

Working class in British films

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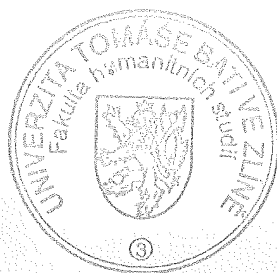
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ABSTRAKT

Práce zkoumá, jak britští filmaři čerpali své náměty ze života lidí z britské pracující třídy. Jak často sahalí po tématech z této největší britské třídy a jak ji zobrazovali. Jsou zde popsány její nejvýraznější rysy a změny, kterými prošla. Popisuje, kdo jsou hlavní představitelé zobrazující pracující třídu v britském filmu, jak ji ve svých filmech představovali a jaké účinky měli tyto filmy na diváky. Cílem praktické části je ukázat na čtyřech vybraných britských filmech jak je pracující třída zobrazovaná s odkazy na teoretickou část.

Klíčová slova: filmaři zabývající se pracovní třídou, filmy pojednávající o pracující třídě, znaky pracující třídy, pozice žen z pracující třídy, vztahy, jazyk, provedení.

ABSTRACT

The work analyses how British film-makers choose their topics from life of working class people. How often they used topics connected with the biggest class of Britain and how they depict it. It describes the most distinctive features and changes working class went through. It presents the best film-makers dealing with working class films, how they record it and what effect these films had on the audience. The aim of the practical part is on four British films show how is working class depicted in British films with the reference on theory.

Keywords: working class film-makers, working class films, working class features, position of working class women, relationships, language, design.

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own and certify that any secondary material used has been acknowledged in the text and listed in the bibliography.

May 13, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

Working class creates the biggest part of British society and at the same time it is the most vivid element of this class-driven society. For this class-consciousness, class membership is a crucial issue for British and working class with its nature, changes and hard-living conditions is an interesting topic to depict.

My bachelor thesis is concerned with the appearance of working class in British films. It is divided into a theoretical and a practical part.

The first part deals with the position of working class in British films during the history, how often working class appeared in British films, how were their topics used and what effect these films had among the audience. There are directors who concentrate on working class and devoted them almost all their work because this class has always provided film-makers with serious and sophisticated stories but on the other hand working class can also spread the sense of optimism and amuse audience. Besides this, the theoretical part brings also the most typical working class features and their application on films. The last chapter of the theoretical part is devoted to the current state of British film industry and the place of working class films and films with similar aspects in recent history. There are mentioned the most successful working class films and the most awarded films of British film industry.

The aim of the practical part is to show how recent British working class films portray this lower class. What aspects of their life the film-makers show and how they let their protagonist solve the problems and troubles working class members have to face every day. For my analysis I use films: *Secrets and Lies* (1996), *The Full Monty* (1997), *Billy Elliot* (2000), and *Green Street Hooligans* (2005). I scrutinize these films and search for the working class features appearing in these films and compare them with the features stated in my theoretical part.

I. THEORY

1 POSITION OF WORKING CLASS IN BRITISH FILMS

At first working class had to fight for its position and picturing in British films. After two World Wars British people didn't want to look at real situation in their country, therefore, they rather watched Hollywood's dreams films. Fortunately, British film-makers created their own tradition in which they became more interested in working class. Thanks to its changeable nature and hard-living conditions, in some periods of time also working class became the main strength of British film industry. The reason for their appreciation wasn't only the thorny issues working class had to face but also the design of these films. Especially Ken Loach and Mike Leigh dealt with working class issues and each dealt with them in different approach. Both are considered as the best British directors. Thanks to their real picture of working class they raised awareness about the problems working class went through and helped to bring some changes. Similar it is with other film-makers and directors whose films didn't necessary picture only working class itself, but highlighted the working class feature and the condition in which they lived. Although most of the films weren't made by members of working class, the picture of working class, these films offer, is often identical in accordance with real working class features.

At the beginning of 19th century British film-makers were considered as the most creative and innovative in the world. Unfortunately, two World Wars affected also British film Industry and enabled Hollywood to gain the domination of world cinema. British film-makers had two choices how to compete with Hollywood. Either they could copy Hollywood dream films or they could defeat them by stressing the difference British films had. The difference was derived from the documentary tradition used in 1930s.

One of the most distinctive personages who supported the way of documentary tradition was Michael Bacon. He preferred to ignore the influence of Hollywood and promote a characteristically British film industry, making films about ordinary communities and the drama and comedy of everyday life [4] what was the first approach that pointed out British working class. British documentary tradition put the role of community before the role of individuals and celebrated community's values and spread them through the world. Alistair Davis wrote in British Culture in Postwar also about the

pamphlet Michael Bacon had written in 1944 where he defines the contrast between Hollywood tinsel and British realism.

As Michael Bacon stated, his films were mainly about ordinary communities and ordinary people. David P. Christopher described his films as nostalgic and detail portraits of post-war Britain. Working class was appearing in his work as well, but it never was the major topic of his films. Alistair Davis used, among examples of his work connected with working class, films *Fires Were Started* and *Caught*. The former shows easy assimilation of a middle class volunteer fireman into the largely working class unit and the later deals with similar situation but stresses class hostility and distrust.

Lean, Lander, Gilliant and Asquith were, according to Davis, concerned with classes as well. They also provided the audience with some working class feature but again, working class wasn't the major theme of these films, which followed the tradition of black and white realistic films.

There were several ways how this realism was used. Some critics say that these film-makers were historians and clearly depicted the situation of working class and Britain. Second group was accused that their films showed working class and Britain in their stereotypes for entertainment of foreign audience. The last group, especially artists belonging to group called New Wave, used realism not only to reflect but also to criticize the society and they used working class for much of their work.

Principles of British New Wave had its origins in the radical counter-culture of the 1960s [7]. They highlighted the visual part of films and their members weren't members of any universities or art colleges. Also film-makers from New Wave made adaptations of plays and dramas but they chose authors and plays occurring in their time because these days social realism was in interest of many playwrights. They tried to make more honest and open representation of social life as explained David P. Christopher in *An Introduction: British culture*.

New Wave brought to the cinema novels and plays written especially by John Osbourn, Colin Wilson or John Braine. The films were usually faithful to the novels and as David P Christopher said, the adaptations brought fresh, raw portrait of working class.

Then he added that they depicted the language of working class. This was achieved by leaving RP accent. Actors spoke in their regional slangs and films gained more authenticity and energy. Then we can see their living conditions. How they lived in sparsely furnished terrace houses, worked in oppressive factories and spent their free time in grim pubs. The films were usually set in gray northern towns. They also showed reduce sense of social responsibility. There is a spirited optimism in many of the characters, reflecting the freedom, consumerism and permissiveness which many young people of the time were beginning to experience. [4]

Look Back in Anger (1959) and *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, (1960) David P. Christopher highlighted among the first work of New Wave and both he considered as highly critically appraised. The second one, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, remains one of the most representative. It is adaptation from a novel by Alan Sillitoe and is directed by Karel Reisz. The film follows the principles New Wave had established. It is set in small Nottinghamshire town and depicts young vivid man who fights against the tedium and restriction he feels in work and in his marriage. As he has no political belief and ideology, unlike others members of his community, he is shown as cynical and detached from his community. His aim is just little more than Saturday nights in pub and dream of retirement in bungalow. From this example David P. Christopher used we can see how New Wave alerted to social problems.

Films of the New Wave were usually shot in black and white, with little bright lighting. [4] It was style without theory or glamour and as a support for the action film-makers used modern jazz, pop music and long pauses.

According to David P. Christopher the problem arose when the older generation stopped going to the cinema because they didn't understand and didn't want to accept how New Wave presented social problems. This led to the decline of audience and with no support from the government cinema wasn't able to compete with Hollywood or television stations, which was becoming very popular. Cinema had to rely on commercial films whose aim was to attract young people or single adults because these groups were the most profitable groups and neither young people nor single adults were interesting in working

class. We can see there some moments which are connected with working class, but as in times of Michael Bacon, it wasn't their main topic again.

Film-makers who didn't choose the way of realism omitted working class in their films almost at all. The genres they used were described in *British Culture in Postwar* as, so popular, costume dramas, historical romances, comedies or imaginative and fantastical color films. Although they seem to be similar with Hollywood's tinsel films Alistair Davis considered some of them as intellectually and cinematically most adventurous British films ever made.

1.1 Golden age for working class films

In the late 1960s "the golden age" came for working class. It coincided with appearance of the honorable director Ken Loach. He was born in 1936 in Nuneaton in the English Midlands. He began his career at Oxford University where he was president of the Drama Society. [4] After graduation he continued with his work at television station BBC where he directed television dramas. Peter Childs and Mike Storry highlighted that his plays were made with the pioneering usage of documentary film techniques and created social awareness among audience. Later his films were aimed more at injustice working class experienced during the time of Thatcherism. He aimed at poverty, homelessness, the state terrorism in Northern Ireland, unemployment and the casualization of employment as added Alistair Davis. Towards the end of the 1990s Loach made widely admired films, which brought him recognition as a major British director. [4]

David P. Christopher appreciated his films dealing with social problems and social issues, especially of working class members, as one of the main strength of British cinema and described Loach's drama as a frank, realistic portrayal which brought a breath of fresh air into egoistic, literary and historical dramas screen in television in that time. He is also critically admired for political awareness in his films. Some critics say, Loach's vision is a pessimistic, austere one, but on the other hand he is admired by many for having always been a consistent, lone, political voice, speaking out in defense of the oppressed and

disenfranchised. [4] Also these characteristics make him one of the most respected director in Britain because is hard to find them in modern British film industry.

Although his films are serious, their seriousness is lightened by humorous incidents, witty scripts and message of optimism about people's ability to conquer their problems. [4] For some films he used as the cast amateurs, picked from some working class community.

Since his beginnings Ken Loach has specialized in working class, which was so far almost excluded from cinema, according to Alistair Davis. Working for BBC he made documentary films like *Up the Junction* (1965) *Cathy Come Home* (1966) or plays for the weekly drama series *The Wednesday Play* and *Z Cars*. [4] According to David P. Christopher they deal with some of the most controversial social problems of the period, expressing especially working class members. *Cathy Come Home* depicts the homelessness, drug abuse or domestic violence and had a great impact on public concerning the public housing in Britain, as stressed Alistair Davis. The previous one, *Up the Junction* deals with teenage pregnancies and abortion. [4]

Then he moved to feature-films, films made to screen in theaters or cinemas. Alistair Davis mentioned *Poor Cow* (1967), *Kes* (1969), *Family Life* (1971) and *Fatherland* (1986), and David P. Christopher brought more details about film *Kes*. It is set in Yorkshire among a coal-mining community. It shows the aimless life of a young boy surrounded by inadequate authorities of his family and teachers. Loach's following work brings us in the time of Thatcherism. These times David P. Christopher represented by Film *Look and Smiles* (1982). This film is about two young school-leavers at a time when opportunities are few. [4]

To the most critically appraised films, appearing around millennium, belong *My name is Joe* (1998), *Sweet 16* (2002) and *Ae Fond Kiss* (2004). David P. Christopher described the last one, named after a love poem by Robert Burns, that it shows the relationship of Muslim businessman and Irish Catholic music teacher in working class background and how their relationship crosses the religious and cultural and borders.

Nevertheless, Ken Loach hasn't devoted his work only to England. After small censorship, stated in Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture, he returned to low budget feature-films and created film *Hidden Agenda* (1990), alleging shoot to kill

activities of the British Army in Ireland. [1] David P. Christopher presented more these films. For example in *Land and Freedom* (1995) Loach's character, David Carne, goes to Barcelona to fight in Spanish Civil War, *Carla's Song* (1996) is set in Nicaragua and also deals with political struggle and others which are not connected with British working class.

Ken Loach's realistic films dealing with social problems and issues have become one of the main strength of British cinema. [4] The authenticity through which he made his films is the biggest power how he has influenced audience and has drawn their attention. His characters face the same problems as common member of working class at the time when the films appear. They live in the same living-conditions, speak in the same dialects, have similar relationships and have the same troubles as members of working class do.

Showing how people in Britain really live is considered the main strength of British realism. The Film-makers have always tried to depict the way of life people in England live in accordance with the old documentary tradition. With this attitude toward making films, British realists have created films falling into the group of films called, by some, "Heritage films" which makes, with other films dealing with things connected with Britain, British national cinema, as stated Alistair Davis and David P. Christopher.

More or less, realists were able to record the atmosphere of the age when their films appeared and in the case of Ken Loach, the picture of working class was always accurate.

1.2 Working class features

Working class has always been interesting part of British class society to portray, study or examine. Mike Storry and Peter Child, this time in the book *British Cultural Identities*, accurately pointed out that more ink has been spilled about them than any other group in British society. [5] On the other hand they noted the fact that what is presented in these novels, plays, films and television documentary is often more what middle class thought about working class because most of these portrays have been reported by members of middle class.

Since 1950s the audience has been provided with films with traditional picture of working class life. The main protagonists were usually men showing in condition which Richard Hoggart presented as condition:

Where the engines clang and hammer ceaselessly and the sparks fly out of the huge doorways and a men can be seen, black to the shoulders, having and straining at hot pieces of metal, or through the huge area in Hull which has a permanent pall of cooking and fishing-meal over it, seeping through the packed houses.[6]

Mike Storry and Peter Childs saw these men as the man who usually left school having no qualification. Thus, they can find a job only in manufactory industry where they worked as manual workers. They had a regional accent, a trade union membership card and lived in a close-knit community of 'two-up-two-down' terraced houses owned by a landlord or the council. [5] In their free time they bet on football matches and visit them. Then they were fond of drinking a pint of beer with their friends in local pub or enjoyed the food, like Sundays roast dinners or anything, what they can share together. Last but not least sign, what they considered as important sign of working class men of 1950s, is voting for Labour Party.

Considering working class women of 1950s, they saw them as perfect mothers, who always stayed at home to care about family and having no other activities in their life, except Bingo.

The first change, working class experienced, came with the victories of the Conservatives party in 1950s. Mike Storry and Peter Child stated that the Conservatives improved wages, living condition, education, welfare system and brought consumer goods into working class. The better standards of living led to more individualistic opinions among working class members. The fact that some working class members stopped to incline to Labor party, they describe as that working class were looking forward to their next consumer purchase and not some grand socialist revolution. [5] Men from working class spent a great deal of time on DIY and wanted a better life for their families.

The second change had more serious consequences. It coincided with the new Prime Minister in 1979, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher. The Book British Cultural Identities describe

the time she ruled as a period of cultural transformation. She divided working class into two groups.

Men of the first group were described in British Cultural Identities as men who were able to keep their full-time or part-time jobs. Their living conditions were better and better. They could afford their own car, fridge, washing machine, television, telephone and inside bathroom and toilet. However, the greatest revolution has been in housing choices. In 1988, 72 percent of skilled and 55 percent of semi-skilled manual workers owned their own house [5] and how Mike Storry and Peter Childs presented the majority of manual workers would like to buy a house. These working class members spent less time with workmate in pubs and more time with family at home.

The second group was created especially due to decline of heavy industry in Britain. Many manual workers who used to work in heavy industry have been unable to find a job. [6] Members of this part were viewed in British Cultural Identities as members of working class who wasn't successful in looking for a job and their long-lasting unemployment led to feeling of despair, little hope and no future. In 1979 only 6 per cent of the population lived at the lowest rate of social security benefit. Today, 19 per cent lived at this level. [5] These unskilled workers had to face homelessness, diseases or drugs. The level of crime has also arisen during time of Mrs. Thatcher's politics. The growth of poverty has come riots in very poor urban areas. [5]

Naturally, the position of working class women changed too. Mike Storry and Peter Childs saw the most crucial change in the position on labor market. They presented, that since 1979 the majority of British workforce was formed by male manual workers. These days, nearly 50 percent were females or members of some ethnic minority. This work they described as poorly paid and very often only part-time jobs in retailing, banking or insurance sector, but it brought working class women more independence on men. This has resulted in more all-female social activities outside home. [5] Good example can be the 'women only' stripper show, Chippendales, famous all over Britain. On the other hand they mentioned that some of these new working class women were often unmarried single mothers who lived on council estate.

Although working class went through a lot of changes, they still considered themselves as working class and in a position at the bottom of British class society. Working class people have become more money-centered, family-centered and individualistic.[5] and

tended to consumer spending. However, they still didn't feel to be middle class although they felt the importance what classes mean for British people as stated Mike Storry and Peter Childs.

Nevertheless, members of working class, according to Kate Fox, are quite content with their place in society and usually divide society only on US (working class) and THEM (middle and upper class). They are not as much class-conscious as for instance middle class. They don't care about whether someone is from upper upper, lower upper, upper middle, middle middle or lower middle class.

Especially in time when old stereotypes are broken and new ones are appearing. Now, it is not possible to classified member of working class according to identical flat caps on his head and with no quid in his pocket, like the document *The Grumpy Guide To Class* mentioned, because there is no one like that. The same is with occupations. It was also stated in this document that now can be plaster more than solicitor. In other words, now is not important the wealth or appearance but the most obvious class indicators according to James O'Driscoll are what ones says, the attitudes, interest, and in what way, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar or dialect. *The Grumpy Guide To Class* added that next important indicator is where people life and what they have inside their houses.

Considering the language, everybody with strong regional accent is considered as working class, stated James O'Driscoll and presented that the most famous working class accent is a strong eastern London accent called Cockney. It is rythming slang. It means that for 'head' they use 'loaf of bread' or for 'stairs', 'apples and pears'.

Kate Fox added more specific features of working class language. They often drop their consonants, especially the first one. The example could be the 'alf past seven' instead of 'half past seven' or 'em' instead of 'them'. Another typical feature is elongating the vowel 'a' or pronouncing 'th' as 'f' or 'v'.

From the vocabulary point of view, she stated that working class people say 'me' instead of 'my' and use 'Mum and dad' instead of 'mammy' and 'daddy' used by upper class children. Then Kate fox added working class words like 'patios' for 'terraces' or 'indoors' instead of 'home', 'home' and 'property' for 'house'.

In Britain seven words exist and they serve as a perfect class indicator. Kate Fox names them as *The Seven Deadly Sins*. It's Pardon, Toilet, Serviette, Dinner, Settee, Lounge and Sweet. She describes that working class language use 'Wha' instead of

'pardon', 'sorry' or 'what'. They again omit the consonant in words 'toilet' so they say 'toile', instead of 'serviette' they have 'napkin' and instead of 'diner' they have 'tea'. They sit in 'couch' not in 'settee'. On the other hand they use 'lounge', but the higher classes use 'dawning room' or 'sitting room'.

After all the changes it is still possible to find features typical for working class. James O'Driscoll presented few. Typical eating place where working class people usually eat is 'Workman's café', which is sometimes called 'greasy spoon' and serve typical British food like fried food of English breakfast. As second most popular eating place, he saw, fish and chips shop or any other fast food.

Still they are fond of football, no matter whether they play it or watch it. However, James O'Driscoll mentioned that last two decades it is becoming interest of more people, not only from working class. Working class is still fond of betting on matches and not only on matches. As The Grumpy Guide To Class showed they like to buy the scratch cards.

As for the way of living, James O'Driscoll stated that they are often force to live in block of flats which are not generally popular in Britain, but they cannot afford their own house. On the other hand the desire to own or live in a house makes a lot of people from working class stay in 19th century houses with outside toilettes.

1.3 Working class films after 1960s

The changes working class went through were also recorded in some films. David P. Christopher described these times as a turbulent time in which old certainties were challenge and became eroded. Traditional ideas about class, politics, drugs, sexuality and the place of women were all being interrogated in society and arts.[4] Firstly the film-makers demonstrated the changes coming after 1960s and later they concentrated more on effect of Thatcherism and on the problems it caused. Since 1960s British film industry has produced many regarded directors and film-makers. The most distinctive artists connecting with working class were directors, Joseph Losey, Bill Douglas, Stephen Frears, playwright

Hanif Kureishi or the most enigmatic director Peter Greenaway. However, the biggest attention to working class was given by the avowed naturalist, Mike Leigh.

Joseph Losey reported this changing situation in several his film, expressing the dying Britain's class system's stereotypes and using the architecture of British houses and institutions. This made him, according to Alistair Davis, stylish anatomist of the English. In his films *The Servant* (1963), *Accident* (1967), and *The Go-Between* (1971) he showed that the traditional attitudes to working class, and not only to working class, were challenged on many fronts. David P. Christopher added more details about the first film, *The Servant*. In this film Joseph Losey shows the issues of class and homosexuality in a subtle and indirect manner when his main characters, working class cockney manservant and effeminate aristocratic master, change their roles.

Yet in 1970s Bill Douglas came with few films dealing with working class. He didn't exactly show the changes. He described of the condition of Scottish working class where he had been brought up. In his autobiographical films, Alistair Davis presented, *My Childhood* (1972), *Ain't Folk* (1974) and *My Way Home* (1979) is felt the deprivation Scottish working class felt in these times.

David P. Christopher pointed out that during the 1970s and 1980s it was hard to make films about identity or ethnicity. For these films didn't have a great commercial appeal they were screen only in small, independent cinemas and had low profits. They were usually low-budget films with relatively unknown film-makers.

The result was that working class could be hardly seen in big cinemas which were full of films, which were beautifully filmed, richly costumed and classically acted and presented an idealized, romanticized image of English life, and receive a numerous international awards [4], despite the fact that many critics didn't appreciate them and consider them as made for pleasure overseas audience and quick profit for the creators.

But between 1985 and 1991, grants became available to improve arts facilities following the riots of the 1980s. [4]

As a result, as also Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture said, in 1980s was a black, feminist, diasporan and gay film movement and also working class had more opportunities to be screen.

As the most original and highly regarded films connecting with working class in 1980s David P. Christopher considered films which were made by duo Hanif Kureishi, born in Pakistanian family in south-eastern England, and Stephen Frears, British director. Plays, novels and screenplays written by Hanif Kureishi raised awareness of the increasingly diverse nature of British society, often showing the problems of marginal groups. David P. Christopher saw Kureishis films as powerful critique of Tory society and at the same time it provides an optimistic message how people can triumph over adversity.

Film *My Beautiful Launderette* (1985) explores themes of racial tensions, youth, class and sex, in one of the most original and highly regarded films about Asian culture in Britain.[4] It tells a story of working class boy Omar who opens a launderette in tough area in London with friend from school. They both have their own problems which even arise when they become lovers. Second Film David P. Christopher presented from this multicultural duo was *Sammy and Rosie, Get Laid* (1987). Among other things it shows the disapproval of lifestyle, politics, class and culture. The last film, mentioned in British culture: An Introduction, with some features from working class is *Prick Up Your Ears* (1987). It tells about gay playwright Joe Orton and shows a repressed nation, divided by hypocrisy and a rigid class system. [4]

Also Peter Greenaway, according to David P. Christopher one of the most enigmatic, innovative and stylish British film-maker, touched changes British society and working class were going through. Although he was aimed more at the different professions than working class has and his other work omitted working class almost at all, in films *The Cook, the Thief, his Wife and her Lover* (1989) dealing with criticism of the Thatcher years we can meet also working class features.

In 1990s Britain experienced the economic decline and as a reaction to these changes artists came with new trend of mirroring this situation. This style is known as naturalism or new realism and David P. Christopher described it as overtly political and attempted to represents ordinary people's proud battles in difficult circumstances by showing situation from the viewpoint of the protagonist, and taking a non-judgmental view of their action. [4] Working class provided naturalistic film-makers with plenty of topics. Films about them were becoming the most appreciated and awarded films from British film industry.

In these times Mike Leigh, the most appreciated naturalist, became the most highly regarded author for his realistic portraits and natural performance in his films dealing mainly with working class. Born in 1943, Leigh has been a writer and director for television, theatre and film. [1]

The reputation Mike Leigh gained was mainly due to his curiously and bitter comedies of lower-middle and working class manners and aspiration, as Peter Childs and Mike Storry mentioned in Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture. He began working in London's fringe theaters during the 1960s, where he earned a reputation for sharply observed social commentary. [4] In 1971 he made his first film *Bleak Moments* but he became most famous in 1970s when he worked for theatre and television. He created a series of television dramas and the most famous was *Abigail's Party*. David P. Christopher confirms the statement of Peter Childs and Mike Storry, when he described *Abigail's Party* as comedy of social manners among the lower-middle class.

In his future career Mike Leigh continued with picturing working class situation. David P. Christopher highlighted films *High Hopes* (1988), *Life is Sweet* (1991) and *Naked* (1993). The first mentioned, *High Hopes*, David P. Christopher described as the demonstration of the tensions between families from different social backgrounds in 1980s in London. He criticizes the growing inequality, greed and selfishness into which society appeared to be descending. [4]

David P. Christopher saw his Films as the studies of class and manner and described his films as films in which he provided audience more with detailed characterizations than plot or action. Despite the seriousness of the topics he chose for his films, his films were lightened by humorous incidents and witted remarks. The authenticity and reality which are felt from Leigh's film are achieved by improvisation by his actors and making screenplays after this improvisation His ability accurately and sympathetically to chronicle the manner and lifestyle of Britain's lower classes has encouraged critical comparisons with Charles Dickens. [4]

Working class has always been an important part of British film industry. The picture of the ways how they live helped to bring some improvements and raised awareness among other members of British society. The films often had the critical aspect inside and often

the purpose of their creation wasn't to entertain the audience but to show how these people live and think about the situation in which the protagonist find themselves. This is also the reason why some people didn't like working class films and preferred other genres which brought them more the entertainment. This approach caused that for some time films about working class were overshadowed by the commercial films. Fortunately, after the riots of 1980s the situation for working class films has been getting better and better and recently British government has announced other improvements to support British film Industry.

2 CURRENT STATE OF BRITISH FILMS

Since the beginning of British film industry the film makers had to deal with inefficient support by the government. They had to rely on profits from commercial films which were less critically appraised but more appraised by the audience. Fortunately for the British film industry, British government in late 1990s realized this fact and did some precaution because British film industry still have a lot of things which are unusual, highly appraised and can be found only in United Kingdom.

War films, Bond Films, Ealing comedies and horror have been among the most popular genres, but the most highly praised and best loved are adaptations of classical novels [4], costume dramas and romantic comedies. British love for adaptations and comedies is felt from many sources. Eddie Dyja puts it beside the fact that the risk takers, who are brave enough to avoid these genres, are, by some, considered as foolish.

They consider them this way because films with limited interest and more specialized nature, what working class films generally are, are usually seen only by a network of small independent cinemas called “art house” or repertory cinema. These cinemas bring less audience and profit although these films have usually great success in critic’s evaluation. They are often promoted and distributed by Channel 4 and BBC. These two TV stations and British Screen were the only constant funders of British Films. James O’Driscoll in his book Britain highlight the fact that BBC gives work to actors and directors and Channel 4 is responsible for making of some high-quality British films. The importance of the financial help and technical assistance of these two British media is also highlighted by Eddie Dyja and David P. Christopher.

David P. Christopher stated that at the end of 1990’s British government realized that this serious situation could destroy the British film industry. He described how were British films beaten by Hollywood’s big budget films and not only audience preferred Hollywood to British film industry but also the highly appraised actors, directors, techniques and other specialists were attracted by the money, opportunities and chances Hollywood offers.

This was the reason why British government became interested in film industry and tried to change the image of neglecting government body that didn’t provide British films

and film-makers with efficient distribution, promotion, assistance etc. Thus, some improvements were announced. Eddie Dyja together with Peter Childs and Mike Storry mentioned few of them like new tax scheme, innovation of old Film Act 1985, giving motivation to film-makers and help with distribution. Despite all the changes Eddie Dyja commented this in Television and Film handbook as: “much have changed, yet, there is little change”.

On the other hand there is still something what could be British film industry proud of. British technical expertise and artistic integrity is awarded all over the world. David P. Christopher stated that the latest techniques of digital post-production, special effects and sound recordings, as well as actors, directors and studios created the world’s leading centre outside Hollywood.

2.1 The most important institutions of British film industry

Recently, three organizations play the major role in British film industry. The oldest one, British Film Institute (BFI), keeps the values of British film and spreads it into the audience. The second one, Film Council, is new governmental body which should help to save the situation in British film industry, and last but not least, The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) whose main purpose is to award films from all over the world.

British Film Institute has the longest history. It was founded in 1933 to promote moving image culture in Britain [1]. It is a non-governmental organization. Its revenues come from donations, profits from films they support or make, but the major part of its revenues came from governmental back up. The nature of British films stems also from British Film Institute’s objectives. As Peter Childs and Mike Storry stated in their Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture, British Film Institute recognized British films as a cultural heritage. This significance of British culture in films and television is

written down in Royal Charter besides the fact that British films should record contemporary life and manner of British people.

The aim of British Film Institute is not only to nurture the understanding of film 'as a record of contemporary life and manners, to foster study and appreciation of it from these points of view' [1], but also to promote, develop and keep the values of the moving images alive. This is achieved by different organizations, which all together make the BFI's complex. Peter Childs and Mike Storry mentioned The National Film and Television Archive, which holds around 300,000 films and television programs from 1895, The National Film Theatre (NFT) and Museum of Moving Image (MOMI). They represent the appreciation of films from more cultural point of view than commercial. Among other activities is worth to mention researches, educational activities, publishing magazines and supporting and distribution of under-represented film genders.

Until 1998 the Arts Council was the governmental superior of British Film Institute but this year Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) announced a new government body, the Film Council. Since then, the Film Council has taken Arts Council's place for British film industry. Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture says also the month of announcement, June, and the Cultural Secretary, Chris Smith. Eddie Dyja in The Film and Television Handbook, also published by BFI, adds more details about the Film Council. The Film Council has had the responsibility for providing grants to the British Film Institute and also took over the distribution of National Lottery funds for Films from the Arts Council.

The foundation of Film Council was the result of vulnerable position of British film industry. It belonged to the improvements coming after publishing the report "Bigger Picture", written by Film Review Group for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, where are recommendations how to improve British film industry. Beside this, Eddie Dyja hopes that it will learn the lessons from recent history and not bogged down in bureaucracy, or spend money unwisely, and will instead, work towards providing a robust infrastructure that supports film producers, distributors and exhibitors in the UK [2] She fosters her opinion by citation Terry Llott's comment from 1996 handbook which shows he has similar attitude to British film industry. In Addition, he feels the disappointment by distribution of Lottery money by Arts Council. Eddie Dyja supports this statement by using

Charles Denton, The Arts Council's Lottery Film panel chairman when he once voiced that no Lottery financed film had made a profit.

On The Contrary to this commercial point of view stands The British Academy of Film and Television Art (BAFTA). It was established in 1947 by famous artists at that time. David Lean, the avowed director, was appointed the chairman. The fundamental purpose "to recognize those who had contributed outstanding creative work towards the advancement of British film" [3] was achieved more than its founders could imagine, as nowadays members of BAFTA claim at their WebPages.

The main purpose they see in supporting, promoting, developing and awarding of films as well as education, inspiration and benefiting the public. Giving the opportunity to learn from their classy members for all, they denote as one of their key service. Majority of the members of The British Academy of Film and Television Art is professionals and artists working in film and television or games industries. Since 2005 American members have become part of their 6500 members. Nevertheless, the most distinctive function, The British Academy of Film and Television Art has, is awarding twenty of thirty British awards. BAFTA awards continue to recognize the best talent in moving images and be recognized as throughout the world as a mark of excellence. [3]

2.2 Recent success of British film industry

Recently films dealing with working class belong to the most appraised films of British film industry. Especially, in times when Britain occupies the second place (after the USA) in three of the most prestigious prizes (Oscars, New York Critics Awards and Cannes Festival), taking 25 percent of the awards in New York, 20 percent of the Oscars and 15 percent in Cannes since 1980 [1], is seen how some films about working class are appraised and thanks these awards they are spread among the audience all over the world. On the other hand Peter Childs and Mike Storry together with Eddie Dyja expressed the regret that some critically highly regarded films are more often screen more in Europe than in Britain.

At Cannes Festival Mike Leigh won several awards with his working class films *Secrets and Lies* (1996) and *Naked* (1993). Ken Loach, with his surrealistic face of his films, was awarded at this prestigious Festival as well. Also thanks to these awards and awards from less known festival, for instance the Golden Bear in Berlin, Peter Child and Mike Storry indicated them as the best and most awarded British directors. They also highlight the work of Lindsay Anderson, Neil Jordan, Carol Reed, and Alan Parker. The last named, Alan Parker, has arguably been the most commercially successful British director over the last twenty years, he makes films that are technically impressive but often melodramatic and sensationalist [1] which make the contrast to realistic work of Ken Loach and Mike Leigh.

Some working class films had even the Oscar Nomination, for example *The Full Monty* or *Billy Elliot* but unfortunately, neither of these films managed to win Oscar award. Recent Oscar winners in the British film industry are films *The wrong trousers* (1993), *Franz Kafka's It's a Wonderful Life* (1995) and *The English Patient* (1997). *The Wrong Trousers* is an animated film created by Nick Park. It is about the famous duo Wallace and Grommit, the plasticine man and dog [1].

In terms of UK (or co-UK) product there was no repeat of the phenomenal success of *The Full Monty* [2] This film was the biggest success of working class films among British audience. Besides *The Full Monty*, British audience was most entertained by films *Sliding doors* (1998) *Lock, Stock, and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998) and *Shakespeare in Love* (1998).

The most recent success of British film industry has been the Oscar-winning film *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008). This film could be the prove that the situation of British film industry has been improving. Whether the government creates the independent and competitive film industry, which will be able to beat Hollywood dream films, remains to be seen. Last numbers written in *British Culture: An Introduction* show that even small changes have helped British film industry and some critics are optimistic about future of British films, which always have a great impact on what is going on in United Kingdom.

II. ANALYSIS

3 WORKING CLASS IN ANALYSED FILMS

Although each of these films deals with the different topics there are several features which are expressed by all four films such as way of living, nature of working class members or the troubles they experienced. The most prominent working class features of these films are the change of the position of working class women, then they often very accurately show the language they use, especially, in films *Billy Elliot* and *Secrets and Lies* and the most impressive feature is the relationships among the working class members.

All these films show the way of living of working class. According to their way of living can be also indicate working class people, because only people who cannot afford anything else would live in block of flats or in houses with outside lavatory.

Family of *Billy Elliot* lives in rural community in 19th century 'two-up-two-down' terraced house with the lavatory outside. James O'Driscoll points out that many working class families stays rather in this 19th century houses rather than lived on block of flats. Cynthia with Roxanne in *Secrets and Lies* live in the same type of house as well. Above, they still have the room after Cynthia's father and the lavatory can be found outside. Also working class men in *The Full Monty* live in this type of house. For instance Lomper lives here with his mum

Maurice and Monika, thanks to their effort in jobs and fact that Monica can't have baby, invest all money in their new house with three bathrooms and six bedrooms. Similar it is with the major and his wife in film *Hooligans*. The young fighter has decided to devote his time and money only to his family and from working class football fan has become successful man living in beautiful house. These examples prove the statement of *The Grumpy Guide To Class* that now property cannot serve as class indicator.

On the other hand Pete, major brother, by his flat represents the second type of typical working class way of living and the main protagonist from *The Full Monty*, Gary, lives in block of flats as well.

Another common feature of these films was that the working class characters often incline to violence in some difficult situation. Billy's father Jackie hit Tony when he wants to go to steal and offend him but unfortunately, with no effect. He probably even raises the

devoutness to steal in Tony. It is not the only case of Jackie's upbringing. When he find out that Billy is a ballet dancer and Billy is rude, he again try to hit him but Billy knows what is coming so he run away.

This sense of violence is most distinctive in film Hooligans. All firm live, as Pete stated himself, for the fights. They see this fight as a way how they can become somebody. They are becoming famous, the newspapers write about them and after every fight they feel like they've won the most important battle in their lives. The reason can be that there are only few opportunities how can working class guys become famous and can be proud about them.

The hooligans and the minors are not necessary the only working class members which tent to violence. Some features are also showed in films Secrets and Lies and in The Full Monty. For instance, when Gerald offends Gary, he immediately raises to hit him and vice verse. When Gary destroys the interview Gerald has for his new job, he enters the job centre and looks like ready to kill him. In Secrets and Lies there are also several moments between Cynthia and Roxanne which show their temperament.

In films Full Monty and Billy Elliot, there is depicted the situation of working class members after the decline of heavy industry which caused a huge unemployment. Protagonists in both films are unemployed und has to face difficult situation which their unemployment brings.

Billy Elliot provides audience with the group of minors in strikes. It is full of strong moments. It shows the hard-living conditions, how they have to survive the winter. Billy's father has to destroy the piano to put some wood in fireplace or then, how he tries to stop Tony, his elder son, not to go to steal because they haven't enough money.

In the Full Monty are the main protagonists previous steel-workers and their previous boss. They face the lack of money too but they find out how to earn some money and all their energy they invest in their stripper show. Also in this comedy are some features which express the seriousness of unemployed working class manual workers. First, Lomper would like to commit a suicide although he has old, ill mother at home to care about but in his situation is not able to do that. Then the desperate situation of Gary, when he has no enough money to pay for his son and he is under the treat that they can't see each other and he stays alone. Also Dave loses his position of man in the family. His wife is the one who earns money and he feels as a bad husband and is becoming more and more reserved.

3.1 Working class women

Women are depicted according to their real position in British society at that time. They are mainly occupied as workers in factories and create major part of the British workforce. They start to have their own life with their friends and the result is that they become less independent on males. On the other hand for all female characters, family still stays the biggest part of their life.

No matter, whether they are single mothers, as Cynthia in *Secrets and Lies*, who brings up her single daughter, or financially independent Jean in *Full Monty*.

Jean is the only working member of the family. Her husband Dave is still looking for a job. She represents the new working class women. She is independent, has her own friends and money to spend on whatever she wants. She is having fun with her friends and together they visit the performance of the *Chippendale*, the stripper show. This *Chippendale's* show was really famous in Britain and shows the improving situation of working class women in British society. Before, it was not usual that working class women had been entertained by men. It shows that working class women become an important part of society. They have money and would like to spend them and amuse themselves. The reason why are in audience in such show only women from working class is that ladies from the higher classes would not probably attend this type of entertainment. On the other hand the family still plays an important role in Jean's life. She supports Dave all the time, cares about him and shows him her love and her feeling.

Similar it is with Cynthia. She has her own life, more or less. She works in factory and when she is not at work she usually watches TV. However, the most important thing for her is her family. Not only her daughter, who has never seen her father, but also her younger brother whom she brought up after their mother died. Bringing them up creates the biggest part of her life. She often exaggerates the care about the family. She is very devoted but also very sensitive. The reason for her sensibility can be the fact that she gave her baby for adoption when she was very young. This is next sign of the liberalism of working class

women, and consumerism of working class. When 15 years old Cynthia spent nights with different men and she didn't even know who was the father. Then, it is even more shocking for her to find out that her baby, who decided to find her after death of her step-parents, is black.

It shows that the main duties of working class women are not to care about the family and help them all the time. From all women pictured in these films is felt the power they felt inside them and resisting attitude. It is visible, they know that they can choose how their life will look like. Often their choices aren't the best one for them, but it also proves that for working class is always more important to feel happy inside some communities, like family, friends, unions or workmates, than feel the job satisfaction as James O'Driscoll stated.

This proves also Cynthia's daughter Roxanne. She prefers working for Council to going to the College. She is happy with her boyfriend, mum, uncle and aunt who all together care about her.

On the other hand mother of Billy Elliot was a typical example of working class women of 1950s. She was at home and care about the children properly. Despite her death her presence is still felt in behavior of the characters. Billy still see her as she giving him some orders or advice and Billy's father decides right to sent him in Ballet school and it is clear that without mother's influence, he still had inside him, he would not decide this way. It shows how good mother and wife she was and how much time she spent with her family.

3.2 Working class relationships

All these four films are showing how tied and long-lasting relationships members of working class have and create. Films *The Full Monty* and *Hooligans* highlight the relationships and ties among the friends on the contrary to *Secrets and Lies* or *Billy Elliot* where the authors bring the audience among working class family members. However, neither of these films is aimed only at one thing in life of working class members, they all

are more complex and sophisticated just like the life, people from working class live. As a result we can see also in Hooligans or in Full Monty the ties with family and vice versa.

Friends from film Hooligans create so firmly tied relationships as in some kind of brotherhood. The betrayal is considered as the worst sin. When Bov unconsciously causes deathly injury of the previous major of their firm he is immediately expelled from the firm. Nevertheless, at the end it shows that, even he has been expelled, the ties can't be broken so quickly and easily and he is willing to do everything to save members of the firm or their families. That is the reason, why at the end in the final battle he saves the Yankee he has hated because this Yankee is a family of his friend and leader of the firm Pete. It is visible that saving Yankee is for him no problem and he would be willing to give his life to save him.

However, the biggest sacrifice is made by the main character Pete, the leader of the firm. He feels responsible for what has happen to their previous major, who is in addition his brother. When he sees major's wife with her small baby in danger. He chooses to be clubbed to the death to save his and his brother family.

The friendship among the group of strippers in Full Monty is not so closely tied. They don't behave like one body. Each person in this group is an individual person who gives the face to the group. Despite the differences they create a group of friends and cooperate with each other which are other advantages for the group. Each of the members brings something from his personality and thanks to this they performance is such a success in the end. Gary is the leader who has come with this idea, promote it with his specific speaking skills and support the other members. Gerald with Horse prepare the performance and Eric is the handsome boy in the group. David, the best friend of Gary is not pretty, creative or voluble but only his presence and support is important for Gary. He gains the power to do such a brave performance also from this friendship and support of his old friend.

The reason why Gary have decided to make such a show is that he needs money to keep seeing his son, who lives with Gary's previous wife and her new boyfriend. For Gary's unemployment he is unable to pay money for Nathan, his son, and the wife demand that only she will care about Nathan. His last change to keep in touch with his son is to pay 700 pounds. When Gary and David are talking in job local centre about the Chippendales this idea comes to his mind. Gary wouldn't be able to face all the troubles without his old

friend Dave. In times when Gary has been losing everything, his job, wife, and now son, Dave is the last thing Gary still has. That's the reason why is Dave important for the group. The prove comes when Gary enter the shop where Dave has started to work because he thinks he is too fat to be a stripper. Gary tries to persuade him to join the group in dress rehearsal but with no success although he explains Dave how much is he needed. Nevertheless, after all Dave takes part in the final performance after support of his wife Jean.

Friendships among working class are similar to family relationships. Many working class families have problems and working class men often create "family" with their friends. They spent their time together and support themselves. They have fun together and experience things together. That's what ties them most and what form their friendships.

Working class men aren't often the perfect fathers or husbands. They often have a lot of troubles in their families but often they can fix it. Although they haven't the best behavior they have a lot of love for their family and are devoted to do everything what their families need.

Gary is willing to become a stripper and risk the humiliation and that he can lose his son forever but he is able to do everything to save his relationship with his son. Especially when their relationship is getting deeper and deeper with all the troubles they have to face.

The same devoutness to family is seen in film Billy Elliot. When Billy's father Jackie find out how talented is his son he is willing to lose his friends, his pride and go back to the work to earn money for Billy's ballet school, but his older son stops him to stay in strike and persuade him that they find another way how to pay Billy's studies. The second sacrifice he makes when he put in pawnbrokers shop all golden jewellery, belonging to his dead wife. These are the last things what he has. It is seen how much he still loves her and how he misses her but for his family he is willing to sacrifice all things he has.

3.3 Mixture of working class and middle class

The relationships between working class and middle class are also changing. Promotion to middle class or fall into the working class is easier after Britain society has

gone through all the changes and the class system become more flexible and old stereotypes are not valid anymore. These films showed some examples of how working class members can enter the middle class and how they cope with it and on the contrary they picture some situations when member of middle class falls into the working class and how working class member deals with middle class newcomer.

First example of assimilation of middle and working class brings film *Hooligans*. Members of the gang often don't have working class jobs or manners. One is teacher, other one is wearing the uniform and work at the airport probably as steward or maybe pilot. If they weren't among their working class friends, people would consider them as middle class. On the other hand when they are with their friends, they drink beers in pubs, visit football matches and fight with other gangs belonging to different football teams. They have typical working class features, the values they respect and the language they use. The language is often Cockney and some has a strong accent. The most important activity for them is Football, which was a long time considered as working class leisure activity.

They live for Football or more properly for the fights and drinking with friends. They feel no responsibility, no job satisfaction; don't care about promotion, more money or having children. They had only their firm in their hands. These things are typical for working class. They maybe belong to middle class according to jobs and money but inside they are still working class and members who before weren't working class and came from middle class families are glad to belong to such firm and have such strong relationships. James O'Driscoll used the term 'inverted snobbery' to describe the trend within middle class. They want to be classified as working class because their values are esteem as the more honest and truthful. This *Hooligans* movement could be a good example. Members of middle class became part of the firms and forgot the class system and enjoy the friendship and fun working class offers.

The relationship between working class and middle class is also presented in film *Full Monty*. When the previous steel-workers are looking for a job they are meeting their previous boss every day in local job centre. He find himself, with his beautiful house, small garden with garden dwarfs, solarium, gym and well-furnished house, in the same situation as the workers are. He lost his job and slowly he loses all the property he has. In the beginning is felt that he would like to keep the distance he and the workers used to have.

He still keeps the manners he has as a member of middle class. He is eager to find a new job, attended a dancing courses with his wife. He says “sorry” when he haven’t heard properly but, isn’t frank to his wife when he conceal the truth that he is unemployed. After few struggles, also he enjoys the friendships he has gained after assimilation in working class subordinates. Then, they are helping each other and cooperate in tough situations for instance when two men come to impound furniture belonging to Horace, the previous boss, all boys top-off make them leaving the house without anything.

This proved that situation in Britain has changed. Class system became less rigid and people from different classes can mix and are able to cooperate. They are still aware of classes but they are also aware of the changes that happened.

Film *Secrets and Lies* provide audience with opposite effect. Maurice bought a business dealing with photography from his friend leaving to Australia. He used money from father’s bequest which should have served also to Cynthia, his younger sister and her daughter. However they gave their part to Maurice to start his business, which is another example of the strong and true relationships working class, could have. With this money he became a successful photographer. He bought nice house with garden, three bathrooms, well refurbished and furniture. At the first sight is visible he isn’t working class any more. But inside he is the same working class person. He often talks with his wife about their families and how they missed in contrast to the luxury they live in. The inverted snobbery middle class experience these days may lies in the fact that many previous working class members became middle class but their values and relationships still keep them in working class and spread these values among other members of middle class they can meet.

Completely different case it is with Billy Eliot. He is originally from typical rural working class family. They live among the working class community in 19th century houses with the lavatory outside the house. He is forced to do boxing to be a strong member of family. When he takes part in a ballet lesson and finds the talent he has and starts to be fond of dancing. After a several restrictions made by his father, who still believes that ballet is for girls and want to have a proper working class man from his son. This means that he would become a miner and don’t leave the family and let other people to laugh at him. Finally, Billy applies for a place in national ballet school in London. As he is very talented and at the first sight is clear how music makes him dance, he is accepted. Then,

Billy leaves the family to study in London while his father and brother are again in mines, after some strikes. It is seen how difficult it is for him and his family. At the end of his studies Billy's family is invited to performance. Both, his father and brother came to see him. Their tired and exhausted face create contrast to the beauty of the theater, dresses, music and the ballet itself in which is now Billy.

The case that working class boy attends Royal Ballet School is as unusual as the final attitude of the family to the Billy's education. It wasn't usual that working class boy has a chance to study on such prestigious school. The situation of education of working class children has improved recently and the more study opportunities they have the more opportunities they have in life. This also destroys the borders between middle class and working class.

Another question can be how successful could Billy be. If he became a really successful ballet-dancer and spread the fame of United Kingdom all over the world he would be given by title Sir and enter the upper class. This would be more like American dream but it still can happen and from the working class boy would be the upper class member. Similar cases have just happened. The football player, musicians or actors sometimes came from working class and through their talent they became members of the upper classes.

3.4 Working class language

As James O Driscoll highlighted now is not important what property or how much money one has. The most important class indicator is what one says and in what way. The characters from these films proved this statement. Although some live in beautiful houses and have good jobs, as for instance Monika and Maurice in *Secrets and Lies*, their language has similar features with the minors in *Billy Elliot*. In these films is the language of the protagonist most distinctive. The minors use their northern regional accent. Another accent is used by some characters, especially by Cynthia and Roxanne, in *Secrets and Lies*. Monika and Maurice haven't any strong accent, but in their language they still have some

working class feature. Also Hooligans use their specific working class dialect only in *The Full Monty* the language feature is less distinctive.

The connecting features between Monika and Maurice and the minors are many. For instance dropping the consonants, using 'meself' instead of 'myself' or using the word 'what' with the omitting of the last 't' in situations when they haven't understand properly or want to heard something twice. This answer indicate Kate Fox as one of the seven words, called Seven Deadly Sin, and according to them every British person recognize, what classes one comes from and this 'wha' is typical answer for working class . Monica used this word when she is hovering and her husband asks she if she would like to have a glass of wine and she doesn't understand duo to the hovering

The omitting of the consonant is the most frequently used sign of working class language in these two films. Billy omits consonants of every word he used where it is possible but it is also connected with his accent. Cynthia shortens her words very often as well. This feature, considered by Kate fox as the one of the most specific for working class, is mainly used by these two characters the rest of protagonist use it less frequently.

The second connecting working class feature, pronouncing 'myself' as 'meself' or using 'me' instead of 'my' also reveal the working class base of Monika and Maurice. Maurice constantly used 'meself' when he talks about himself. Billy next to the 'meself' used 'me mum', when he talk about his mum with Mrs. Wilkinson, as Kate fox again highlighted as habit of working class children. Also Cynthia used 'meself' and 'me bill' or 'me head'.

Cynthia also elongates the vowel 'a' what Kate fox indicate as typical working class habit. She uses it especially in words 'daaaarling' or 'sweetheaaaart'.

Also in Film *Hooligans* the protagonists show the working class membership through the language. They use the Cockney dialect that James O'Driscoll described as one of the best known working class dialect. It is a dialect of eastern London, what is also the place where the protagonists live and it is home of their football team United. Using this dialect create the connection and ties among the members of firm. The importance of this dialect is visible at the first sight. It is the first thing, except football, what Pete introduce to Yankee and then he proudly explain how this dialect works and that this language is what they used and what is used in Britain. Second prove comes when they enter the pubs and after

introduction the members of the firm immediately say something in Cockney, just from the habit or to exanimate the Yankee.

Only in film Full Monty audience cannot meet the specific working class features of language. The protagonists don't use any specific working class accent, the omitting of the consonants is also not so much distinctive and they don't elongate the vowel 'a' at all. It is possible that they just haven't got the chance to use the proper words like 'wha', 'patios' or 'indoors' but it is clear that showing working class language wasn't the purpose of making this film.

4 FORM OF ANALYSED FILMS

Films also differ in form. *The Full Monty* and *The Green Street Hooligans* can be considered as commercial-looking films. *Billy Elliot* stays somewhere in the middle. It doesn't make the naturalist picture of working class life. It is full of funny moments, cute situations and beautiful dances which make the contrast to the strike of the minors. On the other hand Mike Leigh's film *Secrets and Lies* correspond with the definition of David P. Christopher and provide audience with more detailed characterization than plot or action.

The Full Monty and *Hooligans* are support by good, known and modern music which is similar with the tradition of New Wave that used modern music in their films as well. The film-makers can be influenced by these films and use this feature in their films. Both films together with *Secrets and Lies* have also the similarities with the naturalism or new realism. They deal with the ordinary people in their own battles and difficult situations.

In *Hooligans* we can meet also the non-judgmental view of the action of the protagonist. The *Hooligans* are not depicted here like the bad guys. The film shows their lives, their situation and shows also the consequences of their behavior but with no negative connotation. The real view on what they have caused and how they are feels about it affect audience more than if they were depicted as bad guys and without any feelings. Despite the terrible things which the real members of *Hooligans* caused in Britain, here they are presented as 'heroes', in exaggerate terms. The fact is that no matter how much Pete destroy the face of the major of the other firm or how much heads he has broken, however, at the end when he decides to be clubbed to death to safe his family he is considered as a hero and many people makes cry. The terrify situation is that he wouldn't had have to be clubbed to death if he hadn't done the things he did before. The film explores how tied relationships they have the values they respect and that the protagonist are a good people which do stupid things and how they react on the consequences. Audience isn't terrified by their behavior but by the situations they have to face.

The non-judgmental view is used also by Mike Leigh in *Secrets and Lies*. As a main representative of naturalism he used this feature more often. This film is the most naturalistic work from these four films. The audience can have the feeling that they lived with the protagonist. Most of the film is created only by dialogs. They are talking and

thought their speech, feelings, expression and body language the audience get to know the protagonist very properly and is easier then to understand their feelings and situations in which they find themselves. This style is typical for Mike Leigh. As David P. Christopher describes he is director who specializes on detailed characterization.

On the contrary stays the comedy *The Full Monty* where the audience has to 100% stand by the protagonist in their troubles and likes all the mistakes they do and the weird characters they have. This is another aspect why it can look commercial. Their struggles are viewed with an optimistic element and all comes to the happy end.

Also *Billy Elliot* has some similar feature with New Wave films. The protagonists speak in their regional slang, which brings the authenticity. It is set in northern town Durham in communities of minors. But on the other hand Billy himself has inside him the feeling of optimism and he provided the other characters with this feeling. These features are what David P. Christopher described as the bases of New Wave principles.

One of the most interesting parts is how Billy spread this feeling of optimism. No matter that most of the characters are in desperate situations. His father and brother are minors on strike and have no positive views about the strikes or about their future but when they has seen Billy dances they cooperate together with their friends and want to find the solution how gather the money for Billy and still comes with new ideas. Although Tony, the brother, is always more practical then creative it is seen that he also want to find the solution. And this effort brings the positive feeling of the situation. Similar it is with the teacher Mrs. Wilkinson. She recently has found out that her husband had affair with another woman and she is desperate from this fact, too. However, when she is with Billy, and helps him to get the chance for better life, she seems to find new thing to make her happy and which turn her back the hope. Unfortunately, the hope disappears with Billy. Last person who is affected by Billy's optimism is Michael, his homosexual friend. How hard it would be for him to grow up as homosexual in minor community. But Billy is not one of the minors and understands his friend. It is very probable that Billy's helps Michael to leave Durham and find his way of live among the girl's cloths and boyfriends.

Wheatear the film-makers continue with the tradition of 1930s in their films or were influenced by their predecessors or the similarities are just accidental, is issues of another deeper scutation. There is no doubt that the films have the similarities with the two most important movement picturing working class.

CONCLUSION

Working class has always been interesting part of British society to depict. Many artists choose it for their work because working class has always provided them with plenty of attractive topics. Their hard living conditions, their nature, values, way of live and the changes they experienced made this class the most picturing element of British society.

There were times when the films about working class were overshadowed by other genres as Hollywood dream's films, costume dramas or comedies which have ever been the most popular genres among the British.

On the other hand there were also times when working class belongs to the main strength of British film industry. This was achieved especially thanks to two avowed British directors Ken Loach and Mike Leigh. Both are the specialist on working class. Ken Loach brought working class topics from the shadow and devoted almost all of his work to working class and brought their situations and problems among the audience, while Mike Leigh recorded with his naturalistic approach. He concentrated more on detail characterization than on plot or action. Their working class films belongs to the most critically appraised films of British film industry what prove the number of nominations and awards they gained in all big films ceremonies like Oscars or Cannes Festival or in less known festivals.

The film-makers always tried to depict working class situation in accordance with the reality. First movement, the realism, was based on the old British documentary tradition and showed position of working class after two World Wars. These realists are considered as historians but also some are accused that they created the picture working class. New Wave film-makers create the fresh and raw portrait of working class and used different features to achieve more authenticity.

Films of Mike Leigh and Ken Loach record the real situation as well. Ken Loach used new ways of documentary film techniques. His films are serious but with humors and sense of positive message. Leigh concentrates more on working class behavior and manners.

Films *Secrets and Lies*, *The Full Monty*, *Billy Elliot* and *The Green Street Hooligans* proved this statement as well. They perfectly depict the situation on working class

members considering the way of life, living conditions, language, relationships, values, the changing position of working class women and the changing position of working class itself.

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