One Film, Many Perspectives:
Understanding The Issue Of Climate Change In The Documentary Film
Before The Flood

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Abstract

There have been abundant literature concerning movies as a learning tool in International Relations (IR). The use of movies as a learning tool matters in order to achieve learning outcomes since movies could reduce the level of abstraction of a concept. This paper aims to explain the global climate change phenomenon depicted in a documentary film entitled Before the Flood *using four main theoretical approaches in IR, namely, realism, neoliberal institutionalism, Marxism, and constructivism. This paper argues that Before the Flood is quite relevant and effective to achieve learning outcomes of IR theories course. Watching documentary films is expected to enrich learning methods in IR particularly IR theories courses by using audio-visual instruments.*
Keywords: Documentary Films; Learning Tool; Climate Change; IR Theories Course

Abstrak

Riset tentang film sebagai media pembelajaran dalam studi Hubungan Internasional (HI) sudah banyak dilakukan. Pemanfaatan film sebagai media belajar penting dalam rangka mencapai tujuan pembelajaran sebab film dapat menurunkan tingkat abstraksi dari sebuah konsep. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan fenomena perubahan iklim dalam film dokumenter Before the Flood menggunakan empat perspektif utama HI yaitu realisme, neoliberal-institusionalisme, Marxisme, dan konstruktivisme. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa film dokumenter Before the Flood sangat relevan dan efektif untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran mata kuliah Teori Hubungan Internasional. Menonton film dokumenter diharapkan dapat memperkaya metode pembelajaran HI khususnya mata kuliah Teori Hubungan Internasional dengan memanfaatkan media audio-visual.
Kata kunci: Film Dokumenter; Media Pembelajaran; Perubahan Iklim; Teori Hubungan Internasional

Introduction

Climate change has been a global issue for a long time, especially after the Cold War. Even before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the issue of climate change had become a major political issue (Paterson and Grubb, 1992, p. 293). However, this issue only caught world attention once the Cold War was over. In fact, according to Dalby, this issue had been discussed in the 1970s but was only seriously studied in the late 1980s (Williams, 2008, p. 261). Brown argues that post-Cold War ecological problems have become a fundamental threat to the international order (Brown, 1989, p. 519). Likewise, Buzan conveyed that one of the crucial international security agendas after the Cold War is environmental security (Buzan, 1991). However, these arguments have rejected by realist adherents who argue that environmental issues cannot be included in security studies because they are not directly related to conflict or the use of military force (Lynn-Jones, 1991).

From the academic standpoint, theories of International Relations (IR) have contributed a lot to the analyses of global environmental issues. Paterson, for example, analyzes climate change conventions from the point of view of neorealism and neo-institutionalism (Vogler, 1995). Meanwhile, Bretherton analyses from the perspectives of feminism by arguing that environmental damage is caused by masculine domination so a feminine perspective is needed to save the world (Vogler, 1995). The analysis from the domestic level was put forward by Sprinz and Weiß (2001) who argued that state policies to ratify the climate change convention are influenced by domestic groups pressures. Meanwhile, O'Neill (2009) identified three approaches, namely the realist which emphasizes power politics, the liberal emphasizes the institutional dimension, and the cognitivist which emphasizes ideational elements. Apart from these three perspectives, Vogler (2016) added a normative approach stressing on the concept of justice as well as a sociological approach focusing on the reputation behind the implementation of climate change agreements.

Given the importance of environmental issues for mankind today, there have been many artistic works to illustrate the terrible impact of climate change on human race. Hollywood has produced sci-fi-themed movies, such as *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) and *Geostorm* (2017). Many documentary films raise the issue of global warmings, such as *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006),

Chasing Ice (2012), and *Before the Flood* (2016). Except *Before the Flood*, most documentary films highlight facts and data about the impact of global warming yet tend to overlook how international relations relevant to the issue.

Movie is an effective medium of teaching that could enhance student understanding on certain issues. The sequel of *An Inconvenient Truth entitled An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power* tells a story about Al Gore's efforts to persuade the US government to provide renewable energy and sign the 2016 Paris Agreement (Climate Reality Project, 2017). Even though it alludes to the political aspect, this film contains only a few elements of IR so it is less representative as a learning tool in the IR Theory course.

This article aims to answer the question: "How are IR theories relevant to explain climate change phenomena as depicted in the documentary *Before the Flood*?" To answer this question, this article uses four IR perspectives, namely realism, neoliberal institutionalism, Marxism, and constructivism. The main arguments of this article are fourfold: *first*, according to realists, the phenomenon of climate change is a national security issue. *Second*, according to neoliberal

institutionalism, the phenomenon of climate change can unite the interests of countries to cooperate. *Third*, according to Marxism, the phenomenon of climate change cannot be separated from the influence of corporations that have a close relationship with political power. *Fourth*, according to constructivism, the phenomenon of climate change can be anticipated through the role of religion, culture, or tradition to respect nature.

Theoretical framework

This article uses four analytical frames to interpret the phenomenon of climate change in the documentary film *Before the Flood*. First, realist approach that focuses on state actors and national interests. Realism has three basic assumptions. First, the main actor in international relations is nation-states that act based on cost and benefit calculations (or rational actors) in an anarchic international system. Second, state interests are static in the context of conflicting international relations. According to realists, the national interest of all countries is at least to defend themselves (survival), whereas if possible the state will dominate the international system. Third, the most crucial element of international relations is material

capabilities, especially economic and military (Legro and Moravscik, 1999).

The leading figure of realism, Kenneth Waltz, in his article stated that the national interest of all countries is to ensure their national security. For Waltz (1990), power is only a tool to achieve national security. In his greatest work, *Theory of International Politics*, Waltz (1979) pointed out that all states pursue security because security is a prerequisite for pursuing other goals. This assumption differs from classical realists such as Hans Morgenthau who treats power as the goal of the state. In the most frequently quoted sentence, Morgenthau (1948, p. 1) states, "International politics, like all politics, is a power struggle. Whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim." In this paper, Waltz's assumption that the national interest of all countries is to ensure security will be the point of departure.

Second, this article also uses a neoliberal-institutionalism approach or simply an institutionalist school of thought. Even though it adopts a liberal perspective, this theory agrees with the neorealist theory that the international system is anarchic, thus creating feelings of mutual suspicion between countries. According to Keohane and Martin (2003),

institutionalist theory believes that in the condition of anarchy cooperation remains possible. The key is that countries create international institutions or regimes that act as bridges of information to reduce feelings of mutual suspicion as a consequence of anarchy.

The international regime is the most crucial variable of institutionalist theory. According to Keohane (1984), international regimes serve as a forum for states to unite their interests. In other words, international regimes are the instrument of states national interests. As a result, international regimes reflect state interests. However, state interests may be influenced by international regimes. It means that international regimes provide references for states to formulate their interests.

Third, this article also applies the theory of Marxism to analyze the phenomenon of climate change in the documentary film *Before the Flood*. Marxism emphasizes the relationship between economics and politics. This theory adopts Karl Marx's historical materialism philosophy that history is determined by economic factors. This is the principle so-called 'economic determinism'. In the context of international relations, economic

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determinism implies that the economy determines politics, not the other way around. Marxism views international actors as social classes, that are, the capitalist and the proletariat class. According to Marxism, the history of mankind is the history of class antagonism. Thus, the capitalist is and will always be in conflict with the proletariat.

For Marxists, a state is merely a tool for the capitalists to pursue their own interests. The state is nothing more than the servant of the dominant class, that is, the group that controls capital. For Marxists, giant capitalists straddle the state and make the government the mouthpiece of their interests (Rosyidin, 2020). With this assumption, Marxism holds that the national interest is nothing more than the interests of the capitalists, which in this case are represented by big investors. Giant corporations control the formulation of state policies.

Finally, this article applies a constructivist approach where non-material elements are more important than material elements. Constructivism has several basic premises. First, the interaction between countries is more determined by ideational factors. Second, the most important ideational factor is intersubjectivity, namely shared

understanding between actors (not individual understanding). Third, this intersubjectivity shapes the interests and identities of actors (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001). One of the characteristics of constructivist thinking is that actors (or also referred to as 'agents') and structures are mutually constituted. This idea is borrowed from Anthony Giddens' concept of 'dualism of structure' in his structuration theory; that social structure is a 'product' of social interaction but at the same time is a 'medium' that enable such interaction (Giddens, 1984).

International norms, therefore, can be categorized as 'international structures' that condition how actors interact with each other. Although these norms are made by the state, their interaction is largely influenced by these norms. Apart from norms, culture also plays a crucial role in constructivist international relations. Jepperson, Wendt, and Katzenstein suggested that cultural and institutional factors have more influence on security issues and that these factors influence not only state behavior but also state characteristics (or identity) (Katzenstein, 1996). Desch (1998) conveyed that culture has enriched post-Cold War security studies which include organizational, political, strategic, and

global culture. For constructivists, culture matters for analyzing international relations since culture shapes how actors view the world in which they are embedded.

Result and Discussions

Film as a medium for learning in IR

In the International Relations Theory (IRT) course taught by all campuses around the world, students who take this course expect to master at least two main competencies. First, understand the basic assumptions of each theory. It includes understanding the history of thought that underlies the theory. For example, students studying realist theory need to understand the thoughts of key realism figures such as Thucydides, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Thomas Hobbes. In addition, students are also expecting to understand the theoretical variants. For example, in studying realist theory, students need to understand the schools of realism such as classical realism, neorealism, and neoclassical realism. Second, after understanding these basic assumptions, students are also expected to be able to apply them to analyze case studies. This task is important because understanding the theory will be much more effective if it is carried out using the case study method. Thus, students understand how to apply abstract ideas (theories) to explain phenomena.

One of the objectives of IRT learning can be achieved through the method of movie screening. The study of Kuzma and Haney (2001) examines how films are used to learn about US foreign policy. According to them, the use of films as a medium of learning is crucial to achieve learning outcomes because films can reduce the level of abstraction of a concept. According to Simpson and Kaussler (2009), films simplify abstract concepts or theories. They exemplified *Black Hawk Down* movie which tells the student the concept of 'humanitarian intervention' or the film *300* which tells them key principles of realism.

Indeed, a movie does not replace the conventional method but rather complements so that the undereastanding of teaching materials is more effective. However, according to Sunderland, Rothermel, and Lusk (2009), the learning method by watching movies in the course and then continuing with discussions proved to be less effective. They suggested that a simulation method be added. It is crucial to change student behavior from passive to active.

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In terms of its relevance to IR, films are worthwhile for depicting world-historical events such as the Cold War. In addition, films are also helpful for taking a closer look at international issues such as terrorism and genocide. Films can also be used to make it easier for students to understand cultural narratives, such as anti-government or anti-capitalist movements. Lastly, films make it easier for students to understand IR theories, for example, postmodernism in the *Pulp Fiction* film (Engert and Spencer, 2009).

Valeriano (2013) also argues that film is an effective instrument to study historical events and issues of international relations. However, films do not always have a positive impact. Although films can enable students to see more concretely the international relations issues, films can also be boring and even stressful. Films also tend to be simplistic and indulge in sensationalism when discussing abstract concepts. In addition, films can also be less effective if students only see them as an entertainment, not a medium of learning (Swimelar, 2013).

This article views that previous works tend to focus on the benefits of film as a medium of learning but pay less attention to details. In other words, these works only take film to demonstrate that there is relevance between films and the teaching materials. It is not clear which parts of the film have relevance to the material. In addition, these works do not specifically examine the theory of IR. IR theory is a subject with the highest level of abstraction so the use of film is expected to help students understand IR theory. Unfortunately, these works fail to address this issue.

Finally, previous works mostly use fiction films even though they are inspired by true stories. Although fiction genre films can adequately describe the reality of international relations because they are intended for entertainment and commercial purposes, fiction genre films tend to highlight dramatic aspects to serve the film's objectives. This paper, on the contrary, uses a sample of documentary films that cover reality as it is.

Although it has many weaknesses, film as an IRT learning medium has proven to be quite effective in achieving learning outcomes. Students tend to prefer lectures using audio-visual facilities rather than boring hours of lectures. Kabadayi's study (2012) revealed that the learning method involving video or film instruments was proven to be effective in increasing the effectiveness of student learning compared to the lecture method.

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Furthermore, Kabadayi (2012) argued that if the lecture method is only able to maintain students' attention for about 16-20 minutes, then the audio-visual method is much longer than that. The use of audio-visual media such as films, short videos, or picture illustrations helps activate student's right brain so that they can increase the effectiveness of their learning.

In the courses that I teach, I often show the short videos downloaded from the *Youtube* channel as a trigger for group discussions. The video is related to lecture material but focuses more on phenomena at the empirical level. Based on the broadcast, the lecturer then asked some questions to all lecture participants. Students are then assigned to solve problems in their groups and then present the results before other groups. For example, in my *Security Studies* class, I played a video about the phenomenon of people smuggling from Indonesia to Malaysia. I assign each group to answer a question whose answer is actually on the show if the students listen carefully. For example, "What are the factors driving people smuggling?" "Why has the government failed to tackle the phenomenon of people smuggling?" and "What is the best way to tackle this cross-border crime?" With this active learning

method, the level of student understanding is much higher than just listening and taking notes on the lecturer's presentation.

IR theory at work on the issue of climate change

Realism perspective

Most people are aware that the air temperature is getting warmer day by day, sea levels are rising, and even the ice in the Arctic region continues to melt. All of this is the impact of climate change, and if it continues to happen, not only natural disasters will be common, but the security of the country will also be threatened. Several video clips in the documentary *Before the Flood* make it clear that the impacts of climate change are not unmitigated. Leonardo Di Caprio, who was mandated by the UN as an environmental ambassador showed concrete evidence of the impact of climate change. First, the flash flood that hit the US. Second, the tidal flood and clean water crisis that hit Abaiang (Kiribati) forced residents to migrate and evacuate to other areas. Third, the scarcity of clean water in Mexico has escalated into violent conflict. Fourth, farmers in India have to bear heavy losses due to agricultural fields that are submerged in heavy rain

equivalent to half a year in five hours. As a result, food security and supply were disrupted. Fifth, in China, apart from deteriorating public health, worker productivity has also declined, and this has led to a decline in the country's production. Sixth, Greenland is predicted to disappear by the end of this decade. These events are considered sufficient to prove that climate change is a real threat to national security, and there will not be a single country that is not affected.

The phenomenon of climate change can be read through the lens of realism. While realism is concerned with traditional issues such as war and national security, climate change can trigger this to happen. As previously mentioned, the effects of climate change trigger a scarcity of clean water in Mexico and lead to violent conflict. This in turn can trigger national security vulnerabilities. The climate emergency will further add to the long list of conflicts and wars (Barnett and Adger, 2007). Indirectly, climate change affects national security, starting from aggravating poverty, widening inequality, creating political instability, and increasing illegal immigration (Adger, 2010). These problems trigger inter-state and intra-state conflicts. Tracing back, in the 1950s, conditions of poverty and dependence on

the agricultural sector which were exacerbated by droughts and floods prompted the population of Bangladesh to migrate to India (Swain, 1996). The arrival of Bangladeshi immigrants sparked violent conflict in the 1980s (Homer-Dixon, 1999). Then, in 1969, the war between Honduras and El Salvador was caused by none other than environmental degradation (Preston and Durham, 1981). If the climate crisis continues, the country's security will certainly be in a situation full of uncertainty.

Referring to the 5th Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, the issue of climate change is expected to get worse and have a major impact on social, economic, and environmental conditions (IPPC, 2018). In other words, climate change has become a threat multiplier for the survival of the country (CNA Military Advisory Board, 2014). In response to this, countries need to reformulate security strategies as well as strategic policies, such as including the issue of climate change as a list of national threats in the Defense White Paper (DWP). For example, the United States in the Quadrennial Defense Review 2010 and 2014 (US Department of Defense, 2014) and Australia in the 2016 DWP (Australian Department of Defense, 2016)

issued policies indicating that countries are aware of the threat from the climate crisis.

Climate change impacts globally, no matter how big or small a country is. Therefore, states need to take strategic steps, such as mitigation and adaptation to strengthen national strength. Related to this, mitigation means taking climate change seriously, while adaptation means adjusting to climate change. This is explicitly said by former US president Barack Obama to Leonardo Di Caprio in the documentary film *Before the Flood* (minute 1:14). Obama said that what he worries most about the impacts of climate change are coastal communities. When the sea level rises, it doesn't take long for them to evacuate. Massive migration will trigger social conflict due to limited resources. Obama continued that the Pentagon (US Department of Defense) called this issue a threat to national security, not just an environmental issue.

Figure 1. Video clip in the documentary *Before the Flood* **where Barack Obama calls climate change a national security issue**

Institutionalism perspective

The enormous impact and threat posed by climate change have triggered the international community's concern about the sustainability of life in the future. In the documentary film *Before the Flood*, almost all countries in the world have agreed to build a joint commitment to unite political intentions to solve the problem of climate change (minute 1:09). Various negotiations on climate change took place and even resulted in many agreements that bind the members, such as the Kyoto Protocol (Kyoto Protocol) and the Paris Agreement (Paris Agreement). As institutionalist's assumption, this commitment shows that even in the conditions of anarchy, states will be able to work together through the international regime (Rosyidin, 2020). Keohane and Martin (in Elman and Elman, 2003) argued that one of the functions of the international regime is to accommodate states national interests. Furthermore, the institutionalism perspective posits that through multilateralism, different interests between countries will be united under a

Sumber: Stevens, 2016.

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common perception of the issue of common threats. The Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement are diplomatic achievements of international actors in building a framework for global cooperation to prevent the expansion of climate change impacts while accelerating the implementation of the sustainable development agenda. As an international environmental regime under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol sets a carbon emission reduction target of 5-8% (UNFCC, no year). The mechanisms for implementing the Kyoto Protocol are Joint Implementation (JI), International Emission Trading (IET), and Clean Development Mechanism (Shislov, Morel, and Bellassen, 2016). In an implementation, the Kyoto Protocol is considered a failure, both in terms of achievements and in binding the leading emitters or the largest emitters. This is because the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol emphasizes the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities where developed countries or Annex I receive a heavier burden than developing or non-Annex I countries (Brunnée and Streck, 2013). Bearing in mind that Annex I is obliged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a certain number, while non-Annex I am not burdened with the same obligation. There are Annex I countries that occupy the position of leading emitters, such as China. On the other hand, the US as the country's second-largest emitter after China was absent from this agreement. In short, the peak of the failure of the Kyoto Protocol was marked by the decline in the number of ratifying countries and the withdrawal of some leading emitters including Russia on the second commitment.

The failure of the Kyoto Protocol is like a strong rebuke to all countries that leading emitters play a crucial role in ensuring the success of the climate change agreement. Therefore, it is necessary to build a new order and agenda, namely through the Paris Agreement. Broadly speaking, the results of the Paris Agreement include: (1) reducing the rate of global temperature growth to below 2 degrees Celsius or even 1.5 degrees Celsius; (2) increasing the country's ability to adapt to the impacts of climate change; and (3) encouraging green growth in poor countries during the climate emergency (UNFCC, 2015). Then, why do leading emitters such as China, the US, and Russia want to ratify this agreement?

China's ratification of the Paris Agreement is arguably a risky policy. Industrialization in China is listed as the largest emitter in the world (BBC Indonesia, 2016). However, erratic weather and climate anomalies have resulted in increasing water and air pollution in China (Lestari, 2019). This issue has had a major impact on China's socio-economic development process as well as public health. The China National Climate Change Assessment Report states that China's involvement in the Paris Agreement is a historic momentum that shows its full commitment to fighting climate change (Zhai, 2019).

Meanwhile, for the US, by taking part in the Paris Agreement, the country gets ample opportunity to invest in the renewable energy sector and transfer technology even though it has to go through a complicated ratification process, both at domestic and international levels (Chen and Schmidt, 2017). At the domestic level, the long debate between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party hampered the acceleration of ratification, although, in the end, it received support from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), civil society, and also the Democratic Party. Meanwhile, at the international level, the US received a lot of pressure from countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol and environmental activists (Subarkah, 2017).

For Russia, the availability of dwindling natural resources, various natural disasters that often occur, and concerns about being away from technological trends which have an impact on losing access to foreign markets are urgent for Russia to take part in the Paris Agreement (Makarov, 2016). Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Gordeyev confirmed that the Paris Agreement is a second chance for Russia to shape the global climate agenda and save local lives (Reuters, 2019).

To conclude, both Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement reflect the role of multilateral institutions as an international regime to accommodate the interests of countries in mitigating the impacts of climate change. However, in line with the assumptions of the institutionalist theory, it is important to note that the willingness of countries to join the Paris Agreement is not based on the principle of altruism in which the state assumes moral responsibility but merely on the rational calculations to achieve their national interests. In other words, the Paris Agreement is a place where the interests of

different countries are brought together and united.

Sumber: Stevens, 2016.

Figure 2. Video clip in the documentary *Before the Flood* **where UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said the Paris Agreement was an international commitment to tackle climate change**

Marxist Perspective

One of the prominent scenes in the documentary *Before the Flood* is some large US corporations blatantly discrediting climate scientists and influencing government regulation by lobbying political elites to safeguard their interests and ensure the continuity of their businesses. The fossil fuel mining business have become the backbone of the US economy such as ExxonMobil, Shell, Valero, Chevron, and Koch Industries Inc (25 minutes). These companies carry out high-risk and extreme production processes to reap profits from the global

community's dependence on fossil fuels. For example, bombing mountain tops to get coal, applying the fracking method (drilling with high-pressure hydraulic pumps) to extract natural gas, or drilling offshore to get petroleum. However, these big companies use various means and continue to urge the government to thwart any cooperation related to climate change management.

This fact confirms the Marxist assumption that economics determines politics. Government policies are nothing but reflect the interests of big investors. Even though the democratic system requires the government to serve the public interest above all else, in reality, the government prioritizes the interests of big businessmen. This is partly because the big investors played a big role behind the campaign or winning the candidate for head of state so they demanded concessions or returns. The issue of climate change is dominated by the interests of large companies which emit large amounts of carbon. These companies silence public awareness of the risks of climate change. They do not hesitate to sacrifice the interests of the lower classes. The reason behind it is none other than to protect the interests and wealth of the owners of capital.

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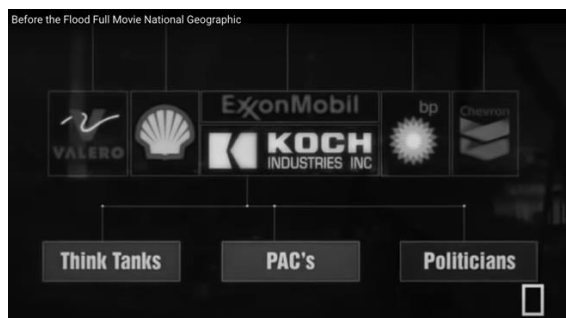
Sumber: Stevens, 2016.

Figure 3. Video clip in the documentary *Before the Flood* shows how big US corporations play a role in fighting climate change issues

Constructivism perspective

Seeing the deteriorating quality of the natural environment and increasing global warming, as well as public confusion and distrust of the issue of climate change, making one of the most influential religious leaders in the world, Pope Francis stepped in to emphasize that climate change is real and brings misery. "Our common home, the earth is becoming more and more like a pile of garbage", is the message written in the video clip of the documentary *Before the Flood* which shows Pope Francis's anger and anxiety about the current ethical, cultural and spiritual crisis of the human (minute 1:22). Therefore, the Pope issued an encyclical or written message entitled '*Laudato Si*' or "Praise to You" which discusses a crucial

issue today, namely the issue of climate change (Sullivan, 2007). Yeb Sano, an activist for the Global Catholic Climate Movement, said that '*Laudato Si*' is a moral guide for the faithful in taking further steps regarding the handling of the climate crisis (Merlo, 2020). It shows that as a religious figure, the Pope has strong legitimacy so that he can influence followers.

In simple terms, Pope Francis through '*Laudato Si*' pressures rich countries to pay ecological debts to develop countries for the massive exploitation they promote (Rossi, 2016, p. 36). While not pointing the finger at any particular country or region, the Pope calls on all countries around the world to enforce legally binding regulations on climate change (Rossi, 2016, p. 131). That way, no party will be absent from the climate crisis management agenda. In addition, '*Laudato Si*' asks capitalists to pay attention to all activities related to environmental sustainability by taking into account the rights of the poor so as not to add to the list of humanitarian crises (Rossi, 2016: 68-69). Finally, the Pope invites the international community to pay more attention to local policies which emphasize the value of harmony and

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sustainability in coexistence with nature (Rossi, 2016, p. 108).

The issue of climate change is often discussed, but no solution is considered effective in solving this problem. Management and protection of nature in an integrated, consistent, and sustainable manner through the values of local wisdom and culture can be said to be quite effective in suppressing the rate of climate change. Moreover, local culture is the result of community social interactions that form a shared view of life and identity (Stavins and Michaelowa, 2015, p. 1038).

There are lots of environmental conservation practices based on local culture. For example, followers of Shintoism in Japan believe that all things, whether living or dead, are inhabited by Gods or *Kami* (Breen and Teeuwen, 2013, p. 32). Therefore, humans have a moral responsibility to take care of everything on earth. In India, the people of West Bengal highly venerate the sacred forest (Sen, 2018, p. 320). In short, the sacred forest is the traditional way of Indian society in conserving biodiversity, the more sustainable the sacred forest, the gods will keep them away from harm. In Tambon Bangkhunsai, Thailand, for generations, shellfish fisherman prefer to use fishing gear that they build themselves rather than commercial fishing gear which can damage marine ecosystems (Kongprasertamorn, 2007, p. 7).

Likewise, Indonesia has a variety of local wisdom related to environmental protection. In Aceh, village communities still preserve the tradition of '*rumoh Aceh*', which is to build houses with environmental insight and traditional values without destroying nature or disturbing animal habitats. Furthermore, in Papua, the community holds the principle of '*te aro neweak lako*' which means "nature is me." The local people believe in Mount Grasberg and Erstberg like a mama's head, and the land is half of the human soul. Therefore, the people of Papua are very concerned about environmental ethics. Lastly, the Baduy community until now has always been practicing natural conservation methods by referring to the three-region division system, namely *reuma* (settlement), *heuma* (arable land), and *Leuweung kolot* (old forest). Thus, the life of the present does not have to sacrifice the lives of future generations.

This crucial role of religion, culture, tradition, and customary norms has attracted the attention of the constructivist perspective of IR, which views that non-material factors are more

important than material factors in explaining the phenomenon of international relations. The role of religion, as indicated by Pope Francis' written message regarding the need for all parties to support regulations on climate change, is a non-material factor that can encourage international actors to comply with global climate change norms.   In contrast to realists, institutionalists, and Marxists who emphasize material factors, constructivism believes that the solution to overcome the impacts of climate change is to return to local wisdom or local geniuses. Instead of going through high-level political mechanisms that often end up deadlocked and full of friction, the international community needs to raise local wisdom to the global level to make the world aware that nature is not a separate entity from us.
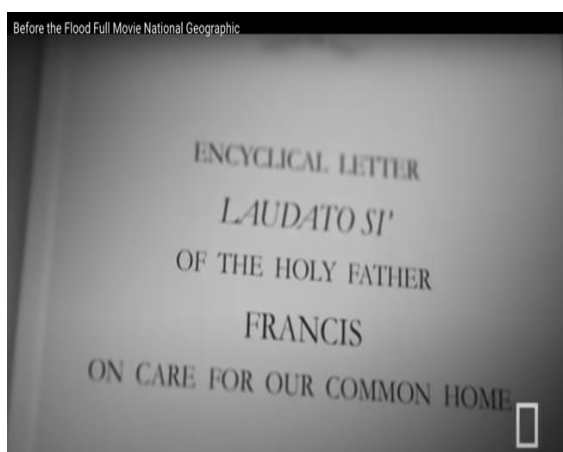
Figure 4. Video clip in the documentary
***Before the Flood* showing Pope Francis'**
encyclical entitled '*Laudato Si*'

Conclusion

IRT as one of the core courses of IR does not only require students to master the basic assumptions of each theoretical tradition. The more important is how students can apply this theoretical understanding into case studies. In other words, the most crucial learning achievement of the IRT course is being able to analyze international phenomena using the theoretical framework that has been studied. To achieve this competence, learning strategies using audio-visual media such as short videos, fiction films, and documentaries are crucial. In addition to reducing the level of abstraction of a theoretical idea, movie screening also reduces student boredom when studying in class.

This study examines the documentary film *Before the Flood*, which focuses on global environmental issues. By applying four approaches in the study of IR, namely realism, institutionalism, Marxism, and constructivism, this paper concludes that the documentary film *Before the Flood* is very relevant to be

Sumber: Stevens, 2016.

used as a medium of learning for IRT courses for several reasons. First, this film represents four main approaches to the study of IR, namely realism, institutionalism, Marxism, and constructivism. By watching this film, students will be able to understand how each perspective interprets international relations. Second, in contrast to fiction films which tend to highlight the dramatic side rather than substance, this film reveals a lot of empirical evidence about the effects of climate change that may have been overlooked by IR students and researchers. In addition, this film also shows how foreign policies, especially great power foreign policy, address the issue of climate change. Third, this film focuses on global environmental issues which have become one of the non-traditional security issues of the 21st century. Watching this film can increase students' awareness that climate change is a real threat to human survival in the future.

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