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**The Influence of Class on Social Life in
Britain between the Wars**

**Vliv třídy na společenský život ve Velké Británii
mezi světovými válkami**

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

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BACHELOR WORK

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Abstrakt

Tato bakalářská práce je zaměřena na analýzu vlivu třídy na společenský život ve Velké Británii v meziválečném období. V úvodní části je podrobně vylíčena meziválečná situace s ohledem na rozdělení společnosti do tří základních tříd, kterým se dále věnuje podrobně každá kapitola. V kapitole první je analyzována třída pracujících se zaměřením na vývoj životních podmínek a jejich vlivu na využití volného času. Ve druhé kapitole je představena střední třída, která se dočkala společně s třídou pracujících zlepšených životních podmínek v meziválečném období. Především se jednalo o vliv odborů v meziválečném období, zlepšené bytové situace obyvatelstva a nového fenoménu rekreace. Třetí kapitola se podrobně věnuje vlivu vyšší třídy a aristokracie na vývoj společenského života v daném období. Zde se jedná především o vhodné využití volného času aristokracie s propojením na upevnění výsadní pozice ve společnosti. V závěru práce jsou shrnuta všechna fakta, která vystihují rozdíly společenských tříd s ohledem na vliv na společenský život.

Abstract

The bachelor work is focused on analysing the influence of class on social life in Britain between the wars. In the introduction, the inter-war period is described in detail in relation to the division of social classes into three basic categories. The following chapters closely describe and analyse particular classes. The first chapter analyses the working classes with regard to an improvement of living conditions and the influence of these improvements on making use of free time. The second chapter introduces the middle class which together with the working classes obtained improved living conditions. It is mainly focused on the influence of Trade Unions on the life in the inter-war period, improved housing situation and a new phenomenon - recreation. The third chapter focuses on the influence of upper classes and aristocracy on the development of social life in the inter-war period. This chapter is mainly concerned with analysing free time activities of the aristocracy in connection with the strengthening of the unique position of upper classes in the society. In the conclusion, all supportive arguments describing the differences between social classes with regard to social life are mentioned.

Poděkování

Rád bych touto cestou poděkoval všem, kteří mě inspirovali ke studiu tohoto krásného jazyka a byli mi oporou v mém vysokoškolském tažení.

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Introduction

Many discussions have been held on the topic of entertainment and cultural studies. The purpose of this work is to prove or disprove the influence of class on social life in Britain in the period between the two World Wars. The work will take into consideration all the necessary aspects of the time and will concentrate on five main stages: Underclass – Unemployed, Low Class – Working class, Middle Class – Officials, Upper Class – The Rich, and Aristocracy – The Ruling Class.

First, it is necessary to understand the era of the beginning of the twentieth century to be able to recognize people's needs. The social and economic situation between 1875 and 1914 was that the condition of the poor in most of Britain greatly improved as prices fell by forty percent and real wages doubled. As stated by Hopkins: "Hence, by 1938 real wages were 30 per cent higher than in 1913" (Hopkins, 1991:20) As a result of falling prices and increased wages, poor families could eat better food, including meat, fresh milk and vegetables. This greatly improved the old diet of white bread and beer.

The British have always been keen on their children. Therefore, education played an important role in their lives. As mentioned by A.H. Halsey: "a typical school at the beginning of the century was a public elementary all age school accepting pupils from the age of five and keeping them at school until the age of 12 – 14." (Halsey, 1972:153) They were taught reading, writing and arithmetic. England also started to build "red brick" universities in the new industrial cities. The term "red brick" distinguished the new universities, often brick-build, from the older, mainly stone-build universities of Oxford and Cambridge. These new universities were unlike Oxford and Cambridge, and taught more science and technology to satisfy Britain's industries. British were also aware of further influence of education on people's lives. Therefore, they were ready to pay high school fees for good education at public schools. This is also mentioned by Storry and Childs in the following statement:

It indicates parents' wish to benefit from the fact that the private sector has always had a disproportionately high influence on British culture and society, dominating many aspects of British public life, from Whitehall to Shire Hall, from Parliament to local constituency parties, from the Institute of Directors to local Chambers of Commerce. (Storry and Childs, 1997:95)

The face of the towns had greatly changed in the middle years of the nineteenth century. The organized improvement of worker's homes, of factory conditions, public health and education had all come fast. London, for example, gained most of its size between the wars. According to Stephen Inwood: "London extended its size six times by 1939 compared to 1880." (Inwood, 2003:645) The popularity of having your own house was widely seen in late 1920's as more families could afford mortgages. Sidney Webb, an early socialist, amusingly described the pride of the new town authorities, or municipalities, which carried out these changes. As mentioned by J.B. Priestly in his work describing England:

I have come to the conclusion that this third England is the new after-war England, which belongs more to this time than to this Island. I thought that its birthplace was America itself. It is England with highways, by-pass roads, petrol stations, and factories, which look like modern fair pavilions, huge cinemas, dance halls and coffee bars, ground floor houses with small garages, Woolworth supermarkets, cars, radios, tourism, factory workers, who look like actresses, greyhound racecourses, swimming pools, and everything, which is free for coupons from cigarettes packets. I knew, if the fog disappeared, I would see this England along the northern edge of London, where straight wide road is coming through the miles long houses, which are all equipped by a garage and a radio, where you can find magazines about film stars, swimming trunks, tennis rackets, and dance shoes. (Inwood, 2003:678)

London was England's engine, hometown of its film, record, radio, and advertising business. It was the way on which new dance styles and modern fashion were coming to England. It was actually a bridge head of American cultural and industrial invasion to Europe. Such thoughts have supportive arguments in another work by C.L. Mowat:

The big city was the product of the past, but it continued to grow, straining ever more tightly the bands of its roads and bridges and railways, its bricks and mortar, its underground mains and sewers and the labyrinth of electric, telephone and telegraph cables. (Mowat, 1955:231)

On the other hand, the British had to face post-war social crisis within its population. The Great War was still on people's minds and a large number of families were affected directly. There were still armless or scared people walking in the streets, women who have never seen their husbands or boyfriends, also mothers who still wondered around looking for their sons. The times were hard but promising as well. The first after-war years appeared to be successful in most parts of human fields.

Church, as one of the important British features, had also undergone some major changes in its structure and influence. As stated by David McDowall:

In the country, the village priest no longer had the power he had had a century earlier. Churches were now half empty, because so many people had gone to live in towns, where they stopped going to church. By 1900 only nineteen per cent of Londoners went regularly to church. Those who did usually lived in richer areas. This remains true today, when less than ten per cent are regular church goers. (McDowall, 1989:152)

The reason why people preferred other ways of spending their free time is also provided by McDowall:

People were also attracted by other ways of spending their Sundays. By the 1880's, for the first time, people could think about enjoying some free time. Apart from museums, parks, swimming pools and libraries recently opened in towns, the real popular social centre remained the alehouse or pub. Thousands of these were built in the new suburbs. (McDowall, 1989:152)

It needs to be understood that the economic growth in the middle of the nineteenth century was later replaced by high unemployment, which was seen as one of the most worrying matters later in the nineteenth century and developed mainly through the shortage of work for English people. The nineteenth century was supposed to be a great success of the British Empire which reached its largest measurements in its existence. The industry was on the right path being well known for its reliability and good workmanship. Also, British agriculture was successful as more ports were being opened for trade in the middle of the nineteenth century. British farmers started to buy more land and, in this situation, the prices of food dropped rapidly but people could see the rising prices for land. There was also another worrying sign - the US situation. The sign of a threat from overseas could have been noticeable even earlier, but the British thought of themselves as The Rulers. This high self-esteem was later on substituted by a fear of the US, who had developed a good reputation for their economy during the past thirty years and could easily compete with Europe. Therefore, it could have been seen that, after unifying their country, Americans also developed a good reputation for their products and services.

Another key factor was the unemployment. The economic situation from the second half of the nineteenth century did not exist any more. The world economic troubles of the thirties also affected the British social life. As mentioned in statistics:

At no time, from 1920 onwards, were there less than two million registered as unemployed, and a peak of nearly three million was reached in 1932-3. These figures represented 23 per cent of all those insured, but did not include agricultural workers, domestic servants, and the self-employed, the true total in September 1932 was estimated 3.75 million. (More, 1989:238)

This also affected the way in which people spent their time. The poor ones could no longer afford to waste their time as they were obliged to stay at work late to earn money for their children. The economic crisis from the beginning of the late twenties and early thirties were the toughest for the past hundred years. As mentioned by Paul Johnson: “The average unemployment figure in 1920-1938 was around fourteen percent compared to six percent before 1914.” (Johnson, 1995:294) The unemployment situation of the inter-war period with its features and causes is described in more detail by Charles More. It focuses on the unemployment in the most hit industries such as coal mining, iron and steel industry, shipbuilding, and textiles. The unemployment figures as mentioned by Charles More reached their peak in 1932 when the unemployment figures were as follows: coal mining 34.5%, iron and steel industry 47.9%, shipbuilding and repairing 62%, textiles 30.6%, and the total unemployment was 22.5%. (More, 1989:238)

As mentioned earlier, the supremacy of the British industry was being challenged by the USA but also by Germany. What even deepened the crisis was the percentage of people employed in the main industries. As Hopkins points out:

At that time the staple industries employed about a quarter of the total work force in Britain, and produced three-quarters of the vital export trade. Between the wars, the textile industry, especially cotton, suffered grievously from competition from Japan, India, the USA and Italy; iron and steel production dropped in the face of more efficient production in both Europe and the USA; coal production was heavily reduced, partly because the industry was old and inefficient as compared with its rivals, and partly because of reduced demand both abroad and at home. Oil was replacing coal as fuel in ships, and depression in the staple industries naturally resulted in a decreased demand for coal. (Hopkins, 1991:13)

After such characterisation it may be thought that the whole England stopped, but there were also some exceptions - areas such as London, Midlands, and South East were the prosperous ones. This was possible due to the building industry, which was largely supported by the government subsidies and, therefore, kept people at work. This will be explained in more detail in the Working Class chapter.

Despite the economic growth in the late thirties, the situation did not prove any sign of stable positive development. As later realized, the economic growth, which stopped the growth of unemployment, was due to World War II. The country had to prepare for the war. Therefore, it needed more people in the heavy industry to produce more planes, ships, cars etc.

Another feature of the inter-war period which played an important role within the society was the voting system. It is described by Johnson:

Britain is well known for its respect for democracy. In 1911 only sixty percent of the male population could go to the election. This was possible only because the poorest population did not go to the elections as they were not registered within the system. The half million of the wealthiest could even dispose with two and more votes. In 1910 two brothers disposed with thirty-five votes. The right to vote was extended twice. First, it was in 1918 and then in 1928. (Johnson, 1995:291)

First, the voting right was extended in 1918 through the Representation of the People Act. This was an honour to women who worked hard through the war years and helped to manage the life without men who were at war. Second, it was in 1928 when all people over the age of twenty one received the right to vote. As mentioned earlier, the position of women greatly changed after the Great War. They proved themselves to have the same right for social advantages as the male population. This is also declared by the following statement. "The position of women in Britain was changing. In 1918 after the war ended women over thirty were given the vote if they were householders. By 1928 all women over twenty-one were given the vote." (Fashion Era, 1) As the British were struggling with the economic depression, they did not believe in their previous symbols. "These days everything is relative, therefore, we cannot rely on God anymore, we cannot believe in free trade, in marriages, rents, coal neither in the social status." (Johnson, 1995:305) Unfortunately, these old symbols of the British Empire still existed to prevent any changes in thinking.

As for the occupational pattern, things changed slightly as the development of manufacturing and services occurred. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the factory worker, the miner, and the railwayman could be the symbols of the British economic growth. However, in the 1920's and 1930's it was the nurse, the sales representative, and the clerk who usurped the position. The redistribution of occupations is described by Charles More. It started soon after the Great War and has continued until

today. The redistribution of occupations has seen its greatest development in services and clerical occupations. Therefore, it was mainly the middle class employees who profited. More compares the figures describing the unemployment distribution in 1911 to 1971: The managers and administration rose from 3.4% in 1911 to 8.2% in 1971. Clerical workers increased its proportion from 4.8% in 1911 to 13.9% in 1971. Finally, foremen, inspectors, and supervisors increased its proportion from 1.3% in 1911 to 3.9% in 1971. (More, 1989:387)

As for the work orientation, there had been quite a significant change in the structure of employment. The inter-war period was the period when England became certainly more industrialised and urbanised as greater and greater proportion of the economy was devoted to industry rather than to agriculture. Detailed description on the redistribution in particular sectors of the economy in the first half of the twentieth century is described by Halsey:

Employment Structure 1901 – 1961, England and Wales

<i>Year</i>	<i>Agriculture & Fishing</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Mining</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Services</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total employed</i>
1901	1,221,814	9	805,185	6	5,354,692	37	6,947,037	48	14,328,727
1911	1,260,476	8	1,044,594	6	6,272,897	39	7,706,432	47	16,284,399
1921	1,283,324	7	1,065,113	6	5,295,108	31	9,534,605	56	17,178,150
1931	1,199,281	6	968,771	5	4,834,712	26	11,850,612	63	18,853,376
1951	1,074,061	5	591,030	3	6,517,332	32	12,153,995	60	20,336,418
1961	832,610	4	457,900	2	5,681,320	26	14,722,640	68	21,694,470

(Halsey, 1972:279)

Class is undoubtedly one of the features which still forms the British society. As for the class classification, it was not easy for the British themselves to establish a correct approach to it, but all possible solutions end up with occupation or cultural specifications. As proposed by J. Stevenson:

None the less, broad notions of what constitutes class form part of both popular and academic discussions of society in the twentieth century: they accord primarily with occupational and cultural divisions within the population as a whole. (Stevenson, 1984:341)

This might become ambiguous as he explains later:

A clergyman living in a poor country parish might well have had an annual income less than that of a skilled printer working in Fleet Street; culturally, however, most would have little difficulty in assigning the former to the middle class or the latter to the working class. Habits of work, dress and speech, inherited notions of status attached to particular careers and lifestyles, and, in Britain as a whole, regional differences all tribute to the complexity of the concept of class. (Stevenson, 1984:341)

This explanation might have helped to better understand such complex matter as class classification has appeared to be.

Social life in Britain between the wars will be studied from several points of view. Most of them will be connected with leisure, which usurped the main position in free time activities. Therefore, the definition of such activities is necessary. "We interpret leisure activities as those things that people voluntarily choose to do in their spare time when they are not working." (Halsey, 1972:540) Leisure saw its greatest development in the first half of the twentieth century. It could fill time of the suburban people, who spent most of their week-day time at work and needed relaxation at weekends.

Finally, for the purpose of this work, it has been accepted that classes will be classified from the point of income and occupational pattern. Classification of single classes will be described separately in following chapters.

Low Class - Working Class

The term “working class” included a wide range of people. According to Charles Booth, the working classes were divided into six categories. People: with high income, regular standard income, regular small income, irregular income, occasional income and low income. People with a regular standard income were the majority in these six groups. (Morgan, 1999:423) It should be also mentioned why it is often described as “working classes” and not “working class”. The first distinction has been provided by Ch. Booth, a second would be described by Hopkins through the skill: “Why working classes and not “working class”? Largely because, since industrialization, there have usually been important differences between skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers.” (Hopkins, 1991:15)

A detailed proportion of manual workers in major occupational groups are available in the chart bellow:

The Occupied Population of Great Britain – Working Class

<i>Occupational Groups</i>	<i>1911*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1921*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1931*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1951*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1961*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1966*</i>	<i>**</i>
<i>Skilled</i>	5,608	30.5	5,572	28.8	5,618	26.7	5,617	24.9	5,981	25.3	5,857	23.7
<i>Semi-skilled</i>	6,310	34.4	5,608	29.0	6,044	28.7	6,124	27.2	6,004	25.4	6,437	26.1
<i>Unskilled</i>	1,767	9.6	2,740	14.2	3,114	14.8	2,709	12.0	2,037	8.6	2,099	8.5
<i>Manual total</i>	13,685	74.6	13,920	72.0	14,776	70.3	14,450	64.2	14,022	59.3	14,393	58.3

*Number of persons in major occupational groups, 1911 – 1966 (thousands)

**Major occupational groups as a percentage of total occupied population 1911 – 1966 (percentages)

(Halsey, 1972:113)

When studied closer, the beginning of the 1920’s was the time of improvement, including: standard of living, the political power of ordinary workers, quality of health, and, more importantly, spending free time enjoying leisure activities.

As mentioned earlier, the wages of the working class doubled in the period of 1875-1914. At the beginning of the twentieth century, people had started to use their free time. This was possible as they saved some money after paying all necessary things such as food, rent and clothing. The birth rate had also decreased although people had

more money. Men and women had started to prefer waiting for marriage and even used abortion when a child was not wanted in the family.

The end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century was also marked by the establishment of trade unions. First, they functioned for the purposes of single crafts as they wanted to keep their uniqueness. Later, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the trade unions had started to use their power to keep more people at work and gain unemployment benefits for their workers. The power of the trade unions was noticeable especially with the working and middle class people as they gained benefits and treatment which were not possible at the end of the nineteenth century at all. The chart below shows the development of worker's treatment in the proportion of working hours throughout the twentieth century:

Hours of work 1913 – 1985

Years	1	2	3	4	5
1913	54	56	56.4		
1924	47	46.8*	46.6		
1951	44.4	46.3	44.6		
1973	40.0	43.9	38.1	43.8	37.8
1985	39.1	44.5	n.a.	41.9	37.3

1 = Hours in standard working week (i.e. those not paid at overtime rates) of full-time manual workers

2 = Hours in actual working week (i.e. including overtime and short-time working) of above

3 = Hours in average working week (all workers)

4 = Hours of all full-time male workers

5 = Hours of full-time female workers

*Negative figure = short-time working

n.a. = not available

(More, 1989:395)

These figures are also supported by Hopkins who even disagrees with K. Marx about factory conditions:

Thus the coming of the factory system did not turn all industrial workers into factory zombies chained for long hours to their machines. This is not to deny, of course that working conditions could sometimes be very harsh at the turn of the century, but the reality of the industrial work experience was too complex and

various to be described simply in terms of long hours of what Marx called machine-facture. (Hopkins, 1991:3)

The changes of working hours and the rise in wages increased the living standards of the employed people between the wars.

As for the free time, it must be mentioned that an increased amount of holidays and leisure activities occurred in general. Leisure activities became more common and varied as working hours were shortened and real wages went up. Only a few lucky ones could spend free time enjoying a leisure activity and even have it paid by an employer as a holiday before 1918. The situation after the Great War changed as the trade unions became powerful. More explains:

Finally, there has been a growth in paid holidays, virtually non-existent for manual workers before the First World War (although most workers did have around two weeks off, including public holidays). Paid holidays, usually of a week or so, became widespread after the Holidays with Pay Pact of 1938. (More, 1989:394)

The second half of the nineteenth century, and especially the beginning of the twentieth, was marked by indisputable rise of sport activities. First signs of sport being recognised as a leisure activity was at the end of the nineteenth century when labourers needed some entertainment after long working days (6 days a week compared to 5 now days) at work.

The most favourite kind of entertainment for lower working class was football. There were football teams in every city in the UK at the end of the nineteenth century. Football teams were not just 11 players on a pitch; it also meant and expressed the social and religious status of its supporters. Example of such rivalry is presented by Kenneth O. Morgan: “Everton always attracted Catholics compared to its neighbour Liverpool which was supported mainly by Protestants.” (Morgan, 1999:425) This also meant that people started to travel more as they went away to see their teams playing away. It should be pointed out that players themselves belonged to working class, despite the fact that they have already started to gain popularity. “Leading footballers began to acquire national popularity, though still paid little more than skilled workmen.” (Hopkins, 1991:56) It needs to be remembered that those days were the beginning of professional football teams as the first tradesmen supported their teams with money to promote their companies’ labelled goods. Football attendance continued

to grow between the wars. In the major industrial cities, football can easily be named the most popular sport. It is important to mention that football was seen as a proletariat sport and anyone could afford to watch it. As for visiting football matches the tickets were affordable for all classes. Today, football became commercialised and a family of four members would pay at least £100 for a Premiership match (top division). This makes football affordable only for people who are either employed or very much committed to supporting their team.

As mentioned earlier, watching a live professional football match has become an expensive day out now-a-days. As more money was invested in football, people realised that it would be a great opportunity to earn money as well. Football pools soon became a very popular activity mainly for the working classes. The numbers were outstanding. By 1938 an estimated ten million people were sending in coupons with stakes totalling over £40 million. (Stevenson, 1984:385)

The influence of sport on English life had also supported new ways of spending money, for example on betting. People at the beginning of the twentieth century could bet on a national level. As an example, horse races being held in London could have been bet on in Newcastle as communication channels were set via telegraph and the places were called betting shops. Hopkins points out the affects of betting:

A new form of betting, on the football pools, came in, with ten million customers by 1938. In 1937 there was a special mail train from Liverpool to Birmingham each week carrying 235,000 football coupons for the Birmingham area. Newspaper reading increased, the Labour *Daily Herald* having a circulation of two million. (Hopkins, 1991:57)

Housing played an important role in the social and leisure activities of the working class people. For instance, workers became more enclosed within the family. For those who have been skilled and fully employed, it was possible to get a mortgage and enjoy the life in their own house. As presented by Hopkins, many of these could take advantage of Lloyds George's government pledge that provided "homes for heroes"; Addison's Housing and Town Planning Act of 1919 provided 213,000 houses. Others followed: Chamberlain's Housing Act of 1923 gave a further subsidy to private builders which led to the building of another 438,000 houses. Another Act in the following year, passed by the first Labour government and known as Wheatley's Act increased the figure of council houses by 520,000. (Hopkins, 1991:21) There were

finally approximately four million houses built in the inter-war period. (Hopkins, 1991:23)

This process must have had an important influence on the way people spent their days off. Home centred activities became very popular. As mentioned by More: “These included gardening, difficult in most nineteenth – century working class houses, since it only offered a yard; DIY, the scope of which had been limited by the smallness of many houses and by the fact that they were rented.” (More, 1989:395) There were also other activities connected to home entertainment such as listening to the radio as a family, and meeting with relatives or friends.

As for socializing, we have to mention the most popular place which has been used over the centuries. It is the pub. The place where working, middle and upper class men went must be remembered with great respect as many important political and business issues were being resolved right there. More mentions that: “Important though the pub still was as a centre for male communal activity.” (More, 1989:396) More mentions that pub was a place of “male community”. Pub was also a place where a lot of men came to relax and enjoy the company of their friends. This is true, especially for the inter-war period. The change occurred in the 1950’s when women reached more equal position in society. Storry and Childs mention:

In the past, pubs have performed different social functions. Traditionally they were male preserves. Various sociological studies have suggested that until the 1950’s the British pub was a more welcoming place for a man than was his home. It was familiar and cosy, with a fire and games such as darts and dominoes. (Storry and Childs, 1997:110)

As for the development of pubs in the period between the wars, more comfortable and civilised places were being built to suit the increased demands of their visitors. The ordinary working-class pub was still the meeting place for working men’s clubs and friendly societies, for games of dominoes, shove ha’ penny, darts and to a decreasing degree of skittles. One may think that socializing in pubs comes hand in hand with an increased level of drunkenness, but the opposite is true. If we compared the level of drunkenness before the Great War with the inter-war period, we would find that drunkenness decreased. This was due to the shortened opening hours, which were first introduced between the wars and the rule was kept also after the war. The lower

number of issued licences and decreased consumption of beer would also play its role.

John Stevenson points out:

Between the wars, consumption of alcohol never recovered from effects of higher taxations and shorter opening hours, while reductions in the strength of beer and a steep relative rise in the price of spirits combined with changing social habits to reduce the number of convictions for drunkenness. (Stevenson, 1984:382)

Below are stated some supportive arguments on decreased drunkenness:

Production of beer for sale in the United Kingdom in 1910 – 1913 had average thirty-four million barrels, but between 1920 and 1938 never rose above twenty-eight million, falling as low as thirteen million in 1933 and during the thirties generally running at about half the pre-war level.(Stevenson, 1984:383)

Thank to the Great War, radio broadcasting was introduced to the British in every corner of the Kingdom. Later, in October of 1922, the monopoly for radio broadcasting was founded in London under the name of BBC. (Hopkins, 1991:54) Soon after, it became the most influential radio in the country. It provided entertainment, reported events, trends, sports, and even religious services nation-wide.

It is important to mention that radio listening, especially at its beginnings, hardly found its listeners among working classes, but finally became very popular. As stated by Hopkins:

December 1926 the British Broadcasting Corporation, a new form of public utility, was established by royal charter, with the aim of providing not only entertainment but educative programmes as well. This meant that some of the programmes were very dull from the working point of view, but by the 1930's there were programmes of dance music, comedy shows, variety and music-hall programmes, sport commentaries and regular news bulletins in the evening. A unique form of home entertainment came into existence. (Hopkins, 1991:54)

There are also other important matters connected to broadcasting. These might be of technical and economic origin. As people got used to spending their free time by the radio, they required more and more advanced appliances. The very first ones were quite primitive. This fact is also supported by Hopkins:

The earliest wirelesses were primitive affairs, which needed much tuning in, separate batteries, accumulators, and earphones. By the thirties, they had built-in speakers, were plugged into the mains, and often had cabinets made of the first widely used plastic, bakelite. (Hopkins, 1991:55)

Spending free time in church was not very popular with any class. As people had more money, they found pleasure in other activities such as football, cricket, shopping, theatre, cinema and travelling. The church also did not realize that religious service became boring and very often difficult to understand. As mentioned by a few workers at the end of the nineteenth century and stated by Stephen Inwood “The service is not understandable, and is boring. The social gap between clergy and people is deep, and also Sunday – the day to relax – is not a good choice.” (Inwood, 2003:609)

Theatre was a place where people came to relax and watch usually melodramas, the most popular topics of plays since the Victorian period. Theatres produced large quantities of such plays as they were very popular among people. As Inwood states:

Dion Boucicault, the most productive, and popular drama writer of Victorian period, produced almost 200 plays between 1840 and 1880. Melodramas had only low literary value, but similarly to TV’s soap operas, offered lively entertainment, addressed audience’s emotions, and very often included moral and social topics related to the life in London. (Inwood, 2003:593)

From the beginning, the cinema addressed large masses of people who queued outside to see their first heroes and live out their lives in those few minutes inside the cinema. The popularity of the cinema, which arose from its very beginning, had its roots in several reasons. People could experience far places of the world, which they would probably never have visited themselves. They could forget about the reality for those few moments. With the arrival of voice, the cinema’s popularity even increased.

By the 1930’s a vast new entertainment industry had been created, centred on Hollywood, where nearly all the films were made and the stars lived; the British film industry was puny by comparison. A vast output of American films flooded Britain – musical, comedies, westerns, dramas, gangsters, and Walt Disney cartoons. They were usually accompanied by a weekly newsreel. (Hopkins, 1991:55)

The rise in film production also discovered another hint for business people, as they found a great interest in building new cinemas. The following should be mentioned:

Great chains of new cinemas appeared such as the Odeon, ABC, and Gaumont cinemas. They provided programmes consisting of a major film, a supporting film, a newsreel, and sometimes advertisement and popular organ music, all for less than a shilling in the cheapest seats, and all in warm and comfortable surroundings. Older cinemas, often less civilised, were called flea-pits. Cinema attendance reached extraordinary levels, and included Sunday opening in the

1930's, by 1937, about twenty million went to the cinema weekly, and about a quarter of these patrons went more than once a week as most cinemas changed their programmes mid-week. (Hopkins, 1991:55)

Also, the cost of tickets was low. Therefore, a weekly trip to the cinema was a cheap, pleasant activity for anyone who could enjoy a little bit of dreaming. This included people of all ages.

Cinema also influenced people's trends and fashion. Women tried to look as the film stars. As mentioned below:

Women wanted to look like their fashion icon screen idols, wear the hairstyles, make up and clothes that their favourite star, who obviously belonged to a very modern advanced world wore. Film goers wanted modern looks like their fashion icon screen and royal idols of the day. (Fashion Era, 2)

Cars were mainly affordable for higher classes for the price and maintenance cost reasons. On the other hand, motorbikes became very popular with the working classes. Some of the working class people were lucky to own a bike or a motorcycle combination (that is, with side-cars). Motorcycles offered less comfort but became widely used for travelling to and from work. They also attracted young people as a leisure activity and soon races started to appear. As Hopkins mentions: "The wider use of the motor cycle led to a new form of spectator sport, dirt-track or speedway racing, much patronised by the working classes." (Hopkins, 1991:56) The highest rise of motorbike use is connected to 1920's. As Stevenson points out:

In 1920 there were more motor cycles than cars, and numbers reached a peak in 1930. During the 1930's, however, numbers declined by about a third, reflecting perhaps the effects of the depression on the humbler motor cyclist and the purchase of motor cars by the more affluent" (Stevenson, 1984:391)

Horse and Greyhound racing were other pastime activities enjoyed by the wide mass of working classes. People liked the opportunity to gamble or to just watch the race. "Greyhounds racing on permanent, floodlit tracks were first introduced in 1926." (Hopkins, 1991:56) Despite the fact that betting on greyhound and horse racing was an illegal form of activity, people enjoyed it a lot. There was a very limited degree of police threat. Therefore, people also put their money into it. Attendance reached the highest level at the beginning of 1930's. As Stevenson mentions:

Greyhound racing claimed as many as eighteen million attendances by 1931. As with horses, off-course betting was illegal, but the provision of greyhound tracks in most of towns of any size made on-course betting much easier. (Stevenson, 1984:384)

Holiday was an activity discovered at the beginning of the twentieth century. Holidaymakers recruited themselves from people who enjoyed travelling. The rise of holidaymaking occurred as more people could pay for the buses and trains, later on substituted by motorbikes and cars. Travelling also helped to develop places such as Brighton, Portsmouth, and Dover. Holidaymaking became quite a mate sort of activity, where people enjoyed meeting in summer holiday camps which almost became like communities. Organisations such as (YHA) the Youth Hostel Association founded in 1930 also helped to support affordable travelling for young people. It reached its peak in the early 1950's.

The working classes could feel that they gained better conditions from their employers as well as from the state institutions. As stated earlier, the living standards rose almost for everyone between the wars. On the other hand, there was still a community of people which were helpless in every way. These were the unemployed.

The unemployed were the group of people who increased the most in numbers in the inter-war period. They also had to cope with a lot of problems concerning the basic living situations such as food, clothes, and their shelter. On the other hand, it was also a group of people who improved their living standards. The so called "life on the dole" became an opportunity for many families to survive the toughest years of the depression under the wings of a supportive government. Although no one could expect any sort of luxury life, everyone could at least have food and clothes. It was calculated that in South Wales one third of the single men and nearly half the married men were better off on the dole than in their last job. This certainly says something for their basic standard of living when employed.

As for the time passing, there were several possible ways of how to spend the entire days being out of work. Britain is well known for its voluntary system, which has its roots back in the eighteenth century. It has also helped many unemployed people to pass their time.

First to mention is the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association). It secured the most needed ones with a place to stay. Second, the Salvation Army helped everyone

who could not find a place to stay and eat. Third, The National Council of Social Services organised a nationwide network of clubs. There were about 400 of such supportive clubs in 1935 with a membership of a quarter of a million. One of these is described by writer J.B. Priestley in his *English Journey* (1934).

It was a dismal hole in a dark back street. In the first room, some youngish men were at work. One or two were cobbling boots, chiefly soling and heeling, for which they pay – in order to cover the bare cost of the leather – a shilling for men's, nine pence for women's, and six pence for children's boots. The other men were making things out of wood. They were mostly things for their homes, such as cupboards, bookcases, coal-boxes, and little desks for children. (Hopkins, 1991:36)

From the reader's point of view, it might be understood that Priestley shows such clubs, as under one's dignity. That would be wrong. These clubs helped one to be occupied and, as later realised, it was a very positive activity. Psychological illness due to feelings of depression was certainly common among the out-of-work people. In 1932, an average of two unemployed men committed suicide for every day in the year. In the period from 1921 to 1931, suicide rate among men under twenty-five years of age rose by 60 per cent. (Hopkins, 1991:36)

There were also other activities for the unemployed and most of them were similar to working classes ones. In the summer time, they could enjoy walks in the neighbourhood, cycling, and gardening. In winter time, activities were limited to places that offered warmth. Therefore, the range of activities differed. People stayed long in bed, went to libraries, or visited cheap cafés or milk bars. The unemployed also visited cinemas, football matches, or listened to the radio.

Middle Class - Official Class

This class, as it is known today, was formed after certain changes which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century. This was possible due to a need for hundreds of thousands of new officials who had to secure the British daily life. The officials were of any age, starting their work at nine or nine fifteen. No one could possibly count them as they were rising in numbers very quickly. These officials were later called “white collars”. They were in charge of retail sale, administrative work in banks, accountancy, and other business activities. They also helped with running the council activities on the county as well as on the national level. More than forty percent of these officials worked for business men, lawyers, insurance companies, and accountancy, but they were not considered “white collars”. It must be pointed out that “white collars” did not rise only in numbers but the proportion of workers in general had changed. These changes in the structure of employment proportion are illustrated in the following chart:

The Occupied Population of Great Britain – Middle Class

<i>Occupational Groups</i>	<i>1911*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1921*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1931*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1951*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1961*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1966</i>	<i>**</i>
<i>Managers</i>	631	3.4	704	3.6	770	3.7	1245	5.5	1268	5.4	1514	6.1
<i>Higher Professional</i>	184	1.0	196	1.0	240	1.1	435	1.9	718	3.0	829	3.4
<i>Lower Professional</i>	560	3.1	679	3.5	728	3.5	1059	4.7	1418	6.0	1604	6.5
<i>Foremen & Inspectors</i>	237	1.3	279	1.4	323	1.5	590	2.6	682	2.9	736	3.0
<i>Clerks</i>	832	4.5	1256	6.5	1404	6.7	2341	10.4	2994	12.7	3262	13.2
<i>Salesmen & Shop Assis.</i>	989	5.4	980	5.1	1376	6.5	1278	5.7	1398	5.9	1516	6.1
<i>White-Collar total</i>	3433	18.7	4094	21.2	4841	23.0	6948	30.9	8478	35.9	9461	38.3

*Number of persons in major occupational groups, 1911 – 1966 (thousands)

**Major occupational groups as a percentage of total occupied population 1911 – 1966 (percentages)

(Halsey, 1972:113)

There are also some other important figures concerning the middle class employment structures, as stated by Halsey: “During the period under review, clerical occupations grew by 292 per cent and increased their share of the total labour force from 4.5 per cent to 13.2 per cent.” (Halsey, 1972:98) Finally, the period from 1911 to 1966 saw the greatest increase in white collar occupations. According to Halsey, the number reached an incredible 176 per cent. (Halsey, 1972:98)

As for the size of companies, it needs to be mentioned that most of them had very few employees. This can be demonstrated by the words of Stephen Inwood:

Most of the financial institutions were not large companies. The average bank or supermarket employed forty eight people. The biggest financial banks (Brandts, Barings or Kleinworts) employed sixty or seventy officials, the bank of England employed approximately one thousand officials in 1900. (Inwood, 2003:452)

Financially, most of the officials were on the same level as workers. Members of both groups earned between 75 – 150 British pounds a year. But socially and economically, the groups were on a completely different level. “White collar” of any level would only socialize with another “white collar” but would never meet with a worker.

Officials lived in suburbs thank to an improved financing housing situation. It was not only an exclusivity of upper class to own a house. People with an average income could afford a house because the government and banks made it possible through an advanced system of mortgages. According to figures presented by Inwood, an average loan mortgage rate in the mid 1930’s was 4.5 – 5 percent. Therefore, a semi-detached house would then cost 600 British pounds, paid in twenty years. (Inwood, 2003:644)

As for the working and living standards, there were almost no differences between a skilled worker and an official. This also means that generalization for both classes may be used. The wages have been growing for almost a half of the century; more money was available for the average family whose members worked. Of the extra spending money, it has been calculated that a quarter went on more nutritious food, and forty-five per cent on clothing, rent, fuel and light, household equipment, newspapers, tobacco and transport. The rest was spent on strictly non-essential items such as holidays, entertainment and on consumer goods such as radio and vacuum cleaners.

Theatre, visited mainly by middle and upper class people, was a place to relax. It developed due to an improved economic and transportation situation. People from business, finance, civil service, and freelance looked for opportunities how to spend their evenings not only by sitting at restaurants or homes, but also for ways to entertain themselves. As mentioned earlier, thank to an improved transportation situation, more buses, trains and underground connections were available for a large portion of the community. Therefore, directors could have stabilised their program offer for a longer period and pay more to play authors as one play appeared repeatedly. Therefore, theatres attracted well reputable authors. New generation audience was well situated, appreciative, and not demanding. They usually came to see new Shakespeare's plays or adaptations of French authors.

Cinema was quite a new kind of entertainment, but as people were in favour of a new modern lifestyle, they soon got used to spending free time in them. Mainly, it became the favourite with young, middle class people as they were bored with music halls and theatres. Cinemas also attracted visitors for their unique indoor decorations and furnishing.

Indoors of new cinemas from 1920's, even the cinemas from the gloomiest and most dull places were extremely well decorated and exotic. Combination of stuccowork, shaped glazed tiles, and coloured lights created the same wonderful scenes, which could have been seen on the silver screen. These big caricatures of Maori palaces, Italian renaissance courtyards, and Egyptian temples should have provided people an atmosphere of hope and joy. (Inwood, 2003:681)

New cinemas were also cheap, therefore, easily affordable for all classes. They also appeared to be more comfortable. As mentioned by Inwood:

Most of young Londoners did not have enough money, but for 6 pence, they could enjoy entertainment for the whole afternoon. They could watch 2 films, news, short concerts and perhaps a live variety show. Girls and young ladies could feel a lot more comfortable compared to theatres where they had to behave according to high social standards. (Inwood, 2003:681)

Cinema was also the place where people could see the royalty's life. This was possible before the actual film started. People wanted to come into contact with royalty and see their lives. As stated below:

In both the UK and the USA, royalty was feted and filled newsreels with their appearances at events whatever side of the Atlantic they photographed. The Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Princess Marina and the Duchess of York, later

Queen Elizabeth consort of George VI all attracted news and views on what and when they wore certain clothes. (Fashion Era, 3)

The rise of the cinema also affected the lifespan of music halls and theatres. Some of the theatres survived thank to upper class people as they understood them as a suitable place to meet for social and “political occasions”. Concerning dance halls, they still attracted people who wanted to enjoy a night out together with a partner. As presented by Stephen Inwood:

Dance halls first appeared in England hundreds of years ago. Young gentlemen were obliged to arrange a meeting with a partner, for example in dance halls such as Cremone and Argyle, the same as it is now-a-days in Hammersmith Palais. (Inwood, 2003:682)

It must be mentioned that attendances were also called according to the entertainment they visited. The differences in terms occurred with the particular activity. This is explained by Storry and Childs:

‘Audiences’ are more sophisticated again because they listen. ‘Viewers’ is a euphemism which denies the passivity of the television ‘couch potato’. ‘Theatre-goer’ implies some form of dynamism and the word ‘buff’ comes from the uniform (made of buffalo hide) worn by smart regiments. (Storry and Childs, 1997:114)

In the late 1920’s, the first dance halls were started to be built in London. This was connected with the popularity of jazz and swing as the nation became very fond of the American way of life. It was just before the Great War when jazz and swing were introduced to the nation by the American Ragtime Octet. The popularity of waltz, foxtrot, one step, and the way of life even increased during war-times as more Americans visited the British Isles. Strict rules concerning the sexes were substituted by an easy-going atmosphere of the after-war years. (Inwood, 2003:683)

Football always attracted large masses of people and middle class was no exception. There were hundreds of clubs already. Football soon started to be a no. 1 sport for working and middle class men. It also attracted children. Therefore, a family visit to a professional football match very soon became a well-enjoyed weekend activity. As for the football competitions in England, a detailed structure is presented by Storry and Childs:

There are two major groups of professional clubs which play in either the Premier or the Football League. There are also two main competitions: the League Cup which is based on points won and the FA Cup which is a knockout competition. (Storry and Childs, 1997:113)

As mentioned earlier, football often expressed social as well as religious status. The following statement demonstrates how English supporters felt about the importance of football: “Football isn’t just a matter of life and death. It’s far more important than that.” (Storry and Childs, 1997:113)

Cricket retained its popularity mostly over the sunny parts of the year, especially in the summer. Cricket as well as football often expressed a social status. It was never widely played by working classes but largely enjoyed by middle and upper class population. To demonstrate such class divisions in cricket, see the following statement presented by Storry and Childs:

However, there are class associations to all British sports and in the case of cricket there is a history of contention for ‘ownership’ of the game. For example, many British stately homes have an adjacent cricket pitch and pavilion, where over the years encounters have taken place between ‘gentlemen and players’. This again underlines the British distinction between the upper class (gentlemen), who are leisured and admirable, and the lower classes (players) who work and are disparaged. (Storry and Childs, 1997:113)

Rugby had the image of a middle class sport. The organized form of rugby was the Rugby Union. It had the image of a non-professional sport. Therefore, it was popular with large masses of people. For a more detailed explanation, see the following description provided by Storry and Childs: “Rugby is controlled by the Rugby Union and the division between lower social status soccer players and higher social status rugby players ...” (Storry and Childs, 1997:111)

There is also other curiosity concerning rugby. As mentioned above, rugby had the image of a middle class sport. Therefore, it would be expected to be played on the grounds of well established schools. Storry and Childs have a different opinion:

One of the many paradoxes of British society is that although most of the Public (that is private) schools in Britain play the middle class game of rugby as their main sport, both Eton and Harrow, Britain’s most exclusive schools, have always played soccer. (Storry and Childs, 1997:112)

There is also distinction in the terminology used to describe particular classes when they watched their games and plays. Storry and Childs mention that:

Those who watch soccer, rugby, cinema, television, theatre, or opera are known respectively as ‘crowds’, ‘spectators’, ‘audiences’, ‘viewers’, ‘theatre-goers’, or ‘opera-buffs’. These terms form part of a spectrum of cultural snobbery. Soccer fans are traditionally working class and are called ‘crowds’, suggesting that they are amorphous. Middle class people who watch rugby are ‘spectators’ – they are dispassionate onlookers. (Storry and Childs, 1997:114)

Motorbikes and cars which attracted all people from their introduction to the market at the end of the nineteenth century became affordable mainly for middle and upper classes. People could enjoy their weekends in the country, for example, visiting their far living relatives. The car also became a measurement of class distinction. As presented by Hopkins: “Popular models included the tiny Baby Austin, the rather larger Morris Oxford and Morris Cowley, and the Ford Popular, which sold at about £100.” (Hopkins, 1991:56) These were mainly affordable for the middle classes. Other sources, such as John Stevenson, provide similar information. He presents motoring as one of the new ways of leisure activities:

Motoring also provided an important aspect of growing leisure opportunities for the middle classes. Although the phrase “motoring for the million” was coined in 1919 when there were only about 100,000 cars on the roads, the inter-war years witnessed a huge expansion of private car ownership, reaching two million by 1939. (Stevenson, 1984:390)

Stevenson also quotes some prices of the most popular cars of 1920’s:

Small ‘family’ cars like the Austin Seven were coming within the reach of some middle-class families. Capable of 50 m.p.h., it sold for £225 when it appeared at the end of 1922. By the early thirties an Austin Seven could be purchased for as little as £118 and a small Morris or other make for between £100 and £200. Cars brought in their wake a host of administrative regulations as well as changes in leisure habits for car owners. (Stevenson, 1984:390)

Golf became a sport of middle class men. Players found a wonderful escape from the daily troubles while enjoying the eighteen-hole green course. Stevenson describes the influence of golf on the middle classes:

For middle-class men, golf provided an increasingly popular recreation, as new courses opened up on the fringes of the suburbs. Although more popular in Scotland than in England, golf was on its way to becoming a badge of middle-class status, so much so that a particular style of golfing dress, ‘plus-fours’,

became fashionable amongst suburban men who never went near a golf course. (Stevenson, 1984:389)

Golf reached its greatest popularity in Scotland where the conditions were even better, especially thank to the weather. Golf also brought new fashion trends to middle class men. They started to wear jumpers and the polo T-Shirt, originally used for polo games, also appeared. To be considered a man with good manners and social status, one needed to know how to play golf. Since then, people enjoyed long afternoons by playing golf and chatting with their friends, business partners, colleagues.

Smoking, today, is highly watched and discussed since it has been found dangerous to one's health. It may sound awkward, but in the 1920's and 1930's, smoking was a highly fashionable part of daily life. As Stevenson points out:

Between the wars cigarettes retained a still relatively clean image. Little was known about the links between cigarette smoking and the various lung and heart diseases. Films and advertisements did much to popularize smoking, especially amongst women, as a fashionable symbol of emancipation, while for men, lighting a girl's cigarette became a romantic cliché of countless films. (Stevenson, 1984:384)

Holidays became more common in the inter-war period just like for the working classes. The power of trade unions secured more advantages for the middle classes. Almost three quarters of middle class members took the opportunity to leave the town and enjoy holidays away from home. As mentioned earlier, they could use trains, cars, and also coach services. Coaches became popular for their availability at any time, especially for daily trips and excursions. They were cheaper than trains and one did not need to change at stations. The boom experienced in paid holiday as registered in the 1920's was seen in such measures for the first time. People got used to taking a week or even two weeks off work and escape from daily troubles. The better job they had, the better holiday they could usually afford. The holiday destination also showed their social status. The major holiday resorts in Britain were established by the South coast for several reasons. First, the accessibility from London was easy by train, coach, and car. Second, the mild weather made the coast a very pleasant place, especially in the summer. Finally, the sea itself offered quite a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere. Blackpool was one of the most successful places visited by the British. These successful

places offered a wide range of leisure and entertainment activities such as swimming pools, ballrooms, cinemas, dance halls, pubs, night clubs, and fairgrounds.

Finally, it is inevitable to mention that some of the activities mentioned with the working and middle class would not be possible without the presence of the rural areas. The British still had a very close relationship to their countryside. Despite the fact that sport began to play a significant role in their lives, it was the countryside that attracted families to spend their weekends off work. Halsey points out:

As many as fifty-eight per cent of people claimed to go to the countryside for pleasure or recreation at least once a month; thirty-six per cent used public parks or gardens. The rest of the activities such as cinema, bingo, football, rugby, or cricket matches attracted a response of more than ten per cent for frequent participation (football 17%, bingo 12%, cinema 10%). (Halsey, 1972:263)

Therefore, it was the walk to the countryside, daily excursions, or visiting castles, which usurped the highest percentage among leisure activities.

Upper Class - The Rich

This class was full of well established business men – self-made men, people who tried to push new prospects into reality and made “dreams come true”. The members of this class later became successful and influential politicians. The upper class members penetrated into exclusive social clubs and got involved in high-class social occasions. These people received university degrees, usually at Oxford or Cambridge. They belonged to the middle, but mostly to the upper class families. Some of them entered the upper class after their success in business, which they developed in the inter-war period. As mentioned by Storry and Childs:

The traditional upper class was always closely associated with the aristocracy. They lived in stately homes and had their character shaped on the playing fields of Eton. They were hereditary elite whose wealth and position were based on property and title. These were both used to gain substantial political privileges. For example, the House of Lords, an unelected second chamber, held a veto over House of Commons legislation until 1911. (Storry and Childs, 1997:208)

The gentry were losing their predominance in this class as the price for land went sharply down before the war. They could not afford to keep their second homes in cities, mainly in London, but had to sell them first. The homes were often sold into the hands of self-made men and rich businessmen. As pointed out by Stevenson:

The real losers in this process were the landed gentry, a group whose fortunes had been in decline since the agricultural depression of the late nineteenth century. Without the spread of resources and means to diversify of the larger landowners, the inter-war years took a heavy toll of smaller, long established families. (Stevenson, 1984:334)

The loss of control over the business area was more and more apparent as years went by. The position of the wealthiest and most influential families was weakened by a new group of entrepreneurs. This is explained by Storry and Childs:

Over time, therefore, the aristocracy has been gradually replaced by a new upper class of businessmen who emerged with ‘gentlemanly characteristics’ and settled in London and the south-east. These ‘gentlemanly capitalists’ have come to dominate the financial and political heart of British society. (Storry and Childs, 1997:208)

Detailed proportion of Employers and Proprietors is available in the chart below:

The Occupied Population of Great Britain – Upper Class

<i>Occupational Groups</i>	<i>1911*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1921*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1931*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1951*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1961*</i>	<i>**</i>	<i>1966*</i>	<i>**</i>
<i>Employers & Proprietors</i>	1,232	6.7	1,318	6.8	1,407	6.7	1,117	5.0	1,139	4.7	832	3.4

*Number of persons in major occupational groups, 1911 – 1966 (thousands)

**Major occupational groups as a percentage of total occupied population 1911 – 1966 (percentages)

(Halsey, 1972:113)

As mentioned earlier, members of this class mostly received university education which helped them to understand the needs of the time and provided them with important information for their coming occupations and careers. The links between the social class and education have never been that apparent as they were at the beginning of the twentieth century. A. H. Halsey mentions:

A higher proportion of children from the professional and managerial classes have a grammar school and university education than of children from the manual worker classes, and the difference is most marked at the extremes. (Halsey, 1972:161)

Education played an important role in preserving upper class values. It passed the information about the family. Close relationships between upper classes have always been a common thing. Therefore, children of such families had a close relationship since an early childhood. This was followed by meeting at one of the public boarding schools such as Eton, Harrow and Rugby. Later on, most of these classmates met at Oxford or Cambridge. After graduating, Oxbridge diploma became a tool to inform everyone of one's place in the society. Such education opened most of the doors in the country and started successful career. The process of obtaining unique position in the society is described by Storry and Childs:

It is a self-selecting elite, closed to outsiders. Contacts occur so frequently within the upper class because of their common background. The first point of entry is family background. The second is a public school education, privately funded by parents. The ethos of British fee-paying public schools such as Eton, Harrow and Rugby is geared towards lifelong friendship. At boarding schools, pupils live with each other during school terms. This allows the development of extremely close social friendship between pupils and their families. This is followed by an Oxford or Cambridge education which expands the networking

process still further. A public school/Oxbridge education moulds integrated elite. (Storry and Childs, 1997:210)

As the relation of schooling, leisure, and social activities have always been very close, the school played an important role in enjoying free time activities within a community and in people's lives. It is proved that people do not change their habits in general as soon as they reach twenty – five years of age and keep them for the most of their lives. This also means that, despite some minor changes, they keep their social habits for the rest of their lives.

Therefore, free time activities were often kept even after graduating from school. The most popular activity of all was cricket followed by tennis, golf, reading, and walks into the countryside. People also visited theatres, dance halls, night clubs, and concerts.

Cricket was a sport which received the greatest amount of popularity not only within England. The game was played all around the British Empire (India, Australia, England, West Indies). It was also very popular among young people and well established classes. This game has its roots back in the thirteenth century. It is said that:

The game seems to have originated among shepherds and farm workers in the Weald between Kent and Sussex. Written evidence exists of a sport known as creag being played by Prince Edward, the son of Edward I (Longshanks), at Newenden, Kent in 1300. (Wikipedia, Cricket 2)

Cricket was the no.1 sport at universities. It reached its popularity mainly among university students. There were also direct links between sport and further socializing. Players usually connected the after match activities with a visit to a local pub where they enjoyed the evening often accompanied by a girlfriend. Stevenson mentions:

Cricket between the wars retained its distinction between 'gentlemen', the amateur, and 'players', the professionals. County sides were usually captained by amateurs, separate dressing rooms for the different members of the same side were common, and the convention of referring to professionals solely by their surnames was retained in scorecards. (Stevenson, 1984:388)

Cricket has kept its uniqueness until today. It is still played all around the Commonwealth countries and especially in India, Pakistan, New Zealand, and England. International matches may take up to several days and they are watched by millions of television viewers.

The growth in popularity was also noticeable in tennis and golf. The roots of now-a-days tennis are found in the Victorian period. There were courts built all around England. The popularity arose quickly mainly among upper classes, who could afford to cultivate the lawn. There were also other matters which affected tennis. The development of vulcanized rubber supported the growth of tennis. Actually, once someone owned a cultivated court, the game could be played. As described below:

All that was needed was a flat grass surface and Lawn Tennis courts became commonplace in the rolling estates of the wealthy. Real tennis had always been the domain of royalty and nobility but in Victorian England the sport was soon embraced by the upper classes. (Tennis, 1)

Tennis, lately the most popular suburban leisure activity, was organized through the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club based on Wimbledon. The history of modern tennis has its beginnings in the second half of the nineteenth century. In that period cricket was on its peak as a sport of upper classes, but already started losing the grip of attention. In that period tennis started its rise, paradoxically thank to cricket.

The biggest boost for tennis however came in 1875. The All England Croquet Club, formed in 1869 had failed to attract enough visitors and in 1875 they decided to offer Lawn Tennis as an added attraction. The new game was an instant success, so much so that in 1877 the name of the club was changed to the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club. (Tennis, 2)

Tennis was also largely enjoyed by women. It was not common that women did any sports in the early twentieth; thank to emancipation, they could. There were also other supportive matters which increased tennis' popularity. Radio broadcasting was one of them. "The growth of tennis continued and the 1927 Championship saw the first ever radio broadcast of a tennis event. This increased its popularity further and in the 1930's the game became highly fashionable." (Tennis, 3)

Golf was well established within the upper class community. It was mainly popular for its close relationship with social and political matters. Many players enjoyed the game, but others only looked for establishing new businesses. Golf also profited from technical development of the nineteenth and twentieth century. Such development involved especially improved conditions of balls and clubs. The history of the improvement is stated in the following paragraph:

The first was the Haskell one piece rubber cored ball of 1900, which practically guaranteed an extra 20 yards. Grooved-faced irons were introduced in 1902.

Arthur Knight introduced steel-shafted clubs in 1910. Within the space of a decade, golfers could hit further and more accurately than ever before using equipment which was relatively cheaply mass-produced. (Golf, 1)

Once considered an upper class member, you had to own a car. The popularity of modern cars reached enormous power in the British Isles. The culture of car-ownership supported the growth of poor business in general. Garages and filling stations were scattered everywhere. This all came hand in hand with motorway reconstruction, equipping the roads with road signs, traffic lights, and changing the structure of towns in general. Motoring was a great passion for young well-off men. To own a fast sport car was everyone’s dream. On the other hand, motoring provided a leisure activity connected to trips to the country or simply enjoying the “ride”. The change in the structure of car ownership is presented in the following table.

Motor Vehicles Licensed 1904 – 1948, Great Britain

<i>Years</i>	<i>Private Cars & Vans</i>	<i>Motor cycles & mopeds</i>	<i>Public Transport</i>	<i>All Vehicles</i>
1904	8,465	-----	5,345	17,810
1914	132,015	123,678	51,167	388,860
1924	482,356	504,367	97,479	1,316,314
1934	1,308,425	548,461	85,129	2,403,856
1948	1,960,510	559,313	127,625	3,728,432

(Halsey, 1972:280)

Car ownership also brought about some new unpleasant features such as motoring offence and traffic accidents. This is described by Stevenson:

It was estimated that road deaths reached 7,300 in 1934. This was an incredibly high number compared to the peak of the post war era. There were 7,779 road deaths in 1972, when there were sixteen million motor vehicles on the roads instead of two million. (Stevenson, 1984:390)

This alarming situation concerning road accidents supported the start of signalling system on the roads. As proposed by C.L. Mowat: First, the programme of road improvement took place after the WWI. Second, roads got classified as I, II and also numbered as A1, A2, and B1509. Third, since the late 1920’s traffic signals have been installed in towns to control the situation. (Mowat, 1955:232)

As stated in previous chapters, dancing attracted a high percentage of young and middle-aged people. Members of the upper class community were not an exception.

Jazz provided the music, the rhythm and the tempo, though this change frequently. At first the tango, fox-trot and waltz predominated; then the 'shimmy', then the slower Blues, then the Charleston and Black Bottom, and finally the one-step and the waltz once again. (Mowat, 1955:215)

There were also luxury hotels and restaurants which realised that this would be an opportunity to increase their profits. Therefore, hotels such as Savoy soon started to provide dance floors for their visitors.

As for the drinking habits of upper class, it needs to be mentioned that they were different than the pre-war ones. There was more drinking in general before the Great War, but it changed after that. It was no more popular for rich people to spend their free time by drinking as it was considered inappropriate. As stated below:

The era 1921 – 1922 saw a great change in the drinking habits of the affluent and the debut of the cocktail at the first night clubs in London. Drinking cocktails was considered degenerate and was confined mainly to the West End of London. Most people still retained pre-war values, but the behaviour of "The Bright Young Things" was written about with distaste by journalists and writers of the era. (Fashion Era, 4)

Holidays spent away from home attracted two thirds of managerial employees. Holidays were mainly popular with people between twenty-five and thirty years of age, where eight in ten people went away on holiday. (Halsey, 1972:548) Holidays abroad already started to appear, but still were not represented as often as the home ones, especially for their cost. The group of people who could afford holidays abroad and enjoy sunshine entire year is represented by Sir Thomas Lipton. He was one of the richest British of the inter-war years and its wealth left his family rich until today. Storry and Childs describe:

Leisure was originally the preserve of the upper classes. Only they had time and the money to tramp their own grouse moors in Scotland, or sail their yachts with professional crews at Cowes. For example, the industrialist Sir Thomas Lipton was able to finance his own Americas Cup yachting challenges and pay his crews in the 1930's. (Storry and Childs, 1997:116)

There is one group that has always been under a close look of the British population. This group consists of purely "blue blooded" people. It is the aristocracy.

The members of the aristocracy class are easily able to trace their ancestors back to the ninth century. Therefore, they sometimes appear as a superior class.

There were possibly two ways to join this class. The first way was to be born into the ruling class. The second one would be obtaining the title for becoming wealthy or a hero. The aristocracy was a close and very often family-related bunch of people whose aim was to have more and more social and political power. For example, engagement courting; the purpose of most residences in London, which survived from the nineteenth century, was to arrange proper engagement parties. The importance of these parties was hardly damaged by the WWI. “There were in London 25 aristocracy residences in 1914, but only 8 were left by 1936. It also included social and economic power, which was left in hands of careerists and American heirs.” (Inwood, 2003:644)

In general, the after-war life has changed a lot compared to a pre-war life. “The old order had passed away, the halcyon days of the privileged classes. The war had cut across everything.” (Mowat, 1955:201) As the families did not earn enough money for their high costing life, they had to sell their residences to richer entrepreneurs. “Great estates were being broken up, great houses sold – in the towns for demolition, in the country for conversion into schools or nursing homes.” (Mowat, 1955:203) It is worth mentioning that according to a newspaper article published in *The Times* 1922 under the title “England Changing Hands”, sales of farm land were on their after-war peak and the land was sold for only 40% – 50% of the pre-war prices. The total closure of high hospitality was done by WWII. “There was only lady Londonderry, who tried to keep the tradition going, but she was the very last one to survive with the tradition until late 1960’s. (Inwood, 2003:664)

The wealth of the aristocracy often had its roots back in the middle ages. This means that aristocracy had to preserve its distinction, otherwise it would not be able to survive until today. This was secured through an advance system of schools. Therefore, old, well established schools are said to be one of the main reasons why the aristocracy survived until the twenty-first century. On the other hand, as we are going to have a deeper look into inter-war period, it will mainly concentrate on a new wave of politicians and businessmen who penetrated into this class.

First, it is necessary to understand how the nation felt about their elites. The royal family was being loved by the nation and very few disturbing matters were being

raised about them. On the other hand, the aristocracy itself could not enjoy much popularity. There was no doubt that in many cases many aristocracy members gained their wealth through the war matters. Therefore, they attracted many newspapers and magazines and journalists took the opportunity to comment on the life of aristocracy in printed jokes. C.L. Mowat mentions that magazines such as:

The Tatler, Sporting, and Dramatic continued to feast their readers with pictures of titled men and women at meets of the Quorn or the Pitchley, at shooting parties, at Goodwood or Ascot, at the Eton and Harrow match, at Cannes or Biarritz. (Mowat, 1955:204)

The decrease in creation of aristocracy could have been noticeable from the beginning of the 1920's. Mowat points out:

In 1923 there were 708 lay peers, of whom 198 owed their titles to creations in Queen Victoria's reign, forty-six to creations of Edward VII, 176 to creations by George V, since 1910. Between 1917 and 1921, four marquises, eight earldoms, twenty-two viscounties and sixty-four baronies were created. Between 1923 and 1930 the score was one marquises, five earls, fourteen viscounts and fifty-nine barons. (Mowat, 1955:204)

It is quite apparent that, after a seventy year period, the royal family thought twice to appoint someone to become a member of the aristocracy.

Second, it would be quite interesting to demonstrate the distribution of wealth owned by the top one per cent of individuals. The figures are provided by John Stevenson: The wealth is expressed in land, property, stocks and shares, and other ownership assets. In 1911 the wealth owned by top one percent of individuals was sixty-nine percent, but already in 1936 it was only fifty-five percent. (Stevenson, 1984:330) This was a supportive argument into hands of those who agreed that the society started to change. It was not only aristocracy who owned the most of the country.

The national wealth of the United Kingdom in 1914 was £ 14,319 millions. In 1919 there were 322 persons with fortune of over £1 million.

As mentioned earlier, one had to be very lucky to become a member of this class. On the other hand, the inter-war period offered so much space for entrepreneurs as no other before. People who were able to take a risk and also had enough luck could make a fortune and become influential not just within a local area. The main industries occupied by wealthy aristocracy and businessmen were coalmining, engineering and

textiles. There were also other especially consumption ones, such as food, drink, and tobacco businesses. As pointed out by Stevenson:

These included famous brewing dynasties such as the Guinnesses, Whitbreads, Charringtons and Worthingtons, so that by 1920 - 1939 the number of millionaire brewers alone was equal to the number of cotton and chemical millionaires. Among the food manufacturers, families such as the Frys, Cadburys, Leas and Blackwells were represented, and amongst the tobacco giants, the relations of the Bristol-based Wills family. (Stevenson, 1984:336)

There were also other families gaining power and they mainly recruited themselves from media orientated businesses. This is also stated by Stevenson: “Alfred Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Northcliffe. 1st Viscount Northcliffe left a £5.2 million estate in 1922.” (Stevenson, 336) The information about the jobs of wealthy ones is provided by Storry and Childs:

However, most writers would put wealthy families involved in the control of major banks, insurance companies, pension funds and stocks in the City of London at the core of the modern upper class. These families still pass on wealth from generation to generation and enjoy a dominant position in society. (Storry and Childs, 1997:209)

Therefore, people were still reminded by society that they belonged to a certain class. It was hard for anyone to cross from one class to the other one. On the other, once someone received better education followed by a good work, this was possible. The distinction between classes is also presented by Storry and Childs in the following statement:

The upper class had stately homes, aristocratic backgrounds and posh accents; the middle class, semi-detached houses, suits and bowler hats; the working class, common accents, fish and chips and council flats. This produced a society divided between ‘Us’ (the workers) and ‘Them’ (the rich and the bosses). (Storry and Childs, 1997:203)

Finally, the aristocracy has always protected its private and business life and let very little to be know about it to protect its uniqueness and money. Therefore, all speculative information about its life has always filled newspapers and magazines worldwide. This might be the reason why even nowadays all sensational photographs of the royal family are paid gold.

Conclusion

It is apparent that social class played an important role in choosing social and free-time activities in the inter-war period.

As for the general view on entertainment, it is necessary to understand that, in the inter-war period, technical change improved the quality of services such as the cinema and public road transport, making it easier to access holiday resorts and spectator sports. Incomes were not large enough for most people to purchase cars, so the radio and the gramophone were the only important leisure consumer goods.

The middle of the nineteenth century was a time when people started to use the railway to get to work. The first half of the twentieth century was the period when railways were started to be used for travelling for pleasure. The working class went to the new seaside holiday towns. The middle class enjoyed the country side or smaller seaside resorts of a more expensive kind. But for both, the seaside was a place where families could take holidays together.

Also the developed transport links, especially train links, were used by a large number of people. Therefore, people could visit previously deserted places. As for the daily life, people went to the cinema, read daily newspapers, went shopping and met each other in cafés, restaurants and pubs. Everyday life had become very similar to nowadays.

It was obvious that incomes were different between classes; but in general, the average earnings of all wage-earners on full time rose by ninety-four per cent, while the cost of living rose by seventy-five per cent. On the other hand, there were still differences in what people could afford to nowadays. Purchasing a car was quite an extraordinary thing for working class people. As for consumer goods, radio and gramophone were the important leisure consumer goods affordable for members of any class.

Holidays also played an important role in public life as people got used to spending more free time relaxing and the development of most favourite places, such as Bath and Bristol, took place. Spectator sports became very popular among all classes but already noticeable boundaries between the classes such as the VIP restricted areas also pointed out the difference.

There were several factors why leisure was so popular within the inter-war community. First, people did not spend all their Saturdays at work. Second, working hours were shortened. Third, employees were provided paid holidays, and, despite of higher income, they did not wish to have as many children as was common fifty years ago. Finally, people found pleasure in leisure activities and realised that not only work is important for life.

There is also another factor that contributed to the growth of leisure itself. Radio became widely affordable by all classes. Information became a medium which could be passed on within seconds.

In contrast, some aspects of leisure, mainly those connected to hobbies around home and domestic life, also increased in numbers. This came hand in hand with a developed housing situation. Some people found pleasure to spend more time around their houses. On the contrary of leisure, this helped to set up DIY activities.

Social life during the inter-war period became very similar to the life after the WWII. With a few exceptions, people could enjoy motion picture, wireless broadcasting, fast food restaurants, and weekend trips to the country. There were still some differences which were mainly of a technical and financial matter as people could afford only some activities. In general, the inter-war period brought about the rise of equality between the classes, which has been strengthening until today.

Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá vlivem společenských tříd na společenský život ve Velké Británii v meziválečném období (1918 – 1938). Bakalářská práce je rozdělena na pět hlavních kapitol, včetně Úvodu a Závěru. Ve třech hlavních částech, „Working Class“, „Middle Class“ a „Upper Class“ je příležitost se dozvědět o hlavních mimopracovních a společenských aktivitách Britů v meziválečném období.

V úvodu bakalářské práce je podrobně vylíčena ekonomicko-společenská situace daného období. Čtenář má možnost se seznámit se základními fakty vzdělávacích procesů ve Velké Británii, které byly základními kameny ekonomického úspěchu společnosti již v předválečném období. Poté je nastíněn vývoj společnosti ve městech a na vesnicích, a to především s ohledem na dynamický vývoj městského života. Zároveň však došlo k podcenění síly Britského Impéria, a toho využily především Spojené Státy Americké, které postupně převzali úlohu světového ekonomického vůdce. Dále je zde podrobně nastíněn vývoj nezaměstnanosti ve Velké Británii v meziválečném období a její vliv na konkrétní průmyslová odvětví, ve kterých bylo zaměstnáno nejvyšší procento veškeré populace. V bakalářské práci je možnost se seznámit se změnami ve volebním systému a jejich samotného vývoje, který prošel zásadními změnami, a to právě v meziválečném období. Neméně důležitá otázka pracovního rozvrstvení obyvatelstva je v úvodu analyzována ze dvou pohledů. Za prvé, z pohledu pracovního zařazení jednotlivých vrstev a jejich procentuálního zastoupení. Za druhé, procentuální vývoj zastoupení obyvatelstva v konkrétních oborech. V závěru úvodní části je vymezena klasifikace, podle níž se bude nadále přistupovat k rozdělení jednotlivých tříd.

V každé z následujících kapitol je podrobně rozvržen procentuální vývoj obyvatelstva jednotlivých tříd podle pracovního zaměření a míry vzdělanosti. V úvodní části kapitoly „Working Class“ jsou pracující rozděleny na „Skilled“, „Semi-skilled“, „Unskilled“. Dále je zde nastíněn vývoj pracovních podmínek obyvatelstva, počtu hodin strávených v zaměstnání a jejich vliv na společenský život v meziválečném období. Co se týká konkrétních činností pracující třídy, největší část je věnována kopané, která se stala doménou právě této vrstvy obyvatelstva. Dalším tématem je bytová situace a její podrobný vývoj s ohledem na možnosti rekreace a využití volného času. Předmětem

analýzy je také vliv restauračních zařízení na společenský život pracujících. Neméně důležitou součástí života meziválečné společnosti byl vývoj medií, a to především rádií. Z tohoto důvodu jsou zde zmíněna základní data jako jsou založení BBC, jeho počáteční vysílání a vliv na společnost. Dalším tématem je vývoj kina, jak z hlediska programového, tak z hlediska růstu výstavby nových kin. V neposlední řadě se čtenář může podrobně seznámit s životem nezaměstnaných a způsobem, jakým trávili volný čas.

V kapitole „Middle Class“ je úvodní část opět věnována rozboru jednotlivých tříd podle pracovního zaměření. Neméně důležitou složkou společenského života je bydlení, kterému je také věnována jedna z částí v kapitole „Middle Class“. Jednou z nejdůležitějších mimopracovních činností této vrstvy obyvatelstva byla návštěva divadel a kin, o kterých se dozvídáme v detailním zpracování z několika pohledů. Dále je možnost poznat další aktivity, kterým se věnovaly zejména střední vrstvy, a těmi byly kriket, rugby a golf. Tyto tři sporty byly doménou především středních vrstev, nicméně zasahovali i do života aristokracie. Motorismus, jako neoddělitelná složka dvacátého století, se podílel významným způsobem na životě obyvatelstva, z tohoto důvodu jsou v práci zahrnuty údaje o vývoji cen a prodeji nejoblíbenějších automobilů. V další části kapitoly se dozvídáme několik zajímavých údajů o kouření a jeho pozici ve společnosti. V neposlední řadě jsme seznámeni se zvyšující se oblibou dovolených, které zaznamenaly největší nárůst právě v tomto období, díky restrukturalizaci společnosti a zvýšeným požadavkům pracujících na své osobní volno.

V kapitole „Upper Class“ má čtenář možnost se z kraje seznámit s novými znaky aristokracie. Především se zde dozvíme o úpadku „gentry“ a růstu především kapitalistické aristokracie. Značná část této kapitoly je věnována klasickým sportům vyšších vrstev, jakými byly kriket, tenis a golf a jejich podílu na trávení volného času. Jak již bylo zmíněno v předchozí kapitole, motorismus se stal neoddělitelnou součástí meziválečného života. Z tohoto důvodu je zde zmíněno několik základních dat, především s ohledem na vývoj infrastruktury. Dalším bodem této kapitoly byla stará aristokracie, která se již nevyvíjí a její kořeny sahají do středověku. Tato vrstva se potýkala s úpadkem spojeným se ztrátou výsadního postavení ve společnosti z pohledu finančního a částečně i politického, které se postupem let nadále prohlubovalo. I přes tyto negativní jevy se aristokracie snažila zachovat si výsadní postavení ve společnosti.

Nástrojem předávání tradic se staly především „public schools“, které zůstávaly doménou nejbohatších, a to především aristokracie.

V závěru bakalářské práce jsou zmíněna všechna relevantní zjištění, která dokazují vliv třídy na výběr společenských aktivit v meziválečném období. Hlavní roli při výběru společenských aktivit hrála především celkově zlepšená životní úroveň, která umožnila lidem více cestovat a využívat svůj volný čas ke sportování, ať už aktivnímu, či pasivnímu. V meziválečném období dále zaznamenali růst aktivity spojené s motorismem, a to především u movitější části obyvatel. Tito lidé využívali automobil, nebo motocykl k jízdě za prací, nebo zábavou. V neposlední řadě došlo ke zjištění, že celková meziválečná situace dopomohla ke zrovnoprávnění všech společenských tříd a zároveň, že tento trend zrovnoprávnění prostupoval celým dvacátým i počátkem dvacátého prvního století.

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