

Gender Deconstruction in Alkhallat+

Muhammad Irfan Maulana*¹, Falih Hilmi Adi²

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Indonesia

²University of Jordan, Jordan

irfanseribu@gmail.com, fal0177451@ju.edu.jo

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Abstract: Alkhallat+ is one of the films from Saudi Arabia published on Netflix featuring four themes about deceit. The interesting part of this film is the existence of misogynistic values by the author that can bring out the opposite meaning of favoring women. This research will analyze the gender issue in the film using Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction theory, which brings the concept of binary opposition to gender. This theory is used to explore the idea of deconstruction reflecting misogynistic values in the movie. The result reveals that "the other" means women are not weak and susceptible creatures. Women can feel with their hearts if something terrible happens. Men also need women. This idea also rejects the stigma that all men can live alone without the help of women, whom men consider weak and less powerful.

Keywords: *Alkhallat+, Gender, Deconstruction, Jacques Derrida.*

INTRODUCTION

Every text has a varied meaning. In interpreting a text, a meaning that arises is not the only complex meaning that can limit the presence of other meanings. It is due to continuous reading by diverse readers from different backgrounds, resulting in different points of view and approaches (Ningrum et al., 2020). Various points of view may lead to various interpretations of meaning. In understanding the interpretation, especially in literary works, an extensive process of interpretation can be carried out.

One of the texts that raises various interpretations is the film Alkhallat+ on Netflix. This film is aired on Saudi Arabia's channel (Fauziah, 2022). The film, which shows four different stories about trickery, was directed by Fahad Alammari (Database, 2023). Several scenes in the film seemed misogynistic and did not favor women. The scene depicts women as weak because they are easily deceived. The women in the film are placed as victims of deceitful narratives and ideas. This misogynistic view also represents subversive and repressive colonial literature (Laila, 2001). Misogynistic ideas in the movie are reflected in some scenes with contradictory meanings. In this show, there is no physical violence, discrimination, or marginalization that is highlighted continuously from the beginning to the end, as is the case with the appearance of the action in Nawal Sadawi's novel entitled "Qisshatu Fathiyyah Al-Misriyyah" (Muama & Mustofa, 2022, p. 15).

The study of the meaning behind a text can use the deconstruction theory. Feminist approaches to the study of gender deconstruction can reveal boundaries and hierarchies between masculinity and femininity (Culler, 1994). The theory used in analyzing this film is the deconstruction theory of Jacques Derrida. Derrida stated that deconstruction is a method of close reading (Sarup, 1993). Derrida's view can reveal the existence of a single meaning in an object in the form of this film (Respati, 2017). The study of meaning is closely related to literature because meaning is one of the tendentious points in literary studies (Fitriani, 2018). In this context, a text fragment or snippet may not have a single meaning. There is a hidden message that the author covers up and tries to uncover using the deconstruction theory. This theory can reveal the other

side of a text because the nature of the text is not stable, and some loopholes can be used to break down the secret message. Derrida has the concept of binary opposition. The concept goes by mapping the idea of binary opposition that appears in the text (Latifi, 2015, p. 128). In a literary text, the author may need to cover up ideas better opposing the main idea. With this concept, Derrida's theory would reverse the ideology of the text and carry out dissemination.

In searching research regarding literary works, researchers have never found a study that talks about the film. As for the relationship with formal objects in the form of gender deconstruction, researchers found a study conducted by Latifi (2015) entitled "Gender Deconstruction in the Short Story "Ana Al-Mawt" by Tawfiq Al-Hakim." The research shows that the oppositional relationships that exist in short stories that degrade women are deconstructed by producing a plural relationship pattern, namely: women as strong and ideal figures, women are higher than men, and the importance of the idea of egalitarianism between men and women (Latifi, 2015).

Baidowi (2011) has also conducted studies on gender deconstruction entitled "Deconstruction of Gender in the Book of Dawairul Khaufi (Qiraah fi Khitabil Mar'ah) by Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd." It was published in the Muwazah Journal in 2011. In the study, Baidowi examines gender deconstruction from religious and spiritual perspectives. In his research, he stated that the readings on women concluded that the authenticity of one's spirituality and the value of one's actions could not be determined by gender. The level of piety or piety is measured by maintaining boundaries and balance in life. Women and men ontologically, sociologically, and normatively theologically have equal capacity and opportunity to achieve the highest level of piety (Baidowi, 2011).

Dewi et. Al. (2020) studied gender bias in Arabic discourse entitled Gender Bias in Arabic: Analysis of Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction Theory I Al-Taḥayuz al-Jinsānīy fī al-Lugah al-'arabiyyah: Tahliil Nazariyyah al-Tafkikiyyah Jacques Derrida. They found out that there is a gender bias in Arabic discourse that influences our perspective. Cultural and religious contexts also influence such gender bias in society.

Through the previous studies above, the researcher has not found any analysis of gender bias in the AlKhallat+ movie. Such gender issue regarding misogynistic phenomenon is still interesting to study, especially in Arabic discourse. Though the world has been modernized, patriarchy and misogynistic values exist. Therefore, this study fills the gap of the feminist study by analyzing how deconstruction is still reflected through the movie as a representation of human lives in today's modern era.

METHOD

This research is content-analysis research. Data collection is carried out by the listening method with recording techniques. Researchers conducted a dissemination analysis based on Derrida's deconstruction theory, which revealed the idea of binary opposition and gave rise to the meaning of the other. The emergence of the meaning of the other in the form of interpretation of contradictory ideas is influenced by facts in the film that the director may not realize can bring out other meanings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The presentation of the analysis of the ideas and concepts that appear in this film will begin with a synopsis of the film AlKhallat+. The director presents four stories, all of which talk about deception's power in various backgrounds of people's lives. The four stories with the same theme have similarities and attachments. The bond between the four stories in AlKhallat+ can be seen from the storyline and the repetition of character appearances: one theme and another show several similar and interrelated characters in each scene. The four themes are tire theft, abuse of authority of restaurant employees, infidelity, and inadvertence during a visit to a disco (Alammari, 2023).

This trickery-themed film begins with the story of a gang of tire thieves. The theft incident was motivated by three people. The victim of the tire theft was a family who was having a wedding.

The scene in this film begins with a scene that shows one of the thieves named Faisal, caught and secured by the owner of the car tire. Two other friends tried to get him out of the captivity of the Turkish family. The two friends pretended to be coffee delivery waiters and lawyers from Faisal.

The end of this first story is that they manage to release Faisal but are caught again before leaving the venue. The cause was evidence of suspicious tires in a car in front of the event venue. The car belonged to the three thieves. When they were about to carry out their action to escape, the three of them were surprised by the appearance of one of the tire-owning families who recognized the evidence. In the end, they were arrested and taken prisoner by the police general, who happened to be one of the special guests at the event.

Some of the lies in this theme are when the two thieves disguise themselves as servants. There was also a time when one of the fraudsters pretended to be his friend's lawyer, who was caught. He seemed to be an all-knowing jurist. The misogynistic scene evoked in this theme is when the bride looks the most panicked and bothers herself while preparing her clothes.

This scene shows that women are creatures who are too convoluted and cannot be simple in living their lives. In addition, other scenes where young children in the family play carrying lizards to the cubicle where women gather can also reinforce the misogynistic idea. It is unknown whether it was a toy lizard or a living animal. However, the moment the women responded by shouting simultaneously indicated that the women were weak and timid.

The second story describes a deception planned by a woman who works as a restaurant clerk. His parents' relationship was not harmonious, which made him look for ways to repair the relationship between the two. He attempted to use his authority and that of his office mates to circumvent the operating conditions at the restaurant.

While screening this second theme, the audience was shown some of the tricks perpetrated by this woman. He engineered the scenario of canceling a table already booked by an extraordinary guest, the parents of the restaurant owner. This female employee named Sara also abused her authority in the restaurant kitchen to make other guests' bookings messy. The restaurant manager noticed this tense and intriguing incident. The discrepancy in the information received from his representative siding with Sara and the information from the restaurant owner as his superior made him suspicious. Ultimately, Sara has to admit that she played tricks on this restaurant, and the manager fired her.

The second theme, played by restaurant staff and married couples, shows women's weaknesses. The assumption that women are easily deceived by seduction is shown by several scenes depicting wives melted after being seduced with sweet words by their husbands. Women are also seen as selfish because of the actions of Sara, who tries to justify all means to carry out her plans.

The story then turns to the events of the accident. A married man was involved in an accident with his friend, resulting in his death. In a sad atmosphere, the wife continued to praise her husband, who during his life was considered faithful and did not grieve him. Her husband's best friend learns that the dead man was involved in a scandal with another woman. Her husband's mobile phone was constantly contacted by the woman, who was considered to be an affair. The wife also felt suspicious of the movements of her husband's best friend. The mobile phone his best friend had secured turned control into the hands of his wife. The suspicion was answered when the wife followed her husband's best friend to the woman's residence.

In this third theme, at least two misogynistic values are raised. The tricks of the dead husband's friend succeeded in deceiving the wife. It shows that it is easy to lie to women. On the other hand, the status of mistresses held by other women indirectly states that women are despicable creatures because they can be hidden and easily controlled by other men.

The final theme of the film tells the story of a family staying in a hotel. The cheating committed by the parents in this family is to hide their two children so as not to be charged from the hotel because they exceed the capacity of the kama. The tension in this theme is when his first boy wakes up at night and accidentally sneaks into the disco downstairs of this hotel because he wants to meet the footballer who is his idol. Forced, his father had to pay much money because he got information from the hotel receptionist and as an entrance fee to the discotheque.

After successfully entering the discotheque, the problems continue. It is not easy to bring the cub back into the room. On the way to bring their son back to the room, the father and son were terrified because from afar, they saw their wife or mother looking for them in front of the disco lobby, which he thought was a wedding reception. Despite trying to cover up as tightly as possible, the secret was exposed by his second son, who saw a disco stamp mark and made his wife furious. The wife's ignorance of what her first child and husband did shows that women easily deceive using diversion or verbal lies.

Based on the synopsis description above, Alkhallat+ contains strong gender values. This value tends to be based on misogynistic ideas echoed by patriarchal support groups. This misogynistic idea will be elaborated and combined with the concept of binary opposition that emerges to produce the concept of deconstruction to bring out the meaning of "the other."

MISOGYNISTIC IDEAS

The film Alkhallat+ contains some misogynistic ideas, namely the concept that views women as weak and inferior beings. Here are some misogynistic ideas found in the film.

1. Women make it difficult for themselves when looking.

In the first theme, the bride begins the scene in a state of panic. The scene occurs at 00:00:45 – 00:01:10. She circled the house looking for something to wear to her wedding. This picture shows that women cannot simplify themselves in a dress. These habits can be troublesome. They are different from men who are used to appearing modest. In the fragment, the bride is seen panicking and hastily preparing for her performance.



2. Women are gullible

Some fragments in the film Alkhallat+ depict female characters easily exposed to trickery. In the second theme, the film depicts a wife who happens to be the mother of a restaurant waiter. She is depicted as submissive and following a scenario run by her husband. With her husband's disharmonious state during the marriage, the mother does not realize there is cooperation between husband and child. She followed the storyline of arriving at the restaurant, ordering the menu, and talking to her husband without any



scenes depicting the mother trying to guess something behind this plan. Here is a snippet of the second theme.

In addition to the second theme, the third one illustrates how easily women are deceived. Friends of her husband tried to cover up the behavior of the dead husband. He tried to keep his dead friend's device so that his friend's communication history with the mistress would not be known.

3. Women are a cowardly gender.

The culture in Arabia depicted in the first story of this film is to gather women in a closed room when attending an event. A frightening tragedy occurred when a small child carrying a lizard ran and walked into the girls' room. The incident was caused by the actions of fraudsters who scolded him for collecting cloth borrowed to pretend to be a maid at a wedding. Instantly, everyone in the room screamed hysterically and made a male invitation run to check on what was going on.



4. Women need to be more professional in their work.

Sara is a woman who works as a waitress in a restaurant in the second story. His desire to improve the relationship between his parents and not end in divorce made him justify all means to achieve his goals. The scene that depicts the unprofessional attitude is when Sara cannot finish making juice properly, even the third time. He also changed the customer's menu, making other guests wait too long. He even sprinkled much salt to trick other guests and the restaurant manager. More stop there. He also stole roses that became a support for birthday cakes to give to his parents, which caused the cake to fall and crumble. The manager's anger comes to a head when she learns Sara accidentally cancels an important reservation with the restaurant owner's parents to engineer her parents' meeting. The scene can be seen at 00:39:40-00:40:10. Sara's dismissal by the restaurant manager ended this recklessness.



5. Women are not free of themselves.

Some scenes in this film depict women who cannot be entirely independent. In the second story, her husband forbids his wife to eat by removing the veil. His religiosity also forced his wife to make sure none of her legs was exposed and seen by other men. Here is the excerpt at the duration 00:43:25-00:43:35.

In addition, the third theme also shows the condition of women who are not free to carry out their activities. The husband's wife, who died in an accident, was required to stay in a dark waiting room without being accompanied by anyone. Some fragments in this theme also tell the story of women who were used as mistresses. The value instilled in this idea is the assumption that women have a lower degree than men because they can be controlled and not accessible over themselves.



THE IDEAS OF BINARY OPPOSITION

In the concept of deconstruction, the idea of binary opposition is found. The idea of binary opposition is part of the deconstruction approach, which can fail the text's attempts at a single meaning because binary opposition seeks statements in the text with opposite meanings (Norris, 2006, p. 14). The idea maps data in a text or a work that is contradictory or oppositional. The film also contains some ideas that are opposed in the context of gender.

1. Men are great charlatans.

This fact represents almost all the themes in the film *Alkhallat+*. The perpetrators of deception or fraud in this film are men. The first story is about three thieves. The second story is about Sara, who becomes a restaurant waiter but is helped by Muhannad, the man who becomes the deputy manager; the third story is about the husband's little friend who died in an accident, and the fourth story is about a father and son who sneaked into the disco by accident. Using male characters as criminals or main characters who create deception shows that men often commit fraud, and the victims are innocent women.

The emergence of this idea contradicts fragments that show that women can also make good use of opportunities. The wife in the third theme pretends not to know where her dead husband's device is. On the other hand, her husband's best friend tried to snatch the device but was frustrated by being tricked by a dead friend's wife.

2. Men are brave

In the first story, the wedding is attended by a police general. The tragedy of fear in the women's room made the police, aides, and all the guests run to find out what happened. The next scene turns to the outside of the house by mentioning the following: Men are brave, and women are timid.

أكان هذا الصراخ كله بسبب ضب؟

"Is it just because of the lizard?"

The first theme is the emergence of the idea that tells the courage of men in opposition to fragments. One of the thieves was also afraid of the animal. In addition, the scene of the husband who is afraid of his wife in the fourth theme also shows that it is not only women who are considered timid, the first misogynistic idea.

3. Men need to make better use of their opportunities.

The deception carried in every story in this film always leads to the disclosure of the deception. It is due to the lack of the maximum number of perpetrators taking advantage of the opportunity to stay away or eliminate traces. The story of the first tire thief will not end with the three of them being caught if one of the perpetrators does not sacrifice his friend to be arrested, immediately releases his friend when his location is known and goes to the wedding to pick up his friend by first removing the stolen tire from the tailgate. The third story about the husband's friend who died will not be caught if the cell phone received from the husband's wife from the beginning is always carried and not deposited in the hospital morgue. The fourth story will not end with the wife getting angry because she knows the father and son enter the disco if the father removes the stamp on his hand as an entrance ticket when forced to pick up his son, whom his idol artist accidentally carried into the discotheque.

This idea is contrary to the fragment in the third theme. The female character made good use of the opportunity. Researchers were amazed by the director's screenplay that made the woman suddenly in the car at the end of the story. The woman entered the car to follow her husband's best friend to the mistress's house.

"THE OTHER" IDEAS

The Other results from an interpretation of a series of deconstruction processes. This idea carries the emergence of the meaning of the other bisexuality, which is oriented towards a dual, varied, and ever-changing meaning unrelated to single values and sex differences (Moi, 1985, p. 110). Researchers found two points from the description of ideas about gender that appear in this film. These two points are at the core of other possible meanings whose presence the researcher may need to be made aware of.

1. Women are figures needed by their partners.

A man needs the presence of a female who is his partner in the house. Sara's father, in the second story, tries to seduce his wife to return to her home. He felt he needed his wife because the house's condition felt pitch black without the woman's presence.

ليتك تعلمين حال المنزل إنه مظلم من دونك بصراحة

"If you knew that the house without you felt pitch black."

The phrase found in the fragment in the second theme above shows that women are not weak creatures. Men are considered to need the presence of women more than the other way around. It made the husband try to persuade his wife, who was in the process of divorce, to want to return to her family.

2. Women have keen instincts and can sense deception.

This idea shows the strength built in a woman. The sharpness of instincts and ways of looking at the surrounding situation shows the intelligence possessed by every woman. The third story shows the condition of a woman left dead by her husband due to an accident. Her husband's best friend, who discovered his friend had just been involved in a scandal with another woman, tried to cover up the fact. The phone was tried to be secured by his best friend but made his friend's wife suspicious. Finally, the wife followed her husband's best friend away and discovered an affair that was being hidden.

These three ideas help in the process of gender deconstruction in this film. When displayed in tabulated data, the compilation of deconstruction concepts in Alkhallat+ film is as follows.

No	Misogynistic ideas	The concept of binary opposition	The Other (Deconstructed)
1	Women make it difficult for themselves when looking	"Men are great charlatans" is opposed to the idea that "Men are easy to deceive."	Women are figures needed by their partners
2	Women are gullible	"Men are brave" is opposed to "Men are timid."	Women have keen instincts and can sense deception.
3	Women are a cowardly gender	"Men do not make good use of opportunities" is opposed to the idea that "Women can make good use of opportunities."	
4	Women need to be more professional in their work.	-	-
5	Women are not free of themselves.	-	-

Based on the abovementioned ideas, deconstruction raises the meaning of "the other," which the author may not realize. The misogynistic concept that is carried concretely shows that the women in the film are individuals or groups who can be deceived and considered weak. However, it is contrary to the egalitarian values behind some other scenes. Women are inadvertently revealed as powerful and influential figures for men and their world. This dichotomy within the film's portrayal of women reflects a broader societal struggle with gender roles and expectations. While some scenes perpetuate traditional stereotypes and objectification, others challenge these notions, emphasizing the agency and strength of female characters. This complexity adds depth to the narrative, sparking conversations about gender dynamics, empowerment, and the need for more inclusive storytelling in modern cinema. This continuation highlights the contradictory portrayal of women in the film, suggesting that it serves as a commentary on broader societal issues related to gender roles and representation.

CONCLUSION

This Alkhallat+ film is deconstructed by paying attention to misogynistic ideas or concepts that show the position of women as victims of patriarchy and combined with the concept of deconstruction to bring out the meaning of "the other." The idea of deconstruction was discovered by carefully analyzing the scenes in the film and considering their position in other scenes and ideas that the film had already raised. The idea of deconstruction in question is that women are not weak and gullible creatures. Women can feel with their hearts if something terrible happens. In addition, the need for a partner is felt more by men than women. A man tends to feel more about the need for his female partner and does not do it the other way around. This idea also rejects that men can live alone without the help of women they consider weak. Future researchers could delve deeper into the analysis of the film from feminist and postcolonial perspectives to uncover how it addresses issues of power, agency, and resistance, particularly concerning women and marginalized groups.

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