

Avatar: An Extension of White Supremacy

by

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After having viewed the latest box office hit *Avatar* (<http://www.avatarmovie.com>), themes which seemingly resonate timelessly, find their expression once again. The story takes place on the distant planet of Pandora. This planet is bountiful in its natural resources and in particular “Unobtainium.” This precious mineral is highly coveted universally, as a business interest from the distant planet Earth seeks to exploit the planet in gathering this resource for its own entrepreneurial purposes. Such an endeavor would be easily undertaken if not for the indigenous population of the planet, the Na’vi.

This group of highly intelligent, disciplined and physically gifted beings are a deeply spiritual people, who demonstrate complete deference for all forms of nature as they derive their sense of being and purpose from their deity known as Eywa, the source of all living things.

Indeed, *Avatar*’s story line has been crafted from world history, as almost all indigenous people of color have had to contend with European colonizers determined to steal the natural resources existing in the lands of these populations. In Europe’s quest to secure these resources belonging to foreign peoples, colonial forces demonstrated no regard for the indigenous people, their customs, or their right to exist as a sovereign body.

In the case of Africa, such European acts of unfettered exploitation found their expression no more so than in South Africa, where the British - among other European groups - for more than a century have and continue to subjugate the original peoples of the land while simultaneously raping the region of its most precious commodities - its gold, platinum, coal and diamonds.

Avatar’s plot simply takes a page from this unfortunate segment of Africa’s history, as it places a group of foreign mercenaries - primarily composed and completely headed by those of European ancestry – in the land of the Na’vi, who seek to rob the indigenous people of their organic capital.

A small band of supposed good doers - who through technology are able to mimic the appearance and abilities of other life forms – function as covert agents working on behalf of their mercenary cohorts, as they are instructed to make efforts to convince the Na’vi to remove themselves from their homeland so as to create a circumstance where by the theft of the regions considerable deposits of “Unobtainium” would be easily facilitated.

Jake - the lead character - heads this collection of duplicitous individuals as he is successful in infiltrating a Na’vi group. However an extended stay among “The People” would function to civilize the former marine, as he would become acquainted with the high principles regarding universal respect for life and the environment which govern Na’vi thought and behavior.

Subsequently, Jake would undoubtedly conclude that the Na’vi would not surrender their homeland to any outside force.

A now spiritually imbued and morally centered Jake then warns the Na’vi of the intentions of his comrades, and informs the group of his role as a secret agent in helping to bring forth their agenda, essentially causing his banishment.

Throughout the early stages of the movie, the actions of the imperialistic business class clearly denote those tenets which undergird the concept of White supremacy; however it is also during this portion of the film, where the less pronounced undertones of such a paradigm emerge.

Jake through an ancient Na’vi spiritual occurrence is identified as an anointed savior figure by this population. This absurd reality surfaces in the face of his role as stealth informant working to uproot this group from its homeland in attempt to make the land’s spoils available for plunder to his capitalist superiors.

Additionally, as the main character interacts with the Na’vi he not only is proven their spiritual superior –again by virtue of the fact ancient spiritual forces suggest he is their redeemer – but also their physical and intellectual superior as he masters all of their practices and customs requiring speed, strength, endurance and intellectual prowess on his way to becoming a respected member.

Jake’s final display of his inherent ascendancy atop the Na’vi - African people - occurs when he demonstrates his abilities in regard to combat, as he physically subdues this group’s top warrior and future King after the defeated prince publically exposes the romantic involvement between the supposed hero and the Na’vi princess and subsequent future Queen.

As evidenced, the ethos of White superiority is consummated by Jake’s perpetual dominance over “The People” of Pandora as it is demonstrated in every conceivable manner, not withstanding his ability to capture the favor of the future Queen, an act which violates the group’s sacred prearranged pairing of the rightful royal prince and princess.

Fearing its financial interests will not be realized; Earth's occupying business class releases the full breadth of its hired military in an effort to remove Pandora's indigenous people by force, vowing to spare no lives if deemed necessary.

Jake having been ostracized by his former hosts, once again demonstrates his unbridled dominance as he would reintroduce himself to the group after having tamed a revered and legendary "flying beast"; the likes of which only a few honored Na'vi warriors in the history of the people have ever domesticated.

Such an occurrence would further reinforce the revealed prophecy expressing, the divinely inspired role this paradoxical figure - who worked to considerably undermine the interests of Pandora's original people - would play as the Na'vi's chosen deliverer.

As the ensuing battle between the Corporations' hired military and the Na'vi would unfold, Jake, recognized as sacred leader and commander of "The People", would unite all indigenous peoples – Africans – in facing this formidable opponent.

Additionally, though not having engaged the Na'vi people for more than a few months, Jake would demonstrate an exceptional ability - reserved only for an arch healer - to access the ultimate source of "The People's" power in summoning Eywa to aid the group in their campaign.

As would be expected the indigenous people of Pandora aided by Eywa would vanquish their opponents, peace would be restored and Jake would find himself as the undisputed leader of the Na'vi and God figure to all its groups.

The overwhelming messages communicated in the movie *Avatar* are disturbing on a variety of levels. The overarching theme promoted in the film, suggests the Na'vi – Africans, Native Americans, South Americans etc... – possess not the spiritual, physical or intellectual capacity to compete with their European counterparts and thus have not the ability to adequately govern themselves, much less in times of adversity ergo the need for a White savior.

Such an interpretation may germinate as the main character Jake would singularly outperform members of the Na'vi - to include their most formidable warrior - in every imaginable fashion, to the extent he would ultimately rise to the level of King and quasi – God figure in securing the survival of the very individuals who civilized him.

Furthermore, not only is the proposition regarding the main character as liberator of those – Africans – who brought him further into the fold of humanity troubling, but even more still unsettling and potentially problematic is the premise that such an arrangement was divinely inspired.

This circumstance prevailed as the Na'vi's deity Eywa recognized Jake as a more spiritually pure and courageous being in relation to his indigenous - African – mentors, again in the face of his less than honorable intentions in regard to the very people the deity governs. Lastly, Jake's rather exclusive channel to this groups' celestial ruler, exercised as he prepared for battle, further establishes the proposed aforementioned spiritual pact.

Regrettably, movie goers often fail to recognize the incessant inane and divisive ideas promoted by such productions as *Avatar* and subsequently are subliminally compelled to accept false notions in regard to either the superiority or inferiority of various groups and their subsequent essential value. Such has been the case far more often than the public is perhaps aware.

The theme of European superiority has played itself out over an extended period of time throughout the history of the movie and television industry. A considerable number of big and small screen productions - including but not limited to - *Tarzan*, *The Lone Ranger* and *The Last Samurai* serve as manifestations of this ethic.

If society is to emancipate itself from such orchestrated tapestries of confusion, those among the masses able to discern the workings of the purveyors of this brand of cerebral control must remain vigilant in sounding "the alarm", so as to impel media forces to more regularly reflect truth. If such a phenomenon fails to emerge, those transmissions designed to maintain and reinforce existing inequitable social arrangements and attending precepts will continue to flourish. Such is the net effect of the movie industries' latest instrument- *Avatar*.