
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Beyond Orientalism? Evolving Political Correctness in Disney's Live-Action Film *Aladdin* (2019)

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ABSTRACT

Walt Disney's animation film *Aladdin* (1992) has been beloved all over the world. However, the animated film has been harshly criticized by analysts for its cultural and racial prejudices and lack of consideration for gender equality. In 2019, the live-action version of *Aladdin* was released and Disney aimed to overcome the previous criticism based on some advice from the people who belong to a Middle East community. The purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative analysis of the 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* and the 2019 live-action version from the conceptual perspectives of Orientalism, feminism, and political correctness. This research argues that there exists a shift from Orientalist viewpoints and gender inequity embedded in the 1992 animated film to more politically correct perspectives that improved the storyline and empowered Princess Jasmine in the live-action version of *Aladdin* (2019). Finally, this article investigates to what extent the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* has overcome the cultural, racial, and gender stereotypes of the Middle East and the Middle Eastern people through the comparative examination of the two masterpieces produced by Walt Disney as a global media culture production.

KEYWORDS

Aladdin, Disney, diversity, feminism, gender, Orientalism, political correctness, stereotype

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1. Introduction

Aladdin is an animation film created by Walt Disney in 1992 based on the eponymous character of the *Aladdin* folk tales featured in the Middle Eastern stories, *One Thousand and One Nights* (Disney Fandom, 2024). Still, a prototype of the film *Aladdin* (1992) stems from "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp" which was not included in the original Arabic versions (IMDb, 1990-2025a). It was added by a French diplomat and translator, Antoine Galland who translated this so-called "orphan tale" into the French language (Waxman, 2019). The 1992 animation version is considered to be a successful masterpiece of Walt Disney, and *Aladdin II: The Return of Jafar* (1994) was created as an animated musical fantasy film by Walt Disney (IMDb, 1990-2025b). The 1992 animation version was adapted as a self-improvement book, *The Aladdin Factor: How to Ask for What You Want - and Get It* (Canfield & Hansen, 1995). Finally, *Aladdin III: Aladdin and the King of Thieves* (1996) was released as a final version of the *Aladdin* animation series (IMDb, 1990-2025c). Owing to the popularity of the story, a French live-action comedy, *The New Adventures of Aladdin* (2015) was produced by a non-Disney filmmaker (IMDb, 1990-2025d), and its sequel film, *Alad'2: The Brand New Adventures of Aladdin* (2017) was produced with multicultural background shot in Morocco (IMDb, 1990-2025e). In 2019, a live-action version of *Aladdin* was released as a remake of the 1992 animated version. This article comparatively examines Walt Disney's animation film *Aladdin* (1992) and its live-action film *Aladdin* (2019) through the lens of Orientalism, feminism, and political correctness (IMDb, 1990-2025f).

In earlier research, the contents of *Aladdin* (1992 and 2019) have been analyzed in the light of cultural studies by focusing on the Middle Eastern culture and Orientalism represented in the story (Ayuningtiyas & Mustofa, 2021). As Jorge Luis Borges and Eliot Weinberger put it, "A major event in the history of the West was the discovery of the East" (Borges & Weinberger, 1984: 564), and this perception of the history simply indicates the essence of Orientalism. The term "Orientalism" was conceptualized and theorized by Edward W. Said in his book, *Orientalism* (1978), as a critique of the West's historical, cultural, and political perceptions of the East, especially Eurocentric prejudice against Arab-Islamic people and their culture (Windschuttle, 1999). Based on his postcolonial theory, Said argued that the West established its identity through confrontation with the East (Said, 1978: 1-2). Orientalism originates from this type of prejudice, romanticized image of the Middle East. *The Arabian Nights* has been analyzed from the viewpoint of Orientalism by many researchers (Yamanaka, Nishio, & Irwin, 2006), and the Orientalist stereotypes can be seen in the animated film *Aladdin*, too. It has been argued that not only Disney films, but also other American media have represented stereotypes of the Middle East as a threat to the United States especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (Al-Sharafat, 2019).

In comparison with the original animation film version of 1992, the live-action version of *Aladdin* (2019) does not seem to depict the Middle East as a threat to the West, at least. Then, what kind of cultural and political implications does *Aladdin* (2019) include in comparison with the original version? To what extent has the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* overcome Orientalist prejudices and political incorrectness? By analyzing the implications of the two versions, this research attempts to answer these key research questions and investigate whether the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* was influenced by feminism and political correctness with a view to overcoming Orientalist prejudice, gender inequity, and indifference to audience in an LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning) community.

2. Literature Review: "Orientalism" in the Animation Film *Aladdin* (1992)

It has been discussed that Disney film *Aladdin* (1992) was based on "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp" added by Galland who heard of the story by Hanna Diyab, a Syrian storyteller (Razzaque, 2017a). Surprisingly, it has been pointed out that the origin of Aladdin's story stems from China, which is still the Orient for the West (Razzaque, 2017b). Colonial, Orientalist, and feminist implications of the animation film *Aladdin* (1992) have been researched by a number of scholars in terms of Orientalism and critical discourse analysis (Bourenane, 2020). Through the lens of Orientalism, it is analyzed that Disney's *Aladdin* portrays stereotypes that Middle Eastern people are "violent, greedy, or barbaric" while representing the Middle East as an "exotic" place for Western people (Aljahdali & Hakami, 2024). In the light of critical discourse analysis, it has been condemned that the film depicts both "racism" and "barbarism" as Orientalist stereotypes of the Middle East (Ibid: 108-109). For this reason, Disney's animation version of *Aladdin* (1992) has been examined from the perspective of Orientalist stereotypes in earlier studies (Ofianti, 2021), which could be regarded as a "dream" about the exotic Orient for the Western people (Koizumi, 2024: 43).

Moreover, social inequities depicted in the 1992 animation film, in which the protagonist is a thief who is forced to steal to survive, represent a typical stereotype of poverty in the Middle East (Hassam, 2024). Obviously, Western portrayals "have come a long way from the lotus-eating, Orientalist fantasies" as acknowledged by Daniel Newman, a professor of Arabic at Durham University (Smith, 2017). It has been reviewed that the 1992 animation film "not only confirms the persistence of rampant Orientalism in American film, it also provides a glimpse of the evolving - or in some ways involving - state of Orientalist perceptions of the East, in that a new iconography emerged while the old remained firmly in place" (Scurry, 2010: 26). Undoubtedly, the depiction of Orientalist stereotypes in the 1992 animation film is based on the so-called "Western gaze" so to speak (Cassar, 2024).

Likewise, Jack Shaheen as a professor of mass communications at Southern Illinois University pointed out that Disney's *Aladdin* (1992) contains "unconscious racism" including the opening song, "Arabian Nights" that goes: "Oh I come from a land, from a faraway place, where the caravan camels roam. Where they cut off your ear, if they don't like your face. It's barbaric, but hey, it's home..." (Shaheen, 1993: 49). It was critically discussed that while Aladdin, Princess Jasmine, and the Genie are seen as the "good Arabs", the evil Jaffer and his parrot Iago are depicted as the "bad Arabs", aggravating the anti-Arab prejudice (Ibid). In order to overcome the unconscious racism in the film, Shaheen made three wishes: 1) delete or alter the opening song "Arabian Nights", 2) add benevolent market-vendors and heroic guards, and 3) respect Islam as well as a "humane character, Aladdin's lovable mother, an Arab woman willing to sacrifice everything for her son's happiness" (Shaheen, 1992).

It has been observed that Baghdad is a model of Agrabah as a country of Disney's film *Aladdin*. Notably, Baghdad was "among the earliest "Oriental" cities to serve as the setting for mainstream American films" (Scurry, 2010: 15), and "serves as the backdrop for Disney's *Aladdin* in 1992, soon after Iraq had been attacked" (Ibid). In this respect, it has to be noted that people in the United States tend to associate Baghdad with the 1991 Gulf War. After the outbreak of the 2003 Iraq War moreover, "more documentary

based films were made focusing on Iraq and Baghdad on wars with political and military engagement" (Beviano, 2013). The image of the Middle East visualized in Disney film *Aladdin* actually influenced the perception of people in the United States toward Middle Eastern people.

The Orientalist stereotypes in the 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* influenced the audiences in the United States, which evolved into "American Orientalism" and "neo-Orientalism". According to the American Orientalism, the people in the United States recognize themselves as "benign and seeking to aid the Orient while also working to protect its own influence in the area" (Aldaher, 2022: 10). On the other hand, from the neo-Orientalist viewpoint, however, stereotypes regarding the Middle Eastern people are reinforced, which relates to the fear of Muslims' worldview as well as extremism (Ibid). On the basis of the American Orientalism, the audiences, especially the people in the United States and its allies have associated Jafer with Saddam Hussein as pointed out in earlier research (Pallant, 2011: 89).

In fact, a poll by the Public Policy Polling in the United States conducted in 2015 asked 532 Republications: "Would you support or oppose bombing Agrabah?" In response to this question, 57 percent of Republicans answered that they were not sure, and 30 percent said they would support the bombing of Agrabah. Only 13 percent opposed the idea of bombing the fictional country, suggesting that most Republicans have negative stereotypes of the Middle East (Kasperkevic, 2015). Khaled A. Beydoun, an associate professor of law at the University of Detroit Mercy, observed that "violence" is ubiquitous in *Aladdin*, and Jafar is a symbol of angry Arab villain, masculinity, and Agrabah's primitive and patriarchal culture (Beydoun, 2017). Thus, it is fair to argue that the animation version of *Aladdin* (1992) was created based on Orientalist stereotypes as denounced in the earlier research.

3. Analytical Frameworks: Through the Lens of "Feminism" and "Political Correctness"

In earlier research, a critical discourse analysis has been employed as an analytical method to examine Disney's *Aladdin* film series as discussed above (Aljahdali & Hakami, 2024). The critical discourse analysis is useful and applicable to the research of animation and cartoon studies (Okuley, 2025) and it has been utilized to investigate Disney animation films in earlier studies (Soares, 2017). The critical discourse analysis also can be used to analyze gender representation in Disney's animation films (Alsaraireh, Singh, & Hajimia, 2020), including LGBTQ representation in Disney live-action adaptations as well (Sitepu, 2024). By scrutinizing the earlier research, it is possible to employ a "feminist critical discourse analysis" (Lazar, 2007), with a view to clarifying gender representation in Disney's *Aladdin* film series. Likewise, a critical discourse analysis can be employed to examine the term "political correctness" (Fairclough, 2003), which could be applied to the study of Disney films too. Building up the earlier studies on the critical discourse analysis, this research utilizes two main analytical frameworks: "feminism and political correctness" in order to critically analyze Disney's *Aladdin* film series.

First, as an analytical framework, this article employs the concept of "feminism" to examine Disney's *Aladdin* film series. Feminism is defined as a "belief that women should be allowed the same rights, power, and opportunities as men, and be treated in the same way, or the set of activities intended to achieve this state" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2025a). There are four waves of feminism as a form of political movement to empower women for the better. The first wave feminism (1848-1920) occurred to pursue the political rights of women mainly in the United Kingdom and the United States in the late 19th century and the early 20th century. The foundation of the second wave of feminism (1960s-1980s) was established in the first wave feminism. The feminist movement tended to focus on white women's rights, but the second wave tackled the rights of black women as well. The third wave feminism (1990s-2008) was triggered by Rebecca Walker, a black and bisexual feminist, who was confronted with the backlash by anti-feminists. It stood up against and addressed the problems of sexual harassment and gender inequity. The fourth wave feminism (2008 to the present) is called "online feminism" as the movement has been based on SNS in order to stand up against sexual harassment or sexual violence, such as "Me Too" campaign (Kakroda & Sole, 2023). Through the lens of feminism, Disney's animated film *Aladdin* (1992) was influenced by the second wave feminism, and coincided with the third wave feminism. Moreover, the live-action film *Aladdin* (2019) was produced by the influence of the fourth wave feminism that empowered Princess Jasmine in the film.

Second, as another analytical framework, this article employs "political correctness" to examine Disney's animated film and live-action remake of *Aladdin* film series. According to Cambridge Dictionary, political correctness is defined as "the act of avoiding language and actions that could be offensive to others, especially those relating to sex, gender, and race" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2025b). The term, political correctness, was originally used in the context of the Communist Party's politics in the 1930s in China. The term itself revived in the 1980s again, and currently means the "prohibition of speech that is seen as derogatory toward historically marginalized groups, and well as the encouragement of more multicultural perspectives" (Ford, 2017). Although political correctness sounds plausible in general, it caused so-called "cultural wars" as a series of anti-political correctness

controversies. After the outbreak of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the focus of the cultural wars shifted to the issues related to the “clash of civilizations” (Ito, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to take political correctness into consideration in analyzing the Orientalist aspects of Disney's *Aladdin* series to avoid the clash of civilizations originally put forth by Samuel Huntington in his article published by *Foreign Affairs* in 1993 (Huntington, 1993).

Earlier studies on Disney's race representation showed that “most of the characters featured were portrayed as White (68.3 percent) whereas BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) characters made up 31.7 percent of the total” (Zurcher, Brubaker, Speed, Shawcroft, Sheppard, Coyne, Christensen-Duerden & Adams, 2024). Disney's *Aladdin* film series might mitigate its race representation that has tended to select White protagonists in general. Although Disney's *Aladdin* film series might mitigate Disney's stereotypical race representations included in the previous animation films, Disney films have been subject to “multiple political critiques” especially regarding the issue of “racial gaze” (Kee & Grant, 2016). Additionally, it is important to pay attention to potential backlash from the group of anti-political correctness. In fact, some people might feel strange to hear “politically correct” announcements at the Tokyo Disney Resort (Tokyo Disneyland and Tokyo Disney Sea), where “English announcements now shun ‘ladies and gentlemen’ in favor of the gender-neutral ‘everyone’” (Hoffman, 2022).

Disney as one of the major global animation filmmaking companies has facilitated the adaptation of political correctness in their animated and live-action films. For this reason, Florida governor Ron DeSantis “branded the Walt Disney Company a ‘woke’ corporation producing films that pursue a politically correct, LGBTQ+ agenda” (Dorn, 2024). However, Disney's political correctness dates back to the release of *Seal Island* in 1948, which “encouraged viewers to empathize with creatures in the natural world, establishing animals as protagonists in dramatic stories that portrayed them as smart, nurturing, and even heroic” (Ibid). Disney used to be regarded as “conservative” before and during the Second World War, and contributed to creating war propagandas in the form of animation films (Stanley, 2023). Disney's animation films were criticized as politically incorrect including its animation film, *Aladdin* (1992). Therefore, Disney became aware that it would need to produce more politically correct films so that they could be accepted by as many people as possible in the world. In this sense, Disney's attempt to remake its 1992 animated film as a live-action adaptation based on the political correctness is an understandable decision.

4. “Empowered Feminism” in the Live-Action Film *Aladdin* (2019)

Princess Jasmine, in the 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* has an active and independent characteristic which could be viewed through the lens of gender studies, especially “feminism”. Even in this animated film, Princess Jasmine can be seen as an embodiment of the “awakening” of feminist consciousness as an image of Disney princess, which could be regarded as the influence of postmodern feminism (Ding, Yusof, Abdullah, & Li, 2024). Unlike a traditional Disney princess who waits for the arrival of a prince who can help her by marriage, Princess Jasmine in the animation film shows her resistance to marriage arranged by her father, Sultan. In the 1992 film, Sultan says: “Dearest, you’ve got to stop rejecting every suitor that comes to call. The law says you must be married to a prince”. However, Princess Jasmine opposed the arranged marriage, saying “Father, I hate being forced into this. If I do marry, I want it to be for love”. Thus, the 1992 animated version of *Aladdin* already contained a feminist point of view in the character of Princess Jasmine.

Similarly, it is fair to argue that the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* was influenced by feminism. In fact, the feminist influence of Walt Disney's live-action film *Aladdin* (2019) has been analyzed from the perspective of gender studies. Michelle Smith, a senior lecturer in literary studies at Monash University, observed that Disney's live-action version of *Aladdin* (2019) replaced the outdated, racially-insensitive animation version of *Aladdin* (1992) (Smmith, 2019). Smith noted that “As race and gender politics change, fairytales and children's stories become sites of concern for reflecting outdated worldviews” and argued that the live-action *Aladdin* has the potential to dismantle the racial and gender stereotypes previously represented in the animated version (Ibid).

From the perspective of feminism, the audience might recognize that the character of Princess Jasmine in the 2019 live-action film differs from that of the 1992 animated film (Ambarita, Saputra, & Efrata, 2019). Although Princess Jasmine in the animated film is quite active and indifferent to romance or marriage, Princess Jasmine in the live-action version possesses political motivation to become Sultan to govern her country. Obviously, the live-action Princess Jasmine is influenced by “purposeful feminism” with a new role in singing a song, “Speechless” which symbolizes an empowerment of women (Forsdike, 2019). The song indicates that while a man can become Sultan in Agrabah, a woman cannot make a speech to govern the country. Therefore, the addition of Princess Jasmine's solo is designed to transform the old gender stereotype that men are “politicians” and workers, while women are supposed to stay at home as “housewives” and mothers without careers (Scott, 2020).

From the perspective of gender studies, some Chinese scholars, such as Yiding Jiang, Xinyi Fan, and Xiaohan Xia, analyzed the live-action version of *Aladdin* (2019) as a “feminist revolt against patriarchy” and reached a conclusion that the live-action film “challenged the patriarchal status quo, deconstructed the male/female dichotomy in early princess films, and represented feminist values as a film that achieved mainstream success” (Jiang, Fan & Xia, 2023). Aisha Harris described Princess Jasmine in the live-action version as “Jasmine 2.0”, an “ambitious, career-focused heroine whose belly button is never exposed” (Harris, 2019). The physical appearance of Princess Jasmine in the 2019 live-action version was thus influenced by the feminist philosophy.

Moreover, in the 1992 animation version, Princess Jasmine kisses Jafar in an attempt to rescue Aladdin. Nevertheless, she is depicted as a soon-to-be 16-year-old princess (Disney Princess Fandom, 2025), and the scene must have been viewed as inappropriate from the feminist viewpoint. In the 2019 live-action remake version, the scene is understandably deleted. Although there exists critical analyses of the live-action version of *Aladdin* in terms of Disney’s long-standing sexism based on a male-centered worldview and narrative patterns regarding marriage in the film (Vdovychenko, 2020), a feminist influence on the live-action version of *Aladdin* is an undeniable factor which makes this film worthy of a female empowerment movie (Scott, 2020).

5. Evolving “Political Correctness” in the Live-Action Film *Aladdin* (2019)

Whereas the 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* has been blamed in terms of Orientalism, the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* pays attention to racial diversity, although the latter is still under the influence of Orientalist prejudices (Gayathri, 2021). The 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* was criticized as the movie is not “politically correct” from the Muslim perspective (Scheinin, 1993). In the creation process of the live-action version of *Aladdin*, Walt Disney intended to avoid the same criticism and sought advice from a Community Advisory Council, which is comprised of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and Muslim scholars and activists as reported by Evelyn Alsultany, an associate professor of American studies and ethnicity, USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences (Alsultany, 2019). Ruby Hamad as a researcher of media and postcolonial studies at the University of New South Wales, who was born in Lebanon and raised in Australia, analyzed the 2019 live-action *Aladdin* as a “whole new world for diversity in Hollywood” in the Arab News on June 7, 2019 (Hamad, 2019). It might possibly sound overexaggerated to describe the 2019 film as “a whole new world” for diversity, but the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* explicitly shows racial diversity in terms of the casting of the film.

As a matter of fact, the main casts in the film represent racial diversity and political correctness. Mena Massoud, who played the role of Aladdin, is an Egyptian-born Canadian actor. Notably, Massoud is famous as an advocate for diversity in the entertainment industry (Yan, 2023). Princess Jasmine’s role was played by Naomi Scott, a British actor and singer who has a British father and Indian mother. As for the significance of Princess Jasmine in the film, Scott commented that “She’s so many different things at so many different points... What’s more important is that she’s actually fighting for the freedom of choice for her people... That’s feminism” (Loughrey, 2019). The role of the Genie was played by an American actor, Will Smith who has an African-American comedian background. For these reasons, the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* was highly praised: “The combination of diverse casting and female empowerment themes results in a perfectly politically correct *Aladdin* for these times” (People, 2019). At the same time however, Disney admitted “‘making up’ some white actors in order for them to ‘blend’ into Asian crowd scenes” (BBC, 2018), and therefore, Disney was “accused of ‘browning up’ dozens of white actors for various Asian roles” in the 2019 live-action remake (Shepard, 2018).

As a result, the racial diversity in the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* was dubbed Disney’s “manipulative political correctness” (White, 2019), and it might not completely overcome “Orientalism” embedded in the current filmmaking culture. Disney was denounced for casting Billy Magnussen, a white actor, who played a role of a prince in the live-action remake. There was not a White prince in the 1992 animated film, so the casting was dubbed “whitewashing” (Fox News, 2017). From the Middle Eastern perspective, casting Indian British actor Naomi Scott as Princess Jasmine is not appropriate, and it has been pointed out that a Middle Eastern or Arab actor should have been selected for the role (Romano, 2019). Another critic reviewed that “While Indians and Arabs might have similar features, this simplistic conflation of the two cultures signals an ignorance offensive to both cultures” (Assaf, 2017). Moreover, the casting of Naomi Scott as Princess Jasmine was critically reviewed in the light of “colorism”, which can be defined as “the process of discrimination that privileges light-skinned people of color over their dark-skinned counterparts” (Smith & Wongso, 2020). Therefore, the casting of Scott who has a lighter skin color than other people in South Asia or the Middle East, was seen as a racially discriminatory factor. Having said that, it is clear that the live-action version of *Aladdin* should be regarded as an important film that courageously tackled the issue of racial discrimination and gender equality based on the idea of political correctness.

The 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* should be critically reassessed in terms of violence against a woman by a man. For instance, a salesperson threatens to cut off Princess Jasmine's hand after she gave an apple to a hungry child at the beginning of the movie. She is saved by Aladdin luckily, but this scene contains potential violence against a woman by a man (IMDb, 1990-2025g). In another scene, Jafar slaps Princess Jasmine and traps her in a large hourglass, but this is a manifest physical violence against a woman by a man (Paulson, 2018: 22). In *Aladdin II: The Return of Jafar* (1994), Princess Jasmine is depicted as handcuffed in captivity, indicating physical violence against the female protagonist (IMDb, 1990-2025b). In terms of political correctness, these violent scenes must have been viewed as problematic, and therefore, these scenes were deleted in the live-action *Aladdin* (2019).

More importantly, Princess Jasmine in the live-action version is "politically empowered" and attempts to politically remedy the gender stereotype by singing a song "Speechless" as follows (Sampurna, 2021).

Here comes a wave. Meant to waste me away. A tide that is taking me under. Swallowing sand. Left with nothing to say. My voice drowned out in the thunder. But I won't cry. And I won't start to crumble. Whenever they try. To shut me down or cut me down. I won't be silenced. You can't keep me quiet. Won't tremble when you try it. All I know is I won't go speechless (Hasan, Simanjuntak, & Sutrisno, 2022: 351-352).

Earlier research still points to discriminatory actions, oppression, and violence against women in the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* (Hafiz, 2022), however, the lyrics of this song symbolizes the struggle to overcome gender stereotype which tends to make women speechless by female oppression in the patriarchal society.

The Arabian Nights, the animated film *Aladdin* (1992), and the live-action *Aladdin* (2019) need to be reassessed in the light of "slavery" and "blackness" too. The Genie in the animated version of *Aladdin* (1992) is depicted in blue color but the Genie does not have freedom and slave away for the owner of the lamp, which reminds the audiences of the "slavery" system which was abolished in the past. Indeed, the story of *The Arabian Nights* has been critically reviewed from the perspective of slavery in the earlier research (Nussbaum, 2007), and the issue of woman and black slaves in *The Arabian Nights* have been examined from the viewpoint of gender studies (Shamma, 2017). In the 1992 animation film, the Genie is freed by the third wish of Aladdin at the end of the movie, but the Genie is still in blue color. However, in the 2019 live-action film, the Genie obtains freedom and becomes a human being in the end, symbolizing a true liberation from the slavery system. Additionally, the blue color of the Genie could be perceived as a reflection of ideological connotation, because the Genie in *Aladdin and His Magic Lamp* (1967) produced in the Soviet Union is depicted in "red" color instead of blue in the middle of the Cold War (IMDb, 1990-2025h).

Moreover, it has to be added that the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* is more politically correct in terms of consideration for LGBTQ. As a matter of fact, it was viewed that the 1992 animation version entails "heteronormative" connotations just as other Disney animation films (Hoffmann, Emilie Snedevig, 2019). In the 1992 animated film, there is a problematic scene with regards to inclusiveness and consideration for audience in an LGBTQ community. In the middle of the movie, Iago, a parrot of Jafar, imitates the voice of Princess Jasmine, calling for Aladdin from the distance. Iago keeps on mimicking the voice of the princess next to a flamingo in the pond. The flamingo confused Iago for a female bird, and seems to be attracted to Iago. In response to the attitude of the flamingo, Iago says "Ya got a problem, pinky?" sweeping the flamingo's feet out from under it. Gender implication of this scene is that Iago expressed an aversion to a male bird who nearly fell into love with him, insinuating homophobia. Unsurprisingly however, 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* does not include this scene, which could be perceived as an influence of political correctness.

6. Conclusion

This article has conducted a comparative analysis of the animation version of *Aladdin* (1992) and the live-action version of *Aladdin* (2019) produced by Walt Disney. First, this research has reconfirmed that the 1992 animated film contains controversial parts that could be regarded as Orientalist prejudices. As critically reviewed in the earlier research, the 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* includes the racial and cultural prejudices and discriminatory expressions of the Middle East and Asia. Second, although the 1992 animation version of *Aladdin* includes some feminist elements regarding the character of Princess Jasmine, this article has confirmed that the 2019 live-action version was influenced by feminism in that Princess Jasmine in the live-action version has a political will to become Sultan, not based on desire for power but on political responsibility for improving the country and the lives of the people. Whereas Princess Jasmine in the 1992 animation film seeks for freedom and true love, Princess Jasmine in the 2019 live-action remake is more "awakened" not only for the freedom of woman but also for the peace with justice and the freedom of oppressed people in her country.

As well as the female empowerment, this study has argued that the 2019 live-action version of *Aladdin* is one of the significant examples of political correctness as a Disney film, although there exists some criticism against the incompleteness. The casting of the 2019 live-action remake can be perceived as “racial diversity” and it is one of the significant attempts for politically correct filmmaking processes by Walt Disney. Still, it has been pointed out that Walt Disney should have chosen a Middle Eastern female for the role of Princess Jasmine. In addition, this research discovered that the problematic scenes with regards to violence, sexism, and homophobia were deleted in the 2019 live-action version, which could be recognized as one of the significant examples of political correctness facilitated by Walt Disney as a global media production company.

In conclusion, it is fair to insist that Orientalist factors and patriarchal tendencies in Disney’s animated film *Aladdin* (1992) were ameliorated to a certain extent in the live-action version of *Aladdin* (2019) based on Walt Disney’s policy toward political correctness. Furthermore, Princess Jasmine in the live-action version has been more “empowered” and “awakened” in terms of feminism and political correctness in comparison with Princess Jasmine in the 1992 animation version. Despite the lingering influence of Orientalism, it is an undeniable fact that Walt Disney has made continuous endeavors to overcome the racial, cultural, and gender prejudices concerning the Orient for the sake of political correctness and global audience. Edward Said once insisted that “ignorance” is a case of conflict, conceptualizing “clash of ignorance” (2001), but the live-action film *Aladdin* (2019) would contribute to avoiding the clash of ignorance in the changing global media culture beyond Orientalism.

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