Neoliberal „time regimes" and their relation to the new technologies

1. Introduction

The aim of the presentation is to try to answer the following question: how do cultural practices of time management, related to the new technologies, shape the experience and perception of time in neoliberal social entities?

To fully understand this question, I should explain its individual elements. This long question is possible to be divided into four research areas.

> The first one is Social time
> The second one is Neoliberal regimes
> The third area is Time management
> And the fourth area is Cultural practices related to new technologies

2. What is social time?

To start with understanding this topic it is important to explain what is cultural time perception in terms of social time. The article elaborates on the problem of social time defined as the hidden system of social, cultural and personal life (Hall 1984) also described as the 'deep structure' for every culture (Pawełczyńska 1986: 121). The matter of social time perception, first time discussed by Émile Durkheim (2001), who pointed out that the collective character of the time is created in the process of interaction between community members, and thus it is shared by the majority of representatives of a given culture. Such understanding of time emphasizes the notion of time is a social construct, consisting of temporal behavioral patterns and imaginations of phenomena such as duration, passing away, change and succession. It is primarily a deep system of cultural, social and personal life that has functions such as integration, regulation and communication.

I define social time and social temporality as issues related to the way of experiencing and perception of time by individuals, cultural concepts of time and social patterns regulating dynamics of daily and institutional life (Tarkowska 1992: 25). Social time is always constructed, constituted or choreographed by society, culture and system.

By using the term choreographing in the context of temporality, I mean the process of constructing the rhythm of social life. I consider time as a tool used to organize social life, which is composing, designing and controlling in social reality.

The category of time is one of basic forms we use to create, shape and order our daily lives (Banaszczyk 1981: 9). Choreographing is a word used by a British researcher Barbara Adam, the author of the article: Choreographing Time and Management: Traditions, Developments, and Opportunities.

3. Neoliberal (time) regimes

Now I would like to go to the discussion about neoliberal time regimes. I will introduce here the term 'cultural time regime' to refer to a temporal ordering and orientation that is deeply entrenched in the culture and provides a basis for implicit values, patterns of thought and the logic of action [Aleida Assmann 2013: 42].

Following Michel Foucault, I understand the process of temporal choreographing as microphysics of disciplinary mechanisms , technologies of power. Cultural time regimes are enforced discipline. It 'making an individual be subject to disciplinary mechanisms of state

power'. This power 'has influence not only on freedom of speech and thinking, but also on who one can be' [Burzyńska, Markowski 2006: 535]. The French philosopher described ways of control over temporality of certain individuals and social groups in the form of the pressure strategy [Foucault 1995]. Foucault defined sense of time as the intentional products of a state administration, which major, if not exclusive function is to assure that discipline reigns over society as a whole [Foucault 1995: 216]. According to the French philosopher, one of power state characteristics is enforcement of time regimes. Pressure is so strong that in some moments the enforced time definitions become finally internalized to such extent that external pressure is not needed anymore, because individuals watch themselves and impose time regimes created by authorities on themselves. By using time regime term, I want to emphasize not only the plurality of times, temporal experiences, practices and forms, but also, even more importantly, how time is produced and ordered, and how that ordering involves technologies, media, hierarchies and systems of power.

Capitalist and industrial "regimes of time", are associated primarily with Taylorism and Fordism. These are forms of work organization, consisting in precise measurement of the duration of individual production stages, breaks and working hours. This type of work organization is symbolized by a production line in a large car factory, where the worker performs a fixed, simple operation, the rate of which is dictated by the speed of movement of the products produced on the conveyor belt. It assumes the maximum intensification of work with effective use of time and cost cutting. These are capitalist labor regimes that have deepened along with progressing industrialization.

But old "regimes of time" which are the ways to control social time have changed. This change is related to the transformation of social time progressed from linear time to "pointillist" time, visualized by many dimensionless points (Bauman 2009). For a long time humanities and social sciences have been deeply concerned to understand how temporality works in the modern era.

For instance, Paul Virilio has written extensively about a long-term tendency toward "acceleration" of societal processes, while David Harvey suggests the concept of "space-time compression" to explain what happens to structures and experiences in the modern world.

Cultural anthropologists and social researchers such as Arjun Appadurai used concepts such as fragmentary, multitemporal and multi-line time. These terms express the change that takes place in the perception of time and how those changes are associated with the multiplicity and diversity of the rhythms of social life, as well as the pace of human life. Transformations related to the delineation of social time are often interpreted as unintentional and unforeseen consequences of a modern attitude towards time, characterized by the growing role of the present, a significant acceleration, concentration on the future, and planning.

Multitemporal time is the result of socio-economic changes taking place in the epoch of neoliberalism understood as the basic, political and economic paradigm of modernity. I interpret neoliberalism as a radical form of capitalism, with a particular emphasis on individual responsibility and flexibility. Neoliberalism is characterized by a belief that it directly leads to development, while freedom is a means of self-realization of an individual.

The new character of post-industrial "time regimes" is represented by deregulation of collective norms, remote working, as well as blurring the line between working time and free

time in the context of deregulation and flexibility of these elements in the era of neoliberalism. The neoliberal perspective enables the analysis of "time regimes" in the context of the strategies that individuals work out in the contemporary culture of hurriedness and efficiency while pursuing such neoliberal values as effectiveness, innovativeness and creativity.

4. What is time management?

In order to fulfill the need to organize time, which is an increasing challenge in the accelerated puentylist time, neoliberal subjects are seeking support with time management tools. Neoliberal subject is understood as an atomic individual whose natural self-interest and tendency to compete for economic rewards must be fostered and enhanced. Time management tools support and strengthen individuals' needs to pursue neoliberal values. Time management in official discourse is "the process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific activities. Good time management enables you to work smarter – not harder – so you get more done in less time, even when time is tight and pressures are high. Failing to manage your time damages your effectiveness and causes stress".

Time management and related methods belong to the coaching content. When coaches talk about time management, they talk about decisions, choices, what to do with a finite and limited resource such as time. They treat time as a means to an end, not as an independent goal. Time management content is a phenomenon that is the result of socio-economic changes taking place in the era of neoliberalism. The neo-liberal style of work and related new forms of employment, such as remote work, generate unprecedented problems with time management, need to be overcame through various techniques. Skilled employees are required to manage their own time in a flexible way. The use of various time management techniques is intended to help in self-organization and goal-oriented learning, and to effectively combine private and professional life.

But from anthropological perspective time management in neoliberal hegemony is a clever tool for controlling the time of individuals. Time management is a neoliberalist way of choreographing or constructing social temporality. Moreover, time is a significant tool used in research on management, when attempting to regulate and control time. The word 'choreography' that was used in the project title refers to processes of arrangement, development, design and control of time within social reality (Adam 2002). Choreography of temporality is the action performed by social entities to transform schedules of their lives in the context of social life. Such actions include cultural practices of time management, that individuals experience and use to organize their lives (Zerubavel 1981).

5. What are those cultural practices related to new technologies?

Cultural time management practices can be seen as a help in synchronization and coordination of various rhythms of social life, related to the multiplicity of times produced by each social class, each individual group, each micro-social element (George Gurvitch). By cultural practices, I understand ways of acting that result from social beliefs, values and ways of thinking.

Cultural practices are the strategies that individuals develop in the culture of haste, lack of time and overwork. In this way, neoliberal subjects try to achieve values such as efficiency, innovation and creativity. By reflecting the neoliberal values, individuals develop strategies related to new technologies. Speaking of new technologies, I mean not only computers. Those

include information and communication technologies, computers, mobile devices, contemporary time planners, modern calendars and portable organizers most often taking the form of applications on smartphones.

In neoliberal logic, the ability to use computers and software is important, as well as learning how to use the software in order to save time, energy and effort needed to perform specific tasks or activities. The internet is full of websides which list the very best time management apps for the most common time management challenges. For example, to properly manage time, it is recommended to use the Trello, Asana, Google Calendar, Any.Do and Polish Nozbe applications.

Such application like Trello and Asana are a web-based project management applications. They are used to coordinate the actions of a group of people focused around one project, although they can also be used individually. It is particularly useful for teams, among which individual employees work from different places.

Applications like 'Any.Do' allows to organize day by creating reminders, to-do lists, notes and events and store them on the Any.do interface without missing anything on schedule. These types of applications are tools for creating individual task lists that can be prioritized.

The Nozbe application allows you to prioritized your daily tasks due to categories: important, unimportant, urgent, not urgent. That categories are compatible with eisenhower matrix - a time management tool.

Klok2 application offers a new approach for time management, scheduling and planning. It calculates the working time of people working remotely from home. This application addresses the need for more and more popular remote work. Our working hours are calculated by new technologies. In addition, we are always under the control of the bosses thanks to the cells that can call us at any time of the day or even nights.

Focus Booster is an online app that allows users to break up their schedule into manageable chunks. Just like the old-fashioned Pomodoro method, Focus Booster is essentially a timer that splits up your revision sessions with a number of little breaks in order to keep you as productive as possible. This digital Pomodoro timer is based on the time management method called pomodoro. The classical version of this technique uses a timer to break down work into intervals, traditionally 25 minutes in length, separated by short breaks. These intervals are named pomodoros, the plural in English of the Italian word pomodoro (tomato), after the tomato-shaped kitchen timer.

New technologies are here to help us in self-discipline, effective work and effective implementation of the set goals. Devices used for scheduling of temporality of social actors create changes, linked to how temporal phenomena are perceived. These are often the result of, more and more perceptible with every passing day, blending of leisure and work.

New technologies are important element of 'time regimes' used by individuals for time management purposes and to discipline our bodies and minds by means of power mechanisms (Foucault 1995).

Different types of applications and tools for time management can be understood as power technologies, microphysics of disciplinary devices, and oppressive instruments forming the temporality of individual social entities. Various practices related to time management can be

interpreted as oppressive instruments shaping the temporality of entities, exercising control through pressure strategies that go hand in hand with the criteria of efficiency and usefulness of social entities. The imposed, but also sustained, regimes of time form the temporality of individuals through time management tools. New technologies constitute a specific element of modern "time regimes". They serve individuals to manage time and through the mechanisms of power subject our bodies to discipline.

Various practices related to new technologies in time management are worth considering in terms of Buno Latour's Action Network Theory. This theory presupposes the presence of both human and non-human subjects. New technologies are non-human actors, though they do have some causal power. But that actors are not only technological but also social. Conducting research with reference to the Actor-Network Theory by Bruno Latour (2013) makes it possible to gain greater understanding of variety of time management practices that are related to both social and technological aspects of reality. They belong to the sphere of nature (adjusted to the natural biorhythm of a human body under pressure of neoliberal rhetoric) and culture in an equal manner (Latour 2011).

6. Going to the conclusions

New technologies arrange the temporality of social actors and initiate changes in the way they experience time phenomena.

Information and communications technology among other technological advances, are supposed to reduce the amount of time necessary to undertake certain actions. In theory, they should thus make more time available, notably for leisure activities. However, as empirical studies have shown, people increasingly have the impression of lacking time, of having to run after it. In our societies, time has never been more scarce than now.

Time management devices are here to optimize our activities. However, technologies can be treated as wasting time. TV, fb, series, or a smartphone turned on in the wrong moment contribute to wasting time. Neoliberal rhetoric teaches us in which moments and situations should we use new technologies properly to optimize us, not wasting time.

The use of such devices is a manifestation of neoliberal values. They are another form of control and constitute a clever mechanism of power over the unit, through which individuals self-regulate themselves, they are their own guardian.

New technologies are used by people in ways that allow people to better rearrange working and domestic schedules, and thereby to create free time for themselves. Very often, however, new technologies amplify our impression of time shortage.

The transformation of social time that is taking place before our eyes is on the one hand linked to neoliberal ideology, which is perfectly realized in times of high speed and instant access to information. On the other hand, multitemporality, heterotemporality and multipointness are not conducive to achieving goals in a systematic, planned and linear manner, and therefore are in conflict with neoliberal logic.