

## FEMINISM IN THE MAIN CHARACTER OF THE MALEFICENT MOVIE BY ROBERT STROMBERT

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### **Abstract**

*This research explores the portrayal of feminism in the main character of the movie Maleficent directed by Robert Stromberg. The study aims to analysis how the character Maleficent represents feminist values through her actions, decisions, and development throughout the film. Using a qualitative descriptive method, this research applies feminist literary criticism as the theoretical framework, particularly focusing on liberal feminism and radical feminism. The findings reveal that Maleficent's character challenges traditional gender roles, reclaims her autonomy after betrayal, and transforms from a victim into a powerful, independent woman. The narrative presents Maleficent not only as a symbol of strength but also as a figure who redefines motherhood, love, and leadership from a feminist perspective. This study concludes that Maleficent offers a nuanced portrayal of female empowerment and contributes to contemporary feminist discourse in film.*

**Keywords:** feminism, Maleficent, female empowerment, Robert Stromberg, feminist literary criticism

### **Abstrak**

*Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi penggambaran feminisme dalam karakter utama film Maleficent yang disutradarai oleh Robert Stromberg. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana karakter Maleficent mewakili nilai-nilai feminisme melalui tindakan, keputusan, dan perkembangan dirinya sepanjang film. Menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini menerapkan kritik sastra feminis sebagai kerangka teoretis, dengan fokus khusus pada feminisme liberal dan feminisme radikal. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa karakter Maleficent menantang peran gender tradisional, merebut kembali otonomi dirinya setelah pengkhianatan, dan bertransformasi dari seorang korban menjadi wanita yang kuat dan mandiri. Narasi ini menghadirkan Maleficent tidak hanya sebagai simbol kekuatan tetapi juga sebagai sosok yang mendefinisikan ulang keibuan, cinta, dan kepemimpinan dari perspektif feminis. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa Maleficent menawarkan penggambaran yang bernuansa tentang pemberdayaan perempuan dan berkontribusi pada wacana feminis kontemporer dalam film.*

**Kata kunci:** feminisme, Maleficent, pemberdayaan perempuan, Robert Stromberg, kritik sastra feminis

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Movie programs have expanded in variety in recent years due to the media's quick development of motion pictures. This could serve as a substitute to rekindle the audience's enthusiasm for viewing excellent movies in a variety of genres. According to Permana et al. (2018), "Movie can be seen as a human creation that contains high aesthetics, or it can also be seen as a medium of communication, which can be used as a medium to express and disseminate messages from film makers to audiences". "Therefore, analyzing the main character in Maleficent through a feminist lens not only highlights the resistance to patriarchal oppression but also reveals how contemporary films portray women's empowerment and autonomy." One may argue that movies are a medium in their entirety, demonstrating that they can be used as a tool to inspire and impact people's attitudes and ideas in addition to being entertaining or artistic creations. "Character is a person's identity, personality, and inherent traits that are related to physical and mental dimensions," states Nurgiyantoro (2011). The clear portrayal of a distinctive and notable character is the primary emphasis of a film, regardless of whether it is action or speech. A character in a movie is anything that is quite similar to the characters in the plot."Feminist theory is the theory of social life and human experience from the perspective of women," claim Aliyah et al. (2018). To put it another way, feminists can concentrate on women's perspectives when examining life the movement began in the Victorian era. The feminist movement is linked to with regard to women's gender equality. Although feminism is a humanitarian movement, it is frequently asserted that it is solely motivated by the aspirations of women. Movements that defend women's rights, especially in cases of gender conflict, are referred to as feminist movements. In the current world, this movement is nearly universal. The equality of women's and men's rights serves as the impetus for the movement. Studying it in relation to literature is worthwhile because it is a linked field. This covers the literary traditions, authors, readers, linguistic characteristics, and leaders of women. The term "feminist" is not limited to women men can also be feminists.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative research motede. The data of this research was taken from the movie Maleficent by Robert Stromberg. According to Abdussamad and Sik (2021) "Qualitative research is an approach that focuses on research that is oriented towards natural phenomena or symptoms". Research based on reality, or a qualitative approach, is used to interpret or clarify the meaning of descriptive data, or research documents used as source material. the method used uses a descriptive approach.

Descriptive research is a type of research that does not use calculations or numbering, this method is carried out to achieve research objectives ( Nuraeni & Peron, 2017). In short, descriptive research refers more to analysis that does not deal with numbers but there are several aspects of how research is conducted in various ways

### **3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The researcher uses a feminist lens to examine the research findings on betrayal in this chapter. The movement known as feminism promotes women's rights with the goal of achieving gender equality and eradicating the injustice and oppression brought about by patriarchal structures. Contrarily, betrayal describes acts that are motivated solely by self interest and disregard the hurt they do to others, frequently resulting in conflict. Through extensive and repeated viewings of the Maleficent movie, the researcher saw conversations, behaviors, and responses that showed male characters betraying their trust. These components served as supporting evidence and were examined to draw attention to feminist issues. The study also found other instances in the movie that depicted feminist ideals and treachery. The researcher has recognized and expounded upon a number of noteworthy findings in the film, each of which provides a more profound understanding of particular facets of the film. The results and their comprehensive analysis are listed below:

When Stefan arrived at the realm...

he gave the king a fragment of Maleficent's wing.

King: What's this?

Stefan: "Your Majesty, your retaliation has been exacted."

"She's dead?"

King: "All right, son. You've been able to do things that individuals who have failed do. You will receive a prize.

Stefan: I'll try my hardest. to be a deserving heir.

In the speech and scenario above, Stefan poses as Maleficent's killer and shows her wings as evidence in order to win King Henry's trust and establish his claim to the throne. But in reality, by chopping off Maleficent's wings, he betrays and hurts the defenseless princess. He deceives the king in order to gain the right to wed the princess and ascend to the throne. Stefan wanted to reign so badly that he would stop at nothing to get there. He purposefully employed the untruth to achieve his objective. Stefan established his claim to the throne by persuading King Henry that he was the murderer of Maleficent. This demonstrates his determination to acquire power by any methods, regardless of how harsh or unethical they may be. Furthermore, Stefan uses Maleficent's wings as a symbol of

victory to propagate lies throughout the realm while presenting himself as a hero. He received the backing he required to take the crown he had long coveted as a result of this deed.

Stefan's deeds deceived not only King Henry but also the kingdom's populace, who viewed him as a savior. King Henry felt justified in endorsing Stefan's deceit because he harbored personal grievances and wanted to rule over Maleficent's country, the Moors. King Henry thought Stefan had killed Maleficent, which made him joyful and proud. Being Maleficent's childhood friend, Stefan could easily approach her and use her confidence. For his own benefit, he took off her wings, injuring her. This demonstrates how men frequently use lying and trickery to gain authority and leadership, even at the expense of other people. By pretending to have slain Maleficent, Stefan in this instance abused violence and deceit against a woman in order to win acceptance and power. This demonstrates how male betrayal of women frequently serves as a means of patriarchal control.

Radical Feminism, from a feminist standpoint, Stefan's behavior is consistent with radical feminism, which opposes the ways in which patriarchal power systems oppress and take advantage of women. In particular, radical feminism attacks the structures that uphold male domination via deceit, brutality, and manipulation. In this case, the core issues of radical feminist theory are reflected in Stefan's treachery and use of falsehoods against King Henry to further his own goals. His actions reinforce the oppressive systems that radical feminism aims to reveal and oppose, disregarding the psychological and bodily suffering done to Maleficent.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

In this chapter, the author presents a number of findings from the study, including a feminist analysis of betrayal and an examination of the effects of the betrayal in Robert Stromberg's 2014 film *Maleficent*. The study employed a qualitative approach. Stefan betrayed Maleficent in four different ways, which the researcher discovered in this study and how they relate to feminism. Stefan committed four types of betrayal: rejection of trust, broken promises, lying, and pretending to love. In the context of feminism, radical feminism a movement that advocates for the exploitation of women and their subjugation by patriarchal men is discovered in the examination of betrayal. Stefan's betrayal of Maleficent and Aurora in Robert Stromberg's film *Maleficent* illustrates the dynamics of patriarchal power and the exploitation of women, which may be examined from a variety of feminist angles. The researcher then discovered six effects of Stefan's betrayal of Maleficent: depression, annoyance/upset, fury, sadness, and hatred. The researcher

discovered that the dynamics of female exploitation and patriarchal authority, as well as the effects of betrayal on female characters, are all skillfully portrayed in the film Maleficent. This analysis aids in our comprehension of how women are portrayed in the media and how the interactions between the characters in the movie mirror patriarchal power dynamics.

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