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Antihero in the Literary Works of the Angry Young Men

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Abstract

The thesis deals with selected works of the British writers labelled as "the Angry Young Men" and one representative of English working-class novel.

Among the selected authors and their works there are: *Room at the Top* by John Braine, *Hurry on Down* by John Wain, *Lucky Jim* by Kingsley Amis, and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* by Alan Sillitoe. The aim of the thesis is to analyse depiction of the main characters with focus on their internal life and relationship to the outside world.

The thesis introduces basic characteristics of "the Angry Young Men" and English working-class novel at first. The most comprehensive part of the paper is devoted to analysis of the selected literary works. Thereafter the depictions of the main characters are mutually compared.

Keywords:

the angry young men; antihero; Braine, John; Room at the Top; Wain, John; Hurry on Down; Amis, Kingsley; Lucky Jim; Sillitoe, Alan; Saturday Night and Sunday Morning

Souhrn

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá vybranými díly britských spisovatelů označovaných jako „Rozhněvaní mladí muži“ a jednoho zástupce dělnického románu.

Zvolenými autory a jejich díly jsou: *Místo nahoře* od Johna Braina, *Pospíchej dolů* od Johna Waina, *Šťastný Jim* od Kingsleyho Amise a *V sobotu večer, v neděli ráno* od Alana Sillitoea. Cílem této práce je analýza zobrazení hlavních hrdinů se zaměřením na jejich vnitřní život a vztah k vnějšímu světu.

Tato práce nejprve představí základní charakteristiky „Rozhněvaných mladých mužů“ a anglického dělnického románu. Nejobsáhlejší část práce je věnována analýze vybraných literárních děl. Následně jsou zobrazení hlavního hrdiny vzájemně porovnány.

Klíčová slova:

rozhněvaní mladí muži; antihrdina; Braine, John; Místo nahoře; Wain, John; Pospíchej dolů; Amis, Kingsley; Šťastný Jim; Sillitoe, Alan; V sobotu večer, v neděli ráno

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1. Aims of the thesis and description of methods

Throughout the long history of literature creative periods alternated those 'drowning' in lethargy. There were many reasons: political, social, economic, or religious. Period after the Second World War was no exception. The war paralyzed all spheres of human society. Thus, there was little space for culture and art. When the cruel and miserable time was over and the world gradually restored itself, the structure and functioning of society, values and desires of a common man were no more the same.

The post-war era in English literary history, especially the 1950s, is the main focus of the thesis. There appeared a new generation of writers aiming at reflection and critic of the English society which had changed so much. They are labelled as 'the Angry Young Men'. Their novels possess historical value. Burgess comments: "All novels become, in time, historical. They express their own period [...]" (1974: 231).

The thesis analyses depiction of main literary characters of the four selected novels whose authors are stated above. One of the writers is a representative of working-class novel, too. The novels are reactions on post-war social development and if the aim is to understand their philosophy, it is necessary to put them in social and political context of that time. Thus, the thesis introduces description of the post-war development in British politics, economics, and society. However, as the thesis is focused on literary analysis the historical information is presented in appendix.

In order to understand the atmosphere in which the literary works were written, the thesis provides basic characteristics of 'the Angry Young Men' in the chapter two and working-class novel in the chapter three.

The writers introduced a new type of hero in their first literary works. The new character opposes the world he has to live in. From this point of view the novels were different from their predecessor as well as other contemporaries. Moreover, "they shocked, amused, or inspired according to the taste of their readers and audience" (Bartlett 1977: 152). Thus, the phenomenon of an 'antihero' is discussed, too. Different approaches of the two literary groups to an 'antihero' are separately discussed in the chapters two and three.

Opinions of some literary critics concerning influence of the selected authors on further development of English literature are presented in the chapter four.

The most important aim of the thesis is analysis of the selected characters. Chapter five is devoted to it. Each of the 'antiheroes' is analysed separately at first. A mutual comparison of the authors' approaches is dealt with in chapter six. Chapter seven is focused on final evaluation of the four novels.

Among the selected 'antiheroes' there are: Joe Lampton from *Room at the Top* by John Braine (1922 – 1986), Charles Lumley from *Hurry on Down* by John Wain (1925 – 1994), Jim Dixon from *Lucky Jim* by Kingsley Amis (1922 – 1995), and Arthur Seaton from *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* by Alan Sillitoe (1928 – 2010).

The analysis deals with an antihero's spiritual and material life and his relationship to the outside world. It includes both current state and changes during the course of time. The thesis focuses on the following psychosocial aspects:

- personality of an antihero
- antihero's attitude to life
- antihero's attitude to work
- relationship between an antihero and the society
- antihero's relationships with women

The thesis also includes appendices. Information concerning post-war development of Great Britain covers of the analysed novels, plots, portraits of the selected writers and their biographies are presented there.

2. The 1950s - anger of the middle-class brows

Anthony Burgess calls the 1950s "a period of middle-class rebellion" (1974: 231). The fact is that the new generation of post-war writers were often children of lower-middle or working-class parents. Many of them were beneficiaries of the Butler Education Act of 1944 which enabled them access to urban grammar schools (not prestigious public schools[1]) and universities.

The 'new wave' of young authors was determined by several political, generation, and cultural aspects: failure of the British Empire in Suez War[2] in 1956 and foundation of pacific movement for nuclear disarmament (CND) which reflected doubts of the British about post-war development of Britain; Butler's Educational Act of 1944 which supported social and class transitions[3]; and fundamental political context of post-war literature which was full of disillusion and disappointment from labour government not fulfilling hopes of its voters.

2. 1. The Movement

These authors, both novelists and poets, are labelled as 'The Movement'. The label was firstly mentioned by J.D. Scott, the literary editor of *the Spectator*, in anonymous leading article in 1954. They shared several important characteristics: critic of snobbery, traditional class system, antiromantic sensibility, provincialism and stressed 'Englishness', reluctance to everything outlandish and 'high' culture, rationality, and intentionally pursued commonness and civil impression (Oliveriusová et al., 1988: 91).

Barnard divides them, and their novels, into two waves. John Wain (*Hurry on Down*, 1953), Kingsley Amis (*Lucky Jim*, 1954), and Iris Murdoch (*Under the Net*,

[1] In the United Kingdom a public school is a traditional privately operated secondary school that is funded by the payment of tuition fees.

[2] The Suez Crisis was a military attack on Egypt by Britain, France, and Israel beginning on 29 October, 1956. The attack followed Egypt's decision of 26 July, 1956, to nationalize the Suez Canal. The nationalization of the Suez Canal hit British economic and military interests in the region. Since the US government did not support the British protests, the British government decided in favor of military intervention against Egypt to avoid the complete collapse of British prestige in the region.

[3] The discussed authors belonged to those fortunate who were enabled to gain university degree due to Butler's Educational Act. Both Amis and Wain attended Oxford University and Amis also occupied position of a lecturer in English at a provincial university. Wain was a lecturer at Reading University for eight years before he became a full-time writer. On the contrary Braine graduated only at Bradford Grammar School.

1954) are referred to as the first ones who 'armed' against bourgeois professions and provincial institutions. Their hero comes of the middle class family he estranged. The second wave includes John Braine (*Room at the Top*, 1957), Alan Sillitoe (*Saturday Night, Sunday Morning*, 1958), and Stan Barstow (*A Kind of Loving*, 1960). Their hero is in opposition as well, however, he comes of working-class family as well as the author himself (Barnard 1997: 223). 'The Movement writers' opposed to the writing elite of the previous generation like Stephen Spender, Evelyn Waugh or Somerset Maugham.

However, later 'a new school of writers' appeared. They started to be called 'the Angry Young Men'.

2. 2. The Angry Young Men

The label partly overlaps with that of 'The Movement'. Among the writers considered to be 'angry' there was: John Osborne, John Braine, Kingsley Amis, John Wain, and Alan Sillitoe who is perceived also as a working-class novel writer.

The label was firstly used in the leading article of *Times*[4] on 26th May, 1956. The phrase was taken from Leslie Paul's novel *Angry Young Man* (1951) focusing on the 1930s. The author compared two protagonists - Jim Dixon (Kingsley Amis, *Lucky Jim*) and Jimmy Porter (John Osborne, *Look back in Anger*), and labelled both of them as 'angry young men'[5].

It is necessary to mention that the phrase 'angry young men' used for labelling young English post-war writers was a bit controversial, for it suggested that they were one group. Nevertheless, to understand them in such way would not be appropriate. The writers were rather individualistic in their revolt. They never followed 'a formulated programme'. Although all of them continued in realistic tradition and depicted mentality of young post-war generation, young intelligence in particular, and belonged to lower classes feeling preserving class boundaries and privileges, they wrote independently

[4] British newspapers

[5] During the course of time the phrase started to be used for expressing not only a particular people but also a state of mind of Britain during the 1950s. This state of mind was very specific as the post-war transformation of English society intervened in all spheres of the system. The youth was lost and did not profess to 'old values'. In other words, young people decided to reject adult world rather than to start a rebellion.

from each other. The writers did not consider themselves to be members of any literary school following certain belief. Moreover, they did not like the label. They were "all for none and none for all" (Allsop 1964: 16). The antipathy was, in some cases, so strong that, for example, "John Wain's publishers advertised his books with the line: 'John Wain is NOT an angry young man'" (Leader 2002: 63). Bradbury comments further on the issue: "This was somewhat narrow, since a lot of the authors were not angry, many were not young, and a lot of them were women" (1993: 318).

To sum up, 'the Angry Young Men' did not consider themselves to be 'angry' nor did they reflect their personalities into their main characters. The young authors only criticised and sometimes mocked what was happening in their society.

2. 3. A novel as a mirror

Literature has always served as 'a mirror' to human history as it is able to record political, economical, and social changes throughout the course of time. Writings of 'the Angry Young Men' were no exception.

'The Angry Young Men' were phenomenon of its time and as such they influenced development of the English literature. Their novels were realistic, based on own experience, and easy to understand. Thus, realism was chosen as a means of expression. They needed 'to record' what was happening in their country. Use of modernism was no more actual. The world and thinking of the British had changed. 'The Angry Young Men' were looking for new ways of expressing their thoughts. Stevenson provides an apposite explanation of what was happening:

> They indicate little or no effect of the experiments in language and structure by which novelists for half a century had been seeking was of bringing fiction more closely into meaningful relationship with modern theories of psychology and metaphysical speculations about time. (Stevenson 1967: 405)

The young writers aimed at depiction of what was happening in their homeland in the 1950s. They desired to reflect everyday reality they had to cope with. Thus, to follow their literary predecessors and use means of modernism as it happened in the 1930s and 1940s was no more possible. In other words, British literature of the 1950s used old means of expression to rebel against the social and cultural order. It chose 'old means to fight against modern'. "It reverted to humanism, rediscovered provinciality,

rejected the shock of the new, returned to hugging the share of the real. It was no longer a project for imaginative adventure and linguistic discovery" (Bradbury 1993: 279).

Although 'the Angry Young Men' returned to traditional realistic techniques, they included new themes in the British literature. First of all, they focused on lower-middle and working-class life. Thus, they managed to reorient a novel to lower social classes, which helped the genre to become popular among the British.

Writing of the young authors reflected social situation in post-war Britain. One of the aspects their critic focused on was a traditional class system which can be considered as an inseparable part of the British society. Among other issues characteristic for writings of this 'literary school' was: materialism, philistinism, snobbishness, and deeply rooted conventions. In other words, they were not satisfied with current state of the British society and desired to comment on it.

2. 4. A new hero as an opposition to the world

With the 'new wave' of rebellious writers a new type of literary hero appeared on the British literary scene. A term which appropriately expresses this phenomenon is 'antihero'.

According to Schüssel this modern 'antihero' "has little in common with the radiant heroes of the literature that went before" (2005: 385). Baldick understands the term in the same way. He claims that 'antihero' is: a central character in a dramatic or narrative work that lacks the qualities of nobility and magnanimity expected of traditional heroes in romances and epics (1990: 260). Zachary Leader uses a different expression for the same type of a main protagonist. It is a word 'lad' and provides his own psychological analysis. Lads are "often losers and boozers, liars, wanderers, and transients" (2002: 60). "They are characters who seem to deserve more from life and romance than they are getting; and they are full of rage at those they hold responsible for their dispossession or plight: bosses, parents, girlfriends, male rivals […]" (2002: 61). A new phenomenon entered minds of 1950s readers.

An antihero is a reaction to controversy of the 1950s: there was an economic growth and relative political stability on the one side, and disillusionment and disorientation in the British society and its class system on the other side. He reflected mood of the young British generation, since Labour Party did not fulfill their expectations. Moreover, due to social mobility there was chaos in understanding social ladders. Consequently, post-war generation lived in a social vacuum. The youth was "a new rootless, faithless, classless class" (Allsop 1964: 27).

Thus, one of the dominant characteristics of a new hero is an a-political perception of the world. Kenneth Allsop explains it further:

> The reason that this type of post-war adventurer refuses to throw his militancy in support of any of the accepted political or religious movements is because he is unconvinced that there is any ideal left to be worked for [...]. (Allsop 1964: 213)

This young oppositive man, as many others in the real world, is lost in the changed post-war Britain and tries to find his position in the society. According to Bartlett:

> One had passed from the era of Jude the Obscure[6] to Jude the Uncertain – to a Jude who, having made his way to university, both there and afterwards could find himself engaged in a struggle to understand and to define who or what he was, as well as trying to assert and defend himself in a world of anonymous bureaucrats and managers. (Bartlett 1977: 153)

In novels of 'the Angry Young Men' the heroes are young disillusioned individualistic intellectual men dissatisfied with current state of post-war Britain and social roles they are assigned. They are graduated from 'a red brick universities'[7] and hope that this will enable them to get higher on a social scale. However, they hate ruling class and its long-established privileges, thinking and way of life, and preserved class distinctions. They feel aversion towards those from public schools and 'grey-stone universities'[8]. The lads are inwardly ambivalence. Allsop explains this phenomenon:

> […] although driven by ambition, envy and greed […], he has no admiration or liking for the class he is gatecrashing. He wants its advantages and privileges, but its conventions look to him to be wet, lah-di-dah and stupid. He has no wish to be assimilated. (Allsop 1964: 213)

[6] The novel by Thomas Hardy (1840 – 1928) published in 1895. It attacked the British institutions such as higher education or class system, and among the first introduced feminist characters into British literature.
[7] A young school without tradition founded after the Second World War.
[8] It is a colloquial expression for Oxford and Cambridge University which are schools with long tradition.

The new antiheroes directly reflected one of the most striking dilemmas the post-war youth had to cope with. They solved a problem of identity "To which class do I belong to?" Due to political, economical, and social changes and reforms a traditional class system 'loosened its ties' and young generation was enabled to experience opportunities which were unbelievable for their parents a decade before.

The first prototype of a new hero was presented in the play by John Osborne *Look Back in Anger*[9] firstly performed in the Royal Court Theatre at Sloane Square on 8 May, in 1956. It provoked a major controversy. The play caused 'earthquake' on the British cultural scene, for this play was "the first play since the war to put the point of view of the younger generation at odds with its world" (Bartlett 1977: 153)[10].

However, although an 'antihero' is full of hate and anger, all antiheroes' stories end in the same way – they marry a girl from upper class in order to become a member of that class. Finally, a rebel becomes a well-situated man. He changes into the one he criticised and wanted to differ from before. The antiheroes try to get higher and have to pay for it. They betray own class. This behaviour is one of attributes which differs an antihero from a traditional hero possessing positive characteristics. In other words, an antihero is unheroic man who can be hardly proud of his achievements. As the antihero finally becomes an 'upper-class man', his social rebellion seems to be just a 'pseudo-rebellion'. He rather criticises his limited opportunities and obstacles on the way to get higher on social ladder and aims at successful integration into society of 'welfare state'. The antihero is not a socially revolutionary thinker. He is just discontented.

[9] The three-act play takes place in a one-bedroom flat in the Midlands. Jimmy Porter, lower middle-class, university-educated, lives with his wife Alison, the daughter of a retired Colonel in the British Army in India. Jimmy, intellectually restless and desperate, reads the papers, argues and mocks his friends over their acceptance of the world around them. He rages to the point of violence, reserving much of his bitterness for Alison's friends and family.

[10] It revealed the huge generation gap – both parents and their children were born in a different time under different circumstances. The play managed, as the first literary achievement, to depict frustration, helplessness, disillusion, and disappointment of the young English post-war generation. All these negative feelings are embodied in the character of Jimmy Porter.

2. 5. Fall of the angry young men

The 'Angry Young Men' became an important part of the development of British literature. Even though the most significant and determining period of their literary career was the 1950s, they continued in writing. However, later years were not as successful as the previous decade. There are various views of the possible causes.

Stevenson thinks that the young writers were too confident and mollified by their early achievements and later hardly found new topics to deal with. He calls them "a man of one book" and doubts their talent to be inventive, which is considered as a base of continual success (1967: 404-405). Allsop is also convinced that the young writers lost their inspiration and recency during the course of time as their other pieces of writing brought nothing new and were hardly worth reading (1964: 10). Moreover, they were not clear and confident enough in their rebellion (Allsop 1964: 214).

Another possible source of 'disappearing' from literary scene can be found in their political views. Although these young men provoked self-reflection of the British society and its system and rebelled by pointing at its paradoxes, many of them gradually became conservative in later years of their lives. They changed into "a pillar of middle-class values" (Burgess 1974: 231). Literary revolution melted in nothingness.

3. British working-class culture

British working-class culture has its long tradition. It started to develop during the 19th century and resulted from social transformation associated with the Industrial revolution[11]. Workers aimed at establishing their own identity and class as well as gaining political and cultural power. As a consequence the Chartist Movement was established in 1837 and existed to 1853. Ideological support of working-class culture was provided by Marxist literary critics and theorists T. A. Jackson (1879 – 1955) or A. L. Morton (1903-1987). Among the first working-class writers there was, for example, Ernest Jones (1879 – 1958). Towards the end of 1950s 'a new wave' of working-class fiction entered the British literary scene.

3. 1. 1950s - Renaissance of working-class novel

The genre is based on own experience and realistic depiction in the same extend as novels of 'the Angry Young Men'. According to Hawthorn the genre is:

> […] autobiographical, documentary or commemorative, rooted in the experience of family, community, locality, it 'tells it as it is' (or, more often, was) in plain words, valued for their sincerity and simple truth. (Hawthorn 1984: 125)

'Proletarian novel' is another expression for the literary genre. Schellinger explains its characteristics. It "represents the position of workers as the class antagonists of the ruling bourgeoisie" (Schellinger et al. 1998: 105).

'Working-class novel' is not a new literary genre in English literature as well as its realistic techniques. Stories from working-class environment appeared before the literary revolt of the 1950s[12]. The 1950s working-class writers came from working-class environment. Thus, they revealed a world they knew well. However, they differed from

[11] The Industrial Revolution was a period in the 18th and early 19th centuries where major changes in agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and transport had a profound effect on the socioeconomic and cultural conditions in the United Kingdom. The changes subsequently spread to the whole world. There began a transition in parts of Great Britain's previously manual labour and draft-animal–based economy towards machine-based manufacturing. Among social changes there was the growth of cities, the development of working-class movements, and the emergence of new patterns of authority, and cultural transformations of a broad order.

[12] Novels focused on naturalistic descriptions of working-class poverty calling for working-class political action or utopian visions of a better socialist future appeared already by the end of the 19th century.

their predecessors not only in their living conditions but also in their audience. In their literary study *Attitudes to class in the English Novel* Eagleton and Pierce explain further:

> Some of these writers had profited from changes in working-class life after the Second World War. They had enjoyed a rather more secure and comfortable upbringing than their parents, and reaping the benefits of the 1944 Education Act, they had achieved grammar school and in some cases college or university places. These changes gave them not only the skills and the freedom to write about their own class but also a like-minded audience, which was eager to see its life-style portrayed. (Eagleton and Pierce 1979: 130)

Among the young writers there was: Jack Common, Doris Lessing, Barry Hines, David Storey and Alan Sillitoe. All of them focused on social problems and class inequality in Britain after the Second World War. However, only Alan Sillitoe was considered to belong to 'the Angry Young Men'.

Working-class novelists of the 1950s are, by some literary critics, labelled as 'North-English novelists', since they wrote about environment of factories in British industrial centres which are located in the north of England and which are their hometowns.

Working-class fiction writers, as well as 'the Angry Young Men', are not a movement or one united group. They wrote independently from each other. However, their writings shared a certain common attribute: they returned to realistic techniques in order to depict truly their own environment with its problems, hardship and struggles.

3. 2. English worker – angry proletarian

In comparison to heroes of Amis, Braine and Wain, a hero of working-class fiction writers has a closer relationship to the class and its social environment he comes from. Thus, this young man does not desire to become a member of higher class. 'He is as he is'. Typically, the hero is a young English worker refusing all supposable authorities and holds an 'us and them' opinion. He stands in opposition to the outside world.

4. Literary heritage or what the men of letters left to the world

Use of realism as a way of expression of one's view of the human world was nothing new. Realism as a literary genre appeared many years before 'the Angry Young Men' or 'working-class fiction writers' published their first novels. However, they "offered a new way of looking at Britain, they were new voices with new views" (Leader 2002: 290). They were the first open revolt against the British society and its preserved outlasted class system in the 20th century. By means of use of realistic techniques and selection of themes from life of ordinary people they made a genre accessible to ordinary people.

Influence of the new generation writers was primarily in the 1950s. Later, they were gradually disappearing from the 'front line' of the British literary and medial scene. Nevertheless, their contribution to development of English literature should not be underestimated. Brafford notes:

> […] these writers can be regarded as establishing a precedent for a considerable number of later twentieth-century novelists who present society and its ills as little more than a patchwork of hopeless grotesques to be treated with nerveless, sometimes comedic, scrutiny. (Brafford 2007: 9)

5. Analysis of the selected antiheroes

For the purposes of the thesis four writers and their novels were selected: *Room at the Top* by John Braine, *Hurry on Down* by John Wain, *Lucky Jim* by Kingsley Amis, and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* by Alan Sillitoe. The following chapter is focused on them

The chapter consists of four parts - each of them deals with a particular literary character. Depictions of the antiheroes are analysed primarily from the social and psychological point of view according to the list of points introduced in the aims of the thesis in the first chapter.

5.1. John Braine – Room at the Top

The novel was firstly published in 1957. It was instant success and its sales were large. Positive reviews followed: *The Observer*[13] found the novel "remarkably good" (Lee 1968: 52).

John Braine, as well as Alan Sillitoe, came from a working-class family. The novel is considered as one of gems of the decade, for it reflects the situation of working-class youth experiencing post-war class mobility the way upwards.

In comparison to the other three analysed novels *Room at the Top* is told retrospectively one decade on. Thus, the novel's 'present' are immediate post-war years. Stříbrný is convinced about appropriate choice of this attitude, for the hero is allowed to perceive himself critically (1987: 735). The novel uses first-person narration - the 'I-as-major-character technique'.

5.1.1. Personality of Joe Lampton

Joe Lampton is a self-confident type of a man. As such the hero does not care about what other people think about him. He represents the judge of his life: "I was the devil of a fellow […] there wasn't a damn thing I couldn't do. Say what you like of me when I was younger" (Braine 1960: 70). Such personal attribute is a necessary means on his way up the social ladder. The hero is also very self-disciplined. This personal attribute is reflected in his attitude to work, which is discussed in more detail in the section concerning work, and also in the way he represents himself visually. Joe must always look neatly and be well dressed (Braine 1960: 10).

However, the hero is not a static literary character. He develops through the course of time. Thus, according to Fiågesund it is appropriate to understand the novel as *Bildungsroman* (1999: 248). Throughout the novel Braine introduces Joe's fight between his real 'self' and the wish to be the man he desires to become. This process is happening under the influence of the town of Warley. Both Wilson and Allsop think that "the physical move from his hometown to Warley allows Joe to make a social move away from his working-class background" (Wilson 2007: 36). Allsop adds that in his

[13] A British newspaper published on Sundays

new hometown Lampton "is able to rise as high as his personality can carry him" (1964: 53). The most significant source of personal changes may be found in the fact that Joe comes from a working-class family always having to be modest, which contrasts with his new hometown, Warley, full of rich magnates and opportunities to climb up the social ladder. Joe Lampton experiences his 'American dream' – from a poor boy a rich man becomes. Thus, his focus on own material success and his natural humanity gradually disappearing are the negative consequences. He ponders retrospectively:

> What has happened to me is exactly what I willed to happen. I am my own draughtsman. Destiny, force of events, fate, good or bad fortune – all that battered repertory company can be thrown right out of my story, left to starve without a moment's recognition. But somewhere along the line – somewhere along the assembly line, which is what the phrase means – I could have been a different person. […] I suppose that I had my chance to be a real person. (Braine 1960: 104)

Head calls Lampton's story as "the classic sell-out" of "modern Faust" (2002: 53). The hero decides in a pragmatic way – he gives priority to social success instead of sincere interpersonal relationships and he realizes the price he has to pay – he estranges his natural 'self' and hurts those he loves and those who love him. In his own words: "He sold himself for a good price" (Braine 1960: 123). Allsop explains:

> Joe is always in agony over the moral choices that must be made if he is to be a grade-two (or grade-one) Zombie. He is perfectly aware that his humanity is slipping away from him as he becomes more and more successful at imitating the privileged classes. (Allsop 1964: 61)

However, the situation is that Joe does not intend to stop the process as his spiritual metamorphosis into ruthless and calculating man brings success. He would hardly bear not being allowed 'to taste what Warley offers' (Braine 1960: 185). Lampton is a great pragmatic. Nevertheless, such behaviour proves Joe's ability to continuously and profoundly reflect his behaviour. Joe fully realizes the whole process of his personal transformation. Thus, the hero gradually changes into 'a zombie'[14] – a human being he despised in early days.

The first case of calling himself 'a zombie' is when Joe recalls his argument with Alice concerning her sinful past:

[14] This Joe's expression means "a man who […] has been killed by society" (Allsop 1964: 26). It is a spiritual death when a man gives priority to material success and social prestige. Humanity is lost long time ago.

> Looking back, I see myself as being near the verge of insanity. I couldn't feel like that now; there is, as it were, a transparent barrier between myself and strong emotion. I feel what is correct for me to feel; I go through the necessary motions. But I cannot delude myself that I care. I wouldn't say that I was dead; simply that I have begun to die. I have realised, you might say, that I have, at the most, only another sixty years to live. I'm not actively unhappy and I'm not afraid of death, but I'm not alive in the way that I was that evening I quarrelled with Alice. I look back at that raw young man sitting miserable in the pub with a feeling of genuine regret; I wouldn't even, even if I could, change places with him, but he was indisputably a better person than the smooth character I am now, after ten years of getting almost everything that I ever wanted. I know the name he'd given me; the Successful Zombie. (Braine 1960: 103)

However, the most influential element in Lampton's personal metamorphosis is Alice's death[15] he is to blame, for he abandoned her because of better-situated Susan. The hero is disgusted at himself. The tragedy induces the final phase of the hero's personal change into unrelenting and utilitarian zombie lacking remorse:

> "What a damned awful way to die," Teddy said. "I expected it, "Joe Lampton said soberly. "She drove like a maniac. It doesn't make it any the less tragic, though". I didn't like Joe Lampton. He was a sensible young accountant with a neatly pressed blue suit and a stiff white collar. He always said and did the correct thing and never embarrassed anyone with an unseemly display of emotion. Why, he even dends. I hated Joe Lampton, but he looked and sounded very sure of himself sitting at my desk in my skin; he'd come to stay, this was no flying visit[16]. (Braine 1960: 185)

The hero is no more able to continue in fight between his real 'self' and the wish to be the man he desires to become. Thus, he finally let his dark side to dominate and overshadow whatever positive in his inner world:

> The other evening I found a photo of myself taken shortly after I came to live at Warley. My hair is plastered into a skullcap, my collar doesn't fit, and the knot of my tie, held in place by a hideous pin shaped like a dagger, is far too small. That doesn't matter. For my face is not innocent exactly, but *unused*. I mean unused by sex, by money, by making friends and influencing people, hardly touched by any of the muck one's forced to wade through to get what one wants[17]. (Braine1960: 5)

[15] Alice is one of Joe's mistresses.
[16] Joe's reaction is to escape far from the society to be alone, because the young man knows how he would behave in front of others –expediently and without sorrow.
[17] These thoughts are parts of the introductory dialogues of the novel. Joe reminisces his unspoilt youth.

The tragic death of Lampton's mistress is also the most obvious demonstration of Joe's second most dominating personal attribute – selfishness. When he is told about Alice's death instead of thinking of Alice and her suffering the hero thinks of himself and his social degradation in the case that citizens of Warley indicate him as the guilty person responsible for the tragedy: "Oh merciful God, I thought, she's committed suicide and left a note blaming me. That's finished it. That's finished me in every possible way" (Braine 1960: 183). Moreover, as Lee observes, although "Joe's grief at Alice's death is real and touching, is "not real enough to cause him to cancel any of his plans" (1968: 54). Thus, Lampton marries Susan no matter the tragedy.

It is necessary to mention that Joe's selfishness influences the whole story from its beginning, for most decisions he makes does not take other people's needs and potential emotional hurts into consideration.

5.1.2. Joe's attitude to life

Joe's starting position after his demobilisation from the Royal Air Force is not easy, for he, like many other young men in his position, is setting out to establish himself in post-war society. Thus, he must adopt in the new world of material affluence.

The hero comes from a working-class family, which never aspired to higher goals and was "condemned" to low living standard. Joe is influenced by these conditions in his childhood and modesty is a philosophy the young man follows until his arrival to Warley full of wealthy men:

> […] I used to make it a point of honour not to be squeamish about anything […] I even had a slight feeling of guilt about leaving Dufton, because I knew that the monthly eight pounds which I gave Aunt Emily had been a great help to her. (Braine 1960: 11)

However, since his arrival to Warley the hero has been fascinated with luxury and 'life at the top' he has never allowed to 'taste'. In his own words: "[…] one was always hungry. Not hungry in the way I'd been at Stalag 1000, but hungry for profusion, hungry for more than enough, hungry for cream and pineapples and roast pork and chocolate" (Braine 1960: 108). Lampton irresistibly desires to "conquer" it (Braine 1960: 24). He wishes to possess what the rich men possess. Burgess claims that the novel "articulated the bitter dissatisfaction of the provincial working-classes at their

exclusion from the great feast of privilege" (Braine 1960: 231). The desire gradually becomes a moving power of Joe's aims at 'getting at the top'. This goal is what the hero desires most and will desire most. Lee considers the hero a symbol of yearning after wealth and status (1968: 47). Fiågesund adds: "to an almost extreme degree money is the measure of success; it is the air which the hero breathes" (1999: 255).

As the hero's desire for luxury and higher social status grows, Joe's perception of himself changes as well. 'The passion' is so strong that Lampton is ready to sacrifice his natural 'self" and 'to sell himself' for a good price (Braine 1960: 95), which Braine presents as a necessary attitude in the case one aspires at social success, for the motto of social success is inflexible: "when you have money, you have everything" (Braine 1960: 169). According to Fiågesund Lampton is "a true child of the modern consumer society who almost exclusively focuses on things" (1999: 258).

Nevertheless, Lampton's 'American dream' is stigmatized by his origin, which is not desirable. The fact is that Lampton is capable and ambitious, but this obstruction is too difficult to cope with. The hero realizes it fully, which Braine introduces through Joe's thoughts during one of his afternoons spent in Thompsons' house learning for economy exams:

> Lampton has risen remarkably high, considering his humble beginnings; but, in our considered opinion, he has not the capacity to succeed in our sense of the word. He lacks the necessary background, the poise, the breeding: in short, he is essentially vulgar, and possesses no talents which might compensate for this drawback. (Braine 1960: 125)

The final phase of Lampton's life in Warley is revealed at the beginning of the novel. As it is told retrospectively, the story begins with Joe's life following his marriage with Susan. Being a member of high social circles is 'redeemed' by loosing one's natural identity which must be replaced by the identity high social class expects from its desirables. Joe admits his life pragmatism after many years:

> When she'd left the room I opened my suitcase and unfolded my dressing gown. […] It was a typical example of the stuff turned out for a buyer's market in the early postwar period and I rather think that I was drunk when I bought it. For all that, it gave me far more pleasure than the dressing gown I have now, which was bought from Sulka's in Bond Street. Not that I don't like the Sulka; it's the best, and I always wear the best. But sometimes I feel uncomfortably aware that I'm forced to be living proof of the firm's prosperity, a sort of sandwich-board man. I've no desire to be ill dressed; but I hate the knowledge that I daren't be ill dressed if I want to. I bought the cheap rayon garment to please myself; I bought

> the expensive silk garment because always to wear clothes of that quality is an unwritten term of my contract. And I shall never be able to recapture that sensation of leisure and opulence and sophistication which came over me that first afternoon in Warley when I took off my jacket and collar and went into the bathroom wearing a real dressing gown[18]. (Braine 1960: 10)

5.1.3. Joe's attitude to work

Joe arrives to Warley to work there as an accounting supervisor at the municipal office. He has a positive attitude to his new job. The hero relishes his colleagues and the chief officer and enjoys effective organisation of work (Braine 1960: 36). The job at the office functions as a 'stepping stone' on the way of integration into the local surroundings. Joe acquits himself successfully at his department, for the young man is an industrious and decent employee blending with his environment. In other words, he "picked up the work very quickly" and "done remarkably well" – uttered by Hoylake, his senior colleague (Braine 1960: 119). Joe also continues in improving his qualifications (Braine 1960: 119). Lampton's industriousness manifests itself much earlier though. As far back as his captivity in the prison camp Joe improved his qualification when he passed exams from accountancy.

Joe Lampton's main objective is to become 'one at the top'. Nevertheless, he does so not by means of his new job where he does not intend to 'move up' (Braine 1960: 149) but through marriage with a millionaire daughter. Thus, his dream social position will not be a result of the man's hard work but a result of calculative ideas about the marriage with Susan. At the end of the story Lampton is offered a well-paid job in the firm of his father-in-law. Braine created a very calculatingly literary character.

5.1.4. Relationship between Joe and the society

Joe Lampton is a child of working-class parents. Therefore, his family had to behave economically all the time. Such experience from childhood has inevitably influenced Joe's perception of own position in the post-war consume society as well as

[18] Joe experiences these feelings after accommodating at the Thompsons.

attitudes to it, especially 'to those at the top' who have never been forced 'to count money'.

This part of the thesis presents Lampton's relationship to the towns Dufton and Warley at first, for these two places have different social climate and involves in Joe's personal transformation. After that his relationship with wealthy citizens of Warley, his close surroundings and friends follow.

Warley, a small picturesque town with its specific 'nouveau riche' climate, is Joe's new hometown. On the other hand he estranges his old hometown, Dufton. Aversion to Dufton strengthens in such extend that Joe calls his hometown "Dead Dufton" (Braine 1960: 81). In fact, he uses this pejorative expression whenever he recalls this town. Lampton is disgusted at its atmosphere of decay. It presents nothing positive, nothing inspiring. Only factories and poverty govern its surroundings. Nothing happens there whereas Warley is full of life and luxury:

> […] Warley had shown me a new way of living […] in the three months I'd been there I was already more a part of the town, more involved in its life, than ever I had been in my birthplace. (Braine 1960: 81)

Later on Warley means everything for Joe as it represents his 'ticket' to higher social circles and material security. However, without contacts with 'appropriate people' he will never achieve his 'American dream'.

Among the wealthy people Joe meets most frequently there are Eva and Bob Storr, Susan, and Alice Aisgill. Relationships with Alice and Susan are analysed in the part focused on women. Mr Brown meets Lampton almost at the end of the story.

The Storrs[19] is fond of Joe and supports him. This positive relationship is revealed most when Joe aims at forcing out Alice's death from his mind[20]. Mr Brown, the father of Susan, is a representative of the highest social circles[21]. Almost at the end of the

[19] The middle-aged couple and friends of the Thompsons meet Joe most frequently during or after rehearsals in the theatre.
[20] The hero 'makes a dash for' the downtown and gets drunk. The Storrs finds the hero drunk and dirty and, because of their deep interested in the young man, they help him in these difficult moments (Braine 1960: 239).
[21] Surprisingly, the man has a social background similar to Joe's.

novel the rich man meets Joe - from his own initiative[22]. He is the only character in the story that may influence Lampton's future existence and Joe is aware of the fact. It is truth that the hero belongs to lower social class than the Browns. However, Brown appreciates Joe's 'going ahead' and self-discipline – attributes necessary to succeed in the world. He needs such people for his firm (Braine 1960: 179). In other words, Brown's interest in Joe is in token of enterprise and utilitarianism rather than a 'warm' personal relationship. Their relationship is confirmed by a proposal of an occupation in Mr. Brown's company, which improves considerably Joe's both financial and social situation. The hero is caught into the rich man's trap and begins to look up to and be grateful to Brown (Braine 1960: 178). Lampton becomes a member of Brown's family without any conflicts. As Joe finally gets among those from the highest social circles Head considers *Room at the Top* as "a novel of class mobility" (2002: 53).

It is also necessary to focus on one more character – Jack Wales[23]. The young man, standing at the same social level as Mr Brown, is the person Joe hates most (Braine 1960: 99). This character represents what the hero stands in opposition but, at the same time, Jack's social status and his opportunities are what the hero aims at (Braine 1960: 46). Thus, his attitude to Wales is ambivalent and well demonstrates the tragedy of Joe Lampton – he hates what he adores and longs for.

Joe feels weak towards Jack, for Wales possesses money which enables a man to gain everything (Braine 1960: 169). Nevertheless, the main rebuke of Jack is his relationship with Susan, which arouses jealousy in Joe's heart. From this point of view, the young man may be considered as the hero's arch enemy.

However, Jack Wales is not the only person Joe does not like. In fact, the hero loathes all wealthy people, Susan Brown is no exception. The fact is that his general attitude to higher social circles is hostile: "The rich were my enemies, I felt: they were watching me for the first false move" (Braine 1960: 62).

[22] As the hero seduces Susan and she becomes pregnant, Mr. Brown does not 'waste time' and immediately invites the expectant father of his grandchild to the Conservative Club in Leddersford. The purpose of this meeting is testing Joe's character and attitude to this situation. The entrepreneur wants to make sure of consistency of Joe's feelings for Susan (Braine 1960: 209). Mr Brown wants to prepare marriage as soon as possible.

[23] The young man is a son of a local wealthy entrepreneur.

He, originally as a representative of a working-class, feels inferior among them (Braine 1960: 136). He envies them their material and social prosperity, but at the same time he is fascinated with them and desires to achieve the same social and living standard:

> I felt a cold excitement. This was the place where the money grew. The Leddersford Conservative Club […] was for rich men only. […] Here was the centre of the country I'd so long tried to conquer; here magic worked, here the smelly swineherd became the prince who wore a clean shirt every day[24]. (Braine 1960: 171)

Such paradox represents a moving power of the story and also one of Joe's crucial goals.

In the novel Joe occurs primarily in the environment of the middle-class he got into by means of his education and job. Among those the hero is in most frequent contact there are the Thompsons and his colleagues at work.

The Thompsons get along well with Joe and perceive him as a part of their family[25]. The older couple prepares a comfortable accommodation for him and behaves respectfully to Joe. Thus, they can be considered a starting point for his new existence in Warley.

5.1.5. Joe's relationship with women

As far as women are concerned Braine introduces a very self-confident hero being aware of his own personal and appearance qualities. If Joe decides to 'ball a chick', he follows his goal and mostly reaches what he has planned, for women can hardly resist his personal charm (Braine 1960: 96). And Joe is well aware of it. According to Fiågesund it is the most effective weapon in his conquest of Alice and Susan later in the story (1999: 250). He is a seducer who constantly seeks intimate contacts with women. In Joe's own words: "I was a devil of a fellow […] say what you like of me when I was

[24] These are Joe's feelings when entering the Conservative Club after having been invited by Mr Brown to talk about his daughter.
[25] The older couple lost their only son who died during the Second World War and Joe reminds them of him. Joe almost takes over the role of their son. There is, in other words, a kind of Cinderella transformation (Fiågesund 1999: 251).

younger; but I certainly wasn't blasé" (Braine 1960: 70). Bradbury adds: Joe "[…] exploits his looks and body to ensure his personal success" (1993: 324).

Lampton's interest in women even increases after his arrival to Warley, for there are many pretty and wealthy young ladies. Thus, he immediately starts to apply his personal charm and self-confidence in order to make impression on women in his surroundings – it concerns both his acquaintances and colleagues at work (Braine 1960: 20).

However, two women are more than significant for Joe's existence and their relationships to the hero are crucial for his life and personal development. These two literary characters are Alice Aisgill[26] and Susan Brown[27]. One of them is older and matured woman, the second one is a naïve and inexperienced child. With each of them Joe begins to date during the course of time. Braine creates a love triangle.

Nevertheless, these two relationships diametrically differ from each other, for reasons for their existence and satisfying of Joe's personality differ. They also reveal opposite parts of Lampton's soul: humanity, openness, spontaneity on the one side, and ambition, selfishness, and falsehood on the other side. The hero pendulates between two different worlds.

Susan is 'a princess from a castle' caring about nothing and nobody. She represents a girl from higher social class attracting Joe's attention with her naivety and innocence (Braine 1960: 60). She just exists 'as she is' and lives for herself (Braine 1960: 67). Lampton is smitten with her social origin, financial background, and beauty (Braine 1960: 47). Moreover, Lampton realizes Susan's emptiness and vanity, which causes disregard for her world in the hero's mind which is nothing more than "not thinking, not wanting, not making plans, but quite simply 'being' " (Braine 1960: 67). Nevertheless, the hero desires to become her husband and 'the one at the top' though.

[26] Alice is a wife of George Aisgill, a wealthy industrialist. She is a middle-aged woman without own financial resources, but having life experience and courage. Joe and Alice fall in love with each other during rehearsals in the theatre.

[27] Susan, a nineteen-year-old girl, is a daughter of wealthy entrepreneur Mr Brown - Warley's leading citizen. At the time of their first meeting she dates Jack Wales. Nevertheless, she naively falls in love with Joe very soon and tries to provide conditions for their possible relationship to develop. They firstly meet after one of performances of the theatre club.

On the other hand, Alice embodies readiness for 'what life brings'. Joe chimes in with her, lives his life fully, and feels secure beside her (Braine 1960: 65). She resembles his personality and fully enjoys each other (Braine 1960: 73). Moreover, their relationship meets their sexual needs, an important issue in Joe's life, which is not feasible with childish Susan.

The two Joe's relationships also differ in the level of his spontaneousness in behaviour to women.

Joe lives more authentic existence when being with Alice as Alice perceives the hero as he is: "Alice was old enough to understand that men aren't all of a piece old enough to take me as I was and not as she'd like me to be" (Braine 1960: 117). She loves him for his personality.

The relationship with Susan is contradictory. The relationship between them is determined and stigmatized by their mutually different social status from the beginning, even though Susan does not realize it. In Joe's own words: "Susan was a princess and I was the equivalent of a swineherd" (Braine 1960: 48). Such situation inwardly 'devours' Joe, which deforms his feelings for the young lady. His enviousness focused on her origin, social status, and opportunities are the result (Braine 1960: 116). He perceives her as 'a ticket' to higher social circles (Braine 1960: 62). Joe explains: "I was taking Susan not as a Susan, but as a Grade A lovely, as the daughter of a factory owner, as the means of obtaining the key to the Aladdin's cave of my ambitions" (Braine 1960: 117). According to Lee Susan "is a part of Joe's calculated plan to marry a job, a way of life, and a grade-one girl" (1968: 55). Thus, Joe he does not behave naturally: "I must transform myself into a different person for her. She had, I felt instinctively, a conception of Joe Lampton which I'd never to depart from in the smallest detail" (Braine1960: 116). He behaves with the view of getting higher. He dissimulates and pretends his love for Susan, for it is the only way how to achieve his goal (Braine 1960: 115). Such behaviour demonstrates pragmatism of Lampton's personality. Joe's unfair behaviour is a reaction to Susan's expectations she has on his personality. In other words, she does not take Joe as he is, but the way as she wants him to be: "[…] she was taking me as the perfect lover and delightful companion, passionate and tender and exciting and infinitely wise […]" (Braine 1960: 117). Joe pragmatically makes use of –

Susan's immaturity and lack of life experience. Inevitably his feelings for Susan are gradually changing into sum of money he is going to possess as her future husband: "She put her cheek against mine, standing on her toes.' Joe, do you really love me?' 'You know I do.' 'How much?' 'A hundred thousand pounds' worth,' I said. 'A hundred thousand pounds' worth.'" (Braine 1960: 118) [28].

Nevertheless, the hero plans future with both women. He promises 'castles in the air'. However, those uttered promises resemble a self-delusion rather than real plans for the future. From this point of view Joe acts as an egoist – in both cases he pursues only his own interests without taking Alice and Susan's interests into consideration. The hero is too selfish to think about unfairness of his behaviour. Fiågesund shares the same view of the hero's behaviour and claims that Joe's "love is still another name for ambition" (1999: 248).

The reason for Lampton's contradictory behaviour may be found in the fact that in his life there occur two basic desires which cannot co-exist. These desires are love and desire for social status and affluence. Under the conditions Joe lives only one of these elements can be satisfied. Finally, the hero chooses the second mentioned desire, which sentences him to inwardly unsatisfying existence. Lee considers this dilemma "the moral struggle of the novel" (1968: 54). Carpenter adds:

> Joe portraits himself as a social-climber, or rather a go-getter for the good things in life – sports cars, pretty girls from well-off homes, and above all money and power. According to Joe (and Braine) this is why he eventually abandons Alice for awful Susan. (Carpenter, 222: 163)

Joe's decision to give priority to Susan representing Warley with its social background meaning too much to loose it and abandon socially inappropriate and economically inconvenient life with Alice significantly influences Lampton's future existence, for the hero chooses the relationship more satisfying the part of his 'self' which desires for social success, prestige, and considerable financial security, but after all Joe will not be satisfied. The hero experiences a deep love with Mrs Aisgill: " All I know is this: there wasn't any other woman with whom I could be happy" (Braine 1960:

[28] This is one of dialogues during their appointment.

154)[29]. Nevertheless, in comparison to Susan Alice cannot offer anything more except her love. Joe analyses the situation:

> I could see it all. […] I loved it all. […] I could not leave it. And if I married Alice I'd be forced to leave it. You can only love a town if it loves you, and Warley would never love a co-respondent. I had to love Warley properly too, I had to take all she could give me; it was too late to enjoy merely her warm friendship, a life with a Grade Six girl perhaps, a life spent in, if I were lucky, one of the concrete boxes of houses on the new Council estate. […] But it wasn't for me […] I had to force the town into granting me the ultimate intimacy, the power and privilege and luxury which emanated from T'Top. (Braine 1960: 166)

However, apart from Joe's own personal tragedy when choosing emotionally empty relationship one more tragic event happens in consequence of Lampton's utilitarianism. When Joe finally chooses Susan, from pragmatic reasons, Alice chooses death in order to prevent herself from torture of loneliness[30].

Sudden and unexpected death of Alice may be considered as the worst crisis and problem in Joe's life and tests his personality. From a different point of view, it is possible to understand the woman's death and his blame as a punishment for Lampton's too high self-consciousness, levity, and selfishness – philosophy of his successful life.

Nevertheless, Braine hints that Joe's overall personal transformation in Warley under the influence of the world of social and material success is to blame above all (1960: 187). Carpenter also sympathizes with Joe, for he understands his unscrupulous behaviour as "a reaction to the extreme austerity of the immediately postwar years" (2002: 160).

[29] Such thoughts occurs Joe's mind during his stay with Alice at a cottage in Wool. Joe has been offered to stay there for a week by one of his friends.

[30] During the course of time Alice reaches a phase when she hates her impersonal existence shared together with her husband George. Joe provides her rescue from her emotional suffering (Braine1960: 222).

5.2. Charles Lumley – Hurry on Down

The novel *Hurry on Down* was published in 1953 as the first and, at the same time, the most significant writing of John Wain.

Wain's book differs from other writings of that time, for its story is "a picaresque humorous novel with attributes of crazy comedy" (Stříbrný 1987: 734). Schüssel appreciates its "mixture of nonconformity, rebelliousness, and sometimes downright silliness" (2005: 382).

5.2.1. Personality of Charles Lumley

Charles is brought up by solid middle-class parents. After studying at a minor public school he takes bachelor degree at Oxford. After finishing his university studies the hero is expected to behave according to rules coming out of doctrines of 'gentleman' behaviour and to employ knowledge to represent successfully his social status and fulfil expectations of the society. However, the hero realizes that he has become "a victim of a traditional-style upbringing which has left him ill-prepared for 'the jungle of the nineteen-fifties' " (Carpenter 2002: 63). Thus, discontent Charles decides "to avoid being trapped in bourgeois values" (Wilson 2007: 85) in his new life. The influenced part of his 'self' modified at a university full of hypocrisy and snobbishness is suppressed by the real and natural part of his personality which does not intend to subordinate and desires to follow its own way (Wain 1966: 11). However, such decision brings many obstacles which the hero must to overcome. And Lumley's personality is tested many times. It is a part of his personal maturing.

Fortunately, Wain endows his protagonist with courage which helps him to cope with his life full of turnovers and obstacles. It is primarily courage to make radical decisions. Many times Charles decides to abandon everything what went before. It concerns primarily variation of jobs, failing in relationships with women, fighting with his surroundings, or solving existential problems. Charles Lumley never gives up. These aspects are discussed in more detail in other parts of the analysis.

Among the most important decisions there is his choice to become a window-cleaner instead of a white-collar, then he makes livelihood as a drug-smuggler, or he finally accepts a well-paid job of a middle-class man, which would be unthinkable at the beginning of the story. However, the most difficult decision is to forget about Veronica when Charles realizes that she has lied him all the time[31]. Wain reveals resolution not to resign whatever the price:

> When she had gone, he lay perfectly still, searching within the huge hollow space in his mind, hoping that in some neglected corner he would find the strength to keep him sane, the will to begin from the beginning. So much had to be altered; he had known it; and now this, too, the foundation on which everything else had rested. Lying there, still and frightened, he knew that the next few hours would bring him, finally, to sanity or madness. Either the loss of Veronica – not merely the loss but the need to reject every thought of her – would kill him, or it would set him free, and give meaning to his decision to sweep the violent and senseless elements from his life. (Wain 1966: 163)

Since the hero is strong-minded, instead of a collapse he starts to ponder on a next phase of his life – the previous one has just ended. A personal transformation follows: "It was a former life, over and done with it, something he had forgotten about. Since then he had died and been reborn a score of times" (Wain 1966: 156).

Wain gradates the story-line to its excess when Lumley falls to the social bottom and the hero is forced to live in the street[32]. Nevertheless, even though such a situation seems to be more than desperate one, Charles does not despair and avoids getting panic. As before he is a strong personality, which helps him to solve whatever problem occurs and the hero earns his living as a seller of overpriced cigarettes.

Facing psychological 'earthquakes' may be difficult, if there is no support – neither one's family nor friends. Nevertheless, this is not valid for Charles, even though he lives a life of 'a lonely wolf' without friends, family, or women (for most of the time). He relies only on himself and his abilities and succeeds every time.

[31] The woman claimed that she is single. However, she has been a mistress of a wealthy man for a long time.
[32] There is nowhere to go after leaving job of a chauffeur at Mr. Braceweight. The hero ends in the streets of Stotwell.

5.2.2. Charles's attitude to life

During the whole story a reader is confronted with expectations of the English society concerning the way Lumley should live and with critics of the way he lives. Nevertheless, Charles does not take views of his surroundings into consideration and his existence is a result of his own will, even though such path is sometimes difficult to follow, for standing in opposition often means to bare consequences of one's own decisions.

As a representative of the opposition towards English hypocritical society Lumley does not choose life corresponding to his education and class-origin which predestinate him for promising career. His parents do not agree with his decisions. The only solution is to break contacts. Schüssel qualifies this process as "detachment from one's own past" (2005: 389). Charles must behave so in order to live his own authentic life. This decision results understanding that the university together with his middle-class subservient upbringing have rid Charles of individuality and led him to obedience and seriousness (Wain 1966: 25). Both of them are accused of responsibility for his inability to assert himself and 'get on in life'. "The University had, by its three years' random and shapeless cramming, unfitted his mind for serious thinking" (Wain 1966: 11). Thus, the beginning of the hero's adult life is more than lax. Final decision how to cope with his life the hero postpones as long time as possible without taking consequences into consideration:

> "Sorry," he would say in answer to questions about his future, "but I'm not making major decisions just now. One thing at a time, you know. At the moment I'm working for an examination"[33]. (Wain 1966: 10)

Charles does not know exactly what he really expects from his life. The hero is not by far a mature man and he must begin to build his own identity**. H**is revolt starts at these days – Lumley realizes definitely his desire not to resemble his family and all those fulfilling expectations of the society and aiming at 'swarming up' the social ladder. Charles desires to be himself and live life he will choose himself. Allsop adds: The

[33] After finishing his studies and arrival home Charles does not know how to cope with his life. He randomly chooses Stotwell as a town where he is going to begin his new adult life. Accommodation and job are not arranged. As far as money is concerned Charles has little of them. Despite it he heads for a pub where he spends most of it. This way postpones coming back home.

novel "set a new cycle in recrudescence of the intellectual rebel without a cause wandering through the deserts and jungles of the post-war world trying to find somewhere to pitch his tent" (Allsop 1964: 76). Thus, he starts working as independent window-cleaner and moves to a garden cabin to his acquaintance Flourish, a poor eccentric novelist. Later, he works in several other working-class jobs.

Charles perceives his new life as it is and concentrates on just three areas of his existence: sleeping, food, and earning money – preferably in undemanding, calm, and peaceful environment because of his inclination "to be lazy and tolerant" (Wain 1966: 171). Except drug-smuggling all his jobs meet this requirement. Such a primitive existence can be understood as a paradox to Charles's previous life of a university student - as if Charles mocked 'proper and orderly' society. The 'roots' of Charles's choice of such existence are in his proletarianism forming his life philosophy. This mentality is manifested most in his conviction that all human beings possess undeniable right for free choice of their journey through life: " 'Do I understand, Burge,' he said, with a hint of a choke in his voice, 'that you are interfering with my right, the absolute right of a citizen, to do just whatever work I may choose?' " (Wain 1966: 174)[34].

Finally, even though Charles follows the path of a social outsider, whose life is full of turning points, unexpected decisions, and emotional pain, he finally succeeds in finding what he was looking for all the time – peaceful life in a luxurious flat, class and social neutrality and perhaps a heart of the woman of his life, too. This Wain's 'deux ex machina' is a compensation for the difficult life way.

5.2.3. Charles's attitude to work

Wain created a hero whose various jobs stand in a direct opposition to his class origin and university education according to which the society expects him to work intellectually rather than manually. Bradbury remarks on: "Lumley comically sustains his revolts and tries to purge the taint of class by taking various jobs" (1993: 317).

[34] This characteristic of Charles's nature according to which he adheres to is revealed in the argument with doctors at the hospital party organised in the hospital the hero later works in. Burge is Lumley's former university schoolmate.

Lumley never looks for a particular job intentionally. He rather chooses 'what comes in way'. The hero does not aspire to higher goals such as a well-paid profession corresponding to his origin and education and feels no humiliation because of it. The hero's general attitude to work resembles the declamation that every work is needed and no work is more important than others (Wain 1966: 174). Thus, Charles is an 'eyesore' to his surroundings, which understands such behaviour as boycott and mocking at social rules and expectations. Mr Scrodd[35] expresses the attitude of the society uncompromisingly:

> "I can conclude, Lumley, that you felt some kind of grudge against me that impelled you to come back and waste my time with this foolish joke. Window cleaning! I suppose the implication is that your education had unfitted you for anything worth doing, and you seek to drive the point home by coming here with this foolish talk about having turned artisan". (Wain 1966: 36)

Wilson calls it "a comprehensive satire on English mores" (2007: 56).

During his working-class career Charles works as a window-cleaner, lorry-driver, drug dealer, hospital orderly, chauffeur, or a nightclub bouncer. Oliveriusová calls this list of Lumley's jobs as "the iliad of a modern displaced person" (Oliveriusová et al., 1988: 73). "He zig-zags from one (job – author's note) to another, never adjusting, never assimilating" (Allsop 1964: 76). It seems that the hero, despite his education and gained university degree, has found himself and his self-realization, for all these jobs share several important attributes suiting Charles' personality: they are useful, undemanding, and honest (Wain 1966: 164). The only exception is drug-smuggling – the job Lumley chooses in order to earn more money for financially demanding affair with Veronica. Such violation of own rules proves the hero's pragmatic thinking. However, he is not proud of himself (Wain 1966: 149).

The long list of jobs is completed by well-paid occupation in a humorist team[36]. This working position differs from the previous jobs – it has more prestige in the eyes of the English. Thus, it helps him to improve significantly his social status. However, such situation would be unthinkable for the hero in the beginning of the story. Nevertheless, the fact is that money enables a man to act whatever he desires to do

[35] He is a headmaster of Lumley's former public school.
[36] Flourish offers Charles this job when they meet again after a long time.

when one possesses enough money for it. Thus, no 'revolutionary' end is happening. Bradbury comments: "Lumley has to admit that battle fought between self and society has ended neutrally, in 'a draw' " (1993: 317). In other words, the hero "conforms to the social code he has rejected" (Stevenson 1967: 402).

However, according to Salwak "by the end of the novel, he realizes that the individual and his own values are more important than any badges of class. Ironically, he learns this in the midst of a highly organised and commercial world as a gag writer" (1981: 35). Moreover, such occupation meets requirements of his previous life style, too, for Charles:

> […] can preserve his anonymity as one of seven, avoid the pressure of social definition that poverty demands, and retain sufficient leisure and independence to realize both what he is and what others are. […] And the dignity of the personal and the humane is the moral value he has been seeking throughout his journey. (Gindin 1962: 131)

Wain created happy end of a distressful journey.

5.2.4. Relationship between Charles and the society

First of all, the story of Charles Lumley is based on the main character's opposition towards the outside world and English society. Such behaviour results from Charles feelings that he is imprisoned in his class yet not one of them" (Allsop 1964: 73). In other words, Charles Lumley is an outsider of his own social class.

Thus, the protagonist leaves his home forever to find a new identity. He becomes an independent worker and hopes that he adheres to his class neutrality in strictly class English society. "His policy is to remain independent of class" (Stevenson 1967: 402). Therefore, "Charles is a solitary figure in the society" (Píša 1991: 299).

During the story Wain also reveals that to stay outside the class system is an embodiment of personal freedom for Charles. He fights for human liberty choice 'to do as one desires to do'.

Unfortunately, the hero is continually criticized either for his behaving or living without abiding by the code of the middle-class he comes from. This fact concerns both

his family and people from his surroundings. However, it does not influence the hero's philosophy of life at all.

The first important case of such critic is uttered by Edith[37] and her husband Robert Tharkles. They despise Charles, for he tries to estrange middle class and does not aim at fulfilling expectations of his surroundings. The hero is perceived as a 'scum' and a man who does not attend to his social status and does not represent himself in the appropriate way (Wain 1966: 15)[38]. The same opinion is shared by Scrodd, the headmaster of Charles's former school near Stotwell (Wain 1966: 36)[39]. In their eyes Charles Lumley is an inferior man. The same attitude shares another character, George Hutchins[40] who understands Lumley's behaviour as his personal failure (Wain 1966: 205).

However, the most aggressive 'assault' on Lumley's simple existence happens during the party in the hospital where the hero is confronted with arrogance, snobbish Grundyism, and hypocrisy of doctors, higher social class members, towards lower class and jobs it does. The speaker of 'the better-class people' is Burge[41]. Charles is criticized for not doing a profession in accordance with his education. The hero dares to betray own class (Wain 1966: 174). Moreover, he is accused of treason to his own class. Lumley exasperate them with his liberal thinking. On the other hand, Charles is exasperated by their shallowness and systematic effort to get as high as possible on the social ladder (Wain 1966: 170) as well as arrogance towards blue-collar jobs and bravely, though unsuccessfully, defends his rights for liberty choice of existence: " 'Do I understand, Burge,' he said with a hint of a choke in his voice, 'that you are interfering with my right, the absolute right of a citizen, to do just whatever work I may choose?' " (Wain 1966: 174). The antipathy is so strong that Charles despises them (Wain 196: 175). A reader witnesses clash of two incompatible worlds. The privileges seem to him as inhuman creatures. Wain depicts Lumley as a left-wing proletarian (1966: 175) and

[37] She is a sister of Sheila – Lumley's former girlfriend.
[38] It happens at the beginning of the story when Charles arrives to Sheila's home to talk with her. Both of them are members of the middle-class as well as his family. Charles bears hard their advices and moralising.
[39] The school is located near Stotwell. When Lumley comes in the issue of application for the position of a window-cleaner Scrodd sneers at him and perceives the situation as a joke. Too incredible seems to him a man with university degree choosing a life of a worker.
[40] He is Lumley's former university schoolmate. They meet from time to time.
[41] Charles is invited to the party by Burge - a one of his former acquaintances from the faculty. He is a doctor in the hospital where Charles works as an orderly.

as such he cannot find a common communicative channel with 'those at the top'. It seems that, through Charles, Wain created 'a mirror' for the English society and its class system and accuses it of frivolity and sneering to lower social class, which is socially valuable in the same extend as the higher one though. All creates inseparable whole.

In the same extend as the hero does not accept arrogance of higher social class he loathes working-class 'bootlickers' aiming at 'copying' more successful individuals in order to improve their social position and who feel ashamed of their class origin, for their family is 'too ordinary'. They betray themselves and all the more they criticize those who do not behave in the same way. Among such characters there is George Hutchins (Wain 1966: 12), or Rosa's brother Stan who is gradually estranging his family (Wain 1966: 185). With such people Charles quarrels, does not communicate, or uses sarcasm and irony:

> "Not at all. Social climbing isn't unworthy. When a man's got half-way up the ladder by hard work, as you have, it's only human for him to decide that he might as well jump the rest of the rungs by a quicker method"[42]. (Wain 1966: 204)

Charles Lumley chooses his life way in the form of opposition to consume, chase for money and career, useless and empty existence based on satisfying material needs and social prestige. Thus, average, eccentrics and people at the edge of the society having no need to pretend and doing what they really want to do without taking social success into consideration are sympathetic to him. First of all, such people live their authentic lives full of natural human activity and do not feel any need to comment on other people's lives:

> […] he belonged to the world where real actions were undertaken. He belonged with Froulish thumping his typewriter in a derelict loft, with Dogson getting himself murdered in the quest for a story, even with Ern serving a prison sentence or Mr Blearney getting up dreary leg-shows in the provinces. The people he belonged with were ill, disgusting, unsuccessful, comic, but still alive, still generating some kind of human force[43]. (Wain 1966: 223)

[42] This dialogue happens when Charles and Hutchins meet at one job.

[43] Wain depicts this Joe's inner dialogue during his walk after leaving his job of Mr Braceweight's chauffeur. He ponders on his previous life. Ern is Lumley's former co-worker in window-cleaning; Flourish is an eccentric novelist; Dogson is Charles's former schoolmate and zealous reporter; Mr Blearney is an owner of a night bar.

All these people are ordinary, average, but 'they are their own man' at the same time. They are valuable. Thus, the hero frequently chooses environment and work, where it is possible to meet such people. In these environments everyone knows their place. In such environments Charles seeks security[44], for "he wishes to move through life 'unnoticed' " (Schüssel 2005: 392). In fact, all his jobs meet this requirement. A good example is Wain's description of the hospital environment where Charles experiences peace in his life:

> With satisfaction he noticed himself becoming accepted and integrated into the community of the hospital, finding his place in a feudal pyramid-shaped society that brooked no vagueness as to questions of status. […] here, there could be no false pretensions, for rank, prestige, and privileges were settled automatically. (Wain 1966: 165)

Oliveriusová thinks that "the hero intentionally pursues own unsuccessfulness in the eyes of the society in order to find these peaceful places" (Oliveriusová et al. 1988: 238). Schüssel expresses this Lumley's attitude as an effort to be:

> […] locked in his own protective prison, […], where he can – so he muses – move along 'unnoticed', where there is no challenge, no competition, and hence no external struggle, and where, finally, no one is allowed close enough to offend, or as much as disturb the fragile self-image. (Schüssel 205: 399)

Through Lumley's behaviour and decisions Wain gradually tries to reveal the basic message which is fully revealed at the end of the novel. The hero aims at being outside given social borders and structures:

> "You never wanted to get into it because it hadn't got what you wanted." "What do you think I want?" he repeated. "Neutrality," said Mr Blearney calmly and without pausing to take thought. […] Charles was humbled. The man understood him perfectly[45]. (Wain 1966: 248)

The hero is not willing to subordinate to dictate of the English society. Allsop explains further: "What Lumley is trying to do is to be outside the class structure altogether […] he wants for the rest of his life 'to travel without a passport' " (1964: 73).

[44] In other words, the less information somebody knows about Charles, the less he is vulnerable. Perhaps it is one of the main reasons why Charles continuously aims at staying at the edge of the society.
[45] This proclamation is uttered by Mr Blearney almost at the end of the story when Charles visits the man to discuss successful changes in his life.

5.2.5. Charles's relationship with women

In Hurry on Down Charles has three relationships with women. Each of them belongs to a different social class, which influences their behaviour and attitudes towards Charles. With each of the women Lumley experiences a certain part of his life which differs from one another.

The first of the women is Sheila, Charles's fiancée[46]. Their relationship is revealed through Lumley's memories. Sheila loves him and is willing to marry him. However, the hero leaves her after finishing his studies, for he is convinced that Sheila will be a hypocrite dictating him how he should live:

> Her face rose before his eyes […] and he saw behind her eyes the eyes of her mother, solemn, spectacled, judging him […] but now he saw her not merely growing old, but growing daily more and more of a piece with the prim, hedged gravel from which she flowered. […] he knew that he could never face it. It was over. No more Sheila[47]. (Wain 1966: 20)

Charles does not intend to accept such situation. In other words, the hero's metamorphosis into an independent young man refusing everything what has created his life so far dictates that they cannot share one world anymore. Without a word of explanation or farewell Lumley leaves Sheila forever.

The second and the most important woman in Charles's life is Veronica, a woman from the highest social circles[48]. Falling in love with her is one of the crucial moments of the novel. Charles has lived his life according to his conviction so far. However, everything changes after their first meeting. Unfortunately, their relationship is determined by the social-economical gap between them, for the young woman comes of

[46] They firstly meet during their university studies.
[47] Lumley comes to this conclusion after discussion with Sheila's sister Edith and her husband Robert he visits after his arrival from school. He is criticized for his behaviour and way of life. Thus, Charles is afraid that Sheila will be influenced by her family (Wain 1966: 26, 27). He realizes that neither he is the same as Sheila's family nor he wants to be the same (Wain 1966: 21). They seem to hold too conventional views of life.
[48] Veronica is a niece of wealthy Mr. Roderick. Charles firstly sees her in one of local hotels.

the highest social circles. Nevertheless, their positions equilibrate as far as the end of the story.

At first the hero aims at forgetting Veronica being aware of the class difference which exists between him and the young lady:

> And yet, how empty was any aspiration, however faint, in her direction! He did not even know who she was or where she lived. And it would profit him nothing to find out. Whoever she was, she clearly moved in circles that demanded money as a condition of entry – money, good clothes, social position. […] Any crawling vermin who happened to have his pockets well lined could leave him standing in the race. (Wain 1966: 77)

Nevertheless, Lumley is not the master of his emotions anymore and continues at aiming the unreachable lady. The hero consciously becomes 'a victim' of a decoy now. For the chance to gain Veronica Charles would do anything – to abandon his attitudes and convictions: "Men he despised, men like Robert Tharkles and Hutchins, would stand more chance than he did. […] He began to think increasingly about money. The poison was doing its work" (Wain 1966: 77). Charles is willing to accept whatever job to support financially demanding affair and becomes a drug-smuggler:

> A few weeks ago, if asked to make a short list of the lowest human vermin, he would have put drug pedlars fairly near the head of the list – assuming it to be in descending order of loathsomeness – somewhere in the same region as white-slave traders. Now here he was, helping to smuggle heroin, marijuana, or whatever the vile stuff was, out of the docks and put it in circulation. [...] He knew that he would commit any crime, that he would steal, kill, maim, or ruin the lives of people who had never do him harm, for the sake, not of possessing her, but of giving himself even a remote chance of possessing her. He knew that neither his mind nor his body could recognize anything as evil, nor as good, except in direct relation to that desire. And he was helpless, and aghast. (Wain 1966: 108-109)

Above all, the hero is willing to sacrifice and betray himself. Lumley becomes fully aware of his negative personal metamorphosis:

> With fantastic vividness, now that it was all over and too late for questions, one question flared before his eyes: what was he doing here? How could he ever have led himself, by what crazy route and with what blind footsteps, to the position he was in a soaking wet lounge suit, being driven in a stolen car, pursued by the police, wanted for dope-smuggling and murder, was this he, Charles Lumley?[49]. (Wain 1966: 149)

[49] Charles realizes how much he has changed so far. He is escaping with Bunder, the head of the drug gang, from the local port after the murder of Dogson, his former schoolmate and reporter.

The love affair embodies a paradox of the hero's story, for Veronica belongs to the world Charles has tried to avoid from the time of finishing his university studies. Unfortunately, Lumley is too intensely infatuated with love. Moreover, he perceives such situation as the most important victory of his life (Wain 1966: 133).

On the contrary, Veronica's attitude to the affair with Lumley is just 'a time killer' based on lie. She does not act fairly from the beginning, for she claims that she is Mr. Bernard Roderick's niece instead of admitting of their lover-like relationship (Wain 1966: 104). She continues in the delusion for most of the story. Therefore, Charles becomes more and more her 'doll' with whom Veronica is enabled to cope with as she wishes. The woman is a selfish person. Almost fatal 'blow she deals' him by means of her message in the hospital sent via Roderick:

> "Charles was silent. The knowledge that Veronica was Roderick's mistress had been there all along, in his bones, in his arms and legs, in the blood in his veins. Now it has risen at last to his brain, bursting through the pathetic little barrier of self-hypnotism that had kept it down all these months"[50]. (Wain 1966: 161)

Nevertheless, the hero loves Veronica too much. The development of their relationship culminates when Veronica visits Charles in his new flat at the time of his socio-economic success. Veronica intends 'to snares him' and her determination is strong (Wain 1966: 351). Neither qualms nor apologies are uttered. There is just self-confident statement of the fact that 'things' have changed and the young lady is deeply interested in the hero now. The lady is sure that she is going to achieve her objective:

> She looked at him quietly and possessively, rebuking him, making him feel ashamed of his foolish temporizing. Veronica comes for a rich and younger lover than Roderick is. Charles is a more suitable partner for her now[51]. (Wain 1966: 352)

Possible fulfilling of their wishes to be partners in life again is supported by Lumley's adequate socio-economical background. Whether this desire will be fulfilled or not is not depicted. Wain provides a space for a reader's imagination. Nevertheless,

[50] Roderick comes to visit Charles after his hospitalisation in the local hospital after his wound he suffered during escaping police.

[51] She convinces Charles about genuineness of her love for him which has never died. Veronica also explains why she ended their relationship before. In the old days Lumley did not possess enough financial resources, which was unacceptable for a member of a higher social class. Charles himself realizes it (Wain 1966: 254).

Charles is going to take more than serious decision which will inevitably influence his future life. The novel is ended with these words:

> It was dusk now. He crossed the room and turned a switch. The light sprang suddenly into every corner, dramatizing each outline, emphasizing the shape of the furniture and the shape of their predicament. They looked at each other, baffled and inquiring. (Wain 1966: 252)

During the separation with Veronica Charles experiences the third crucial relationship with a woman. However, in comparison to the previous affair this one stands at the opposite end of the socio-economical spectrum. It also corresponds with the way of his momentary existence Lumley recurs to – undemanding and restful life as a hospital orderly. The woman is Rosa[52].

In comparison to Veronica Rosa is a modest and unpretentious girl coming from a working-class family. She is 'a down-to-earth' sensuous human being full of energy and optimism she unconsciously tries to transfer on Charles:

> At the fair Rosa was perfect. If anything had been needed to confirm Charles in his sense of the rightness of this business, he had it now. Her animal vitality, and her capacity for small but whole-hearted enjoyments, showed themselves vividly. Years dropped from him, reducing all three or four lifetimes he had endured to the simple chronological total of his twenty-three years. (Wain 1966: 182)

She takes Lumley as he is (Wain 1966: 182). She requires as many as she is willing to offer - no high requirements, just pure existence. That uncomplicatedness and enjoying little things is something the hero has not known yet and what corresponds to his inner conviction – to live an uncomplicated life according to one's own rules. Such personal attributes are important for Charles. The hero feels that he could be happy with this girl, for it seems that Rosa is the right woman for Charles and her family does not comment Lumley's existence: "Charles felt that his search was over. No demands were to be made on him other than merely being there, merely existing" (Wain 1966: 187).

Nevertheless, Wain created a complicated hero whose different parts of his personality fight with each other. The same way as Charles gropes his way between the working and middle class, he behaves in the case of Rosa and Veronica. After a certain time the hero realizes that he still desires for something more than he experiences now.

[52] They meet in the hospital of Stotwell. Rosa works there as a hospital servant and immediately falls in love with Lumley.

The object of his desire is unreachable Veronica. Thus, as several times before, the hero rejects everything again now and leaves Rosa forever. Lumley does not act sympathetically because it seems that he just exploited the young woman, which is a thought Wain utters through Rosa: " 'You sinned against me' […] 'I was ready to love you, and all you were doing was taking me as a drug' "(Wain 1966: 198)[53]. He indulged in wishful thinking that he does not want what he has desired for all the time. Rosa becomes just an episode in his life functioning just as a temporary 'class reconciliation' (Píša 1991: 296). The end of affair with Rosa is one of paradoxes of the novel, for Rosa can offer spontaneousness, openness, and uncomplicatedness – the human attributes Charles esteems. None of them are Veronica's attributes.

[53] Charles abandons Rosa another day after the day when he was in a pub where he has realized that Veronica is the woman of his heart.

5.3. Kingsley Amis – Lucky Jim

Lucky Jim by Kingsley Amis is considered to be one of the first satirical novels thematically focused on university background and as such it is understood as a predecessor of campus novel[54] whose rise began primarily in the 1970s.

The novel was firstly published in 1954 as the first significant writing of the author. Euphoria followed, for it criticized comically hypocritical academic society and many people could identify themselves with a socially outrageous hero. According to Leader it "quickly became a best-seller and trend-setter" (2002: 62). Píša explains the most important attributes of *Lucky Jim's* success:

> It was one of those books that catch the mood of their time exactly: in Britain in the 1950s people were ready for Lucky Jim's lively lack of respect to various sorts of authority and its comic attack on generally-accepted ideas and attitudes; its vigorous and intelligent laughter blew away all sorts of old-fashioned pretence insincerity. (Píša 1991: 289)

Authenticity of the book results from Amis's own personal experience from a university environment when he was a university lecturer of literature at the time of writing the book (Bradbury 1993: 322).

5.3.1. Personality of Jim Dixon

Amis endows Jim Dixon with a mediocre physique: "On the short side, fair and round-faced, with an unusual breadth of shoulder that had never been accompanied by any special strength or skill" (Amis 1992: 51). His personality is 'a mirror' of his semblance. The hero is not a self-confident man, who is sure of himself and his abilities. This disadvantage influences many areas of his life such as work at the university, his relationships with women, or communication with people in his surroundings. Therefore, Jim often does not behave as he would inwardly want but the way others wish or expect from him and Dixon lacks enough inner strength to oppose.

[54] Campus novels became popular during the postwar decades. Their audience were students who were not acculturated to traditional university and "were impatient with teachers who complacently peddled traditional pieties in seeming ignorance of more contemporary concerns" (Schellinger et al.).

Jim uses several means how to cope with this handicap. Among them there is excessive drinking alcohol before or during nerve-racking university events such as parties at the Welchs, balls, or his public lecture[55], or hidden 'faces' expressing his true suppressed attitudes to people he does not like or situations unpleasant for him[56].

However, Jim's self-confidence gradually increases. His acquaintances and colleagues such as Carol Goldsmith, Bill Atkinson, Alfred Beesley, and Christina Callaghan, the lady of his heart, help him. The first moments of this personal development happen after a party at the Welchs when Jim accompanies Christine to the Welchs' house[57]. These thoughts appear in his mind during the way:

> Cautiously and contortedly he got hold of matches and cigarettes and lit one of each in succession. More than ever he felt secure: here he was, quite able to fulfil his role, and, as with other roles, the longer you played it the better chance you had of playing it again. Doing what you wanted to do was the only training, and the only preliminary, needed for doing more of what you wanted to do. Next time he saw Michie[58] he'd be much less respectful to him; next time he saw Atkinson he'd talk to him more; he'd get some sense out of that Caton fellow[59] about his article. Gingerly, he moved a little closer to Christine. (Amis 1992: 146)

The process of personal metamorphosis finalizes in the form of a public manifesto - his scandalous public lecture when all his angry 'self' explodes in its full force:

> Well, if this was going to be his last public appearance here, he'd see to it that people didn't forget it in a hurry. […] No more imitations, they frightened him too much […] Within quite a short time he was contriving to sound like an unusually fanatical Nazi trooper in charge of a book-burning reading out to the crowd excerpts from a pamphlet written by a pacifist, Jewish, literate Communist. A growing mutter, half-amused, half-indignant, arose about him, but he closed his ears to it and read on. (Amis 1992: 226)

Apart from these characteristics Amis 'endows' his protagonist with the talent to be unusually inept and unpractical. Stříbrný perceives Dixon as a hero having fatal tendencies to committing the most fantastic offences against bon ton (1987: 732). Throughout the story there are several 'faux pas', which Dixon tries to conceal. Allsop

[55] "When he is deeply depressed, Jim self-medicates with alcohol" (Leader 2002: 65).
[56] This issue is discussed in more detail in the section focused on Dixon's attitude to the society.
[57] They go by a taxi.
[58] The young man is Jim's too zealous student.
[59] He is the one who is in charge of publication of Dixon's article in a scientific magazine.

notes that "Dixon is and always has been hard up" (1964: 53). The following two paragraphs are devoted to some of examples.

At the beginning of the novel Dixon recalls his first days at the university and tries to deal with his feelings about bad impression he has made on his Professor:

> How had he made his bad impression? The most likely thing, he always thought, was his having inflicted a superficial wound on the Professor of English in his first week. [...] As always on such occasions, he'd wanted to apologize but had found, when it came to it that he was too frightened to. He'd found the same when, two days later, he'd been passing behind the Registrar's chair at the first Faculty meeting, had stumbled and had knocked the chair aside just as the other man was sitting down. A warning shout from the Registrar's Clerk had averted complete disaster, but he could still remember the look on the face of that figure, stiffened in the shape of a letter S. (Amis 1992: 16)

However, the most catastrophic 'disaster' Dixon causes is his 'demolition' of furniture in one of rooms in Welch's house[60]:

Had he done all this himself? Or had a wayfarer, a burglar, camped out in his room? Or was he the victim of some Horla fond of tobacco? He thought that on the whole he must have done it himself, and wished he hadn't. Surely this would mean the loss of his job, especially if he failed to go to Mrs Welch and confess what he'd done, and he knew already that he wouldn't be able to do that. There was no excuse which didn't consist of the inexcusable: an incendiary was no more pardonable when revealed as a drunkard as well – so much of a drunkard [ ]. (Amis 1962: 62)

To sum up, Jim Dixon might be unsympathetic for his unpracticality, low self-confidence and cowardice. According to Allsop: "It is possible to select evidence to prove that Dixon is craven, dishonest, oafish, shifty […] crude and juvenile" (1964: 58)[61]. However, it is possible to perceive the hero from a different point of view: "Despite his flaws and his foolishness, Lucky Jim is likeable, good-hearted and sympathetic, and you know that he is essentially a decent chap" (Allsop 1964: 59).

5.3.2. Jim's attitude to life

Jim Dixon has been educated at a university and accepted a job of a university lecturer[62]. But after all, the hero has neither ambition to become a gentleman, nor he

[60] Welch is Dixon's senior colleague.
[61] These attributes are reflected in his attitude to work and people as well as life.
[62] The hero lives in a cramped room in a dismal boarding house.

aims at getting higher on the social ladder. He just exists. Jim is presented as a tragic character submitting his destiny for a long time. His tragicomic existence in the academic world is supported by his low self-confidence, pessimism, and personal indiscipline. However, the most significant problem is that the hero is in the environment he does not understand at all.

Jim's personal weaknesses, mentioned above, also significantly influence his behaviour when he is forced to solve problems occurring in his life. Lies, ruses, denials, or disguises are the means chosen. In other words, Dixon is not able to encounter problems directly. Nevertheless, Amis created such a character purposefully, for Jim's scandalous behaviour serves as a comic element of the novel. In order to demonstrate how ridiculous Dixon can be the following paragraphs are devoted to several unpleasant situations Jim has to cope with.

During one party at the Welchs Jim gets drunk, then he falls asleep in the guest bed with a lighted cigarette that ruins the bedside table and burns a hole in the bedclothes. In the morning he attempts to cover his crime:

> He got out of bed and went into the bathroom. After a minute or two he returned, eating toothpaste and carrying a safety-razor blade. He started carefully cutting round the edges of the burnt areas of the bedclothes with the blade. He didn't know why he did this, but the operation did seem to improve the look of things: the cause of the disaster wasn't so immediately apparent. (Amis 1992: 63)

One day Dixon needs to talk to Bertrand in order to get some information for Christine. As he does not want Mrs Welch to identify him in the telephone he starts pretending that he is a reporter from *Evening Post*:

> "This is Bertrand Welch". […]"*Evening Post* here, "he managed to quaver through his snout. "And what can I do for you, sir? "Dixon recovered slightly. "Er… we'd like to do a little paragraph about you for our, for our Sunday page, "he said, beginning to plan. "That's if you've no objection." (Amis 1992: 99)

After a certain time when Jim has not got Christine yet he decides to give up his efforts. As he wants to cancel date with Christine he calls to the Welchs' house where Christine stays when she is in the town. Unfortunately, Mrs Welch answers the telephone. In order not to be recognized he pretends to be a different man:

> "Trying to connect you," he fluted as he'd planned. "Hallo, who is that? "Mrs Welch mentioned her number. "Speak up, London," he went on; "you're through."

> Then he jammed his teeth together, opened his mouth laterally as far as he could, and said in a growing over-cultured bass: " Hallaher, hallaher," following this with a whinnying "You're through, London" and, in the bass voice "Hallaher, have yaw a Miss Kellerhen steng with yaw, plizz?" He made a rushing noise with his mouth which he thought imitated line disturbances. "Who's that speaking, please?" […] "Forteskyaw… Forteskyaw". (Amis 192: 190)

Fortunately, Jim Dixon is 'Lucky Jim'. At the end of the story 'luck' brings him not only a life with the woman of his heart but also the cheerful exchange of academia for a well-paid job in London. It is satisfaction for his previous 'suffering' in the academic world. In his *Encyclopedia of literature and criticism* Coyle compares Dixon's life to a romance: "[...] its plot borrows from romance, with a Cinderella-like hero who ends up with a fairy godfather (Gore-Urquhart), a princess, a job, and London itself" (Coyle et al. 1991: 89).

5.3.3. Jim's attitude to work

Jim Dixon, 'a child' of the Butler's Educational Act of 1944, is a young graduate who has accepted a job of a lecturer at an unnamed provincial university[63]. From the beginning Dixon exercises activities being expected from him, primarily those activities expected by Professor Welch, Jim's first line supervisor, who is in charge of the hero's work. It concerns primarily a scientific article and Dixon's first public lecture. The young man is also expected to teach properly subjects which have been assigned to him.

A reader might expect that Jim's work will serve as his self-realization. Instead of it Amis introduces a character that is not able and does not want to function, paradoxically, in the academic world, although he has been a university graduate. "He is by no means an intellectual" (Moseley 1993: 21) and avoids "any possible arena of academic work" (Amis 1992: 172). Being aware of aversion to his job that influences his low participation in academic work "throughout the book Dixon is dominated by the fear of getting the sack" (Allsop 1964: 53). Thus, Jim does petty tasks helping Prof Welch to unburden his work and defines himself as an exemplary 'bootlicker':

[63] After a grammar school Jim has taken his degree at a redbrick university.

> Dixon now had some of the basic facts clear. He was being asked to fill certain gaps in Welch's knowledge of the history of peasant arts and crafts in the county, and these papers, written in Welch's pointlessly neat and clear hand or typed by him with hilarious inaccuracy, would enable him, Dixon, to perform his task without all that much confusion, though not without some loss of time and integrity. Still he daren't refuse; this sort of task might easily, to Welch, seem a more important test of ability than the merit of the Merrie England lecture[64]. (Amis 1992: 173)

Dixon's behaviour is not definitely sincere or heroic. However, it is possible to perceive it from a different point of view. According to Píša Jim's behaviour is "human and believable" (1991: 290).

Thus, Dixon's job does not satisfy him. It is reflected in three main areas: his lax attitude to the expected public lecture[65], a scientific article which should be published in a scientific magazine[66] and his subject he is supposed to teach[67]. Individual issues are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Proving his academic abilities by writing his first scientific article interlaces the whole story. However, Dixon writes it only because of not loosing his job. Therefore, it is of a low quality and Jim is aware of it:

> Dixon felt […] he had a good idea of what this article was worth from several points of view. From one of these, the thing's worth could be expressed in one short hyphenated indecency; from another, it was worth the amount of frenzied fact-grubbing and fanatical boredom that had gone into it [...]. (Amis 1992: 15)

As far as his public lecture is concerned Jim explains to Gore-Urquhart[68]: " 'This lecture of yours tonight, now. Whose idea was it?' 'Professor Welch's. I could hardly refuse, of course. If it goes well it'll improve my standing here' " (Amis 1992: 214). Jim realizes that he is no use at the university:

> "How long have you been in this game, then, Dixon?" "Getting on for nine months now. They took me on last autumn." "I've a notion you're not too happy in it; am I right?" "Yes, I think you are right, on the whole." "Where's the trouble?

[64] Dixon has these thoughts when Welch asks him for help concerning Professor's paper.
[65] Dixon is called upon to prepare his own public lecture on 'Merrie England' for College Open Week. Welch wants Dixon to prove his academic skills. Unfortunately, Jim does not enjoy the preparation. Thus, he continuously postpones and disregards it.
[66] Jim's article is focused on the economic ramifications of medieval shipbuilding. He considers it as absolutely uninteresting.
[67] It is rather 'a nightmare' for Jim, for he dislikes the subject (Dixon is not interested in medieval studies at all).
[68] He is Christine's uncle who appears in the university environment because of his business activities.

In you or in it?" "Oh, both, should say. They waste my time and I waste theirs"[69]. (Amis 1992: 214)

Thus, Dixon begins to get bored and hate his job as well as the university environment throughout the course of time:

> Behind Welch's head hung the departmental timetable, drawn up by Welch himself in five different-coloured inks corresponding to the five teaching members of the Department. The sight of this seemed to undamp Dixon's mind; for the first time since arriving at the College he thought he felt real, over-mastering, orgiastic boredom, and its companion, real hatred[70]. (Amis 1992: 85)

Unfortunately, at the same time Dixon does not know what else would be the solution in his desperate situation. The hero is finally dismissed, because he insulted the academia with his lecture in which the hero attacks the College, Welch and the Principal.

Nevertheless, Amis decided for a happy end and the hero is offered secretarial work in Gore-Urquhart's firm in London and leaves the university forever.

5.3.4. Relationship between Jim and the society

The environment of the novel is a provincial university background. The world of the book is narrow-minded and provincially bourgeois (Lodge 2003: 92) and the hero raises himself there due to his university education.

As a university teacher the hero experiences everyday personal contact with people in his surroundings – his supervisors, colleagues, students, and people from the town. However, Jim is a self-contained man who hardly reveals his feelings and attitudes outwardly. His self-confidence is not high, too. Moreover, in comparison to other academic staff Jim is clumsy, indolent, and unreliable. These psychological attributes and attitudes are explicitly demonstrated in his lax participation in various social events and immediate looking for possibilities how to 'safely escape' to pubs in order to have a glass of bear instead of enjoying university entertainment. If he cannot escape, Dixon overdrinks himself quickly[71]. His attitudes to his work serve as a mirror

[69] Amis places this dialogue between Gore-Urquhart and Jim a few minutes before the hero's public lecture. The men debate about Jim's working position. The rich man understands the situation well.

[70] Dixon asks Welch about his functioning at the department and while Welch tries to answer, these thoughts are in Dixon's mind.

[71] It concerns the party at Welchs, the university ball and the public lecture.

of his attitudes to the academia, too[72]. Thus, the hero places himself into the position of an outsider never completely assimilating into the university environment and never acquiring academic decorum. David Lodge claims that the main cause of Jim's difficult situation is his disbelief in social and cultural values of the local academia (2003: 96).

Lucky Jim is meant to be a comic novel and the comicality is most reflected in Jim's hidden mocking and burlesque of those he is not fond of or when he experiences an unpleasant situation[73] and wants to express his true feelings being afraid of disclosure. Lee compares this Dixon's behaviour to a guerrilla campaign (1968: 21) and Coyle perceives it as "a private revenge on the social world" (Coyle et al. 1991: 65). Amis explains this behaviour through Dixon's thoughts. By means of various 'hidden faces'[74] or noises "he was accustomed to make when untrusted with a fresh ability-testing task by Welch, or seeing Michie in the distance, or thinking about Mrs Welch, or being told by Beesley something Johns had said"[75] (Amis 1992: 72). Such behaviour is Dixon's own specific way of coping with the hostile environment and his feelings of own parochialism and helplessness to be equal antagonist of those who 'give him a hard time'.

Nevertheless, his attitudes gradually change throughout the course of time. Submission and indifference transform into inner protest, refuse and expected lecture whose preparation embodies a real 'torment' for Jim. The performance becomes the hero's powerful weapon for discrediting and stultification everybody and everything in the aula:

> [...] while he spoke another (sentence), cries of irritated horror fumbled for admission at his larynx so as to make public what he felt about the Margaret situation; while he spoke the next, anger and fear threatened to twist his mouth, tongue, and lips into the right position for a hysterical denunciation of Bertrand, Mrs Welch, the Principal, the Registrar, the College Council, the College. He began to lose all consciousness of the audience before him[76]. (Amis 192: 225)

[72] This issue is discussed in the section focused on Jim's attitude to work.
[73] It concerns primarily situations in which he has to pretend interest or agreement.
[74] Dixon's range of faces consists of: the shot-in-the-back face, the consumptive face, the crazy peasant, the Martian invader etc.
[75] Johns is Dixon's colleague at work
[76] Jim's drunkenness (he overdrinks himself before the lecture starts) supports his 'performance'. Unfortunately, it also causes losing his control of himself together with his stage fright.

In his *Encyclopedia of the Novel* Schellinger comments on this dramatical situation: "Emboldened by alcohol, Dixon reveals his real contempt for his superiors and their system" (Schellinger et al.).

For most of the story there is Dixon's inner fight between his effort to be himself and suppressing his own personality according to will of the university headquarters and those in his surroundings. In *The Angry Young Men* Carpenter has the same opinion of Dixon's self-subduedness (2002: 68). In other words, Dixon fights for his own social and personal identity. This problem concerns primarily Professor Welch and Margaret. Jim's relationship with Margaret Peel is focused in more detail in the part of analysis dealing with women. In the following paragraphs primarily the relationships with Professor Welch and his son Bertrand are discussed.

Professor Welch, Dixon's senior colleague, is a personification of academic affection and superiority. The professor aims at being Jim's model, leader, and also helping hand right from the beginning. He is interested in Dixon's scientific work (Amis 1992: 14), he admonishes him to his professional development (Amis 1992: 83), and gives advices. Moreover, Welch invites the hero to various social events[77] in order to introduce him into the local social life (Amis 1992: 71, 175).

To get on well with professor Welch, who is respectable university authority and is in charge of Dixon's activity, is the most crucial goal for the young man. Thus, whenever possible, Dixon agrees with Welch's opinions, humbles himself, and tries to endear. Above all, Dixon's public lecture and its presentation are done for Welch only (Amis 1992: 223). He also does not forget to address the older man: "That's right, Professor." or "Yes, Professor?". A good example is Jim's reaction on Professor's request concerning help with his own duties:

> Welch's expression was slowly adapting itself to incredulous rage. In a high, petulant tone he said: "No, of course they won't have the information here, Dixon. I can't imagine anyone thinking they would. That's way I'm asking you to go down to the library for it [...]""Oh, of course, Professor; I'm sorry, "he said, having been well schooled in giving apologies at the very times when he ought to be demanding them[78]. (Amis 1992: 173)

[77] It concerns primarily arty weekends and lunches at the Welchs' house.
[78] Welch requires Dixon so as to get some information about his academic paper in the local libraries.

Nevertheless, Jim's submissive behaviour conduces to his inner disharmony. The hero does not act as he wishes and lives unauthentic life. Therefore, the more the hero tries to endear the more Dixon hates Welch and despises him: "Look here, you old cockchafer, what makes you think you can run a history department, even at a place like this, eh, you old cockchafer? I know what you'd be good at, you old cockchafer [...]" (Amis 1992: 85)[79].

Dixon also realizes that as far as Professor Welch is concerned he will never be able to have his will: "He'd never be able to tell Welch what he wanted to tell him […] All the time he'd thought he was bringing the matter of his probation to a head he'd merely been a winkle on the pin of Welch's evasion-technique […] (Amis 1992: 86).

Due to several social faux pas the relationship with the professor and his wife is gradually getting worse throughout the course of time. Mrs. Welch is peevish primarily by Dixon's insolence, unpracticality, and shuffling behaviour in the cases of his faux pas. Almost at the end of the story 'expression of imminent vomiting' appears on her face (Amis 1992: 215)[80]. Dixon's lax attitude to his academic work amplifies Welch's low belief in Jim's personal qualities. Dixon's public lecture during which stultifies not only everything the local academia believes in and is proud of but also the academic congregation itself (Amis 1992: 223) is 'the last drop' in Jim Dixon's working as a lecturer at the university. Professor Welch unmercifully 'hoofs the hero out' (Amis 1992: 228). Bradbury sees the main problem in the fact that Jim does not manage to accept the academic values of his seniors (1993: 321).

As far as Welch's son, Bertrand, is concerned, he is Dixon's most significant enemy in love. Their relationship is hostile from its beginning. The man is Christina fiancé and does not intend to abandon her. He is uncompromising:

> "Just get this straight in your so-called mind. When I see something I want, I go for it. [...] The trouble with you, Dixon, is that you're simply not up to my weight. If you want a fight, pick someone your own size, then you might stand a chance. With me you just haven't a hope in hell"[81]. (Amis 192: 207)

[79] These thoughts are in Dixon's mind when asking the Professor about his career at the university.
[80] Amis reveals this scene almost at the end of the story when Dixon and Christine walk along the street and meet the Welchs getting out of their car.
[81] Bertrand visits Dixon in order to dissuade him from dating Christine.

However, even though Dixon is aware of his unequal position towards Bertrand the hero does not intend to submit (Amis 1992: 53). The background of Dixon's strong-mindedness is his irresistable affection for Christina. Thus, Amis indicates that although Dixon might seem to be a rather timid young man, an inner strength hides inside his soul and heart. However, the hero is dragged into unequal and difficult struggle. Nevertheless, Dixon finally gains Christine, although it seems that there is no chance to defeat young Welch who is in much better social and relationship position.

Fortunately, there are enough colleagues and acquaintance willingly offering help: Bill Atkinson and Julius Gore-Urquhart are the most important.

Bill Atkinson[82] shares antipathy towards the university atmosphere and environment with Dixon. He also willingly participates in sabotage of the Dixon's lecture[83], for he understands how desperate about the lecture Jim is :

> Atkinson had insisted, not only on coming to the lecture, but on announcing his intention of pretending to faint should Dixon, finding things getting out of hand in any way, scratch both his ears simultaneously. "I'll be a good faint, " Atkinson had said in his arrogant voice. "It'll create a diversion all right. Don't you worry". (Amis 1992: 224)

As a salvation appears to be Julius Gore-Urquhart[84], Christina's uncle, who sympathizes with the hero[85]. He "likes his disrespectful and pretension-puncturing attitude" (Schellinger et al.). As well as Dixon the man is bored with boring university environment (Amis 1992: 215) and, especially, before the public lecture his relaxed nature helps Dixon to manage his nervousness:

> "Hallo, Dixon," Gore-Urquhart said, walking on past him. "Are you maybe feeling a little nervous, ladie?" "Very nervous." Gore-Urquhart nodded and produced a slim but substantial flask from his ill-fitting clothes. "Have a swig." […] "It'll do you a power of good. Out of my sherry-cask". (Amis 1992: 220)

Thus, Dixon is not totally alone and lost. This support equilibrates the social pressures put on the hero by the university headquarters and class prominences.

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[82] Bill Atkinson is an insurance salesman who lives in the same house as Dixon does. They are drinking friends.

[83] Atkinson simulates falling senseless. Dixon does the same as well but his collapse is a consequence of drunkeness and stress. These events result in early cancelling the lecture.

[84] The man is eccentric London millionaire.

[85] Both men meet at important university events from time to time. Gore Urquhart understands Jim's feelings about the College, the Welchs, and his job.

Dixon's lower-middle class origin influences his view of the world, too. It also influences how other people perceive him.

The hero, as a social outsider, does not bother about his social status. Nevertheless, there occur situations in which his class origin matters. It concerns primarily Bertrand's relationship with Dixon in which Amis depicts the English perception of social classes. The fact is that although Jim Dixon occupies the position of a university teacher, he is despised – the hero lacks appropriate class origin and social connections as Bertrand does. He looks down on Dixon, despises him, and does not perceive him as an equal rival in love:

> Bertrand suddenly yelled out in a near-falsetto bay: "I've had about enough of you, you little bastard. I won't stand any more of it, do you hear? To think of a lousy little philistine like you coming and monkeying about in my affairs, it's enough to [...] Get out and stay out, before you get hurt. [...] I don't allow people of your sort to stand in my way. What the hell do you mean by buggering about like this? You're big enough and old enough and ugly enough to know better"[86]. (Amis 1992: 184)

Fortunately, even though Bertrand belongs to higher social class, Dixon wins both Christine and a job in London Bertrand expected to get himself as Gore-Urquhart's potential son-in-law. Coyle perceives this happy end as "a symbolic victory within a class-war" (Coyle et al. 1991: 84).

5.3.5. Jim's relationship with women

Amis introduces two women characters in the story – Margaret Peel[87] and Christine Callaghan. Both women are involved in development of Jim's personality. The first one is ballast; the second one is an unreachable dream for a long time.

Being colleague at work[88], Dixon and Margaret meet almost every day. Margaret is a lonely woman and as Dixon is single, he seems to be an appropriate object of her emotional needs and desires. Therefore, she aims at establishing closer contact with him. However, the woman is not 'his type' (Amis 1992: 203). Moreover, Margaret is a "dirndl – skirted hysteric" (Allsop 1964: 53), which unnerves Jim's stoic nature:

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[86] This unpleasant situation happens when Jim does not allow Bertrand to discourage him from dating Christine. The hero successfully resists, which 'drives Bertrand crazy'.
[87] She is a dark-haired thin woman.
[88] Margaret is a junior lecturer in the History department, too.

> Dixon felt apprehension lunging at his stomach as he thought of seeing Margaret, whom he was to take out that evening for the first time since her cracked up. […] How would she behave when they were alone together? Would she be gay, pretending she'd forgotten, or had never noticed, the length of time since he last saw her, gaining altitude before she dipped to the attack? Or would she be silent and listless, apparently quite inattentive, forcing him to drag painfully from small-talk through solicitude to craven promises and excuses? (Amis 1992: 10)

Nevertheless, taking her past into consideration[89] the hero aims at being regardful, sensitive and a psychological support for the woman (Amis 1992: 89)[90]. This is beginning of their 'affair'. However, Dixon has never intended to begin any relationship with Margaret (Amis 192: 200). Thus, the relationship between these two people is tragic from its beginning, for purposes of their behaviour differ from each other. The 'relationship' is understood in two divergent ways: Margaret looks for love and object for her emotional effusions, Dixon tries to help a hysterical woman.

However, later on Amis gradually uncovers another reason of Dixon's 'weakness' for Margaret. The fact is that Jim expects nothing except the last salvation from loneliness and, later, 'substitution' in the case the relationship with Christina, the woman of his heart, does not fall through. Dixon in his inoffensiveness and lack of self-confidence resorts to the solution 'something is better than nothing' and plans to live life with Margaret who is much more accessible than Christine:

> "He was trying to persuade me to keep off the grass." "As far as she's concerned?" "That's right." "Are you going to?""Eh?" "Are you going to keep off the grass?" "Yes.""Why, James?" "Because of you."[...]"What makes you say that?"[...]"It can't be helped. We've have started it again some time; it might just as well be now." "Don't be ridiculous. You'd have much more fun with her than you ever had with me." "That's as may be. The point is that I've got to stick to you." He said this without bitterness, nor did he feel any[91]. (Amis 1992: 185)

When analysing Jim's attitudes to Margaret more profoundly one more aspect of his relationship with the woman uncovers. The bond between the two protagonists serves as a mirror of Dixon's non-assertive personality. Although Dixon would like to refuse the woman's presence, he lacks enough inner strength. In one of discussions with Christine Amis depicts how weak the hero is: " 'I don't see how either of you can be

[89] Margaret attempted at suicide over a failed romance.

[90] This way Jim calms down his remorse, for he is convinced about his responsibility for her suicidal tendencies.

[91] This extract represents one of many dialogues between Dixon and Margaret.

very happy with the other one.' […] 'No, I don't suppose we can, but there's nothing to be done about it. It's just that we can't split up, that's all' " (Amis 1992: 200). Instead of effective solution the hero lets himself to be tortured by her presence. Fortunately, the finally manages to end the relationship. However, the woman copes hard with it[92]. Dixon extricates from Margaret's destructive influence (Lodge 2003: 99).

Nevertheless, there is much more important woman for Jim Dixon – Christine Callaghan - a young elegant lady[93]. The hero falls in love with her at the first sight[94]. Not taking their mutual class difference and her engagement[95] into consideration Dixon desires for relationship with her. He relies upon to his sincerity and naturalness[96]. Jim firstly confesses his love for Christine after the university ball:

> "I'm very fond of you," he said. […]"How can you be? You hardly know me?" "I know enough to be sure of that, thanks." "It's nice of you to say that, but the trouble is, there isn't much more to know than you know already. I'm the sort of person you soon get to the end of." "I don't believe you. But even if it were true I shouldn't care. There's more than enough to keep me going in what I've seen up to now". (Amis 192: 149)

Jim's relationship with Christine reflects his nature as well as the relationship with Margaret, because after first fume of happiness Dixon is being gradually 'swallowed up' by his pessimistic nature, low self-confidence, and constant fears from embarrassment (Amis 192: 113). Leader shares the same opinion: Dixon is "a vulnerable hero, easily undermined and crippled by feelings of pity, guilt, and shame" (Leader 202: 64). He is aware of how Christina wonderful and almost unreachable is for him. Fallis calls Christine "the Queen Goddess of Jim's world" (1977: 65). The reason is not only her social status but also her relationship with Bertrand. These thoughts are in Jim's mind almost till the end of the story. Thus, fight for Christina becomes the fight with himself, if he wants to get the lady. Therefore, love for her becomes the strongest moving power of his life. Perhaps the most transparent evidence Amis depicts via Jim's thoughts when he hurries to catch the train which should take Christine to London: "He couldn't allow

[92] It is absolutely unbearable situation for the woman. Margaret goes into hysterics afterwards.
[93] She is a niece of the wealthy London art collector Julius Gore-Urquhart.
[94] As the lady is engaged she is not interested in Jim at first. He is nothing more than a university teacher for her (Amis 1992: 78).
[95] Ms Callaghan dates Bertrand Welch – the son of Prof Welch.
[96] During the course of time Christina and Jim become friends.

Christine to escape him today; if she did he might not see her again at all. Not at all; that was a disagreeable phrase" (Amis 1992: 242).

Amis ends the story in Christine's separation with Bertrand, which rids the hero of his rival in love. However, it is Amis's 'deux ex machina' that helps Dixon to get Christine[97]. The author does not reveal, whether the woman and Jim Dixon will become lovers or not. Nevertheless, Ms Callaghan intends to talk about everything what has happened between them so far (Amis 1992: 239), which might be considered as a promise of love.

[97] Christine is told about Bertrand's secret affair with a wife of one university teacher. Bertrand maintains a relationship with both women at the same time.

5.4. Alan Sillitoe – Saturday Night and Sunday Morning

The novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* was firstly published in 1958. It is considered to be one of the most significant working-class writings of the 1950s.

It is the first and the most important novel of Alan Sillitoe and its success was based primarily on its critical mood and authentic depiction of working-class environment of post-war Britain. Social authenticity of the novel is present due to the author's own social background and his life experience, because Sillitoe depicted environment he knew well.

In comparison to the other three novels in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* two narrative voices are used - 'the third person' for telling the story and 'the first person' for presenting Arthur's thoughts.

5.4.1. Personality of Arthur Seaton

Arthur Seaton is a 22-year old young lad full of animality whose view of things is 'down-to-earth'. He is not a complicated man and Sillitoe depicts his personality very clearly.

First of all, Arthur's character is based on rebellion against whatever requirements to change his personality. He takes himself 'as he is': "One a rebel, always a rebel. You can't help being one. You can't deny that" (Sillitoe 1979: 207). Moreover, Seaton does not belong to those who ponder on their behaviour profoundly. There is no need. Gindin explains further: "Arthur Seaton feels that he's as good as any other man" (1962: 22). Sillitoe does not judge his hero. Thus, the young lad behaves the way he feels it without taking possible consequences or other people's opinions into consideration. Such characteristics are amplified by his physical strength and fearless nature. He is "a typical rogue with few morals and no responsibilities" (www.literatureonline.cz). Therefore, the novel is full of 'beer busts' followed by various Arthur's riots and conflicts, sometimes even brutal, with people in his surroundings. Among the most critical situations there is fight with Bill[98] and shooting at his neighbour Mrs Bull[99].

[98] The man is Winnie's husband. The young woman maintains a secret affair with the hero.
[99] Arthur hates the woman, for she spreads various true and untrue news about people from the town. He tries to warn her this way.

Nevertheless, Sillitoe softens Arthur's 'hard-boiled' nature from time to time. The young man proves that thoughtfulness and sensitivity are parts of his 'self', too. Sillitoe reveals clearly these Seaton's personal attributes through his inner monologue when having caught a fish on one of Sunday[100]:

> In its eye he saw the green gloom of willow-sleeved canals in cool decay, an eye filled with panic and concern for the remaining veins of life […] Where do fishes go when they die? he wondered. […] he removed the hook and threw it back into the water. He watched it away and disappear. One more chance, he said to himself […]. (Sillitoe 1979: 223)

To sum up, the hero cannot be considered neither negative, nor positive protagonist, for Arthur's personality is created from good as well as bad attributes in the same extend as real people in the real world. Moreover, it is necessary to have a respect to his violent social background.

It is also necessary to mention that Sillitoe's young lad is more than pure worker from a factory. Arthur tries to retain a higher social standard in spite of his working-class origin. He pays attention to neat appearance and elegant clothing, especially when he prepares himself for appointments with women or he just desires to look well:

> Up in his bedroom he surveyed his row of suits, trousers, sports jackets, shirts, all suspended in colourful drapes and designs, good-quality tailor-mades, a couple of hundred quids' worth, a fabulous wardrobe of which he was proud because it had cost him so much labour. (Sillitoe 1979: 174)

In other words, the hero aims at not falling at the bottom of negligence and frowziness of an overworked worker.

5.4.2. Arthur's attitude to life

The novel aims at revealing working-class environment of post-war Britain. Workers live lives full of hard work, often monotonous, and day by day they are forced to cope with impersonal system whose main interest is to increase profit and govern its employees via earning money. Therefore, profound relaxation during weekends is a

[100] Arthur goes fishing regularly on Sundays.

significant part of their existence. Alcohol 'drinking-bouts ' in pubs are a frequent choice.

Arthur Seaton is no exception in escaping everyday stereotype. Saturday evenings spent in the company of his friends, family, or colleagues from work in Nottingham pubs have become his routine. In other words, work and pubs are two main area of his life. The third significant element is appointments with women. Arthur's philosophy is: "plenty of work and plenty of booze and a piece of skirt every month till I'm ninety" (Sillitoe 1979: 187). According to Head Arthur "endures the hardships of factory life for the pleasures of Saturday night" (2002: 55). However, Eagleton and Pierce soften Sillitoe's hedonistic presentation of the main hero:

> "the working-class hero is socially trapped by an environment that is impoverished and limited in opportunity; […] he is trapped by the system, the demands of the city, or sweated labour, or uncaring and opportunistic employers" (Eagleton and Pierce 1979: 73).

Thus, Arthur is just a victim of his own existence. This limiting 'social trap' also influences Arthur's aspirations - he does not aim at getting up the social ladder. He lives his working-class life and tries to 'survive' in the jungle of the world. He does not intend to change anything. Head shares the same opinion (2002: 55).

Nevertheless, even though Seaton regularly visits local pubs and rambles in the streets, he is no cosmopolitan. In fact, he does not enjoy the town and its environment. Arthur is rather fond of nature and fishing on Sundays. By the river bank he is not within the grasp of society and work and the hero is his own master. His desire for freedom of living fulfils itself there: "No one bothered you: you were a hunter, a dreamer, your own boss, away from it all" (Sillitoe 1979: 221). "Fishing is his refuge" (Gindin 1962: 29).

Apart from hedonism 'fight' is Arthur's life philosophy, too. As a young proletarian he perceives his life as a large battlefield. Seaton is like a fighter who fights with authorities, institutions, rogues in his surroundings, and husbands of his mistresses. The hero trails his way in the jungle of the world (Sillitoe 1979: 224). He must do so "without hope or reform or transformation" (Gindin 1962: 97).

Nevertheless, Lee specifies one more attribute of the hero's life: "as a result of his view, Arthur lives for the present and he makes no plans beyond Saturday night" (1968: 38). There is nothing positive in the future but death and suffering. In Arthur's own words: "Factories sweat you to death, labour exchanges talk you to death; insurance and income-tax offices milk money from your wage packets and rob you to death […] the army calls you and you get shot to death" (Sillitoe 1979: 200). However, Sillitoe suggests a positive development of the hero's life, for Arthur finally decides to take a chance and marry Doreen – orderly young lady, which is well

5.4.3. Arthur's attitude to work

Arthur Seaton has worked as a lathe operator in the local bicycle factory since his young age. The job is very hard and monotonous. Thus, as far as Arthur's attitude to his work is concerned, the hero does not like it. Nevertheless, due to the uncompromising working-class environment the hero comes from, he has learnt to accept this physically exhausting and dirty job. In other words: "His work is so dulling that he lives only for the pleasures, often illicit, of the weekend" (Lee 1968: 37). Therefore, the job serves just as a means of earning money that enables satisfying his material, physical, and spiritual needs. To sum up, work is not Arthur's self-realization: "What a life, he thought. Hard work and good wages, and a smell all day that turns your guts" (Sillitoe 1979: 30)[101]. Gindin describes Seaton's working conditions: "Arthur is often sick from the smell; at the edge of twenty-two he suffers from stomach trouble from constantly inhaling oil fumes" (1962: 16).

Arthur is a prototype of a young industrious worker attending to his work and knowing exactly 'where his place is'. Sillitoe describes the hero's usual day at work:

> When Arthur went back to work in the afternoon he needed only four hundred cylinders to complete his daily stint. If he cared he could slow down, but he was unable to take it easy until every cylinder lay clean and finished in the box at his lathe, unwilling to drop off speed while work was yet to be done. (Sillitoe 1979: 40)

He aims at perfect fulfilling his duties and also expects adequate wages (Sillitoe 1979: 62).

[101] From time to time Arthur sighs at work.

To sum up, Arthur is reconciled with the occupation in the factory, although he does not like the job. At the same time the hero has never pondered about a different 'corvee', for Seaton is not a man of higher ambitions.

5.4.4. Relationship between Arthur and the society

Arthur is a young man belonging to the post-war working-class British youth. As such he holds certain opinions and ideals of the world and society.

First of all, Arthur is a critic. Both the British government and the English themselves are focus of his critical evaluations. He refuses 'to accept any authority' and established order of things and chooses opposition. Arthur claims: "they think they've settled our hashes with their insurance cards and television sets, but I'll be one of them to turn round on 'em and let them see how wrong they are" (Sillitoe 1979: 136). Thus, the basis of his life is his personal war with the world outside. Lee observes that Arthur's whole world exists in terms of 'them' and 'us' (1968: 38). The hero perceives the world as a one big 'battlefield' where everyone aims at "screwing everybody" (Sillitoe 1979: 208), although he is convinced that the post-war Britain offers good life to honest working men, which enables them to experience satisfying existence (Sillitoe 1979: 27). Thus, he accepts his position in the society.

Nevertheless, this reconciliation does not discourage him from oppositional attitudes. It results from the fact is that the hero comes from the post-war young generation disappointed with promises of the British government and its political performance. Arthur neither supports the government, nor does he vote politicians: "when it comes to the lousy vote they give me I often feel like telling 'em where to shove it, for all the good using it'll do me" (Sillitoe 1979: 40). The same attitude is valid for inferiors of state institutions such as policemen (Sillitoe 1979: 116) or judges (Sillitoe 1979: 85). This antagonistic attitude to political issues stems in Arthur realizing absurdity of the British government's politics:

> They were angling for another war now, with the Russians this time. But they did go as far as to promise that it would be a short one, a few big flashes and it would all be over. What a lark! We'd be fighting side by side with the Germans that had been bombing us in the last war. What did they take us for? Bloody fools […]. (Sillitoe 1979: 136)

Moreover, Seaton is convinced that laws are useless and therefore, there is no need to respect them: "[…] that's what all these looney laws are for, yer know: to be broken by blokes like me" (Sillitoe 1979: 36)[102].

The same negative attitude as the one to the government and its politics is the attitude to army. Arthur personally experienced the Second World War, although he participated in the conflict, as a soldier, only during its last years. Even though he was commanded to defend his country, he did not do his best to discharge this obligation. The hero did not want to fight in the war. Thus, in order to stay alive he has learnt to be 'cunning' (Sillitoe 1979: 135), which he makes use of as his personal 'quality' in his contemporary personal war against establishment, too[103]. "He cheats the world before it cheats him" (Bradbury 1993: 325). Unpleasant war experiences and Arthur's rebellious nature are the source of his unceasing disgust to everything military now. He does his best to avoid any dealing with the army. Sillitoe depicts his hero's rebelliousness during a regular military exercise:

> Arthur was drunk every night. The fifteen days was a long time, insupportable if sober, for he hated change, and hated the army more. He carried wire-cutters in his pocket to help him back into camp late at night […] snapping one stand of barbed wire after another and rolling it carefully back with his hand […] crawling along on his stomach to keep down from the guardroom lights, until the gap in the fence would have admitted an armoured division. (Sillitoe 1979: 142)

Apart from disillusionment and disbelief with the government and its institutions Arthur is also angry at revenue collection. He is convinced that the whole state apparatus as well as his own factory owner sweat him. As a young proletarian the hero is alarmed at egoism of the government and entrepreneurs which he accuses of being interested in them instead of an ordinary man (Sillitoe 1979: 207) [104]. *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* is a proletarian novel and Arthur represents its voice.

As Arthur Seaton realizes absurdity and exploitation existing in his country whenever it is possible he demonstrates his despising the system. However, Brafford notices: "Arthur Seaton is rebellious, contemptuous of all types of authority –

[102] Arthur tries to explain his political views to Jack – his colleague at work.
[103] "Cunning is the way to negotiate the vast crushing power of government" (Eagleton and Pierce 1979: 135).
[104] He is well aware of toil expended on earning money and this money belongs to him and not to an officer who collects taxes.

government, management, army, and police – but he has no concern for an alternative moral or political agenda. Thus, Instead of a real revolution the hero unleashes his energy via drink, womanizing, fishing and fist fights" (Wain 2007: 9). Thus, his rebellion is only superficial.

5.4.5. Arthur's relationship with women

Intimate contacts with women belong to the most important elements of Arthur's life. It is his motive force as well as relaxation:

> If your machine was working well – the motor smooth, stops tight, jigs good - and you spring your actions into a favourable rhythm you became happy. You went off into pipe-dreams for the rest of the day. And in the evening, when admittedly you would be feeling as though your arms and legs had been stretched to breaking point on a torture-rack, you stepped out into a cosy world of pubs and noisy tarts that would one day provide you with the raw material for more pipe-dreams as you stood at your lathe. (Sillitoe 1979: 39)

During the first part of the novel, *Saturday Night*, Sillitoe reveals Arthur as a young independent man who feels too young to get married and establish himself (1979: 36). He is convinced that such state would restrict his personal freedom too much. Freedom and independence of his life style and behaviour would be 'endangered', which is something the hero could hardly bear. Arthur explains to Jack, his colleague at work:

> "[...] I don't feel like spending all my spare time with a woman. On Friday night I'd have to run home with ma wages, drop 'em in her lap, and get nagged for not droppin' enough, but now I can go home, change and tek mysen off to the White Horse for a pint or two." (Sillitoe 1979: 173)

In this section Sillitoe introduces three Arthur's relationships with women. The first two affairs concern sisters Brenda and Winnie, the third one involves young girl Doreen. The relationship with Doreen develops mainly in the second part of the story.

Arthur Seaton is a promiscuous man. It does not bother him whether there is more than one woman in his life. Leader comments: "His ambition is to obtain as much sexual satisfaction as possible" (2002: 289). Thus, at first he dates Brenda and later starts affair with her younger sister Winnie. Both Brenda and Winnie are wives of other

men[105]. Therefore, they keep their intimate contact with Arthur in secret. The sisters as well as the hero are physically attracted to each. Especially with Brenda Seaton spends a lot of time whenever it is possible. However, none of them expects a 'legalization' of their relationship (Sillitoe 1979: 37). This love triangle is satisfied with the way they date, for there are neither obligations nor expectations[106]. These relationships are neither strange nor amoral for Arthur. He only realizes that there might be some danger from their husbands: "[…] his weeks and weekdays were divided between Brenda and Winnie […] the pleasure and danger of having two married women had been too sweet to resist" (Sillitoe 1979: 160). Sillitoe reveals his hero as profligate and amoral. This impression is strengthened by the fact that Arthur does all this without any flicker of self-reflection.

Nevertheless, Sillitoe goes further as far as his hero's extremity is concerned. Arthur anticipates that he will not avoid a revenge of the women's husbands: "It was a dark life and a dark deed, and his darkest thoughts revolved upon the possibility of a clash with the swaddies" (Sillitoe 1979: 160). However, he refuses to change anything about his way of life[107]: "[…] his capacity for discretion had deepened, and so far the tight-rope neither sagged nor weakened nor even threatened to throw him off balance" (Sillitoe 1979: 160). The source of such attitude might be found either in his immaturity or self-importance. Unfortunately, after discovering the infidelities Arthur is uncompromisingly 'punished' by the women' husbands – in a street fight he is badly wounded.

The second part of the novel, *Sunday Morning*, differs from the first part as far as women are concerned. Above all, Arthur dates only one woman – Doreen. Both of them are approximately at the same age and single at the time. This choice is a pragmatic decision, for the affair with Doreen is not endangered by her husband discovering their affair:

> As they walked Arthur reflected on the uniqueness of his goings-out with Doreen, on the absence of danger that had tangibly surrounded him when he formerly met Brenda or Winnie. Each outing now was no longer an expedition on which every

[105] Brenda is wife of Jack, Arthur's foreman at work, and Winnie is married to Bill, a professional soldier.
[106] All of them know there is no constructive future for them. Brenda and Winnie do not intend to divorce and Arthur has not been ready to get married yet. However, they continue in their appointments until the affairs are detected. Both husbands do not know what is happening for a long time.
[107] The hero ponders that the situation cannot continue forever and expects problems sooner or later.

> corner had to be turned with care, every pub considered for the ease of tactical retreat in case of ambush, every step along dark streets with his arm around Brenda taken with trepidation[108]. (Sillitoe 1979: 209)

In Arthur's choice to go out with only one woman his incipient maturity is reflected.

In comparison to the other two affairs the bond between Arthur and Doreen is crucial for further personal development of the central protagonist.

In the beginning Arthur behaves very blithely to the young woman and she is hardly an important person for the hero. Her physical appearance is more important for Seaton than her nature (Sillitoe 1979: 190). On the contrary, Doreen really loves the hero and wishes to marry him and start a family with him. Nevertheless, due to her character[109] and courage she manages to become an equal partner to Arthur's selfish, stubborn, and rebellious nature. Their everyday communication is 'hot' from time to time:

> She bit her lips and glared at him. "Anybody'd think we were already married," she threw out, "the things you say, and the way you carry on. You get your own way all the time." "And aren't you glad when I do? " he demanded in the same light-hearted infuriating manner. "Don't you love it? And it's only right that I should always get my own way, you know that." "My god," she said, "if we weren't in a pub I'd crack you one, a good one as well"[110]. (Sillitoe 1979: 213)

Nevertheless, even though Arthur behaves obstinately and wilfully at first, he gradually calms down and submits the new situation (Sillitoe 1979: 208). His personality changes. Finally, Arthur intends to marry Doreen and establish himself (Sillitoe 1979: 219). Stříbrný calls Arthur's decision as "a young lad tamed by a kind woman" (1990: 741).

Such disentanglement of the story might seem to quite unexpected because Arthur is an independent type of a man who hardly reconciles with submission to anything or loss of his personal freedom. However, his relationship with Doreen is a kind of 'exam' for the hero. A married life with Doreen is a chance for Arthur to find 'his place in the society', which will not be an easy task for the hero - he is a rebel by nature. Head comments on the end of the novel when Arthur ponders on his future life when fishing

[108] Arthur decided so after his conflict with Bill and Jack – Brenda and Winnie's husbands.
[109] She is a simple girl whom Arthur understands.
[110] The couple is in a pub and makes clear their view of common future.

by a river: "[…] he imagines his life will still be governed by the kind of 'trouble' that has characterized his youth" (2002: 55).

6. Comparative analysis

The following chapter of the diploma paper is focused on the comparative analysis of the selected antiheroes. Structure of the comparative analysis is ordered according to the structure of the analyses dealing with the individual antiheroes.

Personality

Personalities of the individual antiheroes differ from each other. It depends on their family and social background as well as life experience. All the characters develop throughout the plots.

Arthur Seaton and Joe Lampton are self-confident young men. Both of them are open in their communication with other people. On the other hand, Jim Dixon has low self-confidence - his nature is blame for it. Charles Lumley is different. He was led to submission at the university. However, he has courage to refuse his previous upbringing.

What is common to all the young men is the fact that they are not heroic. The antiheroes are rather negative from some points of view. Arthur Seaton is self-centred and hedonistic; Joe Lampton uses other people in order to achieve social success and manipulates with them; Charles Lumley does not abides by the code of his class, becomes a working-class indigent and even works as a criminal for a certain time; and Jim Dixon hangs about at his work and mocks the local dignified academia. Amis's hero differs from the other three heroes in one more aspect of his personality. As the main character of a comic book he is unpractical and very inept, which serves as a comic element in *Lucky Jim*.

Fortunately, all the heroes mature and become more or less solid citizens. From the point of view of their personal change, Joe Lampton changed most. Braine created 'a successful zombie' killing its original 'self', which is, according to Braine, a necessary element for becoming socially successful.

Attitude to life

There are huge differences in lives of selected characters. The reasons are their social background and life aspirations.

Arthur Seaton lives hedonistic existence focused on dating women and earning money in order to spend them on alcohol in pubs. According to Carpenter Arthur makes all the other heroes "seem prim and timid" (2002: 203). He does so, for he is influenced by the working-class background he lives in and also his job of a lathe operator is very exhausting. Thus, Arthur needs to relax. The hero has no higher life aspirations, too. He just tries to survive day by day. His turbulent life calms down when planning marriage with his girl Doreen.

Charles Lumley is also a part of working-class background, too, even though he comes from the middle class. Not till the end he occupies working-class positions and lives in seclusion. His life is focused on staying outside the society, earning money in a useful employment, changing one job for another and later, to do anything to get the woman of his heart – Veronica. As well as Seaton Lumley has no life aspirations, except gaining 'self-centered independence' (Stevenson 1967: 402). Only due to Wain's 'deux ex machina' his level of living improves when he is offered a well paid job and a luxurious flat he finally moves into.

Amis's Jim Dixon lives in a different environment than the other three heroes. The story takes place in the university background. Dixon's attitude to life is similar to Seaton's and Lumley's attitudes. He just tries to survive somehow in the university background he gradually starts to hate. As in the case of *Hurry on Down* the writer creates a fantastic happy end when Jim moves to London after accepting a well-paid job. Another life luck is his potential relationship with a woman of his heart.

Joe Lampton comes from working-class background as well as Arthur Seaton. In comparison to the other heroes Joe's main life interest is to improve his living standards. He does his best to achieve this goal: he studies and aims at getting a millionaire daughter Susan Brown. Finally, he succeeds. However, there is no 'deux at machina' as in the case of Charles. Joe relies on his personal abilities and due to Susan's pregnancy he makes his father, Mr Brown, to employ him in his firm.

To sum up, except Sillitoe's character the other three heroes get up to higher social level and all of them finally find their place in the society. Oliveriusová perceives the social advancement as socially ambivalent, for the characters' original social level is different than the one at the end of the novels (Oliveriusová et al. 1988: 236).

Attitude to work

Work is a strong element in all the novels. The heroes' working positions and their attitude to their jobs reflect the young men's social status, perception of life and, in some cases, their employments enable the heroes to achieve various goals.

Arthur Seaton and Joe Lampton are quite content at their occupations. They earn enough money to satisfy their material and social needs – clothing, entertainment, and women. Their contentment is also reflected in their industriousness.

On the contrary, neither Jim Dixon nor Charles Lumley is satisfied with what they do. Their jobs do not accord with their mental predispositions. The fact is that both heroes were educated at a university. But still, Dixon is not an academic type of man at all and Lumley refuses to follow expected career middle-class white collar employee and rather chooses working-class jobs. Dixon suffers at his university almost till the end of the story. However, both men are lucky, for Amis and Wain's 'deux ex machinas' provide them a well-paid job in London.

In terms of prestige of an occupation, except Arthur, the rest of the characters finally get a prosperous job. Joe Lampton is most lucky. He becomes an employee of his millionaire father-in-law. Especially *Room at the Top* represents an English variety of 'American dream' - from a working-class boy a rich man becomes in the end.

It is necessary to note that no one from the characters aims at getting higher in their employments. All of them take it 'as it is'.

Relationship with the society

The four selected antiheroes represent extraordinary types. Some of them stand in opposition to the society; the others are on its edge. Some heroes intend to change their

destiny. In her *Making a Political Statement* Schüssel sees psychological reason of the characters' extraordinary position to the society. She calls it 'prolonged adolescence':

> It is "a certain kind of development within the final stage of adolescence, in which the psychically grown-up individual has only seemingly become an adult, on the surface functioning in an intelligible manner and often 'performing' a sufficiently acceptable role in society. They 'act' their part, as against 'fulfill' their role, for, in deeper layers of their personality, they are insecure as to where they stand in society ". (Schüssel 2005: 385)

The authors put their heroes into various social environments. Joe Lampton lives and works in Warley, small town full of rich men; Jim Dixon spends most of his time at the university and its surroundings; Charles Lumley 'hurries down' to working-class people trying to become classless; and Arthur Seaton divides his time among work in a factory, pubs, and his married mistresses.

Both Arthur and Charles live in working-class environment. While Arthur perceives himself as an inseparable part of it because he comes from the working class, Charles avoids becoming a real worker. He comes from the middle class but he does not want to belong anywhere. On the other hand, Jim and Joe were born to the lower-middle class parents and due to their occupation they get a bit higher. Nevertheless, Jim is an outsider who continuously violates rules of the university decorum and finally is dismissed. Joe's position is much better. He is popular, which is caused by not only his high self-confidence but also nice appearances. But still it is not enough for him. He aims at getting as high on the social ladder as possible.

In terms of opposition to the outside world Sillitoe's hero is the most violent. His 'them' and 'us' attitude is present in the whole novel.

Relationship with women

It is possible to divide the group of the antiheroes into two different categories: Arthur Seaton and Joe Lampton; Charles Lumley and Jim Dixon.

Both Seaton and Lampton are intense men. They date two women at the same time for a certain period and they do not have remorse. Arthur has an intimate relationship with Winnie and Brenda, Joe dates Alice and Susan. Head calls these novels 'novels of sexual discovery' (2002: 222). They are also very self-confident when

communicating with women and both characters pay attention to their outward appearance. The two lads differ in their attitudes to their mistresses and their final choice though. Arthur takes what is available. The only criterion is the woman's outward appearances, for satisfying his sexual needs is the main goal. On the other hand, Joe gives priority to a spiritual consonance, in the case of Alice, and social status, in the case of Susan. Joe finally chooses Susan, whereas Arthur marries a third woman, Doreen. The choice of a female partner differs, too. Arthur looks for a woman from his own class, while Joe wants a mistress from higher social circles in order to get there. Moreover, Joe Lampton, in comparison to other three men, causes death of his female partner, Alice.

In comparison to the two previous antiheroes Charles Lumley and Jim Dixon date only one woman. Margaret, in the case of Dixon, is not really an object of his interest. Both antiheroes are more restrained than Joe and Arthur, too. Both ladies, Veronica and Christine, are from higher social circles as Susan is. The two men are not as self-confident as Seaton or Lampton. Thus, they are unsure in their behaviour at first. Their uncertainty is supported by the fact that "both fall in love with an apparently unattainable woman" (Carpenter, 64). Later, during the course of time their self-confidence increases and they do their best to get the woman of their heart – and they finally succeed.

As far as relationship with women is concerned, the selected 'Angry Young Men' created a very similar happy end of their novels. Dixon, Lampton and Lumley gets a woman from higher social circles, which improves a social status in the case of Joe Lampton, and raises social prestige in the case of Charles Lumley and Jim Dixon. Coyle describes these relationships as "hypergamous" (Coyle et al. 1991: 163). Arthur Seaton, as a representative of a working-class character, is exception. In his choices he is limited by his social background.

7. Final evaluation

The objective of the thesis is a structured analysis and comparison of main characters depicted in the selected literary works of 'Angry Young Men'. As the novels were written in the 1950s they were influenced by the world war conflict and overall social transformation which followed it. Each of the authors comments on a particular social phenomena in his novel and their heroes are the means.

All the main literary characters are perceived as 'antiheroes'. Thus, they lack traditional positive attributes of 'a classic hero' like courage, loyalty, or honesty. They are

> […] disgruntled with themselves, with their social status, with their work […], with their shabbiness of daily life, with their frustrated aspirations for self-fulfilment, with the competitive spirit, […], with all the small activities whose pursuit takes up their depleted energies. (www.literatureonline.cz)

The heroes are anger in various ways and all of them oppose world and society around them. As individual plots are situated in a different social environment, each of the novels reveals its hero and his life from own point of view.

The authors' life and life experience influenced the literary masterpieces as well. Amis's Jim Dixon and Wain's Charles Lumley are university graduates as well as their creators. On the other hand, Arthur Seaton and Joe Lampton come of working-class or lower-middle class families. The same was the case of John Braine and Alan Sillitoe.

As far as a literary style is concerned the novels are written in the spirit of realism which replaced modernism influencing English literature decades before. The authors wanted to reveal everyday reality of that time. They used realistic techniques[111] in order to reflect 'the Angry Decade' when the youth 'groped in the dark' of newly established social order.

Some of the novels inspired film directors who made films from the stories, too. *Room at the Top* filmed by Jack Clayton in 1959 was the first. *Lucky Jim* was filmed by John Boulting in 1957 and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* was filmed by Karl Reisz in 1960. The films were labelled as the 'new wave' films and as such they succeeded at the English film scene of that time.

[111] The heroes are not glamorized. Both Wain and Sillitoe use slang or vulgarisms. Dramatical situations are often depicted in detail.

Resumé

V dějinách literatury se období rozkvětu střídala s obdobím letargie. Příčiny tohoto vývoje byly různé: politické, sociální, ekonomické či náboženské. Období druhé světové války a po ní nebylo žádnou výjimkou. Ačkoliv se svět vzpamatoval z válečných hrůz, jeho podoba, společenské hodnoty i obyčejní lidé se změnili.

V 50. letech 20. století se na anglické literární scéně objevila nová skupina mladých autorů, kteří se zaměřili na reflexi a kritiku anglické poválečné společnosti, která prošla mnoha změnami. Jsou označování jako ‚Rozhněvaní mladí muži'. Předmětem této diplomové práce jsou čtyři autoři z této literární skupiny a jejich první romány, které byly v 50. letech publikovány. Práce si klade za cíl především analýzu zobrazení hlavních literárních postav a jejich následné porovnání. Zvolenými autory a jejich díly jsou: *Místo nahoře* od Johna Braina, *Pospíchej dolů* od Johna Waina, *Šťastný Jim* od Kingsleyho Amise a *V sobotu večer, v neděli ráno* od Alana Sillitoea. Sillitoe je také představitelem dělnického románu, který v poválečných letech zažívá svou ‚renesanci'.

Protože doba vzniku a celková společenská atmosféra se značnou měrou podílely na tvorbě jednotlivých románů, druhá a třetí kapitola této diplomové práce je věnována základním charakteristikám dané literární skupiny a dělnického románu.

Pojem ‚Rozhněvaní mladí muži' byl prvně použit v roce 1956 v britském deníku *Times*. Nicméně, toto označení není přesné, neboť naznačuje určitou pospolitost mezi tvůrci. Avšak, spisovatelé takto označovaní nebyli žádnou organizovanou skupinou a psali nezávisle na sobě. Sami autoři odmítali toto označení. Co je však spojovalo, byla společenská kritika a reflexe jako pozadí jejich románů, volba ‚realismu' jako literárního prostředku a také pojem ‚antihrdina'. Nicméně, ‚rozhněvanci' a dělnický román se v jisté míře liší v pojetí svého hrdiny, který je v případě dělnického románu více spjat s prostředím, ze kterého vzešel.

Pojem ‚antihrdina' se poprvé objevuje v 50. letech 20. st.. Baldick uvádí, že na rozdíl od tradičního hrdiny tato literární postava postrádá ušlechtilost a velkomyslnost (1990: 260). Jsou to „často ztroskotanci, pijáci, lháři a tuláci" (Leader 2002: 60).

Čtvrtá kapitola této diplomové práce presentuje názory některých kritiků na přínos vybraných autorů pro další rozvoj anglické literatury. Podle Zacharyho Leadera přinesli především nový pohled na Británii (2002: 290).

Avšak, během následujících desetiletí ‚Rozhněvaní mladí muži' postupně mizí z popředí anglické literární scény. Stevenson je dokonce označuje za „muže jedné knihy" (1967: 404). Podle Allsopa ztratili inspiraci (1964: 10), Burgess vidí hlavní příčinu ve změně politických názorů samotných autorů. Mnozí z nich se časem přiklonili ke konzervatizmu (1974: 231).

Hlavním cílem této práce je analýza zobrazení hlavních hrdinů se zaměřením na jejich vnitřní život a vztah k vnějšímu světu a jejich následné vzájemné porovnání. Jednotlivými aspekty jsou: osobnost hrdiny, jeho postoje k životu a práci, vztah mezi ním a společností a jeho vztahy se ženami. Pátá a šestá kapitola, které jsou věnovány této problematice, jsou rozděleny podle jednotlivých literárních děl a aspektů analýzy. Hlavními hrdiny vybraných románů jsou: Joe Lampton (*Místo nahoře*), Charles Lumley (*Pospíchej dolů*), Jim Dixon (*Šťastný Jim*) a Arthur Seaton (*V sobotu večer, v neděli ráno*).

Osobnosti jednotlivých hrdinů se vzájemně liší a také se během příběhů postupně vyvíjejí. Jednotlivé odlišnosti jsou dány rodinným a sociálním zázemím a také životními zážitky.

Arthur Seaton a Joe Lampton jsou velmi sebevědomí mladí muži. Naopak, Jim Dixon dlouho bojuje se svojí poddajnou povahou. Charles Lumley je jiný. Ačkoliv byl během svých univerzitních studií veden k poddajnosti, Wain ho obdařil osobní odvahou odmítnout ‚nepoužitelný' kodex chování.

Avšak, co je společné všem čtyřem mužům je jejich ‚nehrdinství'. Arthur je sebestředný a poživačný; Joe využívá ostatní k dosažení vlastního úspěchu; Charles se stává dělníkem místo toho, aby využil svého univerzitního vzdělání; a Jim ‚si utahuje' ze ctihodné akademické obce. Naštěstí všichni hrdinové ‚dospějí' a stávají se spořádanými občany.

Životy jednotlivých literárních postav jsou prvotně dány jejich původem a životními cíly. Arthur a Joe pocházejí z dělnického prostředí. Arthurovou životní náplní

jsou ženy a vydělávání peněz, které následně utratí za popíjení v hospodách. Joe sice také pochází z dělnické vrstvy, ale jeho cílem je vymanit se z okovů své třídy a dostat se mezi ‚ty nahoře'. Svojí pílí toho také dosáhne. Naopak, Jim a Charles, byť vzděláni na univerzitě, netouží po uplatnění svých vědomostí. Charles dělá vše pro to, aby byl mimo společnost a její systém a tak klesá až na její dno. Jim se snaží nějak přežít v univerzitním prostředí, i když si vzájemně nemají co nabídnout. Avšak, Amis i Wain zakončují svoje romány ‚happy endem'. Svým hrdinům nabízejí dobrou práci v Londýně i přízeň krásné dívky. Joe svým sňatkem s milionářovou dcerou končí na společenském žebříčku ještě o několik stupínků výš.

Vztah k práci je významným elementem všech vybraných novel. Odráží se v něm osobnost hlavních protagonistů, jejich sociální status, i vnímání života. V některých případech práce významně ovlivní budoucí existenci zvolených hrdinů.

Z pohledu práce lze hlavní literární postavy rozdělit do dvou skupin: Joe a Arthur jsou spokojeni ve své práci a také jsou pracovití. Arthur sice ví, že ho jeho práce u soustruhu ničí, ale umožňuje mu jeho bohémský způsob života. Charles a Jim, ač univerzitně vzdělaní, nevykonávají práce odpovídající jejich schopnostem. V případě Jima je navíc čtenář svědkem jeho všudypřítomného odporu k veškerému akademičku, které ho paradoxně vzdělalo. Charles Lumley se pak nejvíce vymyká svojí volbou povolání. Klesá až na samé dno společnosti a vykonává nuzné dělnické profese ve snaze se co možná nejvíce odlišit střední třídě, ze které pochází. Dixona a Lumleyho spojuje ještě jeden element. Amis a Wain na konci svých románů nabízejí svým ‚antihrdinům' dobře placenou práci v Londýně, která je vysvobodí z jejich neuspokojivé existence. Největší pracovní prestiže ale dosahuje Joe Lampton jako zaměstnanec svého milionářského tchána a naplňuje tak svůj ‚americký sen'.

Čtvrtou oblastí analýzy je hrdinův vztah ke společnosti. Hlavní představitelé všech románů představují výjimečné typy osobností, což byl také záměr jejich tvůrců, neboť vybrané romány měly sloužit především jako společenská kritika a reflexe.

Zvolení hrdinové jsou buď v opozici, nebo se pohybují na okraji společnosti. Jejich společenské prostředí se značně liší. Joe Lampton se zabydlí v malém městečku plném boháčů; Jim Dixon tráví většinu svého času na univerzitě; Charles Lumley proplouvá mezi dělníky a Arthur Seaton dělí svůj čas mezi práci v továrně, hospodu a schůzky s vdanými ženami. Každý z hrdinů se také odlišně staví ke svému

společenskému zařazení. Arthur ‚byl, je a zůstane' dělníkem, Charles pouze využívá dělnické prostředí k získání společenské ‚beztřídnosti'. Stejným společenským vyděděncem je i Jim, avšak nedobrovolně. Do univerzitního prostředí se nehodí a také neustále porušuje normy slušného chování. Ze všech hrdinů je na tom nejlépe Joe Lampton, který od svého propuštění z válečného zajetí neustále stoupá výš po společenském žebříčku a také dosáhne nejvyšších společenských kruhů. Ve svém díle *Making a Political Statement* Schüssel uvádí jako hlavní důvod opozičního či nestandardního jednání tzv. ‚prodloužené dospívání', kdy člověk dospěl pouze zdánlivě a vnitřně si svojí pozicí ve společnosti není jistý (2005: 385). A tak neustále hledá, odmítá a nalézá.

Z hlediska vztahů k ženám lze ‚antihrdiny' opět rozdělit do dvou skupin: Arthur Seaton a Joe Lampton na jedné straně a Charles Lumley s Jimim Dixonem na straně druhé. Seaton i Lampton se presentují jako svůdci udržující intimní vztahy s více ženami najednou, a to bez výčitek svědomí. Dixon a Lumley jsou pravým opakem. Postrádají potřebné sebevědomí a milují pouze jednu ženu. Kromě Arthura nakonec získávají hlavní hrdinové dívku z vyšších společenských kruhů, čímž se zlepšuje i jejich společenské postavení. Jejich románky tak končí milostným i společenským ‚happy endem'.

Životy a životní zkušenosti jejich tvůrců jistou měrou ovlivnily konečnou podobu analyzovaných románů. Amisův Jim Dixon a Wainův Charles Lumley jsou absolventi vysokých škol stejně jako oba spisovatelé. Naopak Arthur Seaton a Joe Lampton pocházejí z dělnické nebo nižší střední třídy – stejně jako John Braine a Alan Sillitoe.

Jak již bylo výše zmíněno, romány jsou psány v duchu realismu, který nahradil modernismus - dominantní literární styl předchozích dekád. Realismus se jevil jako vhodný prostředek, neboť mladí spisovatelé chtěli reflektovat tehdejší společnost a její problémy co možná nejvěrohodněji. Tedy, jak Wain, tak Sillitoe volí slang či vulgarismy; ve všech románech jsou dramatické situace detailně vykreslovány; a především, jejich hrdinové nejsou zidealizovaní.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 - Post-war era in Great Britain

The Second World War (1939 – 1945) has been one of the most difficult periods of human history. Never before there had been such a suffering, fear, wrath, and injustice, and since its bitter and brutal end the world has not been the same. Great Britain participating in the conflict had to face many problems requiring immediate solution. Consequences of the war were noticeable mainly in the following two decades – in the 1940s and 1950s. During these two periods the state system experienced the most significant changes.

The British nation had to struggle with all means available. Although there were huge damages in cities and heavy casualties, the United Kingdom was a winner and was not liable to Hitler's empire. Moreover, after the end of the war there was a chance and necessity to reconstruct the country and choose a direction the British society will follow in the future.

Social and economic reforms of the Labour party in the 1940s

The political, economical, and social development in the 1940s is connected to the Labour Party which won the elections in the 1945. During the following six years of their government the Labour Party pursued an economic and social revolution Great Britain has not experienced in its whole history. Bartlett describes the process:

> [...] one can detect acceleration, an intensification and consolidation of certain trends, as well as some real changes of emphasis. Without the war it is hard to imagine so great a determination to prevent a return to the heavy interwar levels of unemployment, so much interest in the creation of universal social services, or so ready an acceptance of so much government interference in the life of the nation. (Bartlett 1977: 1)

All intentions and steps that were realized aimed at economic and social recovery of the country and establishing 'welfare state' or 'affluent society', which were to bring more economic liberties. It was a consequence of new needs of the post-war British society having experienced hunger, terrible living conditions, living within one's own

limits, and state control over industry. The two last mentioned experiences were one of the strategies the British government had to use in order to survive threats of the war. Moreover, the post-war recovering economy started to require more qualified workers as during the war many new fields of science developed.

There were many reforms introducing new social services the Labour Party, headed by Clement Attlee as Prime Minister, realized. Thompson explains:

> There was a widespread belief that the new social services, combined with high levels of income tax [...] were rapidly leading to a more equal and integrated society and to the lopping-off extremes of poverty and wealth. (Thompsopn 1990: 102)

One of the first reforms the Labour government realized was a nationalization of key economic or industrial branches like the Bank of England, transport, electricity, coal industry, and overseas communications[112].

Apart from the idea of collectivism desire for equality among people can be considered as a feature of post-war British society. Requirement of equal access to public services originated in necessity of lowering living standards in order to survive the world war, in terms of national economy, and enable the state to finance war expenditures. The fact is, that in British society there has always been traditional class division but during the war class stratification was less visible.

The idea of equal access to public services was realized in reforms of the health and school system. Introducing National Health Service and national insurance in 1948 were one of the most important reforms realized by the Labour government. Until that time only members from upper classes could effort a good health treatment. These steps should ensure social security which was so important for ordinary man after the world war. It was "a universal service that made no distinction between rich and poor" (Bartlett 1977: 62). The key role in introducing the reforms played requirements of working-class movement and its trade union. "The claims of the underprivileged to more security, comfort and dignity in their lives were greatly strengthened" (Bartlett 1977: 2).

[112] The process of nationalization lasted from 1946 till 1948.

As more educated citizens were needed the government increased compulsory school attendance to 15 years of age. Thus, secondary education was established as a part of a compulsory education. The government also tried to provide conditions for children of parents from lower classes to attend universities. The reform was initiated by the Butler Education Act in 1944. This act can be understood as "the victory for the common child" (Bartlett 1977: 10).

Another demanding task the Labour government had to cope with was a lack of houses. As many of them were destroyed during the Second World War and the number of marriages and new born children rose, it was necessary to support intensive building of new houses or revitalisation of those in better condition. Unfortunately, there was not enough building material as too many factories, schools and other facilities needed reconstruction[113].

Together with overall post-war reconstruction of country and development in most activities two more important legal acts were introduced by the government – the Industrial Injuries Act (1945) and National Insurance Bill (1946) extending area of social securing.

Disillusion instead of enthusiasm

It is truth that during the 1940s the living standards of ordinary working people increased and they started to believe in better future. However, strict social stratification did not disappear from the British society and the upper classes still preserved their pre-war living standards. One of the reasons was that the government paid shares from nationalized industry, which was a secure income for the rich. Moreover, the tax load was transferred to indirect taxation. Thus, the national income was based on money of the poorer who, although enabled to use new public services, could not effort considerably better living standards.

As far as the reform in education is concerned, it did not function well, too. The fact that access to higher education is based on membership to upper classes is part of

[113] "Nevertheless, between 1945 and 1951 some 1.5 million additional homes were provided" (Bartlett 1977: 60).

the British cultural tradition was valid also after the introduction of the Butler Education act. Although new grammar schools, technical schools, and less academic secondary schools were opened,

> the proposed secondary education for all presented no challenge for the prestigious public schools. [...] The act did not establish any form of organization for secondary education; rather it promised education according to 'age, ability and aptitude' of the individual pupil. (Bartlett 1977: 11)

Thompson states that "a survey on social mobility conducted in 1949 found little modification of the long-established tendency for status to be determined by parental occupation" (1990: 103). Moreover, no appropriate attention was paid to further development of the system of schools.

To sum up, although there were certain aims to create more affluent state system, differences among individual levels of the British society remained the same. The Establishment of the old oligarchy continued. This result lead to general disillusion as the Labour Party was not able to fulfil expectations of the nation, which was one of reasons for defeat of the party in the election in 1951.

The Conservative Party and continuing transformation in the 1950s

After a decade of unprecedented economic and social reforms the Labour government ended. The Conservative Party came to power in elections in 1951 "with the slogan 'Set the People Free' " (Thompson 1990: 14). Winston Churchill became Prime Minister. Although the Conservatives always opposed the Labour Party, they did not reverse reforms introduced by their predecessors except from transport which was returned to private sector. They rather tried to prepare their reforms in order to continue in reconstruction and recovery of the country.

The second decade after the world war was full of contrasts in greater extent than the 1940s. On the one side there was economic growth and increase of standards of living and the decade is often referred to as 'a period of affluence', on the other side there were more visible distinctions among individual social classes, slums appeared, there was general dissatisfaction among lower classes, the British started to emigrate to United States, Canada, or Australia, and generation gap between adults and the youth

deepened. As this contrast of social and economic trends considerably influenced further development of the British society it is worth deeper analysis.

The economic situation in the 1950s was better than in the 1940s. Goods were successfully exported abroad, thus there was not lack of work. Standards of living were gradually increasing during the decade. However, as Polišenský explains, according to statistics the improvement of living standards is caused mainly by increased employment of women and that many workers work in the evening as well. The British could afford to buy more equipment to their homes but many of them were bought on instalments (Polišenský 1982: 248) [114]. Thus, general atmosphere among average the British was more and more pessimistic.

The British were experiencing devastating disillusion as a consequence of frustration originating in promises which were not realized according to initial expectations. The result was, that there appeared a huge immigration to other countries[115]. On the other hand, many new immigrants from the countries of the British Commonwealth arrived in Britain. These people moved to poor districts and occupied working positions the local British did not want to accept.

Appearance of slums and local gangs called 'teddy bears' or 'rockers' in poorer districts were new problems the British society had to cope with. Moreover, taking drugs in these areas became quite common. Nevertheless, a certain success in the social sphere was achieved. Thompson explains:

> It was commonly assumed, not that total equality had been achieved or was even desirable, but that both groups and individuals were socially mobile: that 'class escalators' were transporting the working-class into middle-class levels of affluence and that personal status was largely determined by personal effort and ability. (Thompson 1990: 106)

This claim can be demonstrated on increased number of university students as the government provided grants for children from poorer families and new universities were opened. The fact is that in previous decades hardly any children from lower classes could afford to attend university.

[114] Two thirds of all capital was in hands of three percent of people (Polišenský 1982: 248).
[115] Polišenský states that up to 300 thousand people in productive age and from all social classes emigrated every year as they could expect higher salaries (1982: 248).

There was also development of independent broadcasting and television initiated by the Television act in 1954. The act enabled private sector to run its own media financed by advertising. Until that time BBC was the only media station. However, as Maurois notes, the initial impulse was provided by the public view, which reflected increasing importance of family life (1993: 446).

Perhaps the most important political conflict during the 1950s was 'the Cold War'. It was a hidden political, industrial, military, and espionage competition between 'the west democratic world' lead by the United States and 'the east communist world' lead by the Soviet Union. Great Britain participated in it, too. Different campaigns against communists in the country were organised. They were excluded from many public services and important positions in offices[116].

Transition from industrial to post-industrial society

During the following post-war years Great Britain changed a lot. From the country which had to do its best to survive the threats of the Second World War and was forced to pay a high price for its victory, it gradually transformed into relatively prosperous modern country. Perhaps the most significant change can be seen in the attitude of average people to material aspect of their lives. Especially during the 1950s the British started to spent huge amount of their money on entertainment, luxury, clothes, and other things which could bring them some pleasure. Bartlett explains:

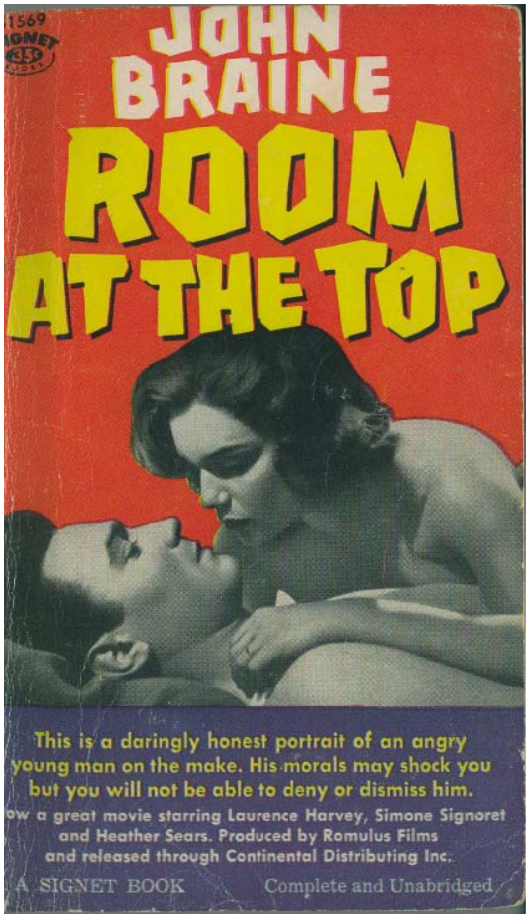
> The increased purchasing power of the non-middle classes profoundly affected the commercial world, both in production and distribution. Here were new consumers that were worth cultivation. It was most dramatically expressed in the explosion of what came to be known as the 'pop' world. (Bartlett 1977: 147)

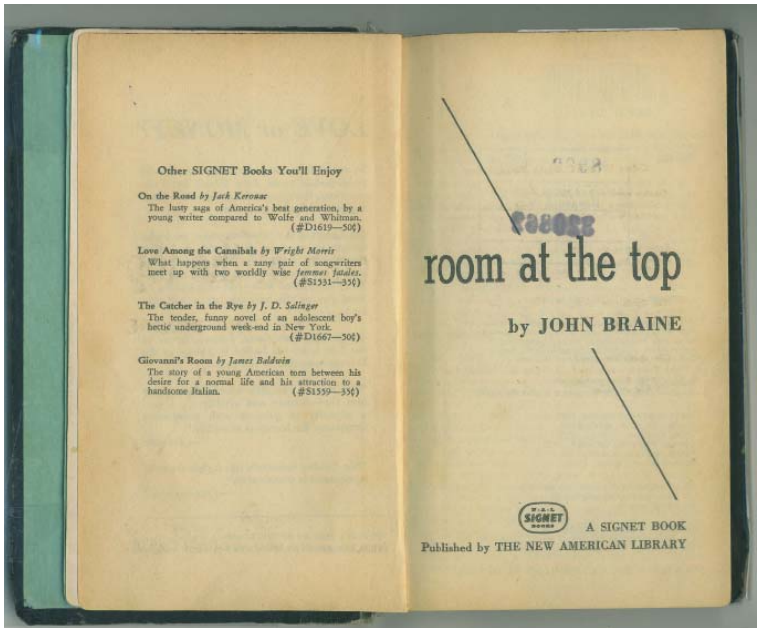
The new consume way of life was characteristic mainly for the young generation which could be hardly understood by their parents who experienced hunger and poverty. As a consequence, the generation gap gradually deepened. The number of various services increased as well. Thus, during the two decades after the war the British society transformed from the industrial into post-industrial society focused on consumerism.

[116] Polišenský claims that they were considered to be potential spies of the Soviet Union. However, 'the hunt of witches' was not realized in such huge extend as in the United States (1982: 252).

This transformation influenced economy, too. According to Polišenský durability of goods was shorter on purpose and more money was spent on innovation and advertisement. People got used to hire purchases. All these efforts aimed at extension of sales and profit. Great Britain became 'a model consumer society' in which circulation of money is more important that production of basis goods (Polišenský 1982: 27).

Appendix 2 – Room at the Top: the cover of the book





Appendix 3 – Room at the Top: the story

The main character, Joe Lampton, tells the story in the course of ten years. At the time of the plot he is the 25-year old lad. Thus, the story takes places in the late 1940s not in the 1950s.

Joe, a young ambitious man, comes from a working-class family living in a small industrial town Dufton, northern England, full of pubs and factories. Although the hero is a son his working-class parents, he studies at the local grammar school. When his parents die during the Second World War, Joe is forced to stay at his aunt Emily. Nevertheless, he himself is stigmatized by the war, for the young man, a Royal Air Force crewman, is taken captive by enemies and sent to the German prisoner-of-war camp Stalag 1000 in Bavaria, Germany, for three years. During his captivity Joe studies and prepares for examinations in accountancy. Finally, he is released.

After a certain time Lampton arrives to Warley, a small friendly town in the northern English county of Yorkshire, to work and live there. He accommodates himself at the Thompsons, a middle-class couple, and accepts a job of the local government official in the municipal treasury. From this base he assimilates into the local environment and later gets into contact with the upper strata of Warley society.

After joining the local amateur theatre group, the Thespians, the hero meets Susan Brown, a young 19-year-old inexperienced girl from the highest social circles, and falls in love with her immediately. Unfortunately, she has been already engaged . Joe also starts dating married Alice Aisgill, nearly ten years his senior. However, Joe still desires for Susan. Thus, he does his best to get her. The 'love triangle' is maintained almost to the end of the story. Nevertheless, Lampton successfully seduces Susan, so their marriage in unavoidable. Therefore, the flow of the plot is inevitably influenced.

Susan’s father, Mr. Brown, decides about a marriage and consequently offers Joe a well-paid job in his firm. Separation with Alice follows. Such a situation is hardly bearable for the woman. She drinks to excess and being impaired she wrecks her car and dies.

Although Joe does not cope with the unlucky death easily, the vision of a promising future 'cures' his misery. From a working-class boy a rich man becomes at the end.

Appendix 4 – the portrait of John Braine

Appendix 5 – the biography of John Braine

John Gerard Braine (1922 – 1986)

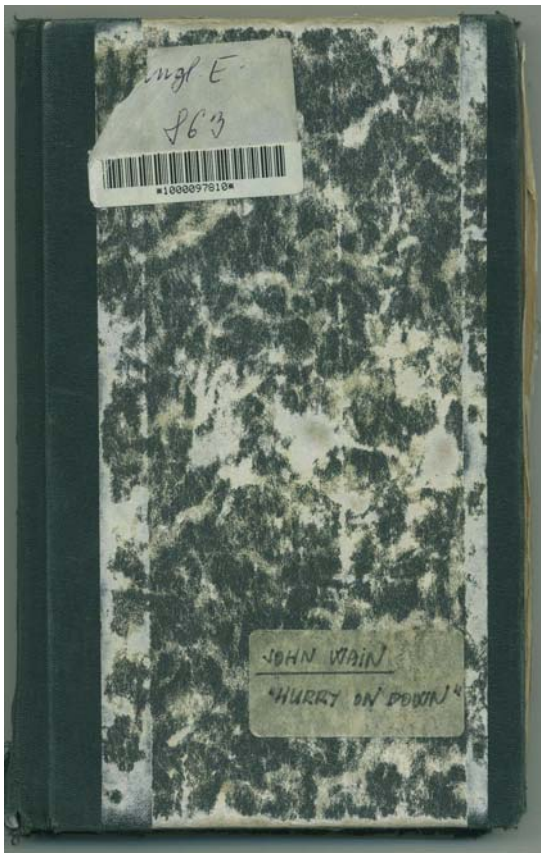
John G. Braine was born in Bradford, Yorkshire, 1922. His father worked as a works superintendent of the Bradford Council and mother was a librarian. Thus, their household was full of books. The family belonged to the local lower-middle-class Catholics. The writer's formal education began at the state-run Thackley Boarding School, where he was exposed to a predominantly Protestant, working-class atmosphere. After graduating he attended St. Bedes Grammar School, Bradford. Unlike Wain and Amis Braine did not have a university degree, which limited him in getting well-paid writings.

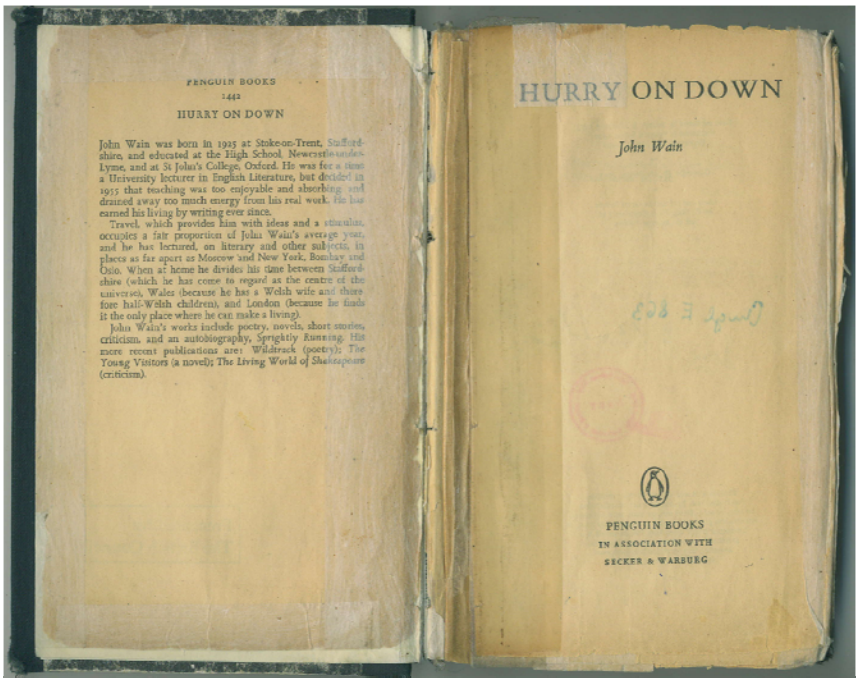
The author had various jobs before he became a librarian – working in a laboratory and a factory, selling furniture and books, and serving as a telegraphist in the Royal Navy. Finally, he left the post of a librarian and became a freelance writer. Braine tried to write short stories, articles for magazines and periodicals. However, no significant success happened. Thus, be returned to the profession of a librarian.

In the second half of 1950s the tuberculosis which invalided the writer out of the Navy in 1943 returned and he had to departure to a sanatorium being short of money. During this sad period of his life Braine started to write *Room at the Top* which made him famous. As a novel was the only literary form suiting him all the other writings were novels, too. The author moved house to London to live there as a full-time writer. Braine wrote twelve novels in total.

During later years of his life Braine frequently appeared on television programmes and radio stations and devoted a great deal of time to adapting his novels for dramatic television productions. John Braine died in a London hospital in 1986.

Appendix 6 – Hurry on Down: the cover of the book




PENGUIN BOOKS
1442
HURRY ON DOWN

John Wain was born in 1925 at Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, and educated at the High School, Newcastle-under-Lyme, and at St John's College, Oxford. He was for a time a University lecturer in English Literature, but decided in 1955 that teaching was too enjoyable and absorbing and drained away too much energy from his real work. He has earned his living by writing ever since.

Travel, which provides him with ideas and a stimulus, occupies a fair proportion of John Wain's average year, and he has lectured, on literary and other subjects, in places as far apart as Moscow and New York, Bombay and Oslo. When at home he divides his time between Staffordshire (which he has come to regard as the centre of the universe), Wales (because he has a Welsh wife and three-fore half-Welsh children), and London (because he finds it the only place where he can make a living).

John Wain's works include poetry, novels, short stories, criticism, and an autobiography, *Sprightly Running*. His more recent publications are: *Wildtrack* (poetry); *The Young Visitors* (a novel); *The Living World of Shakespeare* (criticism).

HURRY ON DOWN

John Wain

PENGUIN BOOKS
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
SECKER & WARBURG

Appendix 7 – Hurry on Down: the story

Wain tells the story of 23-years old Charles Lumley who has just finished his bachelor degree. The hero stands at his 'life crossroad' and has to decide how to cope with his future life. Instead of acceptance of a profession corresponding to his education and middle-class origin the hero decides to work as an independent window-cleaner.

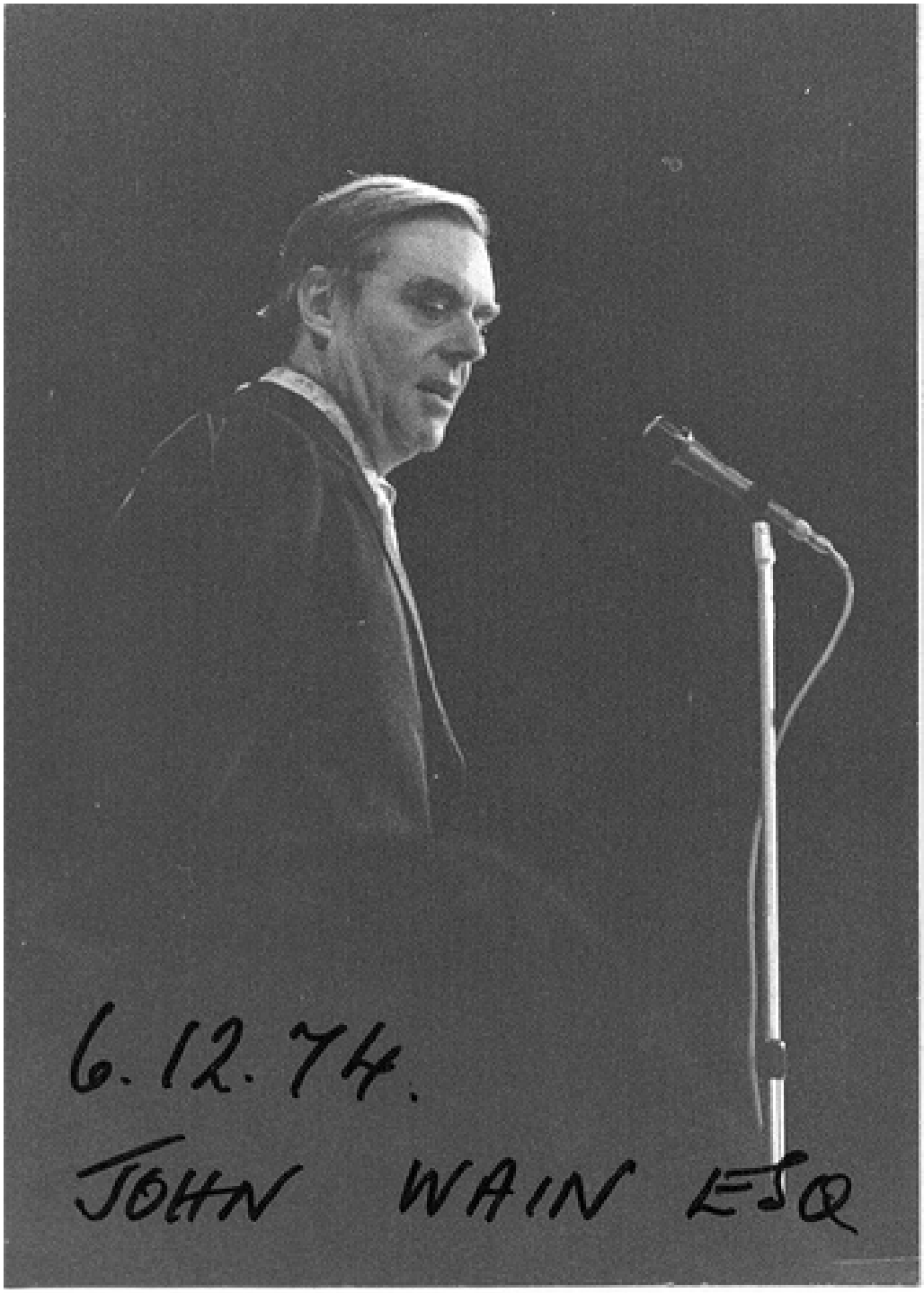
A turning point in Lumley's simple existence happens when he meets a young woman from higher social class Veronica in the local hotel restaurant. Charles is aware of the socio-class vacuum between them. Nevertheless, under the pressure of irrepressible love for the lady the hero violates all his life principles. The affair with Veronica is kept in confidence from its beginning. Their appointments are expensive amusements while the hero realizes how much he has been estranging himself.

After having witnessed a murder of a reporter committed by the group of smugglers Charles is a member, the hero is forced to escape the police. Having been thrown out of a car by Bunder, his colleague, Lumley is transported with wounds into the local hospital. In the hospital Charles is told that Veronica has been a lover of a rich businessman for a long time. Being completely heartbroken the hero decides to start a simple and uncomplicated life once again and accepts a job of a hospital staff. He begins to walk together with Rosa, his colleague at work. However, after a certain time Lumley realizes that Veronica is the woman he has loved all those days. Thus, the affair with Rosa is terminated and the job in the hospital is changed for a job of a chauffeur of Mr. Braceweight - a man of property Charles acquainted with in the hospital. The hero does not remain in this occupation for a long time, too, and after an unpleasant incident caused by Mr. Braceweight's son Walter he leaves and has to stay in the streets of Stotwell where he aims at earning money by means of selling overpriced cigarettes. He goes almost to the social bottom. After a short time the hero accepts a job of security service in a local bar, where he meets his schoolmate Froulish again offering Charles a job in his humorist radio team. Consequently, he obtains financially lucrative employment contract and a luxurious flat, which enables him to improve his social status.

The novel ends openly. Veronica visits Charles in his new flat. After his social advancement it is highly probable that she chooses Lumley as her fiancée. Nevertheless,

Wain lets this idea without further development in this respect and gives a space to a reader's fantasy.

Appendix 8 – the portrait of John Wain



Appendix 9 – the biography of John Wain

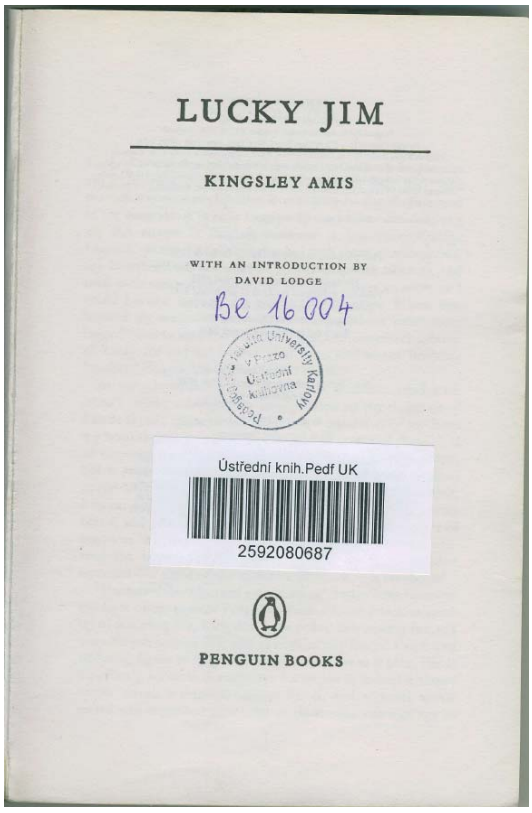
John Barrington Wain (1925 – 1994)

John B. Wain was born in Stroke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, 1925, as a son of Arnold Wain, a prosperous dentist, who was the first member of his family to emerge from the working class. The writer attended the High School, Newcastle-under-Lyme, and went on in his studies at St. John's College, Oxford, where he obtained a First Class degree. Wain's family was relatively bookish and affluent enough to pay the school fees.

After fishing his university studies the author went to Reading University as a lecturer in English literature from 1947 to 1955. Then he worked as a freelance writer, a lecturer, and as a visiting academic. Among places of his operating there was University of Bristol where Wain was Churchill Visiting Professor in 1967 or Brasenose College, Oxford, where the writer worked as the first recipient of a newly established fellowship in creative arts in 1971 – 1972. In 1973 Wain was elected the twenty-seventh Professor of Poetry at Oxford University.

In the beginning of his literary career Wain focused mainly on poetry. Later on, he started writing fiction and short stories. Among other activities since 1960s there was criticism and literary journalism, radio and television work, film and drama reviewing, editing, and lecturing. John Wain died in 1994.

Appendix 10 – Lucky Jim: the cover of the book



Appendix 11 – Lucky Jim: the story

Jim Dixon, a young unambitious man with working-class background, accepts a job of Medieval history lecturer at a provincial university in the North of England. From the beginning the hero aims at integrating into the new environment. First of all, Dixon tries to satisfy expectations of his senior, Professor Welch, whose opinions and attitudes are crucial for his career.

At the university the hero meets a fellow lecturer Margaret Peel. The mentally unstable woman unsuccessfully aims at intimate relationship with him and throughout the story she represents one of problems Dixon must cope with. Later, Jim Dixon meets a young lady Christine Callaghan at a party at Welch's house. The hero falls in love with her at first sight. However, Christina belongs to 'upper-class' and dates Bertrand, the son of Welch. The hero is sure of inaccessibility of the girl for a long time.

Jim's life at the university is unbearable during the course of time. Not only that he hardly meets requirements imposed on him by the university and still does not fit into the local environment for his individuality, but he is psychologically tortured by Margaret, too. Feelings of despair concerning the improbable relationship with Christine support Dixon's gloomy existence. However, as the novel is a comical novel, the pessimistic atmosphere is relieved by grotesque situations the hero has to cope with. Their climax is a public lecture during which he esposes the university dignitaries. He is finally dismissed.

Nevertheless, the novel ends with happy end. Dixon is offered a better-paid occupation in London and leaves the university world forever. Moreover, due to Christine's separation with Bertrand there is a certain chance that an intimate relationship will develop between them.

Appendix 12 – the portrait of Kingsley Amis

Appendix 13 – the biography of Kingsley Amis

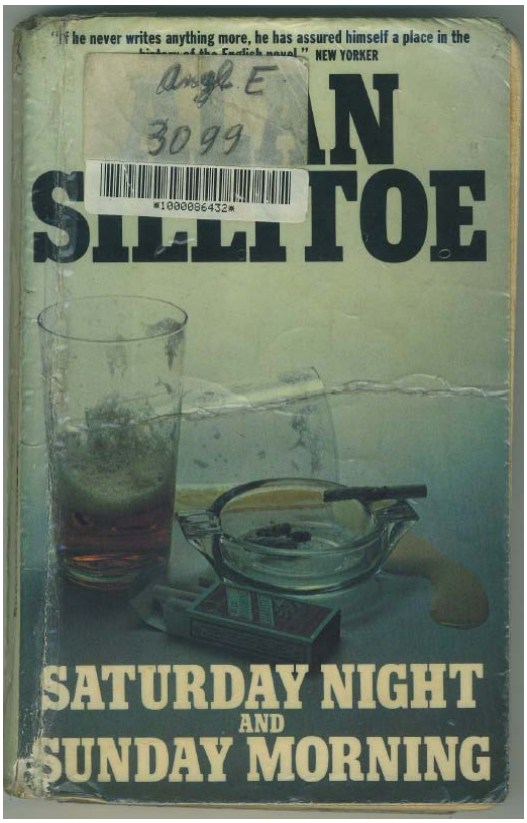
Kingsley Amis (1922 – 1995)

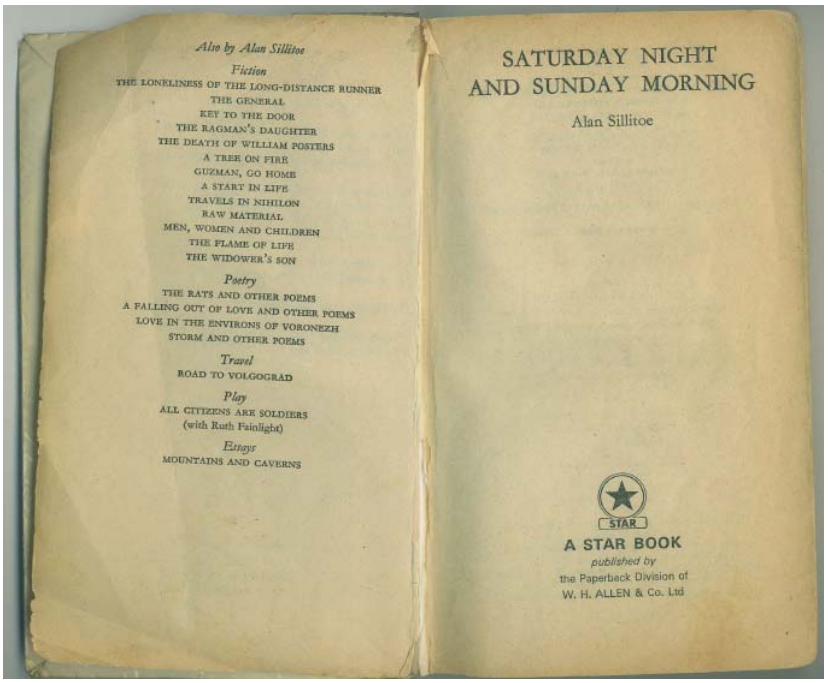
Kingsley Amis was born in Clapham, southwest London, 1922, as the only son. William Robert Amis, his father, worked as a senior clerk in the export department of London office of Colman's Mustard manufacturers. The writer grew up in a conservative, distinctly suburban, lower-middle-class Baptist environment. Although not highly cultivated family, both Amis's parents were interested in popular literature. The author attended St. Hilda's primary school and Norbury College and after graduation he became a student at the City of London School, a top-notch private prep school. In 1941 Amis started to study at St. John's College, Oxford, where he became a contributor of verses to anthologies and university magazines. The writer was also politically active. He participated in left-wing political movements, university Labour Club activities, and the Communist party. Amis's education was interrupted during World War II by his service as a lieutenant in the Royal Corps of Signals from 1942 to 1945. Fortunately, he survived without any harm. In 1947 the author took a first-class degree at Oxford. In 1949 Amis changed a place of his academic work and appointed to an assistant lectureship in English at the University College of Swansea, Wales, where he remained from 1949 until 1961. In the mid and late 1950s, the writer became increasingly in demand as a reviewer and a commentator writing on literature for various publications. However, Amis made himself famous with publishing *Lucky Jim* in 1954.

In 1963 Amis left academic world and has been a full-time writer ever since. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the author was devoted to writing first of all. This period was also a turning point in changing his political views. Middle-aged Amis resigned his Communist Party membership and followed conservative views of the world.

Since the 1970s the writer also suffered from mental problems. On 22 October 1995 Amis died at St Pancras Hospital in London from pneumonia and a suspected stroke.

Appendix 14 – Saturday Night and Sunday Morning: the cover of the book





Also by Alan Sillitoe

Fiction

THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER
THE GENERAL
KEY TO THE DOOR
THE RAGMAN'S DAUGHTER
THE DEATH OF WILLIAM POSTERS
A TREE ON FIRE
GUZMAN, GO HOME
A START IN LIFE
TRAVELS IN NIHILON
RAW MATERIAL
MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN
THE FLAME OF LIFE
THE WIDOWER'S SON

Poetry

THE RATS AND OTHER POEMS
A FALLING OUT OF LOVE AND OTHER POEMS
LOVE IN THE ENVIRONS OF VORONEZH
STORM AND OTHER POEMS

Travel

ROAD TO VOLGOGRAD

Play

ALL CITIZENS ARE SOLDIERS
(with Ruth Fainlight)

Essays

MOUNTAINS AND CAVERNS

SATURDAY NIGHT
AND SUNDAY MORNING

Alan Sillitoe

STAR

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Appendix 15 – Saturday Night and Sunday Morning: the story

The story takes place in Nottingham, an English provincial town. The main character is 22-year-old Arthur Seaton, a lathe operator in the local bicycle factory, who opposes the outside world and looks for his own position in the conventional society.

The story is divided into two parts: 'Saturday Night' and 'Sunday Morning'. Both of them reveal various episodes and situations, whereas Arthur's secret affairs with married women, alcohol sprees, and troubles prevail.

Nevertheless, indisciplinable spirit of the rebellious hero is finally caught into a trap of marriage with young girl Doreen. But after all, proletarian anger remains and Arthur does not intend to desist from his fight against everyone and everything.

Appendix 16 – the portrait of Alan Sillitoe

Appendix 17 – the biography of Alan Sillitoe

Alan Sillitoe (1928 – 2010)

Alan Sillitoe was born to working-class parents in Nottingham – an industrial city. The family background was not secure and morally appropriate. Sillitoe's father was often out of work and her mother tried to provide financial resources by means of resorting to prostitution from time to time. It was not enough, so the family had to survive on government benefits. Moreover, they would frequently move house to escape rent collectors. The writer left school at the age of 14 and got a job at the Raleigh Bicycle Factory (1942), a local concern. From 1945 to 1946 Sillitoe occupied a position of an air traffic control assistant. The young man had no higher ambitions.

As well as Amis and Braine Sillitoe participated in the world war. He joined the Navy and then the Royal Air Force. In 1947, he went as a wireless operator with the RAF to Malaya and came back to Britain ill with tuberculosis. A treatment in an RAF hospital followed. The 18-month 'intermezzo' influenced Sillitoe's literary career as there was enough time for reading the classics of the world literature.

Between 1952 and 1958 he travelled in France and Spain with American poet Ruth Fainlight, whom he married in 1959. In 1954, the writer met Robert Graves[117] who told him to write about what he knew best – working-class Nottingham. These events were crucial elements in turning Sillitoe into a real writer. In contrast to other writers Sillitoe lacked a formal education. Thus, he was neither inspired by any other authors nor influenced 'how to write'. The writer wrote poetry, novels, and short stories focused mainly on English working-class environment. However, his literary career was at its top in the 1950s and 1960s first of all. The 1970s were not literary successful as the previous decades. In these years Sillitoe adapted his own novels for film, wrote a screenplay and stage and television plays, autobiographical and critical essay, or travel books.

Although Sillitoe lacked a university degree, he was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and held an honorary fellowship from Manchester Polytechnic

[117] Robert Ranke Graves (1895 - 1985) was an English poet, translator, and novelist.

(1977). The writer was also Visiting Professor of English at Leicester de Montfort University (1994-7) and was awarded honorary doctorates by Nottingham Polytechnic (1990), Nottingham University (1994) and De Montfort University (1998).

On 25 April 2010 Sillitoe died at Charing Cross Hospital in London after a long battle with cancer.