

1973-06-14b: [SYNCHRONIC / DIACHRONIC] Synchronic-Diachronic & Life Chances.

Taking discreet moments in time to be analyzed according to social strata seems to imply a strictly synchronous approach to the problem of life chances. Actually this is not so since the very idea of what rational life plan different people would entertain at that given moment in time focuses attention above all on social stratification, which is a diachronic element. Hayer-Buckley's distinction between differentiation and stratification will be used throughout. There will be no effort to examine the functional differences between the classes; it will be taken as a fact that things were such and such a way at a certain time, and the differences between life chances on different levels will be taken as natural reflections of the social stratification. The sense always will be to see how the different sets of times show changes within comparable classes. It will be interesting, but rather obvious, that certain classes grow in size over time, and their status improves in relationship to others. But it will not be a major concern to talk about the rise of the middle class as such. This subject has been very well treated, countless times, and it can be taken as a fact and not subjected to further analysis here.