

THE BETRAYAL IN THE FILM, *MALEFICENT* BY ROBERT STROMBERG: FEMINISM APPROACH

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the types of betrayal and the impact of betrayal committed by Stefan character against Maleficent and Aurora through the Feminism approach. This research uses qualitative method with descriptive approach. The data used is Maleficent 2014 movie by Robert Stomberg. In this research, the analysis is also conducted using Radical Feminism theory to find out how the action reflects the dynamics of patriarchal power and exploitation of women depicted in Maleficent. The results show that the form of betrayal of Stefan consists of 4 types, namely lying, pretending to love, breaking promises, and breaking trust and the impact of betrayal is 6, namely anger, sadness, hatred, depression, irritation, and emotional. This study found that in the context of Betrayal and Feminism in the movie "Maleficent" shows how patriarchal power exploits women and how betrayal impacts women directly.

Keywords: *Betrayal, Feminism, Maleficent*

Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis pengkhianatan dan dampak pengkhianatan yang dilakukan oleh karakter Stefan terhadap Maleficent dan Aurora melalui pendekatan Feminisme. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Data yang digunakan adalah film Maleficent tahun 2014 karya Robert Stomberg. Dalam penelitian ini, analisis juga dilakukan dengan menggunakan teori Feminisme Radikal untuk mengetahui bagaimana tindakan tersebut mencerminkan dinamika kekuasaan dan eksploitasi patriarki terhadap perempuan yang digambarkan dalam film Maleficent. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bentuk pengkhianatan Stefan terdiri dari 4 jenis, yaitu berbohong, berpura-pura mencintai, mengingkari janji, dan melanggar kepercayaan dan dampak dari pengkhianatan tersebut ada 6, yaitu kemarahan, kesedihan, kebencian, depresi, jengkel, dan emosional. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa dalam konteks Pengkhianatan dan Feminisme dalam film "Maleficent" menunjukkan bagaimana kekuasaan patriarki mengeksploitasi perempuan dan bagaimana pengkhianatan berdampak pada perempuan secara langsung.

Kata Kunci: *Pengkhianatan, Feminis, Maleficent*

1. INTRODUCTION

As a social movement and critical theory, feminism has provided a broad perspective in various aspects of life. According to (Andrianti, 2011) "Feminism is a movement that originated from the awareness of the oppression and subordination of one of the sexes, namely women". In other words, feminists can focus on a woman's point of view where there is oppression committed against women. According to (Rosalina, 2022) there are several types of feminism including Liberal Feminism, Marxist Feminism, Radical Feminism, Postmodern Feminism, Socialist Feminism, Postcolonial Feminism, and Anarchist Feminism. The movement is often claimed to be based solely on the desires of women, but in reality, feminism is a humanitarian movement. Feminist theory refers to movements that fight for women's rights, especially in gender conflict. During the Obama administration in the United States in 2014, feminism received significant attention..

According to (Permana 2019) "Film can be seen as a human creation that contains high aesthetics, or it can also be seen as a communication medium, which can be used as a medium to express and disseminate messages from filmmakers to audiences". It can be said that film is an overall media that conveys a message. The researcher chose this title because she wanted to analyze betrayal and its impact with a feminist approach in the Hollywood film *Maleficent*, directed by Robert Stomberg in 2014. In a patriarchal culture, men feel more powerful and have higher moral values than women, resulting in gender inequality and frequent betrayals. According to (Opit 2020), "Betrayal occurs because of lies, pretense of loving someone and also breaking promises. concluded, betrayal occurs because of personal ambition so that someone is willing to commit a form of betrayal in various ways." According to Manurung 2018 (in Shackelford, Buss, 1996), "The experience of betrayal can be anger, sadness, humiliation, hatred, depression, annoyance, emotional, and upset". The impact of this betrayal makes the victimized individual feel more depressed.

One of the movies that received attention in this regard is *Maleficent*. *Maleficent* is a fairy who from childhood to adulthood lived in a mysterious neighborhood called Moors adjacent to the Moorish kingdom. During the time of King Henry, he was an arrogant king with ambitions to conquer and rule the Moors. *Maleficent* was young and befriended Stefan but unexpectedly, when Stefan grew up, he betrayed *Maleficent*. Stefan undertakes the task of killing *Maleficent*, but he cuts *Maleficent's* wings at the behest of King Henry, and gets his wish to become King. King Henry is the patriarchal

ruler of the human kingdom who intends to invade Moorish territory. They dealt with Maleficent's environment and the Moors only to conquer, rule, and colonize the environment, but with her sense of power, Maleficent always protected her environment. This emphasizes that the female personality also has emotional depth. Therefore, 'Maleficent' presents a strong feminist view in the story, which emphasizes gender equality and the elimination of betrayal.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this study, researchers used qualitative descriptive research methods. According to (Creswell, 2014) "Qualitative research is a method for exploring and understanding meaning by many individuals or groups of people who come from social or human problems". The descriptive approach is a type of research that does not use calculations or numbering, this method is carried out to achieve research objectives. The data source is the subject from which the research data is obtained. Data sources for research are taken from various sources and journals related to the Maleficent movie under study. The main data source is the movie Maleficent 2014 and the dialog in the scene of the movie.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Feminism Form of Betrayal

a) Lying (Feminism Radikal)

In the scenes of Maleficent, there are scenes where betrayal through treachery occurs.

King : What is this?

Stevan: "Your revenge has been avenged, Your Majesty."

King : "he's dead?"

King : "Nice my son. You've managed to do things that unsuccessful people are doing. You will be rewarded."

Stevan : I will do my best. To be a worthy successor

(Maleficent: 19:11-20:00)

In the dialogue and scene above, to gain King Henry's trust and secure his position as the heir to the throne, Stefan deceives King Henry by pretending to kill Maleficent and taking her wings as evidence. Stefan was so ambitious to live in a kingdom that he was willing to do anything to become a king in King Henry's kingdom. To achieve his goal of becoming a king, Stefan made this lie as a strategic action. Stefan secured himself as the heir to the throne by convincing King Henry that

he had killed Maleficent. This shows how willing he is to do whatever it takes to gain power, even by cruel and immoral means. Stefan's actions from a feminist perspective are radical feminism, which emphasizes how patriarchal power structures exploit and oppress women.

b) Pretence of Loving (Feminism Radikal)

Hearing the king's words. Steven travelled to the moors to meet Maleficent.

Stevan : "Maleficent... Maleficent..."

Maleficent : "How does it feel to live with humans?"

Stevan : "Maleficent, I've come to warn you. They intend to kill you. King Henry will stop at nothing. Please believe me."

They talked about many things. She forgave Stevan for his ignorance and ambition.

Stevan : "Are you thirsty?"

(Maleficent: 15:34-18:48)

Stefan pretends to still care about her, he deliberately comes to Maleficent for his personal ambition to become King in the Kingdom to replace King Henry. Stefan launches his action with the betrayal of cutting Maleficent's wings. Stefan dominates and prioritizes his own interests, he seems to give love and false seduction to Maleficent so that Maleficent believes in him which in the end is betrayed. He deceives Maleficent by saying he still loves her, but then commits a very painful act of violence that undermines Maleficent's strength and trust. Stefan's betrayal is not only an individual act, but also a power dynamic in a patriarchal society, where women are often victims of manipulation and exploitation. Stefan's betrayal was not only physical but also emotional. From a feminist perspective, this form of betrayal demonstrates radical feminism, where men exploit women through oppression. Stefan's actions reflect the exploitation of women in the context of economic and political power.

c) Breach of Promise (Feminism Radikal)

Maleficent : You don't have to come back here. It won't be safe.

Stevan : If I decide that, if I come back, will you be here?

Maleficent : Maybe.

Stevan shakes hands with her.

Maleficent : Awww... Your ring! Iron burns fairies.

Steven : I am Sorry.

Steven throws away his ring.

Steven : I like your wings.

(Maleficent: 06:05-06:44)

The scene when they were children where Stefan shakes hands with Maleficent as a sign of farewell and promises to return, is the beginning of many betrayals by Stefan. In this scene, he promises Maleficent eternal friendship and loyalty, but ends up betraying his promise by not returning and knowing the weakness of the fairy who cannot be exposed to iron. He uses this knowledge to paralyse Maleficent during an attack and then injures the other fairies with iron weapons. Stefan has broken his promise not to harm with iron but this weakness is used as an attack against Maleficent. This scene can be categorised as radical feminism, as this attack can be seen as an example of how patriarchal structures use violence and physical oppression to control women. Maleficent is trapped and injured by iron. Since they were children, Stefan knew Maleficent's weakness to iron and overcame it.

d) Denial of Trust (Feminism Radikal)

And Aurora goes to the palace. Arriving at the palace...

King Stevan: "There should be no one at the gate! I want him into the palace."

Aurora: "Father, It's me, Aurora."

King Stevan: "You look like your mother. They brought you back a day too soon. I told those three idiots ! Guard, lock him in his room!Go! Prepare the men. Maleficent's coming!"

In the movie "Maleficent", Stefan denies Maleficent's trust by sacrificing Aurora, his biological daughter to bring Maleficent to the royal palace. Using his own daughter as bait is a deep and complex denial of trust, which impacts both Maleficent and Aurora. This shows how Stefan sacrifices humanity and compassion to achieve his goals. From the perspective of Radical feminism, Stefan's denial of trust shows how women are exploited in the context of financial and political power.

2. Impact Of Betrayal

a) Anger

One of Maleficent's main emotions was after Stefan betrayed her by cutting off her wings. In her anger towards Stefan who had betrayed her by cutting off her wings, Maleficent came to the palace when Aurora was being baptized and Maleficent cursed Stefan's daughter, Aurora. This was the impact of Stefan's betrayal. After her curse on Aurora was completed then Maleficent used her magic to build a thorny wall surrounding the Moors, the fairy kingdom where she lived. As an act of defense to protect her territory from humans, this act shows her anger and hatred towards humans after Stefan's betrayal. This thorny wall not only serves as a physical and protective barrier, but also shows Maleficent's distrust of humans as well as the desire to protect the Moors from outside threats.

b) Sadness

The impact of Maleficent's betrayal had a profound effect on Maleficent as well as the Moors she protected. The way Maleficent changed from a loving and friendly fairy to a cold and closed figure shows this sadness. Maleficent is devastated by Stefan's betrayal, especially the loss of her wings, which are a testament to her power and freedom to interact in her environment. The wings are not only a part of her, but also a symbol of the fairy power and freedom that she possesses. By cutting off Maleficent's wings, Stefan not only takes away Maleficent's ability to fly, but also destroys her confidence and sense of security and creates a lingering sense of sadness.

c) Hatred

Maleficent transforms a crow into a human named Diaval and Diaval then becomes Maleficent's servant and right-hand man. In addition, this action shows Maleficent's hatred towards Stefan. By spying on Stefan, Maleficent shows that she will not allow Stefan to betray himself and will not let him be happy on top of his self-sabotage. Observing Stefan allows Maleficent to plan her next act of revenge, ensuring she is always ahead of the enemy. The hatred in Maleficent's heart is immense. The impact of this betrayal truly turned her into an evil fairy who was filled with a deep sense of hatred without thinking about the negative things that would come later. She feels confined due to the loss of her wings, and by changing Diaval, she tries to make up for that feeling of lost freedom by having ears and eyes that can move freely and see the

outside world. This is Maleficent's way of maintaining control and surveillance, something that was lost when she lost her wings.

d) Depression

Maleficent used to be a kind and friendly fairy, but after previously being affectionate and caring towards the Moors, Maleficent is now an uncaring figure. Maleficent's appearance also changed drastically after the betrayal she suffered after the betrayal, Maleficent began to dress dark and sinister. In one of the scenes in the Moors forest, Maleficent is depicted wearing a long black cloak that makes her horns more prominent. This appearance marks her transformation into a more frightening and angry figure as the aftermath of the betrayal leads to depression. The darkness that now rules her heart is reflected in the dark color of her cloak and the protruding horns. The black cloak she wears not only provides physical protection, but also shows the wall of emotions she has built to protect her from the outside world that has betrayed her.

e) Annoyance/Upset

During Aurora's childhood on the moors, Maleficent often felt irritated and annoyed at the sight of Aurora's supposed happiness as a victim of her curse. The impact of Stefan's betrayal was a sense of resentment. Maleficent, who still holds a grudge against Stefan, unwittingly brings Aurora to her neighborhood in the Moors with the three fairies who care for her. During Aurora's childhood in the Moors, Maleficent often felt annoyed and irritated when she saw Aurora happy, who was supposed to be the victim of her curse.

f) Emotional

Maleficent's feelings towards Aurora evolve from a vengeful beginning to a more complex and loving relationship. This process shows the growth of Maleficent's character who changes her hard heart and pushes towards spiritual salvation, at first Maleficent curses Aurora as a way to get revenge on Stefan who has betrayed her in a very terrible way, this curse is one of the consequences of Stefan's actions. However, over time Maleficent's feelings towards Aurora evolve from a vengeful beginning to a more complex and loving relationship. This process shows the growth of Maleficent's character as well as the theme of how love and forgiveness can change hard hearts and push towards spiritual salvation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In this research, the author draws several conclusions, namely that the researcher found 4 forms of betrayal committed by Stefan to Maleficent and how it relates to the Feminism approach. The four forms of betrayal that Stefan did were lying, pretending to love, breaking promises, and breaking trust. In the context of feminism found in the analysis of these forms of betrayal is Radical Feminism which is a movement of exploitation of women and oppression carried out by patriarchal men. Then the researcher found 6 effects of Stefan's betrayal of Maleficent, namely anger, sadness, hatred, depression, annoyance/resentment and emotional. We found that the film "Maleficent" effectively portrays the dynamics of female exploitation and patriarchal power, as well as the impact of betrayal on female characters. This analysis helps us understand the representation of women in the media and how patriarchal power dynamics are reflected in the relationships between characters in the film.

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