

Ecocide in *Avatar: The Way of Water* - An Ecocritical Approach

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Abstrak

Kerusakan lingkungan, terutama yang disebabkan oleh pemanasan global dan perubahan iklim yang cepat, merupakan salah satu masalah yang paling mendesak di Bumi. Kenaikan suhu global telah mengakibatkan peristiwa cuaca buruk, yang dapat mengancam ekosistem, keanekaragaman hayati, dan juga kesehatan manusia. Kerusakan ini disebut ekosida. Ekosida pertama kali diperkenalkan oleh Arthur W. Galston pada tahun 1970 dan kemudian diperluas oleh pengacara lingkungan Polly Higgins. Ekosida mengacu pada kerusakan ekosistem yang luas, yang sering kali menyebabkan kerusakan signifikan pada populasi lokal dan keanekaragaman hayati. Makalah ini mengeksplorasi latar belakang ekosida, merinci upaya Galston menentang penggunaan *Agent Orange* di Vietnam, dan kampanye Higgins untuk mengakui ekosida sebagai kejahatan internasional. Makalah ini juga membahas contoh-contoh nyata dari ekosida, termasuk penggundulan Hutan Hujan Amazon, perusakan Laut Aral, dan pencemaran Sungai Citarum, yang menyoroti dampak merugikan dari aktivitas manusia terhadap lingkungan. Pada akhirnya, makalah ini menganalisis penggambaran ekosida dalam film *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) karya James Cameron, yang menggambarkan konsekuensi bencana dari perusakan lingkungan melalui penggundulan hutan, perburuan ilegal, dan eksploitasi sumber daya secara berlebihan. Film ini merupakan refleksi dari isu-isu dunia nyata, dengan menekankan tema keserakahan manusia, ketidaktahuan, dan kondisi Bumi yang mengerikan. Analisis ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya memahami dan mengatasi ekosida untuk melindungi keanekaragaman hayati dan memastikan masa depan yang berkelanjutan bagi planet ini.

Kata Kunci: ekosida, masalah lingkungan

Abstract

Environmental damage, driven by global warming and rapid climate change, is one of Earth's most urgent issues. The rise in global temperatures has resulted in severe weather events, threatening ecosystems, biodiversity, and human health. This destruction, termed ecocide, was first introduced by Arthur W. Galston in 1970 and later expanded by environmental lawyer Polly Higgins. Ecocide refers to extensive damage to ecosystems, often leading to significant harm to local populations and biodiversity. This paper explores ecocide through historical and contemporary lenses, detailing Galston's efforts against the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam and Higgins' campaign to recognize ecocide as an international crime. It also examines real-world examples of ecocide, including the deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest, the destruction of the Aral Sea, and pollution of the Citarum River, highlighting human activities' detrimental impacts on the environment. Additionally, the paper analyzes the depiction of ecocide in James Cameron's film *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), which portrays the catastrophic consequences of environmental destruction through deforestation, illegal hunting, and the overexploitation of resources. The film serves as a reflection of real-world issues, emphasizing the themes of human greed, ignorance, and the dire state of Earth. This analysis underscores the importance of understanding and addressing ecocide to protect biodiversity and ensure a sustainable future for the planet.

Keywords: ecocide, environmental issue.

INTRODUCTION

One of Earth's most pressing challenges today is environmental damage, a significant issue exacerbated by global warming. The planet is experiencing rapid climate change, posing severe risks to ecosystems, biodiversity,

and human health. Global temperatures have led to more frequent and intense weather events, such as hurricanes, floods, and heatwaves. Humans are primarily responsible for this widespread environmental destruction, a phenomenon known as ecocide. According to Andrianto

(2024), the World Health Organization (WHO) has highlighted that climate change impacts public health in numerous ways, increasing deaths and illnesses. Severe weather events, which are becoming more common due to global warming, are a major concern. Andrianto also noted that many environmentalists are tirelessly working to mitigate these impacts and save the planet from further degradation. But what exactly is ecocide?

The term ecocide refers to the extensive damage to, destruction of, or loss of ecosystem(s). It was first introduced by Arthur W. Galston, a United States professor, in 1970. Galston presented the concept of ecocide at the Conference on War and National Responsibility in Washington, where he also proposed the creation of a new international treaty to prevent such destruction. Galston, an accomplished biologist and later a bioethicist, initially discovered the defoliant properties of a chemical that was ultimately used to create Agent Orange. His early research involved the plant growth regulator triiodobenzoic acid (TIBA), which he found could accelerate soybean flowering and growth. However, he also discovered that excessive application of TIBA caused the plants to lose their leaves. In addition, Galston identified a pigment in plants capable of bending light. His prolific research career included over 320 papers in peer-reviewed journals and more than 50 articles on public affairs. He also authored textbooks on plant physiology and edited collections of papers on bioethics.



Figure 1: Arthur W. Galston

As a botanist deeply concerned about the environment, Galston played a pivotal role in halting the use of the herbicide Agent Orange in Vietnam. He meticulously documented the environmental damage caused by Agent Orange, noting its devastating impact on riverbank mangroves. These mangroves are crucial ecological niches for the life cycles of certain shellfish and migratory fish. Galston traveled to Vietnam to observe the effects of the chemical firsthand, bringing attention to the widespread environmental destruction it caused. His advocacy

underscored the need for international agreements to prevent such environmental harm and laid the groundwork for recognizing ecocide as an international crime akin to genocide or war crimes.



Figure 2: Polly Higgins

In 2010, British environmental lawyer Polly Higgins built upon Galston's work by proposing to include ecocide as the fifth core crime under international law. Higgins defined ecocide as "the extensive damage to, destruction of, or loss of ecosystem(s) of a given territory, whether by human agency or other causes, to such an extent that peaceful enjoyment by the inhabitants of that territory has been severely diminished." Her definition emphasizes the significant impact of environmental destruction on the well-being of local populations. Higgins revived the movement to recognize ecocide as an international crime and proposed an amendment to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to include it. Her campaign gained substantial support from environmental activists, legal scholars, and several governments, highlighting the growing recognition of the need to protect ecosystems from large-scale harm.

Higgins' advocacy for recognizing ecocide as an international crime has inspired ongoing efforts to incorporate it into international law. Her work has drawn attention to the severe consequences of environmental destruction and the importance of holding perpetrators accountable. By framing ecocide as a crime, Higgins and her supporters aim to establish stronger legal protections for the environment, ensuring that future generations can enjoy a healthy and sustainable planet. The campaign for recognizing ecocide continues to gain momentum, reflecting a broader shift toward acknowledging the critical importance of environmental preservation in international legal frameworks.

EXAMPLES OF ECOCIDE

With the definition provided by Professor Galston and Higgins, here are some examples of what ecocide is.

a. Deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest



Figure 3: Amazon Rainforest

The Amazon's future hangs in the balance. Soy farms are booming in Brazil, pushing cattle ranchers deeper into the rainforest and indirectly causing deforestation (Verweij et al., 2009). This is not the only threat. Huge infrastructure projects planned for the Amazon, like roads and navigable rivers, will open up vast, previously inaccessible areas in the western Amazon – a region with incredibly high biodiversity and numerous indigenous communities. Making matters worse, large parts of this same region have been earmarked for oil and gas exploration, and palm oil plantations could become another major threat.

b. Aral Sea Destruction



Figure 4: Aral Sea

The Aral Sea is drying up at an alarming rate. This is because all the water feeding it, roughly 90 cubic kilometers every year, is diverted from the Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers for irrigation (Waltham, 2001). Natural evaporation takes its toll as well, leaving little to no water reaching the Aral Sea. This human-caused water diversion has completely disrupted the natural balance, leading to the sea's continuous shrinkage.

The Aral Sea was not just shrinking, and it was succumbing to a slow, agonizing death. The Amudarya delta, once a vibrant wetland teeming with life, became a barren wasteland. The famed reedbeds disappeared, and the muskrat hunting industry that thrived there met its demise.

c. The Trash of Citarum



Figure 5: Citarum River

The Citarum River is in dire straits. Its pollution carries a serious threat to the health of the nearby public, devastates aquatic life, and causes the water unfit for drinking, farming, or any meaningful use. To save the river, a multi-pronged approach is crucial.

Fitriana (2023) stated that chemical pollutants dumped into the Citarum River have negative consequences for over 5 million people living nearby. The river suffers from a multitude of pollution sources, including household waste, industrial discharges, and waste from farms and fisheries.

These examples illustrate how human activities can result in widespread environmental destruction, threatening the health of ecosystems, species, and, ultimately, the well-being of humanity.

ECOCIDE IN LITERATURE

Why is learning about ecocide important? Understanding ecocide is crucial because we cannot prevent what we do not comprehend. Ecocide, the extensive destruction of ecosystems, poses a significant threat to the planet's biodiversity and the health of all living beings. By gaining a deeper understanding of ecocide, we prepare ourselves with the knowledge needed to recognize its causes, identify its impacts, and develop effective strategies to combat it.

Brosimmer (2002) highlights in his book that the rapid acceleration of mass extinction and global habitat destruction are among the most pressing environmental issues we face today. He underscores that the rate at which species are disappearing from Earth is unparalleled in human history. Human activities, such as deforestation, pollution, and climate change, largely drive this alarming trend. Brosimmer points out that humans, as the most dominant species on the planet, have an overwhelmingly negative impact on the environment, stating that "our impact is devastating." The consequences of this devastation are far-reaching, affecting not only wildlife

but also human communities that rely on healthy ecosystems for their livelihoods, health, and well-being.

The significance of the situation becomes even more apparent when considering Brosnimmer's stark warning: if humans continue to destroy the environment at the current rate, half of the world's species could become extinct early in the next century. This potential loss of biodiversity would have catastrophic effects on the stability and resilience of ecosystems, disrupting food chains, altering natural processes, and diminishing the planet's ability to provide essential services such as clean air, water, and soil fertility. The extinction of species also represents a loss of genetic diversity, which is vital for adaptation to changing environmental conditions and for the continued evolution of life on Earth.

Literature can help to highlight the urgency of addressing ecocide, raising awareness, and standing as inspiring action. Works like novels and movies often depict the consequences of ecocide, presenting vivid and emotive portrayals of landscapes ravaged by deforestation, pollution, and climate change.

Literature can explore the complex relationships between humans and the natural world, emphasizing the interdependence of all living beings. By portraying how human actions impact nature, literature can provide a deeper understanding of the ethical and moral implications of ecocide. The direct interactions between people and nature are crucial in numerous ways, creating growing attention for their diverse impacts. These interactions significantly influence human health and well-being, yielding both positive and negative outcomes. For instance, exposure to natural environments can enhance mental and physical health, reduce stress, and promote relaxation, yet it can also pose risks, such as exposure to natural hazards or zoonotic diseases (Soga & Gaston, 2020).

Environmental destruction resembles a form of dystopian fiction, which Margaret Atwood suggests is a glimpse into the future. Dystopian literature frequently depicts uninhabitable areas or locations on the brink of collapse. One of the literature arts themed around environmental destruction is *Avatar: The Way of Water*, a 2022 movie created by the Canadian director James Cameron. Ningrum et al. (2021) suggest that films have the power to captivate and influence audiences, shaping their thoughts and perceptions about the themes or messages presented in the visuals. This persuasive potential is why Andrianto (2024) incorporates film analysis in his thesis.

ECOCIDE IN JAMES CAMERON'S AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER (2022)



Figure 6: Avatar: The Way of Water

In his thesis, Andrianto (2024) employs ecocriticism to depict the ecocide portrayed in the movie. His research aims to illustrate the depiction of ecocide and identify the factors contributing to it. According to Glotfelty (1996), ecocriticism shifts the focus from the inner world of human experiences to the outer world of the Earth. Essentially, ecocriticism examines how environmental issues are presented and analyzed, along with cultural issues related to the environment and societal attitudes toward nature. A key objective of ecocriticism is to understand how individuals interact with and respond to nature and ecological concerns. Increased attention to environmental destruction and the role of technology has led to the rise of ecocriticism, which has gained significant traction in recent years.

Avatar: The Way of Water is a film centered around the catastrophic consequences of ongoing environmental destruction by humans. The Earth is depicted as dying, prompting humans to search the universe for a new habitable planet. In this quest, they discover Pandora, a stunning moon in the Alpha Centauri star system, inhabited by the blue humanoid aliens known as the Na'vi.

In brief, the plot centers on the R.D.A. returning to Pandora because Earth's conditions are worsening. They arrive with more troops and weaponry to exploit Pandora's resources and establish a human settlement, sparking conflict with the Na'vi. Quaritch, thought to be dead in the first film, returns with his memories implanted into an Avatar. Amidst the chaos, Jake and Neytiri rescue their children from the R.D.A., except for Spider, who is captured and revealed to be Quaritch's son. Spider's capture and interrogation by the R.D.A. add further tension to the story.

Avatar: The Way of Water (2022) connects well to environmental studies in several ways. The movie critiques resource exploitation, highlighting the real-world problems of unsustainable and uncontrolled resource extraction and its impact on ecosystems. According to Andrianto (2024), here is a list of ecocide events depicted in the film.

1. Forest Fire



Figure 7: Forest Fire (*Avatar: The Way of Water* - 07:20)

Forest fires, or wildfires, are uncontrollable blazes that can ignite in forests, grasslands, or any location that is full of grass, trees, and greenery. Natural events like lightning strikes or human activities such as campfires, discarded cigarettes, or intentional arson can trigger them. The effects of forest fires are profound, affecting ecosystems, the economy, and society. They alter habitats, reduce air quality, and cause lasting environmental damage.

In the movie, a forest fire is shown when the humans that they call 'Sky People' come back to Pandora for the second time. Their spacecraft ignited the jungle around its runway, turning the green jungle into waves of fire, killing all the trees and animals that had inhabited it before.

2. Deforestation



Figure 9: Bridgehead City (*Avatar: The Way of Water* - 22:35)

Deforestation refers to the intentional removal, destruction, or damage of forests or wooded areas, typically to support activities such as agriculture, logging, urban development, or construction. This process involves the permanent or long-term removal of trees and vegetation from an area, often resulting in reduced biodiversity, disruptions to ecosystems, soil erosion, and changes in local climate patterns.

A notable instance of deforestation is seen in the Amazon Rainforest, where the forest is cleared for agriculture, logging, and other purposes, leading to significant and widespread ecological impacts.

Andrianto (2024) noted that in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), deforestation is depicted through the

ongoing exploitation and destruction of Pandora's lush environments by human colonizers in order to build a futuristic city called Bridgehead City. According to him, this destruction mirrors real-world deforestation, highlighting the conflict between industrial expansion and the preservation of natural habitats and its impact on the indigenous Na'vi people and Pandora's ecosystems.

In the film, General Frances Ardmore acknowledged that the R.D.A achieved more progress in a single year than they had in the preceding three decades. This statement implies that the rapid and aggressive deforestation of Pandora's jungle played a crucial role in the swift expansion and development of Bridgehead City (Andrianto, 2024). The accelerated clearing of forests allowed for the rapid construction and growth of the city, highlighting the intense and destructive impact of human activities on Pandora's natural environment. This rapid deforestation facilitated the transformation of the landscape, enabling the R.D.A to establish and expand their infrastructure at an unprecedented pace.

3. Illegal Hunting



Figure 8: Illegal Hunting (*Avatar: The Way of Water* - 02:00:16)

Illegal hunting is the unauthorized hunting, trapping, or capturing of wildlife without the necessary permits, licenses, or approval from relevant authorities. This activity involves pursuing and killing animals for their meat, fur, or other body parts, often for commercial profit or personal use. Illegal hunting can severely impact wildlife populations, causing declines in species numbers, disruptions in ecosystems, and threats to biodiversity. It is regarded as a serious environmental crime. It is frequently linked to organized criminal networks engaged in the illegal wildlife trade.

In *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), illegal hunting is illustrated through the humans' reckless treatment of the creature known as the tulkun. Col. Quaritch kills one of the tulkuns solely to draw Jake Sully out of hiding. Another instance is when Lo'ak connects with a tulkun named Payakan and experiences a vision of Payakan's past, revealing that humans had slaughtered

many of Payakan's kin to obtain Amrita, a substance known to humanity for its age-stopping properties.

In one scene, humans are shown targeting a tulkun and her baby. According to Andrianto (2024), their initial plan was to capture and kill them to extract their Amrita, which would later be sold at an exorbitant price. However, Col. Quaritch had a different strategy. He instructed the crew to leave the carcass of the dead tulkun and her dying baby to lure Jake Sully out and spark a conflict between the Ocean Na'vi and the R.D.A.

Undoubtedly, the natural world harbors its own mechanisms for retribution in response to human transgressions. In a poignant scene, the audience witnesses Lo'ak, a pivotal character, enduring the cruel torments inflicted upon him by humans aboard a battleship. His suffering serves as a stark reminder of the murders committed against Pandora's indigenous inhabitants. It is in this moment of anguish that Payakan, another prominent figure among the tulkun, emerges as a harbinger of retaliation. Witnessing the agony endured by his 'brother' Lo'ak, Payakan is filled with a profound sense of anger, compelling him to exact vengeance not only for Lo'ak but also for the collective suffering endured by his tulkun brethren.

With a primal roar echoing across the tumultuous seas, Payakan unleashes his wrath upon the Sky People, symbolizing a force of nature rising against human oppression. His colossal form becomes a formidable force of resistance as he launches himself onto the imposing structure of the S-76 Seadragon, a formidable symbol of human technological prowess. With each thunderous blow, Payakan inflicts notable destruction upon the vessel, a poignant reflection of nature's resilience against the encroachment of human greed and exploitation.

The spectacle of Payakan's retaliation serves as a powerful allegory, underscoring the consequences of humanity's relentless exploitation of nature and the inevitable reckoning that awaits those who sow destruction. As he retreats back into the depths of the ocean, Payakan's actions linger as a testament to the enduring spirit of Pandora's Indigenous inhabitants and their unwavering resolve to protect their home against all odds.

In addition to depicting ecocide in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), Andrianto (2024) delves into the various factors that contribute to this destruction. He provides a detailed analysis of the motivations and circumstances leading to the rampant exploitation and devastation of Pandora's natural environment. Andrianto explores the economic, greed, and personal vengeance drivers behind

humans' relentless pursuit of resources, highlighting the complex interplay of greed, technological advancement, and disregard for ecological balance that fuels the ongoing environmental crisis depicted in the film.

Continuing in the thematic mood of its first movie, *Avatar: The Way of Water* reiterates the motifs of greed, detachment, arrogance, and violence enacted by humans upon the natural world. This cinematic saga adeptly captures the depths to which humanity will plunge in their quest for wealth and fulfillment, illustrating the unyielding determination driving their endeavors. Through its narrative, the film elucidates the multifaceted elements fueling ecocide within the Pandora universe. It serves as a poignant reflection of humanity's unquenchable appetites and their repercussions on the environment.

1. Personal Vengeance



In *Avatar: The Way of Water*, the enduring
Figure 10: Vengeance of Col. Quaritch (*Avatar: The Way of Water* – 01:43:40)

animosity between Colonel Quaritch and Jake Sully remains a central theme, as noted by Andrianto (2024). Quaritch's profound hatred towards Sully stems from the latter's betrayal in aiding the Na'vi in defeating Quaritch, his military unit, and the entire human presence on Pandora. This betrayal ultimately resulted in Quaritch's demise at the hands of Neytiri, Jake's wife, before his subsequent revival in an Avatar form in the sequel. Andrianto suggests that this mix of vengeance and strategic pragmatism serves as the driving force behind Quaritch's relentless pursuit of Jake, justifying any means necessary to capture him and his family.

The author further explores how Quaritch's intense animosity towards Jake significantly contributes to the environmental devastation witnessed on Pandora. Viewing Sully's defection as a severe betrayal, Quaritch resorts to extreme measures to exact revenge. This obsession ultimately leads to Quaritch's death, only to see him resurrected in a new form. Driven by unyielding rage, Quaritch demonstrates a willingness to commit genocide against the tulkun creatures in a bid to lure Sully into a confrontation. Andrianto paints a chilling picture of Quaritch's brutality, highlighting

his willingness to harm even a mother tulkun and her newborn baby in his pursuit of revenge.

In conclusion, Andrianto's analysis sheds light on the complex dynamics at play in "Avatar: The Way of Water," illustrating how themes of vengeance and betrayal drive the narrative forward while also serving as catalysts for environmental destruction on Pandora.

2. Overexploitation of Earth



Figure 12: Earth is dying... (Avatar: The Way of Water - 24:10)

One primary factor highlighted is the overexploitation of Earth. This theme resonates strongly in *Avatar: The Way of Water*, a sequel to the original *Avatar* (2009). The film underscores the dire state of our beloved planet, Earth, teetering on the brink of demise due to relentless human exploitation. Driven by greed, humanity's insatiable desire for resources leads them to aggressively seek out untouched worlds rather than addressing the urgent need to preserve their own habitat. Pandora, the pristine moon orbiting the colossal gas giant Polyphemus, becomes the unwitting recipient of humanity's destructive tendencies.

The demise of Earth, ravaged by human hands, serves as a grim backdrop to the narrative. As Earth faces its impending demise, the inhabitants of the planet are driven by desperation, seeking refuge in the unspoiled landscapes of Pandora. However, the parallels between the fate of Earth and the environmental degradation witnessed on Pandora serve as a stark warning of the consequences of unchecked exploitation.

The search for resources and a new home in the vast expanse of the universe becomes a driving force behind humanity's ventures to worlds like Pandora (Andrianto, 2024). Yet, the underlying motivations are tinged with a sense of recklessness and shortsightedness as humans fail to learn from the ecological devastation they wrought upon their own planet. This cycle of destruction and disregard for the environment underscores the tragic irony of humanity's quest for survival in the cosmos.

3. Overexploitation of Pandora



Figure 11: Overexploitation of Pandora (Avatar: The Way of Water - 24:18)

Andrianto observes that the primary motivation driving humanity's return to Pandora is the desire to establish a new human civilization, primarily prompted by the deteriorating condition of Earth. As articulated earlier, the central goal of the R.D.A. is to establish a new human settlement on Pandora, emphasizing the thematic focus of human colonization and expansion in this sequel. Additionally, human greed and the hunger for power and dominance over new territories play pivotal roles in this narrative.

Despite Pandora's description as a vibrant and biodiverse world, it represents a tantalizing opportunity for human colonization and the extension of human influence. The insatiable greed of humans drives them to constantly seek more, with their desire for full control and authority over Pandora's resources serving as a testament to their voracious appetite.

Andrianto highlights that human greed manifests in the relentless pursuit of power and control over Pandora, particularly through the exploitation of its natural resources, notably the prized minerals unobtainium and Amrita. While Amrita, extracted from the brains of the Tulkun, boasts anti-aging properties and is viewed as a symbol of immortality, unobtainium, introduced in the previous film, is a rare mineral valued for its exceptional conductivity. Both minerals hold immense value to humanity, with Amrita fetching an astronomical price of eighty million United States dollars per drop. In comparison, unobtainium is valued at twenty million United States dollars due to its potential to revolutionize energy production on Earth.

The pursuit of these minerals underscores humanity's relentless quest for profit and technological advancement despite the ethical and environmental implications. The exorbitant value placed on these resources justifies the significant risks and sacrifices made in their acquisition, further highlighting the depths of human greed and its far-reaching consequences.

In his insightful study, Andrianto compellingly combines two overexploitation factors under the overarching theme of human greed. He defines this

greed as an unquenchable thirst for wealth, power, or resources far beyond what is necessary for well-being or survival. The degradation and depletion of Earth's natural resources are driving forces that compel humans to explore and exploit Pandora, making the moon's rich resources one of the main attractions for human colonization.

4. Human Greed



Figure 13: Amrita (*Avatar: The Way of Water* - 02:02:10)

The dire state of Earth serves to fuel this insatiable greed, as humanity's desperation leads them to seek new territories to exploit. Upon discovering the valuable mineral Unobtanium on Pandora, humans eagerly set out to mine this resource, highlighting their relentless pursuit of profit and power. Andrianto's analysis underscores how Earth's ecological crisis not only motivates but also exacerbates the exploitative tendencies of humans, driving them to repeat their destructive behaviors in a new, resource-rich world (Andrianto, 2024).

Andrianto's analysis skillfully ties the theme of human greed in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) back to its predecessor, *Avatar* (2009). He highlights that, prior to the discovery of Amrita, Unobtanium was deemed the most valuable resource, which initially drove humans to Pandora. This rare mineral's significance lies in its exceptional ability to conduct electricity with zero resistance at room temperature, making it an excellent superconductor. With a staggering value of around twenty million United States dollars, the R.D.A. considered Unobtanium the key to resolving Earth's energy crisis. This potential justified the exorbitant costs and risks involved in its extraction. Andrianto effectively underscores how Unobtanium's unique properties and high market value made it a groundbreaking material for energy production and transmission on Earth, thereby linking the ongoing narrative of human greed and exploitation across both films.

5. Human Ignorance



Figure 14: Human Ignorance (*Avatar: The Way of Water* - 07:05)

Andrianto (2024) provides a compelling analysis of human ignorance, describing it as a lack of knowledge, understanding, or awareness about a particular subject or situation. This ignorance is often compounded by arrogance or closed-mindedness, where individuals refuse to consider alternative perspectives or learn from others. Such attitudes result in a reluctance to acknowledge gaps in one's knowledge or engage in meaningful dialogue or learning. In *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2024), human ignorance plays a crucial role in the ecocide depicted in the film.

One striking example that Andrianto highlights is the humans' return to Pandora. Jake Sully immediately recognizes the anomaly of a new bright star approaching. However, feeling inferior to the humans' new heavy machinery, he and his wife, Neytiri, can do nothing but watch in despair as their beloved home is destroyed almost instantly.

Quoting from *Avatar: The Way of Water: The Visual Dictionary* by Izzo et al., Andrianto illustrates the advanced technology employed by humans: "Transporting heavy materials requires accelerating them to 70 percent of the speed of light (and decelerating them, too), so harvesting and building is done on-world wherever possible. Rapid manufacturing is key to a quick and efficient strategy. With metals and petrochemicals extracted from Pandora, 3D printers can churn out vast numbers of components for vehicles, weapons, robotics, data equipment, and even buildings, which are fed into rapid, highly automated assembly lines. With minimal human intervention, such factories can produce a veritable army of assets to aid the reconquest of Polyphemus' moon."

This excerpt underscores how the humans' advanced technology in the film fosters a sense of arrogance and superiority, fueling their belief that they can conquer and control nature without repercussions. Andrianto effectively draws a parallel to our world, particularly in the Amazon Rainforest, where humans

have been quietly but continuously influencing their surroundings for thousands of years.

THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS BETWEEN LITERARY AND REAL-WORLD

In his comprehensive analysis, Andrianto (2024) not only delves into the environmental themes depicted in "Avatar: The Way of Water" but also draws poignant parallels to real-world events, serving as a stark reminder of the consequences of human actions.



Figure 15: Gender reveal party that create fire

Through meticulous examples, Andrianto skillfully links the ecocide portrayed in the movie to contemporary environmental crises. For instance, he connects the forest fire depicted in the film to a tragic incident in 2020, where a gender reveal party in California sparked a blaze, resulting in significant habitat destruction and loss of life.

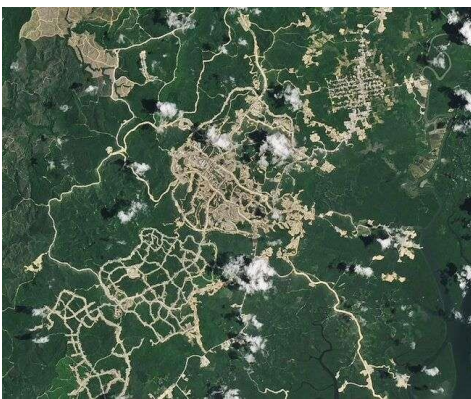


Figure 17: Kalimantan forest

Furthermore, Andrianto highlights the issue of deforestation, citing events in Indonesia where forest lands are being cleared for various development projects. He emphasizes the importance of preserving these habitats, drawing attention to protests aimed at protecting forests in Papua from conversion into palm oil plantations.



Figure 18: African rhinoceros

Illegal hunting and the exploitation of animals are also scrutinized, with Andrianto drawing parallels to the plight of African rhinoceroses and elephants. These examples underscore the detrimental impact of human greed and exploitation on vulnerable species.



Figure 16: Mutilated tusk of elephants

Andrianto reflects on the portrayal of human ignorance in the film, particularly in the form of advanced technology leading to ecological devastation on Pandora. This mirrors real-world attitudes driven by a sense of superiority over nature, exemplified by ongoing human interventions in places like the Amazon Rainforest.

Andrianto's review skillfully connects the themes of human ignorance and arrogance in *Avatar: The Way of Water* to real-world environmental issues, providing a thought-provoking reflection on the consequences of humanity's actions. Overall, his analysis offers a compelling examination of the environmental themes in *Avatar: The Way of Water*, urging viewers to reflect on the parallels between fiction and reality and to consider the urgent need for environmental stewardship to prevent the devastating consequences depicted in the movie from becoming a reality for future generations.

Fictional narratives like *Avatar: The Way of Water* offer valuable insights into the consequences of environmental destruction and the urgent need for action. By drawing parallels between fictional scenarios and real-world environmental challenges, we can better understand the complexities of ecocide and its implications for future

generations. Through critical analysis and reflection, we can leverage the lessons learned from fiction to inform real-world efforts to combat ecocide and promote environmental sustainability.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Andrianto's analysis serves as a thought-provoking exploration of the environmental themes depicted in "Avatar: The Way of Water," weaving together elements of fiction with real-world examples to underscore the urgent need for environmental stewardship. Through meticulous examples and insightful commentary, Andrianto skillfully links the ecocide portrayed in the movie to contemporary environmental crises, highlighting the devastating consequences of human actions on ecosystems and biodiversity.

Andrianto (2024) effectively utilizes the depiction of ecocide, encompassing occurrences like forest fires, deforestation, and illegal hunting, to underscore the film's role as a powerful cautionary tale regarding the detrimental effects of human activities on delicate ecosystems. He further highlights Cameron's adeptness in employing stunning visuals and compelling storytelling to vividly depict the profound consequences of these harmful practices in the fictional world of Pandora. Through this immersive narrative, Andrianto suggests that the film effectively instills a sense of urgency, urging viewers to prioritize environmental conservation endeavors.

By drawing parallels between the fictional world of Pandora and our own, Andrianto prompts viewers to consider the implications of unchecked environmental destruction and the importance of collective action to mitigate its impacts. His analysis sheds light on the complex interplay of factors driving ecocide, from human greed and exploitation to ignorance and arrogance.

Moreover, Andrianto's review skillfully connects the themes of human ignorance and arrogance in "Avatar: The Way of Water" to real-world environmental issues, providing a compelling reflection on the consequences of humanity's actions. Through his comprehensive analysis, Andrianto urges viewers to reflect on the parallels between fiction and reality and to recognize the urgent need for environmental stewardship to prevent the devastating consequences depicted in the movie from becoming a reality for future generations.

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