EXPLOITATION OF NATURE IN *AVATAR 2: THE WAY OF WATER(2022)*: AN ECOCRITICAL ANALYSIS

THESIS

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I state that the thesis entitled "**Exploitation of Nature *in Avatar 2: The Way of Water(2022)*: An Ecocritical Analysis**" is my original work, I do not include any material previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, 19 December 2025

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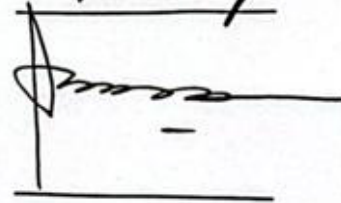1. Prof. Dr. Hj. Mundi Rahayu (Chair)
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MOTTO

لِكَيْ تُسَيْطِرَ عَلَى الطَّبِيْعَةِ، يَجِبُ عَلَيْكَ أَوَّلًا أَنْ تَدْرُسَهَا، فَالإِنْسَانُ جُزْءٌ لَا يَتَجَزَّأُ مِن الطَّبِيْعَةِ المُحِيْطَةِ بِه

"علي الوردي"

To control nature, you have to learn it first, because humans are an inseparable
part of the natural world around them
(Ali Al-Wardi)

DEDICATION

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my beloved parents,
Sugeng Iryanto, S.H., and Kurnia Sari Fatimah, S.H.,
For their endless prayers, unconditional love, and unwavering support.
Every step and achievement I have reached is a reflection of your sacrifice,
patience, and faith in me.
To my dear sisters, Tamara Tsabita Balqis, and Azarine Rakha Salma,
for your warmth, encouragement, and the joy you bring into my life.
May this work be a small token of my deepest gratitude and love,
and may it always make you proud.

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In the name of Allah, the All-Compassionate, All-Merciful. *Alhamdulillaahi Robbil 'Alamiin.*

The researcher expresses deep gratitude for all the favors and sustenance that Allah SWT has provided, which have enabled the researcher to complete this thesis. The researcher also sends salawat and salam to the great Prophet Muhammad SAW, who has become the researcher's role model in this life.

The researcher would like to thank as much as possible for the tremendous love and support that have been so great for the researcher. Thus, the researcher can be in this current position. They are: the researcher's thesis supervisor and the researcher's academic supervisor, Prof. Dr. Mundi Rahayu, M.Hum., who has provided the researcher with many valuable directions, input, advice, and motivation during the preparation of this thesis.

My beloved parents

Sugeng Iryanto S.H. and Kurnia Sari Fatimah S.H., my beloved sister Tamara Tsabita Balqis, and Azarine Rakha Salma. This thesis is dedicated to my dear parents, as a testament to their success in educating the researcher (their child) to the current position.
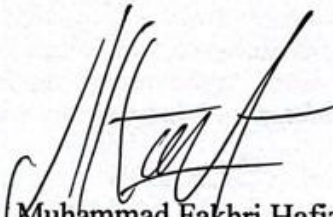
Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the support of my friends, who have provided me with endless encouragement and motivation. Their unwavering faith in me has been a source of strength and inspiration throughout my academic journey.

Last but not least, I want to thank myself. I want to thank myself for believing in me. Thank you for all this hard work. I want to thank myself for having no days off. I want to thank myself for never quitting. I want to thank myself for always being a giver and trying to give more than I receive. Thank me for trying to do more right than wrong. I want to thank myself for just being me at all times.

The researcher realizes that the thesis still has many shortcomings. As such, the researcher would be happy to receive all criticism and input. This feedback will help improve both the researcher and the research in the future. The researcher also hopes that this thesis can provide benefits and enthusiasm for the wider community.

Malang, 19 December 2025

The Researcher

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ABSTRACT

Hafizh, Muhammad Fakhri (2025), Exploitation of Nature *in Avatar 2: The Way of Water(2022)*: An Ecocritical Analysis. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Prof. Dr. Mundi Rahayu, M.Hum.

Keywords: *Exploitation of nature, ecocriticism, metkayina, poaching,*

This study examines the representation of environmental exploitation and ethical modes of inhabiting nature in Avatar: The Way of Water (2022) through an ecocritical framework grounded in conception of ecocriticism and further articulated by Greg Garrard's concept of dwelling. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the study analyzes visual scenes, narrative structures, and key dialogues related to environmental issues through repeated film viewings and close textual analysis. The findings are structured according to the research questions as follows:

The study identifies four interconnected forms of environmental exploitation: (1) natural resource extraction by the Sky People that commodifies nature and undermines Indigenous lifeways; (2) destruction of natural habitats, reflecting a colonial logic that transfers ecological crises rather than resolving them; (3) pollution and environmental damage through industrial and militarized technologies that transform shared ecosystems into zones of violence; and (4) wildlife exploitation, particularly the hunting of the Tulkun, which commodifies sentient non-human beings and severs ecological, cultural, and spiritual relationships. Viewed through Garrard's concept of dwelling, these practices represent extractive and anthropocentric modes of inhabitation.

The film depicts multidimensional impacts of environmental exploitation: (1) ecologically, forest burning, marine pollution, and Tulkun hunting cause habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem imbalance; (2) socially, these practices generate environmental injustice, cultural displacement, and conflict between the Sky People and the Na'vi, particularly the Metkayina clan; and (3) morally, the narrative reveals a failure of ethical dwelling, as profit-driven and technocratic ideologies override care, reciprocity, and intergenerational responsibility. These impacts demonstrate that environmental exploitation damages not only nature but also social relations and moral values.

The film presents a multifaceted response to environmental exploitation: (1) by leading and supporting indigenous resistance, Jake Sully and Neytiri stand with the Metkayina clan in defending territory and non-human kin; (2) by protecting nature through reciprocal everyday practices, such as forming respectful bonds with aquatic beings, the film promotes harmony and ecological responsibility; (3) by building solidarity among clans and non-human beings, environmental struggle is framed as a shared ecological condition; and (4) Jake Sully and Neytiri embody ecological dwelling in protecting the marine ecosystem in *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022), the narrative embodies Greg Garrard's concept of dwelling as an ethical mode of inhabiting the environment based on care, adaptation, and long-term ecological commitment.

Overall, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022), functions as a cultural critique of anthropocentrism and extractive modernity by juxtaposing destructive and sustainable modes of dwelling. This study contributes to ecocritical scholarship by highlighting the relevance of dwelling as a key analytical concept for understanding contemporary cinematic representations of environmental crises and ecological ethics.

ABSTRAK

Hafizh, Muhammad Fakhri (2025). Eksploitasi Alam dalam Avatar 2: The Way of Water(2022): Sebuah Analisis Ekokritik. Program Studi Sastra English, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing Prof. Dr. Mundi Rahayu, M.Hum.

Kata Kunci: *Eksplotasi alam, ekokritik, metkayina, perburuan liar*

Penelitian ini mengkaji representasi eksploitasi lingkungan dan mode etis dalam menghuni alam dalam film *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) melalui kerangka ekokritik yang berpijak pada konsep ekokritisisme dan diperdalam dengan konsep *dwelling* dari Greg Garrard. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini menganalisis adegan visual, struktur naratif, serta dialog-dialog kunci yang berkaitan dengan isu lingkungan melalui penayangan film secara berulang dan pembacaan teks secara mendalam. Temuan penelitian disusun berdasarkan rumusan masalah sebagai berikut.

Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi empat bentuk eksploitasi lingkungan yang saling berkaitan, yaitu: (1) eksploitasi sumber daya alam oleh Sky People yang mengkomodifikasi alam dan merusak cara hidup masyarakat adat; (2) perusakan habitat alam yang mencerminkan logika kolonial, di mana krisis ekologis dipindahkan ke wilayah lain alih-alih diselesaikan; (3) pencemaran dan kerusakan lingkungan melalui teknologi industri dan militerisasi yang mengubah ekosistem bersama menjadi zona kekerasan; serta (4) eksploitasi satwa liar, khususnya perburuan Tulkun, yang mengkomodifikasi makhluk non-manusia yang berkesadaran serta memutus relasi ekologis, kultural, dan spiritual. Ditinjau melalui konsep *dwelling* Garrard, praktik-praktik tersebut merepresentasikan cara menghuni alam yang bersifat ekstraktif dan antroposentris.

Film ini juga menampilkan dampak eksploitasi lingkungan yang bersifat multidimensional, meliputi: (1) dampak ekologis berupa pembakaran hutan, pencemaran laut, dan perburuan Tulkun yang menyebabkan kerusakan habitat, hilangnya keanekaragaman hayati, serta ketidakseimbangan ekosistem; (2) dampak sosial berupa ketidakadilan lingkungan, peminggiran budaya, dan konflik antara Sky People dan bangsa Na'vi, khususnya klan Metkayina; serta (3) dampak moral yang menunjukkan kegagalan *dwelling* yang etis, ketika ideologi berorientasi keuntungan dan teknologi mengalahkan nilai kepedulian, resiprositas, dan tanggung jawab antargenerasi. Dampak-dampak tersebut menunjukkan bahwa eksploitasi lingkungan tidak hanya merusak alam, tetapi juga meretakkan relasi sosial dan nilai-nilai moral.

Lebih lanjut, film ini menghadirkan respons yang beragam terhadap eksploitasi lingkungan, yaitu: (1) melalui kepemimpinan dan dukungan terhadap perlawanan masyarakat adat, Jake Sully dan Neytiri berpihak pada klan Metkayina dalam mempertahankan wilayah dan kerabat non-manusia; (2) melalui perlindungan alam dalam praktik keseharian yang bersifat resiprokal, seperti membangun relasi yang penuh penghormatan dengan makhluk akuatik, film ini menegaskan harmoni dan tanggung jawab ekologis; (3) melalui pembangunan solidaritas antarklan dan antarspesies, perjuangan lingkungan dipahami sebagai kondisi ekologis bersama; serta (4) melalui karakter Jake Sully dan Neytiri, narasi film mewujudkan konsep *dwelling* Greg Garrard sebagai cara etis menghuni lingkungan yang berlandaskan kepedulian, adaptasi, dan komitmen ekologis jangka panjang.

Secara keseluruhan, *Avatar: The Way of Water* berfungsi sebagai kritik kultural terhadap antroposentrisme dan modernitas ekstraktif dengan memperhadapkan cara menghuni alam yang destruktif dan yang berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian ekokritik dengan menegaskan relevansi konsep *dwelling* sebagai perangkat analisis utama dalam memahami representasi krisis lingkungan dan etika ekologis dalam sinema kontemporer.

المستخلص

حافظ، محمد فخري (٢٠٢٥). استغلال الطبيعة في (2022) *Avatar 2: The Way of Water*
تحليل النقد البيئي. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانج.
المشرفة: الأستاذة الدكتورة موندي راهَيو، ماجستير.

االكلمات الرئيسة: استغلال الطبيعة، النقد البيئي، الميتكاينا، الصيد الجائر

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل تمثيل استغلال البيئة وأخلاقيات السكن في فيلم (2022) *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* من خلال إطار النقد البيئي (الإيكو–نقد) المرتكز على تصوّر شيريل غلوتفلتي، والمطوّر عبر مفهوم السكن (Dwelling) عند غريغ غارارد. ينظر الإيكو–نقد إلى الأعمال الأدبية والسينمائية بوصفها نصوصًا ثقافية لا تعكس العلاقة بين الإنسان والبيئة الطبيعية فحسب، بل تسهم أيضًا في تشكيلها. وتعتمد هذه الدراسة منهجًا وصفيًا نوعيًا، من خلال المشاهدة المتكررة للفيلم، وتوثيق المشاهد المحورية، وتحليل العناصر البصرية والسردية، ودراسة الحوارات المرتبطة بالقضايا البيئية.

تُظهر نتائج الدراسة أن الفيلم يصوّر أشكالًا متعددة من الاستغلال البيئي الحديث الذي تمارسه جماعة الـ*Sky People*، مثل استخراج الموارد بشكل مدمّر، وتخريب النظم البيئية البحرية، والتلوث الناتج عن الأنشطة الصناعية والعسكرية، وتسليع الكائنات غير البشرية من خلال صيد التولكون لأغراض اقتصادية. وتعكس هذه الممارسات رؤية أنثروبومركزية واستعمارًا بيئيًا يُختزل فيه الطبيعة إلى موضوع للهيمنة وتحقيق الربح. وفي المقابل، يقدّم الفيلم مجتمع الميتكاينا بوصفه نموذجًا للسكن البيئي، أي نمط العيش الذي يقوم على التكيّف، والترابط الإيكولوجي، والمسؤولية الأخلاقية تجاه النظام البيئي البحري. ومن خلال شخصيتي جيك سَلي ونيتيري، يعرض الفيلم ممارسات حماية البيئة القائمة على التعايش، وصون التنوع البيولوجي، ومقاومة الحداثة الاستخراجية.

كما يصوّر الفيلم آثار الاستغلال البيئي بوصفها آثارًا متعددة الأبعاد، تشمل فقدان التنوع الحيوي، واختلال التوازن البيئي، والظلم البيئي الذي تعاني منه المجتمعات الأصلية، إضافة إلى أزمة أخلاقية عميقة ناتجة عن انفصال الإنسان عن شبكة الحياة. ومن خلال المقابلة بين ممارسات الاستغلال وأنماط السكن المستدام، يعمل فيلم *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* بوصفه نقدًا ثقافيًا بيئيًا يتحدى المنطق الأنثروبومركزي، ويدعو إلى التحول نحو أخلاقيات الرعاية البيئية، والتبادلية، والمسؤولية طويلة الأمد. وتسهم هذه الدراسة في حقل الإيكو–نقد من خلال التأكيد على أهمية مفهوم السكن كأداة تحليلية لفهم تمثيلات الأزمات البيئية في السينما المعاصرة. كما توصي الدراسة بإجراء أبحاث مستقبلية من خلال مقاربات بينية، مثل الدراسات المقارنة للأفلام البيئية، والتحليل ما بعد الاستعماري لتمثيل المجتمعات الأصلية، ودراسات تلقي الجمهور للوعي البيئي، إلى جانب استكشاف الروحانية البيئية، والإيكوفيمينيزم، وتناقضات الرأسمالية الخضراء في الصناعات الإبداعية.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on a brief description of the research. It contains the research background, research problem, research significance, scope and limitations, and definitions of key terms. These sections will be explained separately.

A. Background of Study

In today's modern era, preserving the natural environment is crucial because its destruction often driven by relentless human exploitation directly threatens the survival of all living beings. In literary ecocriticism, the natural environment is understood as a shared living space for humans and non-humans, where humans bear a moral responsibility not only to protect nature but also to refrain from exploitative practices that disrupt ecological balance (Garrard, 2004). Ecocriticism, as a critical approach, analyzes how literary works expose, critique, or resist environmental exploitation and degradation.

In this research, the ecocritical framework (Garrard, 2004), is applied to the analysis of the film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022), a narrative rich with representations of ecological conflict. Although ecocriticism originated in literature, it is highly adaptable to film analysis, especially because film through its dynamic integration of sound, imagery, and narrative can vividly depict acts of domination, extraction, and environmental exploitation. *Avatar* offers a visually striking portrayal of Pandora's environment, in which exploitative forces attempt

to seize and commodify natural resources, creating a strong contrast with the indigenous community's ecological harmony. The film's eco-cinematography allows these tensions to be conveyed with emotional and visual intensity, illustrating how cinematic narratives can amplify ecocritical critiques of environmental injustice. This fusion of literary and visual elements demonstrates the potential of ecocriticism to reveal patterns of exploitation embedded in contemporary environmental storytelling (Buell, 2005)

Film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) the second release on December 14, 2022. The *film Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) This relates to the Avatar film, which was first released on December 17, 2009, and depicts the adventures of Jake and his family with the Metkayina Clan, who live primarily at sea. This contrasts with the first Avatar film, which focused on the Omaticaya Clan, who primarily live in the jungle

In this sea, Jake and his family's exciting and thrilling adventures are presented in many ways film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water (2022).*With the help of the Metkayina Clan, Jake can meet many aquatic creatures such as a giant whale called a Tulkun, pincer fish, dorado verde and many more. He even has a special mount in the form of a giant flying fish called Tsurak. Researchers are interested in examining the film because there is a uniqueness that is the nature in the land of Pandora which is guarded by the Na'vi nation is exactly the same as the nature in Indonesia, especially on the islands whose natural beauty is still maintained and protected from human bad actions that harm nature. James Cameron as the director of this film has always been interested in the relationship between humans and

nature, and this is reflected in his depiction of Pandora as a living and interconnected ecosystem. Pandora's oceans, like the rainforest in the first film, are shown as living creatures with their own life forms, which are threatened by human exploitation and military aggression.

Previous research is divided into two main parts. The first part includes a study of films. Avatar (2009) directed by James Cameron. Romadhon (2012) examines environmental issues in the film, while Dudhatra (2023), dan Dasilva (2025) highlights the relationship between humans and nature using ecocritical theory. Bhattacharjee (2013) explores environmental moral values in the film's structure and themes. The second part focuses on *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022). Arfah, Amin, & Abdullah (2024) examined language performance in the main character's conflict, while Wijaya, Fauzi, & Hidayah (2023) highlighted the representation of family roles. Pandunata, Nurdiansyah, & Alfina (2023) conducted a sentiment analysis of film reviews with Support Vector Machine, and Lee (2024) examined the representation of female masculinity in the character of Neytiri. Furthermore, Prasetya (2023) assessed the potential of film as a learning medium for adaptation topics in high school. Beyond Avatar Several studies have emphasized the relevance of ecocriticism to other cultural texts. Rahayu (2020) demonstrates the role of local media in fostering ecological awareness through critical discourse, while Muhlisin & Rahayu (2024) reveal the representation of the global crisis in the novel The Wall. Nida & Rahayu (2023) through ecofeminist analysis show women's struggle to preserve forests in the novel Black Firefly.

Previous studies have generally demonstrated the breadth of ecological critique in both global and local cultural contexts. However, no research has specifically examined the exploitation of nature as visualized in *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022). Thus, this study is positioned to fill this gap through an analysis of ecological exploitation in popular cinematic narratives.

The gap between previous research and this research is that there has been no analysis of *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) using ecocritical theory. This research certainly provides readers with a new experience, revealing insights never before explored in previous studies. The previous research mentioned above is highly relevant as a reference for this study. Furthermore, this research is also expected to enrich readers' knowledge regarding the development of ecocritical studies in the future.

B. Problems of the study

1. What forms of environmental exploitation are depicted in the film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022)?

2. What are the impacts of this environmental exploitation as portrayed in the film?

3. How do Jake Sully and Neytiri respond to and resist the environmental exploitation portrayed in the film?

C. Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes this research will enrich the variety of literary analysis, particularly films, at the faculty of Humanities at Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. The researcher also hopes this research will provide

meaning and information for researchers and readers, especially those who enjoy and appreciate films from an ecological perspective. The researcher hopes this research will help readers better understand works related to the environment, particularly those that occur in films *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022).

D. Scope and Limitation

This section provides information on certain aspects that are the focus of the research, specifically the objects analyzed in this study using Garrard (2004). ecocritical theory. The film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) was chosen because the data from the film's story aligns with the theory used. And there has been no previous research that uses the film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) by using Garrard's ecocritical theory (2004).

E. Definition of Key Terms

1. Ecocriticism

Ecocriticism, as articulated by Greg Garrard (2004), is a critical approach that examines cultural representations of nature and explores the ethical, ideological, and ecological relationships between humans and the non-human world. Rather than focusing solely on the human condition, ecocriticism investigates how literary and cultural texts reflect environmental values, expose ecological imbalance, and critique unsustainable modes of inhabiting the earth.

2. Relationship between humans and non-humans.

In Greg Garrard's ecocritical framework (2004), the relationship between humans and non-humans refers to the ethical, cultural, and ecological interdependence between human beings and the natural world. Garrard's

approach emphasizes how cultural texts represent environmental ethics, expose ecological imbalance, and illustrate the consequences of unsustainable and exploitative practices. In *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022), this close causal relationship is clearly depicted through the interactions between humans, the Na'vi, and Pandora's ecosystems, where environmental exploitation directly results in ecological destruction and social conflict. The film therefore serves as a compelling text for ecocritical analysis, as it reveals how human domination over non-human life disrupts ecological harmony and undermines the possibility of ethical dwelling.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter delineates the conceptual and methodological foundations of the study by employing an ecocritical approach grounded in Greg Garrard's (2004), theoretical framework. Rather than focusing solely on human environment relations, Garrard's ecocriticism emphasizes key ecological discourses such as anthropocentrism, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, and environmental justice. This framework provides a critical lens to examine how ecological ideologies, power relations, and environmental crises are narratively constructed and contested within the film.

A. Literary Fiction in The Film

The term *"literary fiction* in film"* refers to how cinema adopts elements commonly found in scholarly literary works, such as complex plots, symbolism, multi-layered characters, and profound thematic exploration, to construct narratives with intellectual and emotional depth. Robert Stam (2017) describes this process as an *intertextual dialogue*, where film does not merely imitate literature but reinterprets literary sensibilities through visual expression. This literary dimension appears in non-linear storytelling, shifts in perspective, and temporal play, echoing Gerard Genette's narrative theory. It is also visible through symbolic imagery, metaphoric visuals, and the semiotic richness of cinematic language, as explained by Christian Metz (1974). Furthermore, film characters often embody psychological complexity and internal conflict, aligning with Seymour Chatman's

(1980) view of cinema's ability to reveal a character's discourse. Literary films also explore themes such as identity, morality, and social injustice, which Bakhtin (2010) while employing self-reflexive narrative strategies characteristic of postmodernism, as noted by Linda Hutcheon (1988). Altogether, literary fiction in film is not merely a transfer of literature to the screen, but a method for crafting deeper, more reflective viewing experiences.

B. Literary Ecocriticism

1. The Nature of Literature

Literature can be understood as a cultural text that reflects, constructs, and critiques human experiences through narrative and symbolic forms. Rather than merely serving as a medium for aesthetic expression, literary works function as sites of meaning production in which social, ideological, and ethical values are negotiated. From a theoretical perspective, literature provides a space where relationships between humans and their surrounding environments can be examined critically.

In literary studies, texts are not treated as neutral representations of reality but as discursive formations shaped by historical, cultural, and ideological contexts. This perspective allows literature to be analyzed as a medium that both reflects and influences human attitudes toward nature, power, and domination. Consequently, literary analysis emphasizes how narratives, characters, and settings embody particular worldviews and value systems.

Within this framework, ecocriticism emerges as a critical approach that focuses on the representation of nature and the human–environment relationship in literary and cultural texts. Ecocriticism examines how literature responds to environmental issues, challenges anthropocentric assumptions, and articulates ethical concerns regarding ecological balance. By positioning literature as an active participant in environmental discourse, this approach underscores the role of literary texts in shaping ecological awareness and critique (Khomisah, 2020).

2. Definition of Ecocriticism

Environmental critics employ both literary theory and ecological theory. Literary theory and ecological theory are inherently multidisciplinary, as they engage with various fields of knowledge (Meeran, 2020; Pradhan, 2024). From the perspective of literary theory, environmental criticism can be traced back to the paradigm of imitation theory. The fundamental assumption of imitation theory is that literature is closely related to reality. This paradigm, including Plato's concept of mimesis or literature as imitation and entertainment, was later developed within the cosmological framework proposed by M. H. Abrams (Endraswara, 2013).

The term *ecocriticism* is derived from the words *ecology* and *criticism*. Ecology can be defined as the scientific study of patterns of reciprocal relationships among humans, animals, plants, and their environment. Meanwhile, the term *criticism*, commonly used in Indonesian, originates from the Greek word *krinein*, meaning "to distinguish, compare, and judge" (Endraswara, 2013). Ecological literary criticism does not emerge without an

intellectual foundation; through ontology, epistemology, and axiology (theory of values), the philosophical basis of literary ecocriticism can be comprehensively understood.

From an ontological perspective, literary ecocriticism represents a way of understanding literature by connecting aesthetic facts with environmental realities. Epistemologically, it is grounded in the concept that literature arises from specific environmental conditions. Axiologically, ecocriticism is valuable for revealing the symbiotic relationship between literature and the environment.

Therefore, literary ecocriticism may be conducted through several approaches, particularly by interpreting literary works as reflections of their surrounding environments. The more an author aesthetically describes the environment within a literary work, the stronger the ecological dimension of the text becomes. Along this axis, this key condition is referred to as *literary ecology*, which denotes the extent to which environmental reflection permeates, shapes, and activates the literary atmosphere. This ecological dimension also termed the literary environment can render a literary work more vibrant or, conversely, more constrained.

The fundamental assumptions underlying ecocritical literary research are as follows: (1) literature emerges within specific environmental conditions; (2) literature is inseparable from the environment surrounding the author; and (3) literature is created as a means of understanding the surrounding environment (Abdurahman et al., 2025).

Ecocriticism theory is inherently multidisciplinary. On the one hand, it draws upon literary theory, and on the other, it engages with ecological science. The intersection of these two disciplines gives rise to environmental criticism. Literary ecocritics occupy a pivotal position within the field of literary criticism. Literature that intersects with ecological criticism, including not only written texts but also folk literature and artistic expressions, falls within the scope of ecocritical analysis (Glotfelty, 1996).

Ecocritics examine the relationship between literature and the natural environment. Garrard (2004), argues that ecocriticism can contribute to defining, exploring, and even addressing ecological problems. However, Lawrence Buell (1995), cautions that ecocritical criteria often appear either too broad, encompassing nearly any literary work in which "nature" is represented, or too narrow, including only those texts that are explicitly oriented toward ecological concerns.

Environmental wisdom constitutes one means of raising public awareness that humans are an integral part of nature. Keraf (2010) and Kamil (2021), asserts that environmental wisdom embodies moral principles such as respect for nature, responsibility toward the natural world, care for the environment, empathy for nature, and harmonious coexistence with nature (Ch & Sudarsono, 2008):

a. An attitude of respect is based on the belief that humans have a moral obligation to respect nature. From the perspective of environmental ethics, respect for nature constitutes an ecological principle grounded in society's

understanding of the intrinsic value of nature that nature possesses value in itself and therefore deserves respect.

b. An attitude of moral responsibility toward nature arises from the ontological view that humans are an integral part of nature. This responsibility is not merely individual but also collective. This ethical principle requires humans to take initiatives, make efforts, formulate policies, and implement concrete actions to protect the universe and all its contents.

c. A sense of unity with nature implies that humans share an equal status with nature and other living beings. This reality fosters a sense of connectedness and comfort with nature and other creatures. For example, experiencing empathy with animals can awaken public awareness of the need to protect them.

d. An attitude of love and care for nature originates from the recognition that, as fellow members of the ecological community, all living beings have the right to be protected, nurtured, and cared for.

e. An attitude of non-interference with natural life includes: (a) avoiding unnecessary damage to nature; (b) not threatening the capacity of living beings within the ecosystem; (c) maintaining and fulfilling the obligation not to harm nature; and (d) preserving nature in its original state.

Based on the explanations provided by the scholars above, literary ecocriticism can be understood as a critical literary theory that emphasizes the relationship between literature and the natural environment. Environmental wisdom serves as a means of raising public awareness of environmental issues.

It is grounded in principles such as respect for nature, moral responsibility toward the environment, care and concern for the natural world, empathy with nature, and harmony between humans and the natural world.

C. Ecocritical Greg Garrard

According to Greg Garrard (2004), ecocriticism explores how humans imagine and represent relationships between humanity and the environment across all forms of cultural production. Ecocriticism is also a critical stance inspired by modern environmental movements. Garrard traces the development of these movements and examines several key concepts associated with ecocriticism, namely: (a) pollution, (b) wilderness, (c) apocalypse, (d) dwelling, (e) animals, and (f) earth. Furthermore, Garrard (2004) asserts that ecocriticism can help define, explore, and even resolve ecological problems in a broader sense.

As a medium for representing social attitudes, perspectives, and responses toward the surrounding environment, literature holds significant potential to articulate environmental ideas, including values of ecological wisdom. This is reasonable given that literature emerges, develops, and derives its substance from both social and natural environments.

Shoba (2019), in the *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, states that ecocriticism is the study of culture and cultural products such as art, literature, scientific theories, and others in relation to humans and nature. Similarly, Khomisah (2020) argues that ecocritical theory is multidisciplinary in nature, drawing on both literary theory and ecological theory. In line with this view, Garrard (2004) reiterates that ecocriticism investigates how relationships between humans and the

environment are imagined and represented across cultural domains. Ecocriticism is thus both inspired by and functions as a critical response to modern environmental movements, as demonstrated through the key ecocritical concepts outlined above:

1. Pollution

Environmental pollution constitutes a major source of problems that increasingly demand urgent solutions, as they directly affect safety, health, and life itself. Everyone can contribute to addressing environmental pollution, from the smallest local contexts to broader global environments. The term *pollution* derives from the Latin *polluere*, meaning "to soil" or "to contaminate." According to Garrard (2004), pollution is an ecological problem not because it specifies a particular substance or class of substances, but because it represents an implicit normative claim that there is "too much of something" present in the environment, usually in the wrong place.

2. Wilderness

A forest is a community of vegetation dominated by trees and characterized by environmental conditions distinct from those outside the forest. According to Garrard (2004: 4), the concept of wilderness refers to a state of nature that is uncontaminated by civilization and functions as a powerful cultural construct. Wilderness is often preserved to protect specific ecosystems and species from human interference, and it represents a space of escape from urban materialism and social degradation. Wilderness is central to ecocriticism because it promises renewal and offers an authentic relationship between humans and the environment.

3. Apocalypse

Apocalypse refers to conditions in which nature and the environment deviate from their normal states, including climate change, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, ecosystem extinction, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters. Garrard (2004) highlights an awareness that the world itself will not necessarily end, even if human civilization collapses, as the environment tends to endure. Apocalypse, according to Garrard, involves a social psychology inclined toward paranoia and violence, extreme moral dualism, and canonical thinking, and thus remains a persistent imaginative construct.

In reality, not all environmental problems are caused by human activity; many occur independently of human intervention, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, meteor impacts, and other natural phenomena. It is essential to recognize that the environment possesses resilience, which is the capacity to return to equilibrium after disturbance. This process is known as *homeostasis*. Consequently, when natural processes cause environmental disruptions, nature tends to restore balance through its own homeostatic mechanisms.

4. Dwelling

According to Garrard (2004), dwelling or habitation is not temporary; rather, it implies the long-term accumulation of human memories related to landscape, ancestry, death, ritual, life, and labor. Land as a dwelling place is a fundamental source of life for human societies and nearly all other living beings. In a deeper sense, land is not merely a source of life; it is life itself. It functions as a nurturing mother, sustaining and radiating life. As a dwelling space, land carries ecological, social, spiritual, and moral significance for humans and other living beings. As

stated by Vandana Shiva, land is not merely a womb for biological reproduction, but also for the reproduction of cultural and spiritual life.

The concept of dwelling in ecocriticism refers to how humans live in relation to the natural environment as a meaningful and ethically grounded place. Rather than viewing nature as a mere object of exploitation, dwelling emphasizes living in place, where human existence is embedded within ecological, cultural, and spatial relationships. In ecocritical studies, this concept is central to understanding how literary and cultural texts represent the interconnectedness between humans, land, and non-human life.

Greg Garrard associates dwelling with the georgic tradition, which highlights labor, attachment to the land, and environmental responsibility. However, Garrard also argues that in contemporary post-industrial societies, the relevance of dwelling has diminished. Modern life is characterized by high mobility, industrialization, and global capitalism, all of which undermine sustained and ethical relationships with specific places. Consequently, dwelling should not be interpreted as a nostalgic return to the past, but rather as a critical framework that questions modern modes of existence that are ecologically disconnected.

The discourse of dwelling is closely linked to bioregionalism, a perspective that promotes human life in accordance with the ecological characteristics of a particular region. While bioregionalism offers an ethical vision of sustainability and local attachment, ecocriticism also warns against its tendency to idealize indigenous cultures. This critique is encapsulated in the notion of the "Ecological Indian," a stereotype that portrays indigenous peoples as naturally harmonious with nature.

Although this image is often mobilized to challenge industrial environmental destruction, it risks oversimplifying and romanticizing indigenous identities.

Within ecocritical analysis, dwelling functions as a theoretical lens for evaluating how texts depict human–environment relationships. Representations of dwelling may reveal either the possibility of ethical coexistence with nature or the failure of modern societies to sustain ecological balance. Thus, dwelling operates not only as an ecological concept but also as a critical tool for exposing anthropocentric ideologies and environmentally exploitative practices embedded in contemporary cultural narratives (Garrard, 2004).

5. Animals

According to Garrard (2004), studies of human animal relationships in the humanities are divided between philosophical considerations of animal rights and cultural analyses of animal representation. This field has gained significant momentum, particularly following Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* (1975), which addressed issues that had previously been only briefly discussed by moral philosophers and rarely examined in depth.

Garrard (2004) draws upon arguments first articulated by the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), who argued that cruelty toward animals is analogous to slavery. Bentham claimed that the capacity to feel pain, rather than rational ability, should be the basis for moral consideration. Just as women and African peoples were historically mistreated due to morally irrelevant physiological differences, animals suffer because they fall on the wrong side of an arbitrary moral boundary.
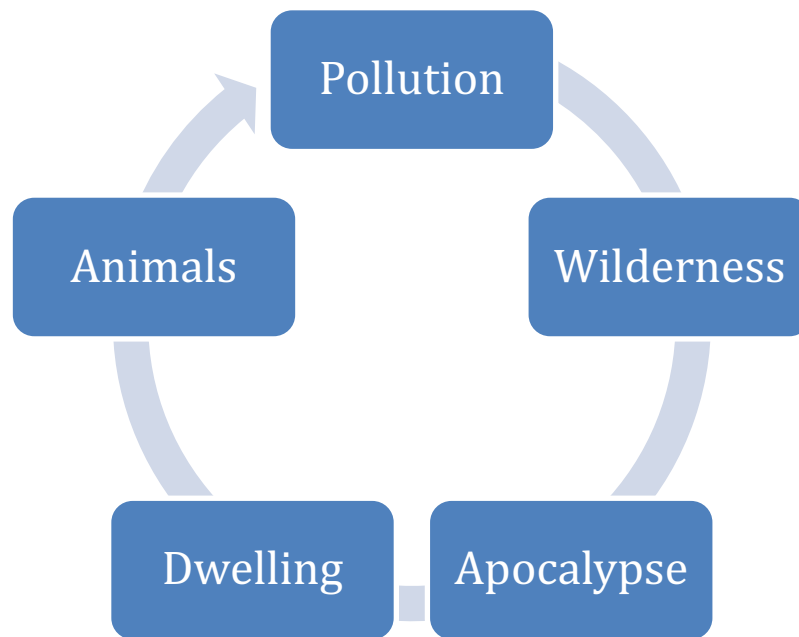
6. Earth

According to Garrard, saving the Earth entails protecting all life within it, including animals and plants. Conservation efforts require collective responsibility and shared commitment to caring for the planet. One notable success in environmental protection, according to Garrard (2004), is the Montreal Protocol of 1987, which introduced global controls on the use of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). This agreement is frequently cited as evidence of the crucial role of scientific knowledge in addressing environmental problems.

Garrard identifies two major challenges for the future. The first concerns the relationship between globalization and ecocriticism: sustained attention to environmental wisdom must be balanced with forms of globalization that have a positive impact on the Earth and its inhabitants. The second challenge lies in developing constructive relationships between the green humanities and environmental sciences.

Garrard (2004) asserts that ecocriticism can help define, explore, and even resolve ecological problems. However, regarding ecocritical criteria, Lawrence Buell (1995), warns that such criteria often appear either too broad, encompassing nearly all literary works that depict nature, or too narrow, including only texts that are explicitly ecologically oriented. Environmental wisdom thus represents an awareness of being part of nature, fostering harmony and unity between humans and the natural world.

Chart 1. Ecocritical Greg Garrard

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter explains the research methods. It covers the research design, data sources, data collection, and data analysis. The main focus of this chapter is explaining the use of research methods and data processing in the study.

A. Research Design

This study analyzes the film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) using Garrard (2004) ecocritical theory. This study aims to identify the forms of natural exploitation shown in the film. *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) analyzes its ecological, social, and moral impacts, examining how the main characters confront and overcome environmental exploitation. Through this analysis, the research is expected to uncover the ecological messages contained in the film and their relevance to environmental awareness in the real world (Cameron, 2022).

B. Data Source

The data for this research are derived from the film *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), which has a total running time of approximately 3 hours and 12 minutes. The film was released on December 14, 2022, in the APAC and EMEA regions. It was directed by James Cameron and written by James Cameron, Rick Jaffa, and Amanda Silver. The film stars Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, and Sigourney Weaver. It is recognized as one of the most expensive films ever produced, with an estimated production budget ranging from $350 to $460 million.

C. Data Collection

This study collected data in several ways, namely: Researchers watched films *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) several times, researchers collected data in the form of quotes, images, and ideas related to the research questions, researchers analyzed the data to find out the natural exploitation events that occurred in *Avatar 2: The way of water* (2022) Using Garrard (2004), ecocritical theory, the researcher then analyzed how the main characters deal with the exploitation of nature that occurs in the film.

D. Data Analysis

After the data is collected, the researcher will analyze it as follows: Process and categorize the data based on the research problem, describe the natural exploitation events that occurred in the film *Avatar 2: The way of water* (2022) and explain how the film *Avatar 2: The way of water* (2022) can contribute to human awareness to prevent the exploitation of nature using the concept of Garrard (2004), ecocritical theory, then draw conclusions that answer the research problems.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings and discussion through the lens of ecocriticism as formulated by Greg Garrard (2004), with a particular focus on the concept of dwelling. Rather than treating the environment as a backdrop or resource, dwelling emphasizes ethical, cultural, and long-term relationships between humans and their ecological surroundings. Accordingly, this chapter examines how *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) represents dwelling as a mode of living that foregrounds coexistence, adaptation, and moral responsibility within the marine ecosystem. The analysis explores how human–nature relations are constructed through practices of inhabitation rather than exploitation, how ecological and cultural meanings emerge from sustained engagement with the sea, and how the film critiques extractive and colonial forms of dwelling that disrupt ecological balance. Ultimately, this chapter highlights the emergence of ecological awareness and environmental ethics as embodied in alternative modes of dwelling that resist ecological violence and promote harmonious cohabitation with the natural world.

A. Forms of Environmental Exploitation are Depicted in The Film Avatar 2: The Way of Water (2022)

In the film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) depicts various forms of human exploitation of nature on the planet Pandora. Pandora is depicted as a

beautiful planet with verdant forests, blue oceans, rare animals, and abundant natural resources.

From the perspective of dwelling as formulated by Greg Garrard (2004), the various forms of environmental exploitation depicted in Avatar 2: The Way of Water are direct consequences of an unethical mode of inhabiting nature (anti-dwelling). (1) Natural resource mining occurs when the environment is perceived as a temporary space that can be exploited without ecological responsibility, reducing nature to a mere economic commodity. This mode of inhabitation subsequently leads to (2) destruction of natural habitat, as human relationships with non-human living spaces are severed and replaced by a logic of territorial expansion. Furthermore, (3) pollution and environmental damage emerge as inevitable outcomes of an extractive form of dwelling, in which ecological sustainability is not considered a moral priority. Finally, (4) wildlife exploitation represents the culmination of anti-dwelling, whereby non-human beings are no longer regarded as part of an interconnected web of life, but rather as objects to be controlled and utilized. Thus, these four forms of exploitation are not isolated phenomena, but rather the products of a flawed dwelling paradigm that normalizes human domination over nature and neglects the principles of reciprocity, sustainability, and ecological responsibility emphasized by Garrard.

1. Natural Resource Mining

Humans from Earth, known as "Sky People," return to Pandora to exploit its valuable natural resources, particularly rare minerals like unobtanium (mentioned in the first film) or new resources not yet detailed in the sequel. This mining is done

without consideration for the impact on Pandora's ecosystem, including the destruction of the forests and seas that are home to the Na'vi and other creatures.

> *"Sully's looting became more daring and frequent, his attacks were well planned, his coordination was neat between land and air. His troops attacked our remote places. Mines, pipes, cut the chains of our troops,"* said the general.* (Cameron, 2022, 24:28–24:46).

From an ecocritical perspective grounded in Greg Garrard's (2004) concept of dwelling, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) portrays the exploitation of Pandora's environment and its Indigenous inhabitants as the result of a fundamentally flawed mode of inhabitation. In Garrard's framework, dwelling refers to ethical, sustained, and reciprocal ways of living within an environment, rather than treating it as a temporary site of extraction or domination (Garrard, 2004). The actions of the Sky People, particularly through the operations of the RDA corporation, exemplify a destructive form of dwelling in which nature is reduced to a controllable and commodified resource, severed from cultural, spiritual, and ecological interdependence.

Within this framework, acts of plunder such as mining operations, pipeline construction, and territorial incursions are not merely economic activities but manifestations of an extractive mode of dwelling that normalizes environmental violence and suppresses Indigenous ecological knowledge. As depicted in the film, ecological degradation occurs simultaneously with the erosion of Indigenous lifeways, revealing how colonial forms of dwelling disrupt long-established reciprocal relationships between humans and their environments. This convergence

reflects Garrard's argument that unsustainable dwelling produces both ecological imbalance and social injustice.

Moreover, the deployment of advanced military technologies helicopters, heavy weaponry, and coordinated air ground assaults symbolizes an aggressive assertion of human control over both land and life. From the perspective of dwelling, such technologies represent not progress but the intensification of alienation between humans and the environments they inhabit. Film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* thus articulates an ecocritical critique of industrial modernity by exposing how extractive and militarized forms of dwelling fracture the ethical bond between humans, non-human beings, and ecological systems, ultimately threatening the possibility of sustainable coexistence.

Furthermore, this representation aligns with previous research that highlights how ecological exploitation is portrayed in various cultural texts. Rahayu (2020) demonstrates that environmental literacy is present in local portals, such as Nggalek. coshaped by people's direct experiences facing natural disasters, which signifies the growth of ecological awareness when daily life is disrupted by environmental exploitation. Similarly, an analysis of John Lanchester's work, The Wall, reveals that global crises, such as floods, famine, and pollution, serve as literary warnings of the catastrophic impacts of climate change, paralleling the depiction of ecological apocalypse in Pandora. Meanwhile, a study of Black Firefly work Suharsani highlights Ni Luh Candri's ecofeminist resistance in defending the Tamblingan forest, demonstrating how women's agency plays a central role in opposing land conversion and ecological damage (Nida & Rahayu, 2023). These

findings support the interpretation that *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) not only represents the exploitation of natural resources but also reflects a broader ecological discourse, where media, literature, and local narratives converge to warn against anthropocentric exploitation. As such, the film places itself within a global tradition of cultural texts that critique ecological colonialism and call for a paradigm shift toward ecocentrism, a system in which humans live in harmony with, rather than dominate, nature.

2. Destruction of Natural Habitat

The exploitation of nature in this film also involves the destruction of natural habitats, such as forests and oceans. For example, human activity disrupts the balance of the marine ecosystem, which is a source of life for the tribe. Metkayina, the Na'vi clan who live in the waters.

> *"Earth is dying, our job is to tame this frontier. Make Pandora the new home of humanity, before we do that we need to pacify the enemy."* The general said to the colonel (Cameron, 2022, 24:15-24:28).
> "*We're not Kansa anymore, we're going to Pandora, I know you're all asking the same thing. Why are you so gloomy?*
> "*Because of our past sins, we are brought back to life in the form of our enemies. Then it gives us their size, strength and speed. And with training We're a good mix."* Said the lieutenant of the sky nation (Cameron, 2022, 16:00-16:20).
> *"Do we have a mission?" said the soldier (*Cameron, 2022, 16:20-16:24)
> *"Yes there is, our mission is to hunt down and kill the leader of the Na'vi rebellion which they call Toruk Makto,"* said the lieutenant (Cameron, 2022, 16:25-16:33

From the perspective of Greg Garrard's ecocritical concept of *dwelling*, the dialogue in *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) reveals how cultural narratives construct and normalize destructive modes of inhabitation. The statement "The Earth is dying" articulates an ecological crisis; however, rather than encouraging

responsibility toward the damaged planet, this discourse is mobilized to justify the invasion of Pandora. Within Garrard's framework, this logic represents a failure of dwelling, in which humans refuse to repair their relationship with Earth and instead seek new spaces to inhabit through extraction and domination. The narrative of making Pandora a "new home" for humanity thus exposes ecological displacement, where exploitative practices are transferred to new ecosystems rather than transformed.

Discourses such as "taming the frontier" further frame nature and Indigenous beings as obstacles to be controlled, reflecting an extractive mode of dwelling grounded in anthropocentrism. This worldview positions the environment not as a shared home but as a hostile territory to be subdued, undermining reciprocal and sustainable forms of coexistence. From the perspective of dwelling, such narratives erase Indigenous ecological knowledge and disrupt long-standing relationships between humans and their environments.

Moreover, phrases such as "taming the enemy" illustrate the militarization of dwelling, in which landscapes and living beings are transformed into targets of conquest. The Na'vi, who seek to protect their habitat, are labeled as enemies, reinforcing a sharp division between humans and nature. Garrard critiques this conflation of progress with conquest, arguing that it produces ecological injustice and denies the possibility of sustainable dwelling. Scenes depicting forest destruction and the expansion of Bridgehead visually reinforce the myth of progress, the belief that civilization can continue advancing without learning from past ecological failures. Through this narrative, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022)

functions as an ecocritical warning against colonial modes of dwelling and aligns with Garrard's call to abandon extractive logics in favor of ethical, reciprocal, and ecologically just forms of inhabiting the world.

These findings resonate with previous studies. Efendi et al., (2025) show that ecocritical analysis of Indonesian novels also reflects anthropocentric dominance that marginalizes both nature and local communities, paralleling the representation of the Na'vi in film. Saputri (2025) shows that ecological colonialism is often wrapped in a development discourse that legitimizes the seizure of indigenous land, a logic that aligns with human efforts to colonize Pandora. Similarly, Sutiyan, et.al, (2025) highlights how environmental crises in contemporary films represent ecological escapism, namely the transfer of ecological responsibility, which is also present in Avatar 2. These studies emphasize that the film not only critiques futuristic colonization, but also reflects real socio-ecological injustices occurring on Earth today.

From an ecocritical perspective, the Na'vi's spiritual ecological worldview in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) exemplifies what Greg Garrard conceptualizes as *dwelling*, namely an ethical mode of inhabiting the environment based on reciprocity, interdependence, and sustained relationality rather than domination. Their relationship with Eywa represents a form of dwelling in which nature is perceived as a living, interconnected presence that shapes identity, responsibility, and survival, directly challenging the anthropocentric narratives embedded in modern industrial culture. In contrast to extractive modernity, which treats land as a resource to be controlled and exploited, the Na'vi's resistance, embodied by

characters such as Neytiri and Tsireya, constitutes an ecological and ethical struggle to preserve a balanced co-existence between human, non-human, and spiritual realms. Through their protective engagement with both community and marine ecosystems, the film articulates ecological responsibility not through hierarchical power but through relational roles rooted in care, continuity, and environmental stewardship. In line with Garrard's critique, this representation exposes the failure of colonial and industrial models of habitation while proposing dwelling as an alternative ecological ethic, one that reimagines environmental relations beyond anthropocentrism and extractive logic.

3. Pollution and Environmental Damage

Human activities on Pandora, such as the use of heavy machinery and advanced weaponry, have caused pollution and environmental damage. This is reflected in scenes where the pristine and beautiful seas are polluted by waste or chemical spills. This pollution not only damages Pandora's natural beauty but also threatens the health and balance of the ecosystem.

In addition, the capture of wild animals at sea using explosives, grenades and sound bombs damages the marine ecosystem and has an impact on marine biota.

> *"Deep depth charges standby! And fire!"*
> *Said the hunter.* (Cameron, 2022, 01:55:26:01-56:55).

They shoot the Tulkuns with explosive waves that deafen them if they don't get out of the water. The hunters target Tulkuns with children because Tulkuns are emotional creatures who won't abandon their children.

> *"They ever fight back?"*
> *"I never saw them raise their fins"*
> *"But they are hard to kill. Haha"*

"Diving team advances!" (Cameron, 2022, 01:57:18-01:57:32)

From the perspective of ecocriticism, particularly Greg Garrard's (2004), concept of dwelling, the capture of marine wildlife through sound bombs and explosives in *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) illustrates a profound failure of humans to inhabit the natural world ethically. Garrard (2004), conceptualizes dwelling as a mode of living that emphasizes coexistence, care, and long-term ecological embeddedness rather than domination or extraction. The command "Depth bombs standby! And fire!" exemplifies how militarized language and technology construct the marine environment not as a shared habitat, but as a hostile space to be controlled and subdued. Such discourse reflects an anthropocentric worldview that separates humans from nature, thereby justifying ecological violence as a necessary means of securing human interests.

The use of sound bombs that deafen the Tulkun further represents what Garrard identifies as destructive or failed dwelling, in which human presence disrupts rather than sustains ecological systems. This form of violence is not only immediate but cumulative, producing long-term damage to marine ecosystems and undermining the relational balance between human and non-human life. From a dwelling perspective, the Tulkun are not merely animals but co-inhabitants of the oceanic environment, whose displacement signals a breakdown of ethical habitation. By portraying nature as an enemy to be conquered, the film exposes how industrial and militarized practices fracture the possibility of dwelling in harmony. Through this depiction, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) functions as an ecocritical critique of modern human settlement practices, calling for a

reconfiguration of dwelling based on ecological responsibility, reciprocity, and respect for the marine world.

> *"They don't know anything," said human child Melly*
> *"Shoot the animal (referring to Ilo) said the commander*
> *"What are you doing?" Adopted child's anger.*
> *"The residents are also angry"*
> *"You see this weapon! Where is Jack Sally? Toruk Makto"*
> *"He doesn't know" Said the resident*
> *"Put him down!" Said the commander*
> *"Burn their houses," said the commander*
> *"Burn down everyone's house"* (Cameron, 2022, 01:44:18-01:4:.43)

From an ecocritical perspective, particularly through Greg Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, command scenes such as "Shoot the animal" and "Burn their house" in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) reveal ecological violence as a deliberate practice that negates ethical habitation. Garrard understands *dwelling* as a mode of inhabiting the world that is grounded in care, continuity, and reciprocal relationships between humans, non-humans, and place. These utterances demonstrate a radical violation of dwelling, as language is mobilized to legitimize the destruction of animals and homes entities that function not merely as resources or structures, but as integral components of an indigenous ecological lifeworld. The targeting of Na'vi dwellings thus signifies the eradication of place-based identity, where home, environment, spirituality, and memory are inseparably intertwined.

The emotional resistance voiced by the Na'vi, including the questioning responses of their adopted children, foregrounds an alternative understanding of dwelling rooted in relational belonging and ecological responsibility. From Garrard's perspective, such resistance articulates a counter-narrative to anthropocentric habitation, emphasizing that true dwelling cannot be sustained

through violence, displacement, or domination. Moreover, the sarcastic dismissal of Toruk Makto and the glorification of weapons underscore humanity's rejection of ecological leadership founded on harmony with nature. This contrast exposes what Garrard critiques as a destructive settlement logic, where technological power replaces ethical coexistence. Ultimately, the scene challenges anthropocentric myths of progress and affirms an ecological ethic of dwelling that prioritizes respect

4. Wildlife Exploitation

The humans in the film also exploit Pandora's wildlife, such as hunting Tulkuns for their highly prized brain fluid. This mirrors the real-world practice of poaching and exploitation of endangered animals. This exploitation not only harms wildlife but also damages the spiritual and cultural ties of the Na'vi, who regard Tulkuns as sacred creatures.

> *"The only way to reach the gland is from below. We drill upward through the hard skin, into the brain."* Said the Doctor
> *"This is a very intelligent creature. Maybe smarter than us"*
> Minutes 02.01.27 drilling the brain of the I will come to extract oil"
> *"How do you know that they are smarter"* Said the adopted son
> *"More Neurons and Structures not only that they are also emotional, more spiritual"* said the doctor.
> *"This area corresponds to our emotions, but is proportionally much larger. They have music, philosophy and mathematics, a complex language,"*
> *"Okay, here you go, show me the money* (Taking oil in Tulkun's Brain)"
> Tulkun Hunter
> "The bad luck of the Tulkuns, this liquid stops human aging. It really does" (Cameron, 2022, 02:01:02-02:01:27).

From an ecocritical perspective, particularly through Greg Garrard's (2004) concept of *dwelling*, the human doctor's dialogue concerning the drilling of the Tulkun's brain reveals an extreme violation of ethical habitation. Garrard (2004) conceptualizes *dwelling* as a mode of living that is grounded in long-term

attachment, care, and moral responsibility toward place and non-human life. Although the Tulkun are explicitly recognized as highly intelligent beings possessing complex systems of music, philosophy, mathematics, and language, they are nevertheless subjected to brutal extraction for their anti-aging substance. This contradiction exemplifies what ecocriticism critiques most sharply: the acknowledgment of non-human intelligence does not generate ethical restraint, but instead legitimizes deeper forms of exploitation. Within this logic, non-human beings are stripped of their intrinsic value and redefined as extractable commodities, signaling a fundamental collapse of dwelling ethics.

Furthermore, the dialogue demonstrates how ecological knowledge itself becomes an instrument of domination rather than reverence. From Garrard's perspective, such instrumentalization reflects a distorted form of dwelling, in which understanding the environment serves short-term economic interests instead of sustaining reciprocal relationships with the ecosystems that support life. The repeated emphasis on financial profit encapsulated in the phrase "Show me the money" foregrounds the supremacy of extractivist logic over ecological ethics. The violent drilling inflicted upon the Tulkun not only devastates marine ecosystems but also ruptures the spiritual and cosmological bonds between the Na'vi and their oceanic environment. As *dwelling* emphasizes continuity between land, memory, and moral belonging, this act represents a profound displacement that transforms a shared habitat into a site of industrial sacrifice.

More broadly, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) portrays the systematic exploitation of nature and indigenous life on Pandora as a unified process rooted in

anthropocentric ideology, a condition Garrard identifies as the antithesis of dwelling. The actions of the Sky People, particularly through the RDA corporation, exemplify extractivist habitation practices, including large-scale mining, subsurface drilling, forest burning, and the industrial hunting of marine mammals such as the Tulkun. These activities construct nature solely as an economic asset, severed from its ecological, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. Within a dwelling-based ecocritical framework, such practices signify a refusal to inhabit the world ethically, replacing long-term coexistence with short-term exploitation.

The ecological consequences, including water pollution, deforestation, habitat destruction, and the disruption of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, further illustrate how extractivist modernity fractures the reciprocal relationships that dwelling seeks to sustain. Sacred ecological spaces are desecrated, and indigenous modes of living are rendered uninhabitable, reinforcing Garrard's (2004) critique of settlement models grounded in domination rather than care. By foregrounding these dynamics, the film functions as an ecocritical text that exposes the ethical shortcomings of modern extractivism and advocates for a reimagining of human-environment relations founded on ecological interdependence, responsibility, and sustainable living.

B. The Impacts of this environmental exploitation as portrayed in the film

The impact of environmental exploitation in this film can be analyzed through various dimensions, including ecological, social, cultural, and moral. These impacts are as follows:

1. Ecological Impact

In the film Avatar: The Way of Water, the exploitation of nature by humans, referred to as the "sky people," has resulted in the destruction of Pandora's marine ecosystem. One striking scene is when industrial ships hunt the Tulkun, a giant, highly intelligent sea creature. The brutal hunting scene shows how the Tulkun is killed only for a small part of its body, namely, anti-aging oil, while the rest is simply thrown into the sea.

Figure 1. Deforestation through Forest Burning

Figure 2. Wildlife as Victims of Environmental Exploitation

Figure 3. Wildlife as Victims of Environmental Exploitation

In the analyzed visual context, the images labeled figure 1-3, data represent two major forms of ecological impact depicted in the film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022), the burning of Pandora's forests following the arrival of the Sky

People and the hunting of the Tulkun, which damages the marine ecosystem. The forest-burning scenes illustrate destructive environmental exploitation, marked by massive fires, thick smoke, and the destruction of flora and fauna habitats, reflecting a form of industrial-driven ecological violence. Meanwhile, the Tulkun hunting scenes portray human domination over non-human beings through technological force, resulting not only in the suffering of marine creatures but also in the disruption of ecological balance in Pandora's oceans. By presenting visual evidence supported by relevant dialogue, the film narratively and cinematically articulates a strong critique of environmental exploitation, positioning ecological destruction as a central concern within an ecocritical reading.

> *"It's just trash to us, but it's worth billions on Earth"*
> *"The ounce, the ounce is the most precious substance known to man"*
> *"This small bottle is worth 80 M USD* (Cameron, 2022, 02:02:8-02:02:26)
> *"I hunt Tulkun, that's my job, that's the child's job baku. There is a quota that I have to fulfill," said the hunter* (Cameron, 2022, 01:39:53-01:40:02).

From an ecocritical perspective grounded in Greg Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) portrays an exploitative human mentality that fundamentally fails to understand habitation as an ethical and reciprocal relationship with place. Garrard defines *dwelling* not merely as physical residence, but as a mode of living that requires care, continuity, and ecological responsibility toward the environment (Garrard, 2004). In contrast, human intrusion into Pandora's marine ecosystem exemplifies a form of anti-dwelling, where the environment is treated as a temporary site of extraction rather than a shared habitat. This failure of dwelling is visually represented through the destruction of coral

reefs, ocean pollution, and the transformation of once-clear waters into gray, contaminated spaces filled with industrial debris and shipwrecks.

The black smoke emitted from offshore drilling machinery symbolizes the violent disruption of an ecosystem that previously sustained harmonious relations between the Metkayina and the sea. Within Garrard's framework, such imagery reflects a colonial logic of habitation that prioritizes occupation and control over coexistence and mutual understanding. The death of the Tulkun, washed ashore and mourned by the Metkayina, functions as a powerful ecological and ethical marker of broken dwelling. This loss signifies not only the extinction of a marine being but also the collapse of an interconnected environmental, cultural, and spiritual network that defines indigenous dwelling practices. For the Metkayina, the sea is not a resource but a living home imbued with memory, kinship, and moral obligation.

While Glotfelty's ecocriticism emphasizes the responsibility of humans within the broader web of life, Garrard's concept of *dwelling* sharpens the critique by revealing how environmental destruction stems from an inability to inhabit the world responsibly. The film's depiction of marine pollution and biodiversity loss thus critiques extractive practices that replace sustainable dwelling with transient exploitation. By foregrounding the grief, resistance, and ecological consciousness of the Metkayina clan, the narrative restores the marginalized voices of ecology. It exposes how the breakdown of dwelling fractures social cohesion and spiritual relations with nature. Ultimately, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) articulates an ecocritical call to reimagine dwelling as an ethical commitment to place, urging humanity to live within ecosystems as participants rather than conquerors.

Rahayu (2020), in his analysis of *The Wall*, also asserts that the environmental collapse manifested in global warming, floods, and famine is a literary reminder of the systemic dangers of industrial exploitation. *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) resonates with these issues through visualizations of coral reef destruction and toxic seas, dramatizing the link between the ecological crisis and the crisis of human survival.

Meanwhile, Nida and Rahayu (2023) show that ecological resistance often arises through cultural and spiritual dimensions, such as Ni Luh Candri's ecofeminist defense of the Tamblingan forest. Similarly, the grief of the clan Metkayina Tulkun's death was not only an ecological grief, but also a cultural-spiritual rift, as Tulkun was considered a relative and guardian in their eyes. Thus, ecological violence also means cultural violence.

Nugroho (2020) adds that capitalist exploitation often commodifies biodiversity under the guise of progress. The poaching of Tulkun's brain fluid as an anti-aging serum parallels the actual practice of commodifying endangered species for luxury goods, where profit legitimizes destruction. This scene symbolically critiques humanity's dependence on extractive industries, which endanger not only the ecosystem but also the survival of future generations.

Thus, *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) presents a powerful ecocritical message: the exploitation of nature creates a chain reacstion of ecological, cultural, and spiritual destruction that ultimately threatens human existence itself. This reflects the reality of today's climate crisis, where global environmental damage

reveals the urgency of abandoning anthropocentric and extractive paradigms and shifting toward ecological justice and sustainability.

2. Social Impact

Exploitation of nature in films *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) not only does it damage the ecosystem, but it also triggers social conflict between humans nicknamed the "sky people" and the indigenous Na'vi people, especially the clan Metkayina The scene where the human fleet arrives with heavy military and industrial equipment to hunt down Tulkun demonstrates that this exploitation project is large-scale and structured, in the name of technological advancement and market demand. Colonel Quaritch's dialogue:

"We are here to tame this territory" (Cameron, 2022, 01:39:53-01:40:02).

Viewed through the combined lens of Glotfelty's ecocriticism and Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, these scenes reveal how environmental exploitation emerges from unequal power relations that deny indigenous communities the right to inhabit and care for their environment on their own terms. Garrard conceptualizes *dwelling* as an ethical mode of inhabiting place that requires continuity, consent, and responsibility, rather than domination or temporary occupation. In *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), this ethical relationship is systematically violated as industrial human actors extract marine resources without the consent of the Metkayina, reducing the ocean from a lived home into an economic frontier.

While humans reap economic benefits from extractive activities, the Metkayina clan bears the ecological and cultural consequences, including habitat destruction, depletion of marine life, and the loss of community members. This

asymmetry exemplifies environmental injustice, a central concern in ecocritical analysis, where marginalized communities disproportionately suffer the impacts of ecological degradation. The brutal hunting of the Tulkun particularly the killing of a mother and her calf in the presence of Metkayina children, functions as a stark representation of failed dwelling. The violence inflicted on a keystone species not only damages the marine ecosystem but also disrupts the ethical, emotional, and spiritual bonds that sustain Metkayina life.

From this perspective, ecological violence is inseparable from social trauma and cultural dislocation. The film restores silenced indigenous and non-human voices by depicting grief, resistance, and moral outrage as legitimate responses to environmental destruction. In line with Garrard's critique, *Avatar: The Way of Water* challenges power structures that normalize ecological harm under the guise of progress, while advancing a vision of environmental justice rooted in respectful dwelling, relational accountability, and the recognition of shared life between humans, non-human beings, and their environments.

"We will fight to protect our brothers and sisters," (Cameron, 2022, 01:50:53-01:59:02).

It is not just an ecological resistance, but also a social and political one, defending the right to life, cultural identity, and the future of their communities. The film reminds viewers of real-life cases like customary land conflicts in Kalimantan or the struggle for mining rights by Papuans, that the exploitation of nature is never neutral but always has complex social impacts.

3. Moral Impact

Avatar: The Way of Water (2022) Not only does it present ecological and social conflicts, but it also contains a strong moral message about human responsibility towards nature. The scene where Neytiri screams in anger after seeing Tulkun's dismembered corpse

> *"This is a massacre!"* (Cameron, 2022, 01:39:53-01:40:02).

From an ecocritical perspective informed by Greg Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, the exploitation of nature in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) represents a profound ethical failure in human environmental inhabitation. Rather than engaging with Pandora as a living habitat that demands care and continuity, human actors approach it as a disposable space for technological expansion and economic extraction. Garrard's notion of dwelling underscores that ecological crises arise not simply from material practices, but from cultural narratives that sever humans from their environments and legitimize domination in place of coexistence.

Through its depiction of large-scale environmental destruction, the film invites critical reflection on models of progress that equate technological advancement with ecological entitlement. Industrial intervention, portrayed as innovation and a survival strategy, instead reveals the collapse of ethical dwelling, where profit overrides responsibility to place. In this sense, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) serves as an ecocritical critique of anthropocentric modernity, advocating for a reorientation of human–environment relations based on reciprocity, care, and sustainable habitation, rather than exploitative control.

This moral message is reinforced through philosophy. Metkayina about the relationship with the sea. Sentences like

"The sea is your home before you are born and after you die" (01:39:53-01:40:02).

From an ecocritical perspective that integrates Glotfelty's ethical orientation with Greg Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, *Avatar: The Way of Water* articulates a strong awareness of intergenerational responsibility in human–environment relations. Garrard conceptualizes *dwelling* as a long-term, ethical mode of inhabiting place, in which humans recognize their embeddedness within ecological systems and their obligations to both present and future life forms (Garrard, 2004). Within this framework, the film presents environmental exploitation not as an isolated act of resource use, but as a failure of dwelling that undermines ecological continuity and moral responsibility across generations.

The narrative demonstrates that extractive practices have consequences that extend beyond immediate ecological damage, gradually eroding ethical values, communal bonds, and human dignity. Through dialogue and narrative conflict, the film emphasizes that unsustainable forms of habitation compromise the future viability of both human and non-human life. In contrast, the film implicitly advocates a model of dwelling grounded in care, restraint, and ecological responsibility, where maintaining harmony with the environment becomes a moral commitment to future generations. By framing environmental ethics through the lens of dwelling, *Avatar: The Way of Water* positions ecological responsibility as a sustained practice of living-with, rather than dominating, the natural world.

"We will not let this happen again" (Cameron, 2022, 01:50:53-01:59:02).

The film asserts that change is only possible if humanity acknowledges past mistakes and takes a moral stand to repair its relationship with nature. It serves as a call for viewers to reconsider their attitudes toward the environment, remembering that every action today shapes the future of the earth and future generations.

C. Jake Sully and Neytiri respond to and resist the environmental exploitation portrayed in the film

In addressing the third research question, which focuses on resistance and collective efforts, this study interprets Jake Sully's actions through an individual reading of the film. From the researcher's perspective, Jake Sully functions as a catalyst whose ecological awareness and ethical dwelling encourage collective resistance among the Na'vi against environmental exploitation.

The film offers several ways to deal with the exploitation of nature, both through the actions of the characters Jake Sully and Neytiri and the moral messages conveyed: (1) leading the communities resistance; (2) protecting the nature; (3) building solidarity among clans; and (4) Jake Sully and Neytiri embody ecological dwelling in protecting the marine ecosystem:

1. Leading the communities resistance

Na'vi tribes, especially clan Metkayina, demonstrating resistance to environmental exploitation by defending their territories and protecting natural resources. They use traditional knowledge and local wisdom to preserve the environment. This reflects the important role of indigenous communities in

maintaining ecological balance, which is also relevant to real-world environmental movements. Metkayina saw Tulkun's body being thrown away and ignited anger and resistance against the sky nation

> *"Sister My soul and her baby were killed by the celestials."*
> *"This war has come to us. We already knew about the hunt of our Tulkun people. But it was beyond the horizon, far away. Now the hunt is here!*
> *Said the chief* (Cameron, 2022, 02:04:45-02:5:11).
> *"We will fight to protect our brothers and sisters"*

Through the lens of ecocriticism and refined by Greg Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, the conflict between the Metkayina clan and the Sky People in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) exposes a fundamental clash between ethical habitation and extractive occupation. Garrard conceptualizes *dwelling* as a sustained, reciprocal, and morally grounded relationship with place, rather than a temporary or instrumental use of space (Garrard, 2004). The dialogue "This war has come to us… Now the hunt is here!" encapsulates how human intrusion converts a lived ecological home into a militarized zone, where marine territories that once sustained life, memory, and spirituality are redefined as targets for exploitation.

The Metkayina's bond with the Tulkun exemplifies a dwelling-based ecological ethic rooted in kinship and responsibility. In contrast to the Sky People's anthropocentric worldview, where non-human beings are reduced to extractable assets, the Metkayina understand the sea as a shared habitat that demands care and restraint. The hunting of the Tulkun, particularly for the extraction of an "anti-aging" substance, represents a profound failure of dwelling: a sentient being central to cultural identity is commodified. At the

same time, its body is discarded once its economic value is exhausted. Within Garrard's framework, this act signifies not only ecological destruction but also the erosion of moral accountability toward place and life.

The Metkayina's collective resistance articulates an alternative model of dwelling grounded in sustainability, ancestral memory, and interdependence. Their mourning of the Tulkun transforms grief into ecological testimony, revealing how environmental violence accumulates across generations when exploitation is displaced rather than confronted. By foregrounding indigenous resistance, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* restores marginalized ecological voices and demonstrates that opposition to environmental domination operates not only through physical defense but also through cultural, spiritual, and ethical commitment to place. In this way, the film advances Garrard's ecocritical call to abandon extractive modes of inhabitation in favor of dwelling practices that sustain justice, continuity, and ecological balance.

2. Protecting the nature

The film emphasizes the importance of living in harmony with nature, as the Na'vi do. They view nature as part of themselves, not as a resource to be exploited.

This message teaches that the solution to facing the exploitation of nature is to change the human paradigm from domination over nature to collaboration and respect.

Minutes to 01.02.44-01.02.50 people Metkayina berterrax with a named flying fish-shaped water creature City which is usually used as a means of transportation

> *"This is Ilu, if you want to live here you have to ride,"* said the tribal boy Metkayina (Cameron, 2022, 01:02:50-01:02:52)
> *"You must make the bond gently, feel its breath, feel its strength"* (Cameron, 2022, 01:02:52-01:03:04).
> *"The Principle of Water has no beginning and no end. The sea is all around you and yours, the sea is your home before you are born and after you die, our heart beats beneath the womb of the world, our breath burns in the shadows of the depths. The sea gives and the sea takes. Water connects all things life and death, dark and light."* Said the tribal people Metkayina (Cameron, 2022, 01:09:35-01:10:57).
> *"You are a I will come, you saved me. Friends, they hurt you. I will try to pull him out. Trust me. Friends? That's right, we are friends. I'm sorry (Tulkun's fin was broken due to poaching)* said "child spider" (Cameron, 2022, 01:21:44-01:24:50)

Viewed through Cheryll Glotfelty's ecocriticism and sharpened by Greg Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, the interaction between the Metkayina clan and aquatic beings such as the Ilu represents an ethical model of inhabiting nature based on reciprocity rather than control. The instruction "feel his breath, feel the power" signifies a relational mode of engagement that requires attentiveness, bodily awareness, and respect for ecological rhythms. In Garrard's terms, this practice embodies *dwelling* as an ongoing, lived relationship with place and non-human life, where coexistence is achieved through mutual adaptation instead of technological domination.

The Metkayina philosophy, articulated in the statement "The sea is your home before you are born and after you die," further frames the marine environment as a space of identity, continuity, and belonging. Rather than treating the sea as an external resource, this worldview understands it as a shared habitat that sustains cultural memory and intergenerational responsibility. The spiritual kinship between

the Metkayina and the Tulkun reinforces this dwelling-based ethic. At the same time, the Tulkun's injured fin scarred by poaching stands as a lasting marker of ecological harm that threatens both marine ecosystems and indigenous cultural survival.

The assertion "If you want to live here, you have to ride (the Ilu)" makes ecological ethics a prerequisite for social inclusion. Within an ecocritical framework, this moment illustrates how *dwelling* is not merely a philosophical ideal but a practical ethic embedded in everyday practices and communal norms. By privileging sensitivity and cooperation over extractive logic, the Metkayina offer an alternative model of sustainability grounded in respect, reciprocity, and care. Through these representations, *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) challenges anthropocentric paradigms and invites a reimagining of human presence within an interconnected web of marine life.

3. Building solidarity among clans

The film also highlights the importance of solidarity and collaboration between diverse groups to protect nature. The Na'vi from various clans unite to fight the human threat. Film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022) features a pivotal scene when the various Na'vi clans not only Metkayina but also the mountain and forest clans unite to face the massive attack of the sky people. The climactic scene shows a long line of Na'vi from diverse geographical backgrounds, all ready to fight under one banner to protect Pandora. One of the lines of dialogue that emphasizes this solidarity is the clan chief's exclamation:

"Today we are not just a water, forest, or mountain clan. We are one!"

*(*Cameron, 2022, *01:21:44-01:24:50).*

Viewed through the combined lens Garrard's concept of *dwelling*, the visualization of Pandoran beings such as the Tulkun, Ilu, and aerial creatures joining the Na'vi in resistance articulates an ethical mode of inhabiting the environment. Garrard conceptualizes *dwelling* as a form of lived ecological responsibility rooted in continuity, mutual dependence, and care for place (Garrard, 2004). The declaration, *"Today we are not just a clan of water, forest, or mountain. We are one!"*, encapsulates this principle by dissolving territorial and biological boundaries and affirming Pandora as a shared home rather than a collection of exploitable zones.

This moment reframes ecological struggle as a collective condition rather than a localized conflict. The participation of multiple species in defending Pandora reflects an ecocentric imagination in which environmental threats endanger entire ecosystems, not merely individual communities. Within this framework, ecological resistance emerges from the shared dwelling-an understanding that survival is contingent upon sustaining the relationships that bind land, sea, and living beings into a single, integrated environmental system. Rather than positioning nature as a passive backdrop, the film presents it as an integrated network of co-inhabitants responding to a common threat.

The narrative further challenges anthropocentric assumptions by portraying environmental destruction as a disruption of dwelling rather than a temporary obstacle to progress. The invasion of Pandora is depicted as destabilizing

interdependent habitats simultaneously, underscoring that ecological responsibility extends across species and territories. This aligns with Garrard's critique of modern habitation practices that prioritize occupation and mobility over rootedness and care. In contrast, the unity of the Na'vi clans and non-human creatures models a sustainable form of dwelling grounded in reciprocity and long-term ecological commitment.

Moreover, the alliance between the Na'vi and Pandoran fauna underscores that dwelling is not solely material but also cultural and spiritual. Nature functions as an active participant in resistance, reinforcing the ecocritical assertion that non-human entities possess agency within environmental narratives. Through this portrayal, *Avatar: The Way of Water* offers an alternative ecological vision in which ethical dwelling is achieved through solidarity, mutual recognition, and respect for the more-than-human world. By foregrounding coexistence over domination, the film critiques extractive modernity and advances a model of sustainability rooted in shared ecological belonging.

4. Jake Sully and Neytiri embody ecological dwelling in protecting the marine ecosystem in Avatar 2: The Way of Water (2022).

Within the framework of ecocriticism as articulated by Greg Garrard (2004), the concept of *dwelling* provides a crucial lens for examining how literary and cinematic texts represent ethical modes of inhabiting the environment. Dwelling, in Garrard's formulation, does not merely signify physical residence within a particular landscape, but refers to a sustained, responsible, and morally grounded relationship with place, shaped by memory, care, and ecological continuity. In

Avatar 2: The Way of Water (2022), this concept is embodied through the characters of Jake Sully and Neytiri, whose actions illustrate an alternative mode of inhabitation that contrasts sharply with the extractive and colonial practices of the Sky People. Rather than asserting dominance over the marine environment, Jake and Neytiri adapt themselves to the ecological rhythms of the Metkayina territory, learning its customs, respecting its non-human inhabitants, and accepting the ethical obligations that accompany living within a fragile marine ecosystem. Their protection of coral habitats, their resistance to the hunting of the Tulkun, and their willingness to defend the sea not as property but as a shared living space reflect what Garrard identifies as ecological dwelling. This ethos prioritizes coexistence over exploitation. Through these representations, the film constructs Jake Sully and Neytiri as ecological subjects whose identity and survival are inseparable from the health of the marine environment, thereby addressing the third research question concerning how the main characters enact environmental protection. This portrayal aligns with Garrard's broader ecocritical argument that sustainable futures depend on abandoning colonial and anthropocentric models of progress in favor of dwelling practices rooted in responsibility, reciprocity, and long-term ecological care (Garrard, 2004).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Avatar 2: The Way of Water (2022) by Greg Garrard articulates a complex ecocritical representation of human-nature relations through the immersive and symbolic portrayal of Pandora's marine ecosystem, which effectively fosters ecological awareness and environmental empathy among viewers:

1. Forms of environmental exploitation are depicted in the film *Avatar 2: The Way of Water* (2022).

    This study identifies four interconnected forms of ecological exploitation in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022): (1) natural resource mining, Sky People, which commodifies nature and erodes Indigenous lifeways; (2) destruction of natural habitat, colonial logic that transfers ecological crises rather than resolving them; (3) pollution and environmental damage, militarized technologies that transform shared ecosystems into zones of violence; and (4) wildlife exploitation, particularly the hunting of the Tulkun, which commodifies sentient non-human beings and severs ecological and cultural relationships. Viewed through Greg Garrard's concept of dwelling, these practices reveal how extractive and anthropocentric modes of inhabitation generate ecological imbalance, social injustice, and undermine sustainable coexistence.

2. The impacts of this environmental exploitation as portrayed in the film

Based on the analysis, environmental exploitation in *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) produces interconnected impacts across three dimensions: (1) ecological impact, forest burning, marine pollution, and Tulkun hunting cause habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem disruption; (2) social impact, these practices generate environmental injustice, cultural displacement, and conflict between the Sky People and the Na'vi, particularly the Metkayina clan; and (3) moral impact, the film reveals a failure of ethical dwelling, as anthropocentric ideologies privilege profit and technological control over care and responsibility. Viewed through Greg Garrard's concept of dwelling, these impacts demonstrate that environmental exploitation not only harms nature but also disrupts social relations and moral values, thereby threatening sustainable coexistence.

3. Jake Sully and Neytiri respond to and resist the environmental

Avatar 2: The Way of Water (2022) presents a multifaceted response to environmental exploitation: (1) leading the communities resistance, the Metkayina clan, supported by Jake Sully and Neytiri, the film depicts indigenous defense of territory and non-human kin grounded in ethical dwelling; (2) protecting the nature, such as forming respectful bonds with aquatic beings, it promotes harmony and reciprocity as alternatives to extractive paradigms; (3) building solidarity among clans, the narrative frames ecological struggle as a shared condition that transcends territorial and species boundaries; and (4) Jake

Sully and Neytiri embody ecological dwelling in protecting the marine ecosystem in *Avatar 2: The Way of Water (2022)*, the film embodies Greg Garrard's concept of dwelling as an ethical mode of inhabiting the environment based on care, adaptation, and long-term responsibility. Collectively, these responses position environmental resistance as a moral and ecological practice that critiques anthropocentrism and the extractive nature of modernity.

B. Suggestion

Future research may expand the ecocritical analysis of *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) by adopting an interdisciplinary approach that aligns with Cheryll Glotfelty's conception of ecocriticism as an intersection between literary studies, cultural analysis, and environmental discourse. In particular, subsequent studies could deepen the exploration of Greg Garrard's concept of *dwelling* by examining how different cinematic texts construct ethical modes of inhabiting nature in the context of the Anthropocene. Comparative analyses with other environmentally themed films, such as *Princess Mononoke* or *WALL·E*, may reveal contrasting ecological narratives and dwelling practices, especially in relation to the ambivalent role of technology as both a driver of ecological destruction and a proposed solution to environmental crises.

Further research may also benefit from employing postcolonial ecocritical perspectives to critically examine the representation of indigenous communities, such as the Na'vi and Metkayina, particularly in relation to the persistence of the "noble savage" trope and its implications for real-world indigenous environmental struggles. Such an approach would allow scholars to assess whether cinematic

representations of indigenous dwelling risk romanticization or contribute meaningfully to environmental justice discourse. In addition, audience-oriented studies using surveys or interviews could investigate how popular cinema influences ecological awareness, environmental ethics, and public understanding of sustainable living, thereby reinforcing Greg Garrard's assertion that cultural texts play an active role in cultivating environmental consciousness.

Moreover, future studies could extend the analysis by incorporating ecological spirituality, local environmental wisdom, gender relations, and ecofeminist perspectives to enrich discussions of environmental ethics and relational dwelling. Finally, a critical examination of green capitalism and the environmental footprint of film production itself would be valuable in exposing the contradictions between ecological narratives promoted on screen and the material practices of the creative industry. Such research would contribute to a more reflexive and comprehensive understanding of ecocriticism, emphasizing not only representation but also responsibility within contemporary environmental discourse.

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M Fakhri Hafizh attended elementary school at SDN Kauman 1, where I began building my academic foundation and learning discipline. Afterward, I continued my secondary education at the Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah (KMI) level at the Darussalam Gontor 5 Modern Islamic Boarding School, from grades 1 to 5. Next, I continued my education from grades 5 to 6 at the Al-Ishlah Islamic Boarding School in Bondowoso, where I strengthened my religious, academic, and character-building values. In addition to my formal education, I have also achieved several notable milestones, including winning 1st place in the National Kickboxing Championship and receiving the 2025 Outstanding Coach award, which reflects my dedication and commitment to the world of sports and athlete development.