

Tradition, Present and Future of the Sociology of Work in Poland: Reflections on the Project ‘Doyens of the Sociology of Work’

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Abstract

This article explores the experiences of the institutionalization and crisis of the sociology of work in Poland by analyzing the narratives of the doyens of the sociology of work in the country. It is argued that the institutionalization of sociology of work in the 1960s and 1970s reflected the requirements of the socialist industrialization of the country and its crisis (lasting from the end of 1980s) has political and economic roots related to systemic transformation. Simultaneously, some parallels between the situation of the sociology of work before and after 1989 are noted, including the challenges of cooperation between sociologists and industry. The empirical data in the article come from the research project carried out the Sociology of Work Section of the Polish Sociological Association based on the narrative interviews with the academic sociologists of work and plant sociologists who began their careers in the period of state socialism in Poland.

Key words: doyens of sociology of work, plant sociologists, institutionalisation of the sociology of work, the crisis of sociology of work, Poland

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Introduction

The aim of this article is to explore the conditions and prospects of the development of sociology of work in Poland in the context of the first findings arising from the research project ‘Doyens sociology of work’ carried out since 2015 by the Sociology of Work Section of the Polish Sociological Association (PTS)¹. While the processes of the institutionalization of sociology of work in the 1960s and 1970s were closely related to the requirements of social practice in the conditions of the country’s industrialization, its crisis (lasting from the end of 1980s) seems to have political and economic background. After the collapse of real socialism, despite the public demand for sociological research on work, sociology of work has been marginalized due to its allegedly Marxist roots, the seizure of the field of research on work by economics and management sciences and the transformation of the sphere of work which required the development of new interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological tools.

Recognizing the institutional problems within the research field of contemporary sociology of work, it is difficult not to notice the relevance of the subdiscipline for shaping the direction of research and scientific biographies of key representatives of post-war Polish sociology. The research project carried out by the Sociology of Work Section of PTS aims at restoring the memory of the multi-faceted and rich traditions of the sociology of work in Poland and improving our knowledge of careers and fields of research undertaken by sociologists of work before and after 1989.

The article presents the main objectives of research carried out and the first observations drawn from a review of available literature, the analysis of conducted interviews and historical sources which were provided till September 2016. Presenting the first empirical findings, we will discuss the source of the crisis of sociology of work and we will assess the prospects and possible directions of development of this sub-discipline in the future.

¹ In addition to original analysis, the text uses fragments of earlier publications, including Mrozowicki (2015), as well as fragments of a research project developed by the team: Olga Czeranowska, Ewa Giermanowska, Sławomira Kamińska-Berezowska Elżbieta Kolasińska, Adam Mrozowicki and Joanna Róg-Ilnicka.

1. The Research Project ‘Doyens Sociology of Work’ – the Origin, Context and Implementation

The project ‘Doyens sociology of work in Poland - sociological analysis of the processes of institutionalization, deinstitutionalization and reconstruction sub-discipline based on biographical interviews’ was initiated by the current board of the Section of Sociology of Work of Polish Sociological Association in 2015. It was inspired by earlier discussions within the circles of the Polish sociologists of work², as well as by an ongoing project aimed at documenting the history of the sociology of work in Europe (see, *inter alia*, Mrozowicki et al. 2015). The research was motivated by both theoretical and practical reasons. The debate on the institutionalization of sociology in Poland has been carried out so far in relation to the discipline as a whole (Kraśko 1996, 2010), while only to a small extent (cf. Jędrzycki 1971; Kilias 2014) benefiting from primary data (e.g. from oral histories). The existing studies of the history of sociology and sociology of work in Poland and the analysis of plant sociologists movement were primarily based on literature reviews rather than interviews with the sociologists of work (e.g. Bohdziewicz 2014; Mrozowicki 2015).

For the purpose of this project we conceptualized in a certain way the concepts of the doyens of the sociology of work and plant sociologist. The doyen of the sociology of work is a person whose activity in the academic field of sociology of work took place before 1989 and who has a strong record of scientific research within the subdiscipline. Their biographies are embedded in a particular institutional contexts of their times. Analyzing their histories we can therefore understand better the historical, political, social and economic environments shaping the academic sociology of work before 1989.

The plant sociologist, in turn, is a socio-professional role which has gained in importance in the socialist economy. Sociologists performing this role were employed in the socialist industrial enterprises and their sociological, methodological and research knowledge was used to assist steering the social system of workplaces. Their role was, among other things, to manage and reduce the conflicts between management and workers.

² The idea of implementing research on sociologists of work was mentioned, among others, by Jolanta Kulpińska.

The scientific goal of the project is to document and understand the experiences and professional careers of doyens of Polish sociology of work and plant sociologists. The main objective of the research is to explore through narrative interviews (with the elements of the methodology of oral history) the experience of people who created the sociology of work in Poland, contributed to its institutionalization in the state socialist period and at the end of their careers experienced its institutional crisis.

Due to the nature of the sub-discipline which was built upon the experiences of practitioners and academic sociologists, the ageing of our potential interviewees and a very limited number and fragmentation of existing works on the history of the Polish sociology of work, it was necessary to develop an original research project. The project aimed at documenting biographical pathways of the doyens and plant sociologists in the institutional, political and economic contexts influencing research directions in social sciences in Poland and at the international level. Collecting the narratives of the doyens of sociology of work made it possible to understand better the development and crisis of the subdiscipline as the latter reflect a combination of biographical and structural-system factors.

The research design reflected the division between the plant sociologists and academic sociologists of work which emerged in state socialism. On the one hand, we aimed at collecting the stories of those within the plant sociologists milieu which flourished in Poland in 1960s and 1970s. In the late 1970s, the number of social scientists employed in industry was estimated at approx. 400 people (Kiliński 2014: 426). Until the 1980s when the movement got fragmented in the wake of the martial law, they performed both bureaucratic and expert roles as well as the roles of professionals implementing the humanization of work principles in their workplaces (*idem*). Simultaneously, academic sociology developed inspired largely by system approaches and humanistic sociology, to a lesser extent, which was obviously a paradox under conditions of real socialism, by neo-Marxism (cf. Mrozowicki 2015). The Sociology of Work Section, established in the early 1960s and initially led by Alexander Matejko followed from 1970 to 1993 by Wiesław Jędrzycki, played an important role in integrating both environments. However, the position of plant sociologists within the Section was clearly dominant which explain its gradual weakening along with the dissolution of the milieu which constituted it.

During the Section meeting in November 2015, two lists were created in order to facilitate the collection of empirical material on academic and plant sociologists of work: the list of interviewees and interviewers and the list of biographical profiles (*Polish: biogram*) to be prepared based on secondary data in case of deceased sociologists of work. Professor Jolanta Kulpińska accepted the role of honorary

patron of the project. In the course of discussion in the research team an interview guidelines were created. During the next meeting, in April 2016, further discussions concerned methodological basis and research tools to be used in the project. It was decided to implement research design combining the elements of biographical narrative interview method (Schütze 2012) and an in-depth interview. In contrast to the classical biographical method (e.g. the Fritz Schütze's school), interviews did not focus on the entire life story of informants, but only to those aspects of their biographies which were related to their academic and practical activities in the field of sociology of work. Two separate, but interrelated guidelines for interviews with academic sociologists and plant sociologists were developed in order to ensure the comparability of research material.

Up till now (April 2017), 14 interviews were collected by the members and supporters of the Sociology of Work Section (see Table 1):

Table 1. The list of completed interviews

| | Name of the interviewee | Name of the interviewer | Type |
|-----|-------------------------|--|----------------------|
| 1. | Danuta Dobrowolska | Olga Czeranowska | Academic sociologist |
| 2. | Juliusz Gardawski | Adam Mrozowicki | Academic sociologist |
| 3. | Lesław Haber | Joanna Wróblewska Jachna | Academic sociologist |
| 4. | Maria Holstein-Beck | Olga Czeranowska | Academic sociologist |
| 5. | Henryk Januszek | Bartosz Mika | Academic sociologist |
| 6. | Wiesława Kozek | Adam Mrozowicki | Academic sociologist |
| 7. | Jolanta Kulpińska | Ewa Giermanowska | Academic sociologist |
| 8. | Witold Morawski | Piotr Ostrowski | Academic sociologist |
| 9. | Jan Sikora | Bartosz Mika | Academic sociologist |
| 10. | Edward Soltys | Sławomira Kamińska-Berezowska | Academic sociologist |
| 11. | Zbigniew Szczypiński | Elżbieta Kolasińska Peter Wegenschimmel | Plant sociologist |
| 12. | Romuald Śmiech | Elżbieta Kolasińska Peter Wegenschimmel | Plant sociologist |
| 13. | Elżbieta Wojtaś | Adam Mrozowicki | Plant sociologist |
| 14. | Robert Woźniak | Robert Bartłomiejski Michał Kujacz | Academic sociologis |

Source: Authors' research.

The project led to the creation and integration of a network of researchers representing various academic centers. At present, the project involves researchers from the Institute of Sociology of University of Wrocław (Adam Mrozowicki), the Institute of Applied Social Sciences, University of Warsaw (Ewa Giermanowska, Olga Czeranowska), the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Journalism, University of Gdańsk (Elżbieta Kolasińska, Bartosz Mika), the Polish Sociological Association – Zielona Góra Department (Joanna Róg-Ilnicka), Institute of Sociology, University of Silesia (Sławomira Kamińska-Berezowska), Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw (Piotr Ostrowski, Julia Kubisa, Aleksandra Leyk), University of Bielsko-Biała (Joanna Wróblewska Jachna), and University of Szczecin (Zbigniew Galor †). The research design assumes the continuous exchange of experiences and discussion over research tools and, in the future, the joint analysis of the collected material and literature studied. The project also aims at archiving the collected data. Preliminary talks were carried out with the Qualitative Data Archive at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology the Polish Academy of Sciences.

2. The Experience of Academic Doyens: Initial Empirical Findings

The important feature of the functioning of academic sociology in Poland, the sociology of work included, was (and still is) its anchoring the academic schools at the regional level. Since 1960s the sociology of work has been dominated by a systemic approach which assumed that its primary subject was a social system of an enterprise (cf. Jacher 1988; Matejko 1961: 47). This approach was also associated with the human relations school whose main aim was to maximize the efficiency and normative integration of employees in the workplace (cf. Watson 2005: 40). As it was noted, among others, in the interview with prof. Wiesława Kozek, Marxist research over work and labour process were rather rare. Regarding methodologies, quantitative approaches based on survey research was dominant both in sociology of work and general sociology (Sułek 2006: 263), with relatively limited attempts to analyze the social structure of enterprises from the perspective of individual experiences. In the 1970s and 1980s the school aimed at exploring work and work-related ethos emerged which were approached within the framework of humanistic sociology.

The interview guide elaborated for the purpose of research on the academic representatives of the sociology of work focused on issues such as their career paths,

experiences and roles in the institutionalization of the sociology of work in the region (voivodship) and Poland (in the Polish People's Republic, PRL), their research and their practical implementations at the level of an enterprises, industries and the country. The themes covered also included the experiences of managing and leading research teams, the most important scientific achievements and the connections between the sociology of work and the political and social context of the country in the era of PRL and in the Republic of Poland (after 1989). The research also explored the problems of the crisis of sociology of work, the methodological challenges to the sub-discipline, the changing meaning of work and the competences of sociologists of work in the past, present and future.

The preliminary analysis of the interviews made it possible to formulate some interesting observations related to both the state socialist regime and the period after 1989. The analysis of the narratives concerning the period of PRL indicates a very clear link between the sociology of work in the field of academic research and the research problems arising from the experiences of socialist industrialization. The role of the research and reforms related to the 'humanization of work' and the problems of workers' integration in workplaces, employee turnover, attitudes towards the workplace and worker self-management should be emphasized. In addition, the statements of doyens indicate the importance of *human relations* school and American functionalism in shaping the ways of thinking about the workplace and its problems in PRL. The transfer of functionalist and system theory ideas to Poland was related to foreign visits of the Polish scholars, among others thanks to the scholarship in the USA (e.g. A. Matejko), as well as visits of foreign researchers in the country. Notably, the research applying the Marxist framework was much less present.

The narratives also point to the significant role of professional experience in industry for a large part of academic sociologists, as well as integrating function of the Sociology of Work Section. The boundaries between academic sociology and practical sociology were not fixed. The Sociology of Work Section, however, was more practically oriented. Simultaneously, a part of the academic sociologists of work (e.g. W. Morawski) gradually began to call themselves economic sociologists. Next, this group constituted the basis for the emergence of the industrial relations research in Poland.

The interviewees also emphasized the relevance of the master – student relationship for acquiring skills and interests in the sociology of work. This, in turn, contributed to the reproduction of certain schools of thoughts in the research of

work at the regional level. In addition, the important role of state (often politically conditioned) funding for the choice of the research topics should be mentioned in the form of the 'nodal problems and themes' (W. Kozek, W. Morawski). The nodal problems created a platform which brought together academic sociologists and plant sociologists who studied the problems of the humanization of work, within the Committees of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Committee for Research on Industrial Regions and other institutions.

The doyens studied ambiguously assess the possibilities of influencing the reality studied by the sociologists of work. On one hand, they point to the experience of censorship in the state socialist regime. On the other hand, they also indicate a better cooperation with enterprises and social organizations than today, even though there were also opinions that the economy was also not interested in the research results (J. Kulpińska). The period of Solidarity and research in the 1980s are less discussed in the interviews. If it appears, it is mentioned as a difficult period, among other things due to layoffs of the plant sociologists and political tensions within sociologists' milieu.

The period after 1989 is described mostly in terms of the crisis of the subdiscipline, in particular in relation to plant sociologists and to lesser degree academic sociologists. The latter began to increasingly move away from the classic themes of sociology of workplaces into research on the consequences of changes in the political system, unemployment, the impact of privatization on labor relations and other macro-level problems (J. Kulpińska). Some sociologists who started their academic career with the research on work shifted their interests into entirely new fields of research.

The assessment of the condition of sociology of work at the present moment is ambiguous. On one hand, our interlocutors indicate a decreasing number of publications, the lack of a good, modern textbook on the sociology of work and the gradual elimination of the sociology of work from sociological curricula at the BA and MA levels. On the other, they also claim that the research in the traditional areas of research in sociology of work is continued by the representatives of other disciplines, such as human resource management, organization studies and economics, while the sociologists of work have 'given up their field' (J. Sikora). The crisis is interpreted as driven by political factors (e.g. the identification the sociology of work with real socialism), economic changes and transformations in the sphere of work and obstacles in the implementation of sociological research in private enterprises.

Apart from a few exceptions (e.g. W. Kozek, J. Kulpińska), the doyens put limited emphasis on the intergenerational transfer of knowledge to the younger generation of sociologists of work – it is somewhat absent in the collected interviews. Nevertheless, all respondents emphasize the need to continue the sociological reflection and

empirical research on work. In the words of H. Januszek, it can be expected that there will be 'a renaissance of sociology of work, because it is a universal sub-discipline and it concerns important issues of social life'. The statements clearly point to contemporary changes in the sphere of work and claim that sociologists have a great 'area to study ... in particular, in relation to the understanding of the working man who has no such support in the collectivities as it was the case in the previous system' (W. Kozek).

3. Plant Sociologists. The Practical and Socially Engaged Aspects of the Sociology of Work

In addition to academic sociology dealing with the work, the period of PRL witnessed the emergence of the plant sociologists' profession. Therefore, an important part of our research project were interviews with plant sociologists aimed at reconstructing their role in the development of the subdiscipline.

The practical and socially engaged aspects of sociologists' work were particularly strongly formulated in relation to the sociologists dealing with the problems of work organization, including the plant sociologists. 'The new branch of the social sciences was expected that it would be practical in nature. ... Its application took the simplest form – hiring sociologists directly in institutions carrying out research motivated by the needs of the industry, as well as in different factories' (Kilias 2014: 424–425). Since 1964 there were about 30 plant sociologists hired every year (in 1964, there were 32, in 1965 – 60, in 1966 – 92, in 1967 – 119) (Jędrzycki 1971: 197). In the late seventies, their number reached about 400 people (Kilias 2014: 426).

As A. Sarapata wrote, 'economic and systemic considerations set some social tasks for an enterprise whose failure to execute would harm the production and development of socialist society' (Sarapata 1975: 8). In the words of an interviewed plant sociologist, R. Śmiech, 'The task of a socialist enterprise was to implement the plan'. Another informant, Z. Szczypiński, suggests that 'socialist enterprises were a sample of socialist economy which was immersed into such an utopian thinking about the planned economy. ... Socialist enterprise was too much political' (Z. Szczypiński).

Hiring sociologists was related to their various functions in the organizational structures of the industrialized economy and research they carried out in socialist enterprises. As W. Jędrzycki (1971: 183–185) wrote, 'the sociologists were hoped to

provide various services and perform analytical and research functions. They were to supply information about the workplace processes (issues related to staff policies, conditions of material and non-material development of working environment, pathological phenomena associated with labour process) to the centers of power in the enterprises and contribute through their research to the improvement of human relations in labour process'. The presence of sociologists in the workplace was also explained by the fashion which prevailed among the management. 'Having a sociologist in the enterprise means to be an enlightened manager, to be progressive, to go with the flow' (Jędrzycki 1971: 38). These expectations, often excessive in relation to the sociologists' skills, as well as the fashion influenced increasing public demands for the plant sociologists' work (ibidem: 38).

The functions and tasks of sociologists in a workplace were connected not only with the practical support for the political center, but also with their expected involvement in shaping a socialist working man. The sociology of work was supposed to be an antidote to the shortcomings of socialist society and its ideological function was supposed to dominate over its research purposes. Sociologist had to be an expert providing knowledge about social processes as well as a social activist shaping social consciousness, 'an engineer of souls' who with his expertise contributes to the creation of 'a new man' (Bauman 1960: 166–167). It was hoped that sociologists would provide information that would help in manipulating the people, contribute to the development of socialist relations, ensure the obedience of the workers in the factories and prevent repeated revolts workers (Bielecka-Prus 2009: 84). At the level of enterprises the practical and ideological aspects of sociologists' activity were supposed to be connected. In any action of sociologists, as suggested by Jędrzycki (1971: 47), there 'should be a place for educational and humanistic content resulting from the fact that the company is also a tool for the implementation of the planned social transformation' (Jędrzycki 1971: 47).

As argued in the interview by W. Morawski, 'On one hand, sociologists wanted to show their relevance to the system. On the other hand, the system naively allowed for such sociological cells [in the enterprises – AM] to be something more than an offshoot of personnel department ... specialized based on sociotechnical knowledge'. The creation of sociological structures in large socialist enterprises was seen as a proof of the advanced systemic and organizational solutions and at the same time it was aimed at solving, inter alia, the problems of 'staff turnover' (Sarapata 1966: 215). This is also mentioned in the interview with plant sociologist, R. Śmiech: 'the problem number one of enterprises in the socialist economy, except for China where the obligation to work existed, was fluctuation [of workers – AM]. The meaning of

plant sociologists presence for all the management was just to take steps to reduce staff turnover'. As continued by the same informant, in 1970s and 1980s, in all large enterprises in Poland, 'there were the workshops of sociology of work and psychology of work' (R. Śmiech). Similar observation was referred to by Z. Szczypiński, who gave the example of the workshop of the Sociology and Psychology of Work in the Gdansk Shipyard: '... Szczecin, Gdynia, Gdańsk had similar workshops within the industrial union'.

In the sociological literature, there were also claims emphasizing the superfluousness of sociologists in the workplace. According to them, the sources of social tension were to be placed outside enterprises, at the level of planning and economic management. Hence, the creation of centers of research and experimentation was postulated within industrial federations to carry out macro-sociological analysis (Jędrzycki 1971: 16–17). The heterogeneity of the roles of plant sociologists was associated with the lack of their specific position within institutional structures. In explaining the reasons for this state of affairs both a tendency to overestimate the role of plant sociologists and a tendency to marginalize them can be mentioned.

An increasing attention was paid to the education and skill requirements for plant sociologists. Kazimierz Doktor (1967: 295) claimed that for the proper use of sociologists in the workplace they need to be occupationally and professionally prepared and undergo apprenticeship to gain experience in the industry. The inadequate preparation of plant sociologists to perform their functions was to be addressed by the reform of sociologists' education, the introduction of which was planned for the academic year 1968–1969. The new sociology program was prepared in line with demands for social scientists with specific specializations, taking into account their theoretical and practical preparation for performing their jobs. The sociology of work was seen as a privileged subdiscipline among other sociological subdisciplines and its task was defined in terms of the education of professionals for 'large companies, industrial unions, trade unions, research centers working for the needs of industry, the party apparatus, etc.' (Jędrzycki 1971: 185).

The crisis of the profession of plant sociologists took place in the 1980s following the martial law. According to J. Kulpińska, it was due to the involvement of the most sociologists, including plant sociologists, in the emerging trade union movement: 'Sociologists, almost everyone, including plant sociologists, were involved in Solidarity. And it meant that they were purged during the martial law. There was even an official explanation that sociologists ceased to be neutral, that they were engaged in Solidarity and they also helped very much the union and therefore they did not

deserve political trust. It affected very much, for example, Silesia, because there was a lot of plant sociologists work, but also a lot of people from the Catholic University of Lublin' (J. Kulpińska).

Kilias analyzing the history of plant sociologists in Poland defines them as 'forgotten profession' and critically assessed their achievements as scientists-practitioners. The plant sociologists who supported socialist enterprise with their knowledge and attempted to rationalize and humanize them did not contribute to any theoretical turning points nor provided important results for studying industrial relations (Kilias 2014: 435). He points to the wasted potential of this profession and the need to develop the analysis of the historical function of this professional group. '... the history and the fate of this almost forgotten occupational group leaves the impression that their potential has largely been wasted - at least from a point of view of academic scholar. From a point of view of historian it represents one of the most interesting phenomena in the social sciences of socialist countries, certainly worth to study' (idem). In the opinion of J. Kulpińska the plant sociologists movement was the most valuable achievement in the sociology of work as a subdiscipline of sociology. Unfortunately, it was squandered after the systemic change. However, according to J. Kulpińska, the restoration of this profession is worth considering.

The disappearance of the profession of the plant sociologists that took place since the 1980s, was also combined with a decline in the usefulness of sociological knowledge for enterprises who began to adjust their operation to market economy. P. Bohdziewicz (2014), based on analysis of the achievements of Polish sociologies of work, industry and organization until 1989, argues that the loss of the position of the sociology of work in favor of management sciences was due to a limited utility of the former for companies in conditions of market economy. There are many common theoretical and research issues covered by human resource management and the sociologies of work, industry and organization. However, there is a difference in the ways they interpret economic reality and their usefulness for business: 'The sociological meanings of concepts emphasize their social functions and sometimes also their effectiveness and praxeological functions. In the science of human resource management the same concepts and phenomena are the elements of a system of actions which should support the business strategy of an organization and contribute to the creation of economic value' (Bohdziewicz 2014: 103).

The absence of sociologists in the enterprises and the loss of significance of the sociology of work as an applied science useful to companies in the first years of the implementation of market economy in Poland was combined with the marginalization of this subdiscipline in the education of sociologists. The sociology of work was

excluded from the compulsory modules in the sociological teaching programs. It is currently taught mainly as a part of some specializations and optional modules. These are usually modules which combine the sociology of work with other areas such as: the sociology of organization and management, human resource management, the culture of organization, collective labor relations. In the sociologist of work training, it becomes central to develop social, practical and methodological research skills relevant to contemporary challenges. As is clear from the doyens' narratives, it also becomes important to remodel the sociologists of work education in order to restore the position of the subdiscipline.

Our interlocutors emphasized, *inter alia*, the central role of the 'humanistic coefficient' in the education of sociologists of work (J. Gardawski). Similarly, M. Holstein-Beck noted that 'the sociologists of work should have empathy, respect for a human being'. In particular in modern times, these skills are relevant for successful adaptation to changes and new situations. In the education of sociologists of work, 'actual knowledge of organization of work and its technical and economic capabilities', as well as 'the ability to access the milieu [studied –AM] are said to be crucial (D. Dobrowolska). At the same time, the informants emphasize very strongly that the 'position of science, sociology, in this case the sociology of work, needs to be reshaped in order to reach the people' (R. Woźniak). The understanding of the social world of work is the central asset of sociologists. Their analytical and conceptual thinking and empirically grounded knowledge are their universal competences which can be used in various organizations and at various levels.

It can be argued that changes in the area of work and working conditions will increase the demand for the knowledge of sociologists - practitioners dealing with work. There are more and more expectations from students concerning the practical application of knowledge and the development of applied sociology. The occupational careers of the sociology graduates who completed the specializations related to sociology of work show that are sought by employers, and their achievements on the labor market are the results of changes in the approaches to work in organizations³. It is because the excessive economization of the company management which took place after the systemic change in Poland has its limits. The growing expectations of employees regarding the social functions of enterprises contribute to the development of the ideas of socially responsible businesses, the implementation of new management

³ Such conclusions can be drawn, among others, from the analysis of occupational careers of the graduates of specializations related to the labor market at the Institute of Applied Social Sciences of the University of Warsaw, such as personnel management specialist and employment specialist.

concepts (such as diversity management) and the introduction of organizational solutions enabling employees to combine work with other social roles. The need for such knowledge and organizational practices will increase in all sectors, including the private sector, public sector and non-governmental organizations. This creates new areas of research and actions for sociologists who are prepared to advise on the reconciliation of economic and social interests in the company and, therefore, can contribute to the humanization of work.

Conclusions

The preliminary analysis of the historical evolution of the sociology of work in Poland, presented in the article, indicates a specific duality of its present situation. On the one hand, we experience a revival of the sociological research of work and the classical, sociological knowledge about work is continuously applied by human resources managers and experts in the area of industrial relations, labor market and economy. On the other hand, the institutional dimension of the subdiscipline, such as its presence in curricula of sociology and the integration of the sociologist of work around common research programs and the cycles of conferences is still limited. This ambiguity points to the need for intergenerational and supra-local debate on its future.

The results of the research contribute to the ongoing discussion within the European sociology on the status of the sociology of work in contemporary social sciences (see for instance Beynon 2011; Brook, Darlington, Partisan 2013; Halford, Strangleman 2009; Stewart, Martinez-Lucio 2011) by focusing on the universal and particular features of the subdiscipline in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Despite the political and economic change, we can observe the continuity of experiences and challenges faced by the sociologists of work in the period of state socialism and in the capitalist-market reality. These similarities concern, among others, the tensions between the academic and practical sociology (implemented in response to economic and political demand). The deinstitutionalization of sociology of work has both the local dimension, conditioned by the transition 'from socialism to democracy', and the universal aspects. The latter result from the expansion of management sciences in academic and business practices (in the context of neoliberal/late capitalist changes in academia) and from the changes taking place in the sphere

of work, such as its dematerialization, servitization and precarianization, all of which question the central role of the workplace in the sociological analysis.

However, it is important to note that our interlocutors in the project are convinced that the deinstitutionalization is not an irreversible process. They univocally pointed to the need for the reconstruction of the academic and practical sociology of work due to high demand for the sociological knowledge in the field of management, organization and the labor market, as well as the necessity to develop critical research on work in the conditions of late capitalist globalization and the transformation of the sphere of employment. It remains to be seen to which extent both needs can be fulfilled in the Polish academia which is currently about to undergo yet another institutional change.

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