

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The movie adaptation of the best seller novel, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), was directed by Edward Blake. It is a romance-comedy movie between a party-girl named Holly Golightly and Paul Varjak, an aspiring writer. The main character, Holly Golightly, is known for her elegant and high-class style. She has an eccentric and bizarre personality that made her a stand-out American movie character in 1960's. The character was portrayed by Audrey Hepburn. During the 1940's era, the society emphasized modernity and fun-loving hedonism. Both the novel and movie are all about society roles or standards.

As stated by Orison Swett Marden, ambition has been interpreted as the resolute culmination of a daring personal decision, but also as a receptive acceptance of an externally-provided great destiny. It is the driving force behind man's struggle with destiny and heaven's inherent motivation to make purpose great, and achievement greater (1919: 1). The ambition of Holly Golightly to be a New York's socialite can be seen in the *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie. She is described as a free-spirited and money-oriented woman who has a caring and loving personality. Her 'Little Black Dress' has such a huge influence on pop culture and it remains fashionable until now. She pursues her desire to live like a socialite and embarks on her own subjective world. Upwardly moving, Holly lives

a good life as a result of spending most of her time in the company of rich and wealthy men.

Social psychologists have long acknowledged that group identity has a significant impact on the way individuals act and think. Individuals have a basic drive to 'fit in' with meaningful and reputable social groupings and to refrain from deviating from those groups' standards out of a need for belonging. It is a personal desire to live up to the expectations of a community (Asch, 1956: 1-2). Biressi and Nunn define a socialite as a wealthy person who is prominent in upper society. A socialite barely has a standard job, but instead spends an excessive amount of time attending various fashionable social gatherings. As American wealth increased in the 19th century, being a socialite developed into a role that brought power and influence (2013: 118).

A socialite lives a luxurious lifestyle to get recognition from the community that they have wealth or power and usually do social climbing to get more relations. The writer found that Holly Golightly has the characteristics of a socialite. She lives in an environment where she is surrounded by wealthy and rich people. Holly enhances her social status through networking, developing relationships, and strategic behavior. She has an ambition to be rich and achieve the social standards of the socialites in New York. By marrying a wealthy man, she thinks all her problems will be gone.

This study analyzes how fashion conveys an individual's social status. In addition, fashion also reflects social mobility. Fashion describes a person's ability to mingle comfortably amidst various social backgrounds and measures social

prosperity. The topic is taken because the writer is interested in analyzing Holly Golightly's behavior throughout the movie, particularly in how she dressed in order to give the best impression to the society that is filled with socialites and wealthy people. In this study, several ideas about fashion trends, lifestyle, and social class in society are used to analyze this movie.

1.2. Research Problems

After observing the entire *Breakfast at Tiffany's* movie, the writer comes up with several questions for this study. The questions can be seen as follows:

1. How are the social standards of socialite reflected in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie?
2. What does Holly Golightly achieve the social standards of the American socialite class?
3. How does Holly Holightly's fashion style affect her identity and social class in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie?

1.3. Scopes of the Study

In this study, the writer uses social class, lifestyle, and representation theory in order to answer the research questions that have been drawn. The approach used to analyze the social class Holly Golightly belongs to and lifestyle in America, particularly in the New York city, in the 1940's based on Max Weber's social class and lifestyle theory, and also Stuart Hall's representation theory.

This study contains wide branches, thus the writer limits the analysis of intrinsic and extrinsic elements of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) to specific results about the representation of the upper class and the lifestyle of American socialites as depicted in the movie. The writer uses this approach along with narrative and cinematography analysis to see the ambition of Holly Golightly to achieve the social standards of the American socialite class through her fashion style and behavior.

1.4. Aims of the Study

1. To describe and analyze the intrinsic, extrinsic, and cinematic aspects of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie.
2. To analyze the social class reflected in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie and find the class Holly Golightly belongs to.
3. To discuss the main character of the movie, Holly Golightly, including her ambition to achieve social standards of the American socialite class and her costumes throughout *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie.

1.5. Previous Studies

The research and journal articles presented in this chapter are related to the scope of this study. Therefore, this research mostly focuses on several aspects, including the 1940's American fashion style and social class found in the movie.

The first previous study is the research entitled "*The Great Gatsby & Breakfast at Tiffany's: A Study of Literary Confluence*" (2021) by Antia Roman

Sotelo. She discussed the similarities between the movies' main characters, Jay Gatsby and Holly Golightly. According to her, Jay and Holly are dreamers who think they have to climb the social ladder in their quest to achieve the American Dream or an ideal happiness. They came from unfortunate lives but as time goes by, their willingness to pursue the American Dream has changed their lives.

A thesis entitled "Flappers Lifestyle as Reflected in *The Great Gatsby* (2013) Movie" (2016) by Safira Anindyaputeri is the second previous study. In this thesis, she discussed the Roaring Twenties era where many women lived a flashy lifestyle known as flappers. One of the American subcultures that is widely remembered today is the flapper lifestyle. The bob hairstyle and little black dress are two characteristics that make a flapper easy to recognize. Flappers also enjoy wearing open dresses, smoking, dancing, and drinking alcohol. According to Safira, the era of 1920's can be considered one of the pinnacles of American history after World War I and the flapper lifestyle was the result of this golden age. Furthermore, this thesis provides the detailed characteristics of flappers through physical features. The use of costumes and makeup in the movie supports these appearances.

The third previous study is a thesis written by Yuni Cinthya entitled "Max Weber Concept on Social Class as Reflected in *Crazy Rich Asian* Movie" (2020). Social class is a group of people who have the same components of life opportunities. In this thesis, Yuni discusses the differences in social classes as reflected in the *Crazy Rich Asian* movie. Based on Max Weber's theory, there are four social classes. However, from the research results, there are only three social

classes that are proven to exist in the movie, namely the upper class, the middle class, and the working class. The lowest social class does not exist because this movie is focused on the life of a privileged family. Luxury mansion, wedding interiors, high fashion, and make-up are seen in it. Based on this movie, Asian wealth is a benchmark in determining class. The impact of this class difference is that the main character, Rachel Chu, becomes inferior because her relationship with Nick Young is not approved by Eleanor and Young's family.

In a journal article by Kendall Varin entitled "*Breakfast at Tiffany's* The Fluctuating Identity of Holly Golightly" (2016), Holly is said to like being respected but not oppressed. Tiffany's jewelry on display for its value yet owned by no one. Her existence seems like the parable of Tiffany's jewelry which is displayed because of its value, yet no one owns it. Holly's personal space is Tiffany's, the place where she goes when she gets the "bad reds", a sensation of dread at the prospect of something new. She sees her ideal identity and image of wealth and possession through the reflecting windows.

The last previous study is a journal article written by Zachary B. Wunrow entitled "Holly Golightly and the Endless Pursuit of Self-Actualization in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*" (2014). According to Wunrow, amidst an expanding urban consumer culture, Holly Golightly forges a sustainable identity for herself. Regardless of age, status, sex life, or financial ability, she showed that glamor was available to everybody. She can disinhibit and actively flip the domestic sphere to which she once belonged, and she can traverse a variety of social circumstances, from a maximum-security prison 'Sing Sing' to the powder room. She looks at

herself in the mirror, as though thinking what it would be like to achieve the freedom and social strata required to fully belong in a place like Tiffany's. She has been looking for a new identity, one that will allow her to advance socially and economically.

The previous studies above mainly examined the American Dream, self-actualization, social class, and lifestyle of Americans in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961). However, this research differs from the other previous studies because it analyzes fashion as representation of the character's social class. The writer uses the movie adaptation of the novel by Truman Capote, which is directed by Edward Blake. This research is focused on the main character, Holly Golightly, specifically her lifestyle as a party girl, social class she actually belongs to, and also her ambition to become an American Socialite through her fashion. The writer also explores the brief history of fashion and 1940's fashion timeline, American fashion in particular.

1.6. Methods of the Study

There are two aspects of method in this research, namely Method of Research and Method of Approach, which can be defined as follows:

1.6.1. Method of Research

Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961) is the main source to analyze the data mentioned in this research. Library research method is used in analyzing this movie. The application of this method is used in watching, analyzing, and reading several literary sources related to the movie, such as the scripts, dialogues, scenes,

and also symbols. Library research involves recognizing and searching for sources which provide factual information and scientific views or expert opinions regarding research questions (George, 2008: 6). This data collection technique also involves analyzing and understanding data from books, theories, and papers that are closely related to the problem, with the data collected in the form of primary data.

1.6.2. Method of Approach

To analyze the intrinsic elements of *Breakfast at Tiffany's* movie, the writer collects the data using a narrative approach which relates to the objective theories of criticism by M.H. Abrams. According to Bleakley, narrative inquiry or approach is a form of qualitative research in which the stories themselves become the raw data (2005: 535). This approach has been used in many disciplines to learn more about the culture, historical experiences, identity, and lifestyle of the character. Based on *The Mirror and The Lamp* book, Abrams explains that this progression starts from mimetic theory of Plato, Aristotle's *Poetics* modification concerning plausibility within plot that generates pragmatic theory, the expressive theory that comes from German and English romantic criticism, and then the last progression is the objective theory that puts the work as itself (Abrams, 1979: 28).

Through the sociology of film, the writer uses the *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie as social texts to explore the four interrelated core themes: (1) identity, (2) interaction, (3) inequality, and (4) institutions. The authors of *Cinematic Sociology* (2013), Sutherland and Feltey consider the ways in which social problems and identities are represented in movies—the manner in which

movies both reflect and create culture (2013: 4-5). In analyzing the extrinsic elements of the movie, the writer uses Max Weber's social class and lifestyle theory. The theory of representation by Stuart Hall also applied in this research to explain what Holly Golightly wears represents her environment. Furthermore, the writer also analyzes the cinematography elements including costumes, make-up, camera angle, and dialogue in order to identify several meanings from the scenes.

1.7. Organization of the Writing

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The first chapter consists of the background of the study, research problems, scopes of the study, aims of the study, previous studies, methods of the study, and the organization of the writing.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The second chapter consists of theories that are used by the writer to analyze *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie in this study. It explains the variety of social class, American lifestyle and also fashion.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS

The main chapter of this study contains a discussion about *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) movie with the analysis of intrinsic and extrinsic elements. It covers an explanation of the movie and provides data that is analyzed by referring to the theories from the previous chapters.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

The fourth or the last chapter presents the conclusion and also the summary of the discussion result.

REFERENCES