

SOCIAL CLASS REFLECTED ON TONY MONTANA IN BRIAN DE PALMA'S SCARFACE FILM (1983)

Rizki Chaidier Hafiezd, M. Natsir, Fatimah M.

English Department, Faculty of Cultural Studies

Mulawarman University

Email: rustumpersia@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research analyze social class as the social phenomena, where social class became life purposes for someone to achieve to be prominent among the society, love and financially. Those phenomenon shows on a film called Scarface, that the researcher uses as the object of the research. From those movie social class portrayed as the most important things to their society life. This research purposed to understand social class on the main character of Scarface movie. This research uses descriptive qualitative method with sociological approach. Sociological approach that researcher uses, was Marx, and Max Weber concept of social class. Which the researcher use to look and identify the condition of the main character on Scarface. The researcher also uses seven tool of character assessment from Literary Element of Characterization from Francis Bacon to dig the reflection of social class on Tony Montana character in Scarface film. Conclusion of this research is The Scarface film, shows social class reflection of how an immigrant from communist Cuba reflected life of his social class and affects his social life in capitalist country The America.

Keywords: Social class, Marxist theory, Max theory, Brian De Palma, Tony Montana.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menganalisa kelas sosial sebagai fenomena, dimana kelas sosial menjadi tujuan hidup bagi seseorang untuk di raih agar menjadi yang unggul diantara masyarakat, cinta dan secara keuangan. Fenomena tersebut ditunjukkan di dalam film berjudul Scarface, yang peneliti gunakan sebagai obyek bagi penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan sosiologis. Pendekatan sosiologis yang digunakan oleh peneliti, adalah konsep sosial kelas Marx, dan Juga Max Weber. Yang mana peneliti gunakan untuk melihat dan mengidentifikasi kondisi daripada pemeran utama pada Scarface. Peneliti juga menggunakan tujuh alat penilaian karakter dari Literary Element of Characterization dari Francis Bacon untuk menggali refleksi kelas sosial pada karakter Tony Montana di dalam film Scarface. Konklusi pada penelitian ini adalah

film Scarface, menunjukkan refleksi abagimana kelas sosial dari seorang immigrant dari Negara komunis Kuba merefleksikan kelas sosial dirinya dan mempengaruhi kehiduoan sosialnya di Negara kapitalis Amerika Serikat.

Kata Kunci : *Kelas sosial, Teori Marxist, Teori Max, Brian De Palma, Tony Montana.*

A. INTRODUCTION

The term "social class" is commonly used in American culture today but is not well-defined or well-understood. Most of us have a sense of a hierarchy in society, from low to high, based on income, wealth, power, culture, behavior, heritage and prestige. The word "class" appended after terms such as "working," "ruling," "lower" and "upper" is a shorthand way to describe these hierarchical steps, but with generally vague conceptions of what those terms mean (Bird,1). According to Watson (2007) "For many in the 1980s, society's hero was the person who helped himself", (1). Success seemed to be measured only by how much money a person made, it means that the people who are strong financially no matter how they get and reach it at those time as written in *The Making of A Nation* by Watson, Americans in the 1980s were concerned with money. These people wanted the good life that they believed money could buy", (1). In *Scarface* a film by Brian De Palma, this social issue of American 80's could be found. Brian De Palma illustrates the issue of social class condition in American social life especially in Miami.

the researcher wants to analyze the main character in a film called *Scarface*. This movie is interesting because Tony's versions of American dreams, The American dreams through criminals and illegal action, reflected by the main character Antonio Montana making social exchange into his social class, for him prestigious things that could be only achieved by ruling the society trough materialistic ownership.

Researcher's purposes to explain the reflection of Tony Montana's social class in *Scarface* film. The results of this study can be used for other purposes of literature and certainly critic and suggestion for evaluation purposes are needed.

Limitation of a research is important in order to avoid unrelated analysis. In this case the researcher only focuses on analyzing the social class issue as reflected in the film that portrayed by Tony Montana as the main character.

B. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Literature and Film

In this modern day Literature transformed into a Film, both are modes of expression "literature and cinema (film) have been regarded essentially as modes of expression, sites and ways of manifestation of an ability to give shape to ideas,

feelings, and personal orientations; in other words, as sites in which an individual's perceptions are combined with the person's will/necessity to offer an image of him or herself and of his or her own world (Casetti,81)". The relationship between literature and film has been the subject of numerous reflections and analyses.

2. Definition of Film

A film captures image motion by motion used to visualizing the story become one visible storyline, and more easy to understand. Because in a film the viewers could enjoy the audio and visual of moving images at the same time, meanwhile reading the book and listening the audio story needs focus and concentration, a film comes offering it one medium by combining images, audio, and reading (subtitle).

3. Character

Character is figure that played by the cast of a story According to Bacon in Literary Elements Characterization "The word character refers to the people, animals, or objects that a story is about (1). Every figures on drama, are peoples with character, Lebowitz also states that "the method of creating characters focuses on maintaining consistency and coherence" (27), it means the cast of a drama could be perfect because he or she is not only played the figure but also the understanding, character of its figure itself by learning the consistency and coherence of every available character.

a. Character's Name

Names convey images. If a character has a strong name, readers interpret the character in a favorable way. If a character has a weak or undesirable name, then the character seems weak and is viewed less favorably by readers.

b. Character's Looks

If a character is physically attractive, readers will perceive the character in a more favorable way than if the character were unattractive. How often do you remember the hero in a story being short, weak, ugly, or overweight? It would be a rare occurrence to have such a protagonist.

c. Character's Job

Readers make assumptions about characters based on the work that they do. If the character is a fry cook in a diner, the readers will make different assumptions about the character than they would if the character is a neurosurgeon. In the one case, the character may be interpreted as uneducated, poor, or unambitious. In the other case, the character might be assumed to be quite intelligent, financially successful, and ambitious.

d. Character's Home

The environment in which a character lives may cause readers to form certain assumptions about the character. For example, if a character lives in a mobile home in a trailer park, we might make different assumptions that we would if the character lived in the penthouse of a high rise apartment in a high-rent district.

e. Character's Habits/Actions

A character's behaviors can reveal a lot about a character. For instance, if a character bites his nails, we might interpret the character as nervous or lacking in confidence. Remember the saying, "Actions speak louder than words."

f. Character's Dialogue

What characters say to or about others can tell readers a great deal about what the character is like. Both what the characters say and how they say it should be considered.

g. Character's Thought

What a character is thinking to him/herself can also reveal the character's personality in much the same way dialog can. A character's thoughts are like an inner dialog.

An understanding of these traits can help readers understand why the story unfolds the way it does and why the problem is so difficult for the character to overcome.

4. Characterization

Jones says that characterization is the depicting of clear images of person. He continues saying about characterization that "There are two methods of characterization: The Dramatic and the Analytic. In the dramatic we form our opinion of the characters from what they do and say, from their environment and from what other characters think of them. In the analytic method the author comments upon the characters explaining their motives, their appearances and their thoughts.

5. Sociology of Literature

Sociology as we know as a study of human meanwhile literature is human works to memorizing what they have studied and experienced. Swingwood as quoted in Pengantar Sosiologi Sastra by Faruk if "Sociology manage to answers

how is society supposed to be, how its work, and why do the society survive to live (1). Furthermore according to Wolff if “sociology of art and literature is a discipline without a form, undefined as well, consist of empirical studies and various theories experimental that tend to be more general, that each has similarities and correlation with art/literature and society(4). Sociology of literature possibly searches an authorship social ground. More over Damono stated that “there are three approach of sociology of literature namely social context of an author, second literature as society reflection, and the function of social literature”(5). Social of literature in a concrete form as we could see now transforming become novel, theatrical performance, and film/movie which is popular ways to enjoy literature form nowadays.

We can say that sociology of literature is a study of human while literature is printed form of human based on experience, life values and social interaction. Sociology of literature attempted to give some description, of undefined science, however the writers try to collect and use some approaches of an expert, to give an explanation about sociology of literature in his own perspective.

6. Sociology Karl Marx And Max Webber

Sociology can be used as a tool to lift the oppressed towards oppressors and realize the ideals of a classless society.” (1) It means sociology in Marx’s views as a solution to solve class conflict among the society meanwhile Max Weber defines the notion of sociology as the study of social actions to explain the causes and effects of the social phenomenon under study (1).

Based on Marx and Max argument about sociology Marx his goals were always critical and practical. Whereas Weber seeks to turn, sociology study into a formal academic discipline.

a. Karl Marx Social Class

Social Class are the way of Karl Marx introducing class between people of his economics proportion as he stated that “the moving force behind human history is its economic systems for people’s lives are determined by their economic circumstances”(87). One of the basic assumptions of Marxism is that the “forces of production,” the way goods and services are produced, will, in a capitalist society, inevitably generate conflict between social classes created by the way economic resources are used and who profits from them.

b. Bourgeoisie is Capitalist

Member of capitalist, first owns the means of productions, second hiring people to works, third taking surplus value (left over profit).

c. Proletariat is Worker

Member of Proletariat have to work for living, selling their labor to earn wage. For example a waiter of get up in the morning and start working at 8 in the morning, till finish at 4 on evening to earn monthly wage in returns of his labor, to fulfill his/her needs or his/her family if they (worker) have too.

d. Max Weber Social Class Concept

The primary foundations of stratification for weber are “class” and “status” as his main concern to criticize social gap phenomenon among the society. According to Barbalet, classes are stratified according to their relations to the production and acquisition of goods; whereas “status groups” are stratified based on the principles of their consumption of goods as represented by special “styles of life”(6). From the explanation of the expert it can be said that how class focus on how much goods and income level, meanwhile status deals with how people to expense the goods.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Design

As Patton stated in Concept in Film Theory that “qualitative characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis” (2). This Methods are able to give the researcher ability to have complex textual description of the way people experience a given issue just like contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationship connection of individuals.

2. Data and Data Source

The main data analyzed textually from the dialogues spoken by character and the narration of the movie script that indicates social class issues reflected on the main character, and some particular scenes, dialogues and the narration from the film.

The secondary data are previous research of this research that are taken from some refrence include: journals, books, pdf, thesis and theories from the expert that related with social class theory. In addition, the researcher also uses internet to find the script of the film and some information about this film.

3. Research Instrument

Parahoo also stated that “research instrument is a tool to collect the data” (52) in this research. The focus on observing Scarface The World is Yours (1983) as it already mentioned earlier before as the main data of research.

4. Data Collection Technique

The researcher did some steps for collecting the data for this study. The first steps, the researcher watched Scarface film and try to understand the contents of the story as the main field on this research. Second steps, the researcher observe everything necessary and related within this research in the scenes and dialogues transcripts as data source to collect. The third steps, the researcher narrated the scenes and dialogues that shows main character's action towards social class, prestigious seekers in his lifestyle that confide by the main character in this movie.

5. Data Analysis

The analysis process started by getting information from the data. There are many components of data analyzing according to Nancy the first is organizing the data, second finding and organizing ideas and concepts, the third, building overarching themes in the data, fourth ensuring reliability and validity in the data analysis and in the findings, the last is finding possible and plausible explanations for findings, sixth an overview of the final steps (4).

6. Triangulation

In *The Use of Triangulation Methods in Qualitative Educational Research* Wiersma stated "Triangulation compares information to determine corroboration; in other words, it is a process of qualitative cross-validation". The idea of triangulation is very much associated with observing practices in social and behavioral research (43). In this research, the researcher used data triangulation and theory triangulation, the data triangulation in the film itself which contains audio visual and dialogues text as sampling data, and theory triangulation of Karl Marx's Social Class as main theory and Max Weber's social stratification as supporting theory.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher would analyze Tony social class reflection. The analysis on Tony social class was based on the social environment that Tony face in the movie and how he deal with his social class condition. From the social class reflection it cloud reveal why he became a notorious gangster with bitter and ironic endings.

1. Social Class Reflection

the researcher reveals social class reflection that happened to Antonio (Tony) Montana, as an immigrant in United States of America. The researcher can see from Tony's dialogue and his social condition among American society, lifestyles, how he response the society and reverse.

2. Social Class

Social exchange is characterized by an individual who supplies rewarding services to another obligates him. To discharge this obligation, the second must furnish benefits to the first in turn (Bleau 89). Greenberg also state that social exchange interpersonal behavior is defined in terms of its meaning, it becomes almost synonymous with resource exchange (81).

a. Character's Name

Character's name. Tony Montana or his full name as Antonio Montana his first names meaning is Antonio derived from the Latin Antonius, an old roman family name of unknown etymology. Antonio means "priceless" and "inestimable worth". Meanwhile his second part of his name is Montana which is inspired by NFL or American Football player by the scriptwriter of the Scarface film Oliver Stone . Montana is the word of Spanish means hill or wooded upland. From this analysis the researcher try to connect between character of Tony Montana and his name.

b. Character's Looks

Character's Looks in this scene we can see the transformation of Tony Montana after working for Frank Lopez after following an order from Omar. He is on suite just like another bourgeoisie looks on this film.

c. Character's Job

Character's job in this first data shows that Tony is a dishwasher, a job that he cursed because it is not what he wanted for to come to America and it also makes small amount of money.

d. Character's Home

Character's home this scene finally how the results of Tony hard works, fancygold statue and ornament everywhere, expensive Jacuzzi and almost every corner ofhis room coverd with gold color. This is represented Tony's social class just likegold.

e. Character's Habits/Actions

Tony shows some unfriendly gesture to his new acquaintance, once he hears an offer from Omar, Tony start more aggressive to wins the negotiation. When Omar give him a big order with a big amount of money, Tony still shows

unfriendly gesture until Omar threw a little bottle to his body and run his car fastly, that makes Tony want to punch his car.

f. Character's Dialogue

Frank Lopez as a successful businessman shows and give speech a lessons for Tony as an experienced man, he reflect his social class to Tony and what to do once he reach it.

g. Character's Thought

Tony craved for wealth when he saw and comparing himself to a group of high social class people in the front of him. He was thinking that he used to be picking gold (looking for better job) instead of washing dishes with small amount of salary. He think that this kind (washing dishes) of job is not for a guy like him.

3. Discussion

In this case Tony was coming from a country that run by communist where in this movie depicted as a country with no freedom and no clear social class as shows in data 14 dialogue between Tony and Gina. The researcher classified Tony as a middle class in Cuba society he has skill as well trained army and also gangster but when he comes to America he should start from the bottom as unskilled labor power (the working class). He start as a simple dishwasher and start using his skill and connection to reach the top of social class..

According to lance "Social capital implies that people well equipped with social resources in the sense of their social network and the resources of others they can call upon better succeed in attaining their goals (18)." Lin also state that "The premise behind the notion of social capital is rather simple and Straight forward: investment in social relations with expected returns (19)."

E. CONCLUSION

The reflection through Tony Montana as an immigrant, from Cuba in Scarface are reflected from seven tools of Francis Bacon that researcher used. First was character's name Antonio Montana indicates him as ambitious character, second character's appearance or his look in this film shows us how fashionable and glamour he was following his hedonic lifestyle as a new millionaire, third was character's job, Tony ambition's to be rich was portrayed by his hard works and efforts to achieve something, fourth character's home, as we have been seen on the data, how fancy his house covered with gold material and color, fifth character's habit/action in this film Tony's habit shows how arrogant someone could be if they were rich and Tony feels normal to be arrogant if you achieving something by your own efforts, sixth character's dialogue, in this film character's dialogue impact the

character's will to achieve his goal and form the main character storyline, seventh character's thought, in this film the thought of Tony Montana encourages him to act independently to face the situation of a low class immigrant. Overall social class is represented by Tony Montana and American society according to Bacon's seven tools. In this case, Tony as an immigrant struggling to be a millionaire among American society, Tony sees America as a place of opportunity that could change someone's fate especially his social class.

WORKS CITED

- Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms Seventh Edition*. USA: Thompson Learning, inc, 1999.
- Andrew, Dudley. *Concepts in Film Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Bacon, Francis. "Literary Elementz Characterization." *Advancement of Learning* 2003.
- Balazs, Bela. *Theory of The Film*. London: DENNIS DOBSON LTD, 1952.
- Barbalet, Jack. *Principles of Stratification in Max Weber: An Interpretation and Critique*. London, 2018.
- Bennet, Andrew. *Literature, Criticism, and Theory*. London: pearson Longman, 2004.
- Calvin. *The Literary Merit of Film Scripts*. 13 January 2016. 24 May 2018 <<https://the-artifice.com/the-literary-merit-of-film-scripts-2/>>.
- Caroline. "Encounter and Ehipany." *Reconstructing Literary Consciousness Through Film Adaptation* 2012: 8.
- Cartmell, Deborah. *A Companion to Literature, Film, and Adaptation*. Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2012.
- Chan, Tak Wing. *Social Status and Cultural Consumption*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Deborah Rugg, PhD. "An Introduction to Triangulation." 2010.
- Dobie, Ann. *Theory into Practice*. Boston: Michael Rosenberg, 2012.
- Eduqas. *Sociology. Max Weber and Social Class* 2017: 1.
- Faruk. *Pengantar Sosiologi Sastra*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2016.
- Gibson, Nancy. *A Step-by-Step Guide To Qualitative Data*. Canada : University of Alberta, 27 August 2017.
- Hess, Andrea. *Concepts of Social Stratification European and American Models*. Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001.
- Higgenbotham, Kathryn. *Sociology in Literature*. Pittsburgh: University of Akron, 2014.
- Klarer, Mario. *An Introduction to Literary Studies*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Lancee, Bram. *Immigrant Performance in The Labour Market Bonding and Bridging Social Capital*. Amsterdam : Amsterdam University Press, 2012.
- Lebowitz. *Creating Characters in a Story-Telling Universe*. New York: Columbia University, 1984.

- Lin, Nan. *Social Capital A Theory of Social Structure and Action*. United Kingdom : Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Oliver, Maria. *The Use of Triangulation Methods in Qualitative Educational Research*. College Science Teaching, 2006.
- Parahoo, Bachelor of Nursing Studies. "A Quantitative Study of the Attitude, Knowledge and experience of staff nurses on prioritizing comfort measures in care of the dying patient in an acute hospital setting." 2011.
- Patton, Michael Quinn. *Qualitative Research Methods*. London: Sage Publications, Inc, 2001.
- Prawiradilaga, RG. *An Analysis of Major Characters Characterization in Burgess's*. Bandung: PASUNDAN UNIVERSITY UNPUBLISHED UNDERGRADUATE THESIS, 2017.
- Ser, Tan Ern. *Does Class Matter? Social Stratification and Orientations in Singapore*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd., 2004.
- Sehandi. "Eksistensi Kelas Sosial". 2014: 179.
- Stephens, Ian. "The Fourth Kind: Fact or Fiction." (2013): <https://www.ufoinsight.com/the-fourth-kind-fact-or-fiction/>.
- THE MAKING OF A NATION*. Dir. Paul Thompson. Perf. Rich Kleinfeldt. 2007.
- Wiersma, Oliver. "The Use of Triangulation Methods in Qualitative Educational Research." *Qualitative Paper 4* (2006): 43.