (minimum of four hours a day adding time to reach the stations) most often find themselves in an already classic dialogue from Stanisław Bareja’s film from 1978 – *What will you do when you catch me? (Co mi zrobisz jak mnie złapiesz¹)*. Residents of Łódź and its surroundings who

¹ ‘You see, I have a very good connection. I get up in the morning at quarter to three. In summer it’s light already. At quarter to three I am shaven because I shave in the evening. I have breakfast for supper, so I only get up and leave. – No, you get dressed. – I take a coat when it rains. Does it pay off to undress after breakfast? – That’s right. – It’s five kilometers to the bus. At quarter to four I have a bus. – Can you make it? – No. – But I’m lucky as it’s overcrowded and does not stop. I walk to the next stop to the dairy and it’s an hour. Then they take me quickly to Szymanów. ... In Szymanów I get off, take down milk cans and I catch a local train. In Ochota I get on electric train to the Stadium. And then it’s over the hump. So, 119, change into 13, change into 345 and I’m at home that is at work. It’s fifteen to seven! Then, I still have a quarter. So I have lunch in the buffet. Then, after work I don’t have to stay

commute by train to work in Warsaw (about 250 thousand people), as it was either their choice (more interesting work, better earnings) or they have to do it (a possibility of finding a job), also have a similar regimen; they get up at about 4⁰⁰–5⁰⁰ a.m., are back home at about 7 p.m. Moreover, they form a kind of ‘train community’ whose leading function is to create such conditions so that co-commuters could get some sleep; otherwise, they would quickly give up such a lifestyle (interesting attempts and behaviour of not letting ‘strangers’ who turn on the light, rustle newspapers, etc., to a compartment). As a result, in such a compartment these acquaintances spend together more time within five days (apart from sleeping time at home) than with their closest family members. What impact can it have on these people’s quality of life, their sense of social welfare, or their work ethos? Therefore, it seems that it would be hard to identify unequivocally specific premises to solve a dilemma whether a sociologist dealing with work in its different contexts should mostly concentrate on transformations of the essence and contents of contemporary work ethos, or rather, on, probably more interesting, analysis of a set of factors that constitute a broadly understood counter-ideology of work, by means of which we will be able to diagnose both, a diversified character of processes and phenomena observed in the labour world as well as a diversified character of processes influencing work valuation or experience by an individual, also on their attitudes towards other workers. It concerns especially workers functioning increasingly often in such work systems that not only have a non-formal character (such as e.g. already mentioned work of ‘freelancers’ outside a formal organisation), but which are also connected with pursuing professional careers treated in categories of an autonomic phenomenon that is less and less linked with a specific profession. Work starts to be perceived by many workers, those highly-qualified in particular, in a subjective dimension, not a relational one, which allows to understand a contemporary career in categories of *boundary less career* (see, inter alia, Defilippi, Arthur 1994; Mirvis, Hall 1994; Sullivan 1999; Bohdziewicz 2010), for the realization of which organizational affiliations do not have such fundamental importance. Additional characteristic features of a career perceived that way, is also an increased workers’ mobility and blurring of boundaries with all its consequences between an individual’s home and work. What seems also of crucial importance is the fact that these new contents in a way of pursuing a professional career embedded in new work situations can generate mechanisms of social disorganization (see more Walczak-Duraj 2015a).

to eat and I go straight home. And maximum at 10.50 I’m back. I shave, have breakfast and I go to bed’ (after Sowa 2012: 10).

Therefore, when trying to talk about transformations of contemporary work ethos, we should more actively concentrate on these contexts of performed work, in which crucial elements of specific work ethics and broadly speaking, ideology of work cease to be important in the process of organizing motivation, actions, aspirations and individual's attitudes and increasingly territorially dispersed employee teams (e.g. in teleworking system) of around specific, leading values related to work. Such a situation has impact on the development of a wide range of new adaptation and interpretation strategies related to work by workers, which may be incorporated in the emergence of a new quality of changes within attitudes towards work, which can be described as the counter-ideology of work. It is obvious that every ideology, including work ideology understood as a set of views, evaluation and justifications concerning work as one of the most important social, religious, psychological and economic values, in order to be socially embedded, and then effective, must be consistent and present in all levels of structuralization of social life – macro-, meso- and micro-social.

Even a cursory analysis of contents of mass messages present in traditional and electronic media and referring to work, enables to indicate incidental presence of issues concerning work-related problems, perceived in different than effective categories. Moreover, solutions referring to work included in logic of neo-liberal perception of market system generate a wide range of deficits related to work perception in autotellic categories resulting from antimony between the idea of individualism and freedom of an individual, on the one hand, and a desire for a sense of safety and community, on the other. However, it seems that a big number of premises supporting the fact that work should not be perceived as a crucial value of both, personal and social life, appear at the level of economic entities: enterprises and all types of institutions of a broadly understood service sector. It concerns payment policy, employment policy, work organisation, relations between employees and managerial staff or physical conditions of work. Therefore, it is hard to expect that perception of employees' role in work situation and their relation to work as a value that is understood either instrumentally or autotellically, is free of a range of rationalizations. Moreover, according to well established analyses and interpretations by American sociologists and work psychologists '... work situation more strongly influences individual's personality than personality influences work, especially ... it influences perception of values and thinking mostly because it poses some challenges to an individual that they must try to meet (Kohn, Schooler 1986: 117). Therefore, apparently a notion of counter-ideology of work introduced almost thirty-five years ago by Jan Jerschina (1983) that was applied to sociological discussions concerning

attitudes towards work in the socialist system, still has, in a completely different system of work, its application although in the perspective of market economy logic and practiced market system, it acquires additional meanings.

2. The Essence and Variations of Counter-ideology of Work

While reviewing a way of operationalization of the notion of counter-ideology of work and its three variations, it must be, first of all, noted that this notion does not only mean anti-ideology in a sociological sense, as vigorously developed attitudes and behaviour towards work, which would be hard to assign with characteristic attributes of any social ideology. Values assigned to counter-ideology understood this way are spontaneously articulated and do not present any specific, coherent systems of attitudes and justifications. However, they may be treated as a generalized indicator of weakening of work ethos, and in consequence, both, its fragmentation, individualization and incoherence and weakening of potential of social capital as well or social disintegration at numerous levels of social structure (see more in: Walczak-Duraj 2015a).

With reference to diagnosis of work ethos in Poland in the socialist system Jan Jerschina referred the notion of counter-ideology of work mostly to such a type of employee attitudes and behaviour which could be assigned with a relatively low valuation of work with simultaneous showing demanding attitudes connected with work situation, disproportionate to made effort. This tendency was described by Jan Jerschina in categories of so-called arbitrary instrumentalism (Jerschina 1983: 16), functioning on the principle of minimum effort – maximum benefits (income). In that time, it differed significantly from two other variants of individual's attitude to work: natural and 'imposed' instrumentalism. Natural instrumentalism was generated mainly by combining such characteristics of employees as low level of education and qualifications as well as performing hard, dirty and monotonous work. 'Imposed' instrumentalism, or in other words, instrumental attitude to work, shaped mostly by numerous factors of pathologized work system, resulting in, as was also presented in the author's research conducted in the second half of the 1980's of the 20th century (see Walczak-Duraj 1988), an explicit sense of deprivation or specific forms of social entropy. Employees, mainly working class of heavy industry permanently experienced motivational dissonance in work situation. On the one hand, at the level

of propaganda action, meaning and value of work were emphasized, on the other one, no special conditions were created so that mass social mobilization around work and effective-efficient contents could be implemented at the level of state economic entities. What is more, referring to the results of the study conducted by the author (Ibidem: 92–250) and concerning presence of work related motifs in propaganda press (*Trybuna Ludu*) in the years 1970–1982 it can be stated that concentration on effective-efficient content of work was not only drastically inconsistent with possibilities of their implementation, additionally, contents referring to self-realization, humanistic and creative opportunities in work, were present more rarely and were of very general slogan character: work as a way of realization of modern patriotism or a sign of moral-political unity of the Polish society.

Therefore, while suggesting an application of previously used attitude to analyzing transformations of work ethos in the times of socialist economy, based on the notion of counter-ideology of work to analyse, diagnose and interpret contemporary work ethos in Poland, it will be easier to indicate both, continuity as well as a change of factors influencing the contents of work ethos of Polish workers functioning within liberal market logic of management. Moreover, nowadays, while using a notion of counter-ideology of work it can be stated that, just like in pre-transformational period, there appeared a kind of individualism that was imposed by solutions concerning labour market and work system applied at the level of business entities, so nowadays, it seems reasonable to indicate the presence of ‘imposed’ autotelic attitudes toward work (employment, as well), verbalized in sociological research, especially in surveys. That, frequently imposed by market solutions, autotelic attitude to work as such, can, yet, have only purely defensive or auto-creative character that is loosely connected with internalized value of work. However, at the same time, in spite of changes in management logic what can be still observed is a sign of ‘imposed’ instrumentalization of attitudes towards work, evoked yet by a set of different factors which were to be presented in that paper. These factors are usually an indirect effect of a process of socializing, on one hand, of risk and losses, and on the other one, privatization of benefits; additionally these processes go hand in hand with appropriateness of life chances of numerous social-professional categories. However, in order to enable research institutions to find empirical confirmation, it is necessary to develop a new paradigm in the sociology of economy. Then, sociologists who deal with economy in a paradigm of new sociology of economy (see, among others: Granovetter 1985; Swedberg 2003; Zelizer 1993; Maurer 2013) will go beyond general theses about a lack of work ethos in Poland (as if it had never existed), its crisis (so

there was some, and an attempt to reactivate it, is needed) or its full artifactuality or even, inadequacy.

Conclusion

The affirmative answer to the title question concerning validity of concentrating, rather on processes, phenomena and mechanisms generating various forms of counter-ideology of work than only on identifying new forms of dispersed and individualizing work ethos can be reinforced especially when we refer not only to explicit effects of ideology of consumerism, still in opposition to ideology of work but also to search for self-realization opportunities by individuals other than work. The problem is that for many individuals and social groups, other possibilities of self-realization than through work are either unavailable or socially underdeveloped. There has been an ongoing debate in the western world for a few dozen years on what these other areas of human activity can be that could be both, sources of generating various attributes of social meaning of an individual as well as a source of meeting their self-realization needs. The situation of a high unemployment rate in many labour markets both, among highly-qualified employees and educated young people finishing studies and accompanying sense of permanent uncertainty often induce almost a compulsive need of experiencing work that arises to one of the major life values.

A generalized indicator of complex processes constituting a phenomenon of counter-ideology of work is, among others, lowering of ethical standards among many professions, including public trust professions, functioning in a broadly understood service sector, including health care and education. There arises a basic question whether in some areas of market economy instead of predominant marketisation of work, we might attempt to socialize that market. So far, we still have to deal with the abovementioned trend to privatize profit and to socialize risk and losses. Adverse process of work marketisation in the area of such public services as health care, education or higher education leads to, among others, lowering of quality of services, limiting availability or deterioration of work conditions. The logic behind work marketisation in the abovementioned areas of such specific services poses a paradigm of good services and a paradigm of risk in explicit opposition (see more in Walczak-Duraj 2015b: 17–33)

The last economic crisis not only deepened adverse trends and processes in the field of work and working conditions, but also prompted the world of science and political authorities in democratic societies to redefine current attitudes to work in market economy embedded in neoliberal logic. However, it must be noted that this logic, discussed in the context of complex processes and phenomena of contemporary world encourages to consider a need for applying a new approach both, to overall analysis of fundamental economic operator such as an enterprise, as well as concerning contents humanizing work and working conditions. That need can be also justified by referring to crucial changes that were observed in a way of thinking and acting of a contemporary man, in which a primacy of hermeneutics over cognition and chaos over order become increasingly distinct. An additional argument in favour of a thesis on emergence of new mechanisms generating work attitudes with some attributes of counter-ideology of work ('imposed' autotellity, or 'imposed' instrumentalism of attitudes towards work) is a situation of a widely analysed precariat as a specific and potentially dangerous social class (Standing 2011), which permanently experiences a sense of social suspension and a lack of guarantee concerning seven crucial areas: labour market i.e. appropriate possibilities of work; employment i.e. appropriate protection against dismissal; work as such i.e. certainty of performing it and realization of duties resulting from it; safety at work connected with a broadly understood protection of health of employees; reproduction of skills i.e. providing professional training, internships, appropriate usage of acquired skills at work; income adjusted to performed work and steady remuneration as well as appropriate representation i.e. a representative of employees' interests (membership in trade unions).

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