BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY’S BY TRUMAN CAPOTE AS A FILM ADAPTATION.

Film adaptation does not have a simple and clear definition. Many critics try to find one and appropriate clarification by taking into consideration various backgrounds. For example, “according to the traditional comparative model, adaptation is the process of adapting one original, culturally defined standard whole in another medium” (Cardwell 2002 :19). Linda Hutcheon’s definition is the following: “adaptation is repetition, but repetition without replication” (Hutcheon 2006 :7). George Bluestone presented a different understanding of film adaptation. He states that: “It is insufficiently recognized that the end products of novel and film represent different aesthetic genera, as different from each other as ballet is from literature” (Bluestone 1957:5) Considering the above mentioned above, we can view the adaptation not only as a text or a film which ‘adapts’ another text, but also as a creative work which ‘requires selective interpretation, along with the ability to recreate and sustain an established mood’(Bodeen 1963 : 349). As we can see a film adaptation does not have to be totally based on its source book. There are some elements which can be different from the novel. It could be seen that the style, language and the events are very often presented differently from the book. “The writer and the filmmaker, according to an old anecdote, are travelling in the same boat but they both harbor a secret desire to throw the other overboard” (Stam, 2008: 4). Thus, it happens that the director has a view about his adaptation but the writer of the source book can have his own idea of its adaptation, then the conflict between them arises. In the theory of film adaptation there are classifications which help to divide film adaptations into categories. These various classifications are helpful for critics who classify film adaptations into such which are fully based, partially based or almost non-based on the source book. We could notice such a phenomenon in the Breakfast at Tiffany’s film adaptation. The movie was screened only three years after the publication of the novel. Producers thought that Breakfast at Tiffany’s as a best-
selling novel would be a great material to adapt. The writer of the adapted book was alive and it might have influenced the film. However, Edward’s story is presented in a different way. The movie is more delicate, without controversial scenes and with Hollywood ending. Truman Capote tried to convince Edwards to make some changes, he even proposed Marilyn Monroe to play Holly Golightly, but the director did not agree with the writer, and changed the story. Capote was not pleased with the adaptation of his work and he showed his disapproval many times during interviews. What is more, Capote’s viewpoint is supported by many critics who express many non-flattering opinions about the film adaptation of *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*. Lotte an Daley says:” I would choose the book anytime as I feel the movie loses the essence of the story. I have been heavily disappointed with the movie adaptation of my favorite book. The book is classic and any day is better than the movie” (Daley 1961). Lisa Allardice claims that “the film is the sparkling champagne to the novella’s dirty martini”1 (Allardice 2011). Many experts also disapproved the acting of the actors, According to DiLeo: “the film loses its way in the unconvincing romance that develops from the friendship between Hepburn and George Peppard, two characters who are connected as fellow tramps. There is no chemistry between the stars, all the way to the sentimentalized ending, mostly because the handsome but charmless Peppard is no fun at all” (DiLeo 2012: 209). Nevertheless, the majority of the critics state that the movie was and still is much better than the book. Many experts: “called *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* the directional surprise of the year” (Wasson 2009: 55). Another follower of the movie is Scarlet Bailey who is the author of *The Night Before Christmas*. She states:

For me, if I have to choose between the two then it’s the film over the book. Not because I don’t love the book, but because I am an old romantic and although my head appreciated what an amazing novel Capote wrote, my heart wants that happy ending for Holly, and warmth and romance that Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard bring to what otherwise is a much colder, crueler. The moment that George and Audrey kiss in the rain at the end of the movie makes it

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one of the cinema’s all-time greatest scenes. I don’t think Capote liked the adaptation of his book too much but I loved it.²

( Bailey 1961)

The Variety wrote: “Whitewashed and solidified for the screen, Truman Capote’s Breakfast at Tiffany’s emerges an unconventional, but dynamic entertainment that will be talked about” (Variety 1961)³. They also highly praise the cast of the movie. DiLeo observes: “Hepburn is stylish and wittily comic, also quite touching and vulnerable, anchoring the film with her special radiance. Despite her beauty and extroverted poise, Hepburn never loses sight of Holly’s radiance”(DiLeo 2012 : 208). In the view of this short analysis we could come to the conclusion that the film adaptation always will be compared to its source book by critics and audience. The movie Breakfast at Tiffany’s is one of many examples which cause conflicts among critics. There are experts who praise the movie for its variety and content, but these features are also criticized. Thus, it is very difficult to state whether the movie is a good or bad adaptation of the book. Moreover, the movie directed by Blake Edwards is not fully based on the novella. Many facts, events and even characters are changed or transformed. There are many reasons why changes have been introduced. Truman Capote in his book Breakfast at Tiffany’s presents topics which were not discussed aloud then, and Edwards had to include them in his movie. There were even speculations that Breakfast at Tiffany’s could not be adapted, because of its low morality. Thus, censors wanted to cut off some scenes from the script. Even the ending of the movie is not the same as the one in the book, because a movie made in a Hollywood should have a happy ending. Although the director did not include the homosexual issue and changed the ending, he presents Holly in a similar way as in the book. Edwards like Capote, wanted to end with the stereotype, which was very common at the end of the 50’s and 60’s that only bad and poor girls have sex in life, and later such girls will not have happiness in their lives. Edwards shows in the movie that even an elegant and good-looking woman

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³ http://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/21936/Breakfast-at-Tiffany-s/articles.html
who is a single and meets with men may not be so bad, but even sometimes interesting and funny. Even though some changes were introduced in the film adaptation, the ideas and themes were similar to the source book. The film *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* got five nominations to the Academy Awards, it won two of them: for the Best Original Score and for the Best Song “*Moon River*”, so we could claim that the movie was successful.