

ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
CULTURAL STUDIES MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

ANIMATION AND ECOCRITICISM: HAYAO MIYAZAKI
Rediscovering the Balance

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113611038

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ISTANBUL
2020

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ANİMASYON VE EKOELEŞTİRİ: HAYAO MİYAZAKİ
Dengeyi Tekrar Bulmak

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih : 20/01/2020

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı: 164

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

- 1) Hayao Miyazaki
- 2) Animasyon
- 3) Ekoeleştiri
- 4) İnsan - Doğa İlişkisi
- 5) İnsan Olmayan

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)

- 1) Hayao Miyazaki
- 2) Animation
- 3) Ecocriticism
- 4) Human - Nature Relationship
- 5) The non-human

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ABSTRACT

Global climate change and its effects on the planet attract attention by policymakers as well as scholars. Global ecological crises are gradually being examined both in cultural and scientific terms all over the world as a concept as the relationship between nature and people is examined further. Japanese director Hayao Miyazaki stands out with his critical approach to the relationship between humans and nature. Miyazaki's animated films *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited Away* and *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* provide us with a different perspective on Mother Earth and the relationship between nature and people in connection to “past”, “present” and “future”. Miyazaki feeds on his own experiences and early works, namely Studio Ghibli, and reflects his artistic and aesthetic philosophy in addition to his cultural, ethical and political views.

In this thesis, Miyazaki's three films are examined through three approaches in ecocriticism: Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism and Dark Ecology. Miyazaki does not differentiate between “good” and “bad” in establishing these relationships. Furthermore, he creates compromising characters between the natural and man-made world and offers us a balance between nature and human intervention. Nurtured by the belief in animism, he shows how humans create both cultural and physical pollution through the forces of nature called “*kami*”s, and how it has an impact on the natural environment. Using the power of animation to animate the non-living, he provides an emotional connection between the audience and nature without being trapped in humanizing nature. In this way, Miyazaki's narratives are in harmony with the views of post-human theory. Miyazaki maintains a unifying, and a not discriminatory narrative in our perception of nature by finding balancing solutions to dichotomies such as nature-man, human-nonhuman, man-woman, technology-nature.

Keywords: Hayao Miyazaki, Animation, Ecocriticism, Human - Nature Relationship, The Non-human

ÖZET

Günümüzde gerek bir konsept olarak doğa gerekse insanların doğayla ilişkisi, küresel ısınma gibi ekolojik krizlerin artmasıyla tüm dünyada dikkat çekmekte, hem kültürel hem de bilimsel açılardan giderek daha fazla incelenmektedir. Kültürel olarak doğa ve insan ilişkisine eleştirel yaklaşımıyla Japon yönetmen Hayao Miyazaki öne çıkmaktadır. Miyazaki'nin *Prences Mononoke*, *Ruhların Kaçışı* ve *Rüzgârlı Vadi* animasyon filmleri bize “geçmiş”, “şimdi” ve “gelecek” üzerinden farklı bir perspektifte doğa algısı ve bununla bağlantılı yeni bir doğa-insan ilişkisi sunmaktadır. Miyazaki, doğa anlatılarını yaratırken Stüdyo Ghibli öncesi işlerinden ve kendi tecrübelerinden beslenmekte, sanatsal ve estetik felsefesini, kültürel, etik ve politik görüşlerini yansıtmaktadır.

Bu tezde Miyazaki'nin bahsedilen üç filmi eko-eleştiri teorisinin Derin Ekoloji (Deep Ecology), Ekofeminizm (Ecofeminism) ve Karanlık Ekoloji (Dark Ecology) yaklaşımları üzerinden incelenmekte, doğa / modern dünya, feminen / maskülen, insan / hayvan gibi ikiliklere doğa-insan-teknoloji arasındaki ilişkiler üzerinden bakılmaktadır. Miyazaki bu ilişkileri kurarken iyi ve kötü ayırımına gitmemekte, doğa ve insan arasında uzlaşmacı karakterler yaratarak bize doğa ve insan müdahalesine dair bir denge sunmaktadır. Animizm inanişından beslenerek doğanın güçleri *kami*'ler üzerinden insanların nasıl kültürel ve fiziksel bir kirlilik yarattığını, bunun doğayı nasıl etkilediğini göstermektedir. Animasyonun canlı olmayı canlandırabilme gücünü kullanarak ancak doğayı insansılaştırmak gibi bir tuzağa da düşmeden izleyicilerle doğa arasında duygusal bir bağ kurulmasını sağlamaktadır. Bu sayede Miyazaki'nin anlatımları insan sonrası teorinin görüşleriyle de uyum sağlamaktadır. Doğa-insan, insan-insan olmayan, kadın-erkek, teknoloji-doğa gibi ikiliklere dengeleyici çözümler bulmasıyla Miyazaki, doğayı algılayışımızda ayırıştırıcı değil birleştirici bir anlatı sürdürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hayao Miyazaki, Animasyon, Eko-eleştiri, İnsan – Doğa İlişkisi, İnsan Olmayan

INTRODUCTION

Miyazaki, in his filmography, deals with issues related to human-induced environmental degeneration. In doing so, he addresses the conflicts between the dualities of the mother earth-modern world / femininity-masculinity / humans-animals and translates these philosophically relevant conflicts into a visual language. This thesis aims to analyze his perspective on these conflicts in the light of ecocriticism.

Ecocriticism serves as a useful tool to address these conflicts, since, genealogically, it consists of a body of literature that expresses the different ways in which artists and philosophers re-evaluated their relationship to nature in the face of an emerging environmental crisis. Ecocriticism gradually merged with posthumanism which conceives of humans as part of an evolving ecosystem. In general, we can say that ecocriticism & posthumanism, considering humans as a part of nature / not the master of it, blurs the above distinction.

Briefly, ecocriticism was established as a literary theory in the late 1970s. Glotfelty notes that ecocriticism is simply the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. She states that whereas feminist theory explores text from a gender-conscious perspective and Marxism examines it in the light of production and economic class, Ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies.¹

Since the 1970s, distinct eco-philosophies and different approaches to the environment were developed. Each approach –such as Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism and Posthuman Ecocriticism– explains environmental crises in its own way, and therefore offers solutions it holds dearest. This dissertation deploys Deep Ecology and Ecofeminism explained in Greg Garrard’s work titled *Ecocriticism*. In addition, Serpil Oppermann and Serenella Iovino’s articles were taken into account for posthuman theories of the environment.

¹ Glotfelty and Fromm, *The Ecocriticism Reader*, xviii-xix.

Ecocriticism and its different approaches are defined and explained in detail in Chapter 1. Because ecocriticism established as literary theory, it investigates how the author's use of language and metaphors reveals their perception and experience of nature. However, when ecocriticism used for analyzing cinema, one must discuss how visual representations portray nature and natural features, how they are framed by the lens of the camera or formed by the editing process.

Nonetheless, both ecocritics and cinema scholarship initially paid little attention to animation. As Lamarre states, cinema monopolized histories and theories of moving image, thus, animation overshadowed by cinema and categorized as a lesser form. With the astonishing popularity in the 1980s and 1990s, animation became impossible to ignore. Hence, it affected film studies profoundly.² Lamarre adds that animation as a medium combining art and technology, firstly decompose or decode the movement for composing it in its own style. This decoding/decomposing is not like imitating or duplicating live-action cinema. This process opens new opportunities for expression. It thus gets to the core of what is 'live'.³ Using drawings to create worlds and characters which are on paper but also 'living', makes animation a useful medium to analyze with a post-human perspective. Therefore, the end of Chapter 1 focuses on analyzing animations with Ecocriticism in a posthuman perspective.

Moreover, in recent years, the animation genre, especially Japanese animation, has been studied more closely. Japanese animation which is widely known as anime is a cultural phenomenon with its roots in Japanese cultural artifacts like handscrolls, wooden block prints, and *haiku* and *Kabuki*, It is also a social phenomenon because it is key to understand modern Japanese interests and concerns. As an extremely popular mode of expression, anime reaches different

² Thomas Lamarre, *The Anime Machine: A Media Theory of Animation* (U of Minnesota Press, 2013), xxi.

³ Thomas Lamarre, "From Animation to Anime: Drawing Movements and Moving Drawings," *Japan Forum* 14, no. 2 (January 1, 2002): 333, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09555800220136400>.

segments of society compared to various high cultural products. Thus, it is evident that anime is important for the scholarship both sociologically and aesthetically.⁴

In the field of anime, the first name that comes to mind within the last four decades is none other than Hayao Miyazaki. Miyazaki is a director who has fully reflected his ideas in his animated films. Over the years, he has made numerous animated features that made him identified as an auteur of the animated world.⁵ His career of being an animated feature film director started in 1979 with *Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro* (Rupan Sansei: Kariosutoro no Shiro) and ended in 2013 with *The Wind Rises* (Kaze Tachinu). He announced his retirement multiple times in the past. However, he still works in Studio Ghibli for his new film.

As critic Yoshiyuki Shimizu explains, Miyazaki's works mostly take place in worlds where the systematical structures and processes of rationalization of the modern world have been dismantled, in addition to a situation of chaos and commotion.⁶ Both his future worlds – *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (Kaze no Tani no Naushika, 1984) and *Future Boy Conan* (Mirai Shōnen Konan, 1978)– or past worlds – *Laputa: Castle in the Sky* (Tenkū no Shiro Rapyuta, 1986), *Porco Rosso* (Kurenai no Buta, 1992), *Princess Mononoke* (Mononoke-hime, 1997), *My Neighbor Totoro* (Tonari no Totoro, 1988)– prior to the completion of the process of modernization can be examples of what Yoshiyuki Shimizu points out.

Miyazaki's settings are mostly created in Western styles and imagery. Six of Miyazaki's animes are set in non-Japanese locations. *Lupin III* is an action anime with a setting of a peacefully picturesque European duchy, *Nausicaä* occurs in a half-European, half-alien world, *Laputa* takes place in an imaginary place based on nineteenth-century Wales. *Kiki's Delivery Service* (Majo no Takkyūbin, 1989) and *Howl's Moving Castle* (Hauru no Ugoku Shiro, 2004) set in European-

⁴ Susan J. Napier, *Anime from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation*, Second Edition, Revised edition (St. Martin's Griffin, 2016), 3.

⁵ "Auteur: Hayao Miyazaki," *So The Theory Goes* (blog), July 29, 2017, <https://www.sothetheorygoes.com/hayao-miyazaki/>; Margaret Talbot, "The Auteur of Anime," January 10, 2005, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/01/17/the-auteur-of-anime>.

⁶ Napier, *Anime from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle*, 153.

looking syntheses of different cities, and *Porco Rosso* is an intersection of coastal Europe and rural northern Italy with imaginary elements. On the other hand, the rest of his films, *Totoro*, *Mononoke*, *Spirited Away* (Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi, 2001), *Ponyo on the Cliff* (Gake no Ue no Ponyo, 2008) and *The Wind Rises*, use settings which are distinctively Japanese.⁷

As Cavallaro points out that there is a subtle understanding between East and West in Miyazaki's films which is also heightened by a thematic and structural exchange. There are specific themes he uses recurrently. One such theme is a persisting concern over the ecosystem. He tackles these continuing issues in three of his animes. These issues over a diverse time scale can be observed in the different settings he used from ancient Japan in *Mononoke* to the present day in *Spirited Away* as well as a post-apocalyptic future in *Nausicaä*.⁸ Hence, I analyze these three films with the perspective of ecocriticism.

Before analyzing how Miyazaki depicts nature, how he uses conflicts and then offer a balance for the dualisms between the modern world and the mother earth, femininity and masculinity, humans and animals, I emphasize the characteristics and history of anime as well as its "unique and supportive sponsor-medium"⁹ manga.¹⁰ Both anime and manga have stylistic elements rooted in Japanese classical art. Hence, Chapter 2 focuses on the connection between animation and manga, and Japanese classical art and their influence on Hayao Miyazaki's visual and narrative styles.

I focus on Western influences in anime and manga in the remaining part of Chapter 2. In 1853, with Commodore Matthew Perry's visit to Japan, the country ended its years of self-isolation and started to become an industrialized modern nation. This also opened Japanese culture and art to influences from other

⁷ Dani Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki* (McFarland, 2015), 8–9.

⁸ Cavallaro, 9.

⁹ Tze-Yue G. Hu, *Frames of Anime: Culture and Image-Building* (Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 9.

¹⁰ Manga term used first time by Katsushika Hokusai to designate a "collection of drawings for learning to paint." Later the meaning of the term changed to modern comic books of Japan.

countries. The modern manga started to take shape in these years. Disney and Fleisher's animated films found a big audience in the Japanese community, therefore, affected the Japanese animation companies and as a result Miyazaki's work.

Furthermore, as it is important to understand his background to fully analyze his work, I examine Miyazaki's early life, his early works and his nature-based influences in Chapter 3. Miyazaki was born during World War II. His childhood took place in post-war Japan. His experiences in his early life affected him deeply. Most of his recurring themes date back to his childhood. In his adulthood years, the first company he worked in was the Tōei animation studio. Tōei had a deep impact on his animation style and in the maturity process of his themes. In this chapter, I utilize his interview and article collections titled *Starting Point 1979-1996* and *Turning Point 1997-2008* because it is important for me to use Miyazaki's own words. As secondary sources, I consult Raz Greenberg's *Hayao Miyazaki: Exploring the Early Work of Japan's Greatest Animator* and Susan Napier's *Miyazakiworld*.

At the beginning of Chapter 4, I introduce the Japanese perception of nature and their belief system Shinto.¹¹ It is critical to understand social awareness about nature in Japanese history. It is often said that the Japanese have a deep love of nature which is expressed in their art, poetry and architectural elements. However, I show that this perception is developed from "secondary nature" which is created by humans. Moreover, Shinto too changed in time for nationalistic purposes. Nature as a form of wilderness and *kami* as not a guardian but a force of nature actually was a fearful thing. Therefore, I start my analysis of *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited Away* and *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* from that framework. As Cavallaro mentioned above, the films are approached as visions of past, present and future, therefore they are not analyzed with their chronological order.

¹¹ Shinto is a polytheistic system of beliefs that involves the veneration of many deities, known as *kami* in Japanese.

Mayumi argues that Miyazaki helps us to recognize the intricacy of our world by depicting power relationships between characters, in this way he shares his understanding of contemporary environmental problems.¹² Miyazaki mostly uses child figures who are open to possibilities, non-altered with adulthood realities and bias. He makes them confront major challenges and responsibilities. In *Princess Mononoke*, we observe outsiders with different backgrounds. The conflict that was born from these differences makes finding a common ground important especially in environmental issues. Setting in the past, *Mononoke-Hime* shows us the beginning of human-induced destruction of nature. *Spirited Away* displays how humans have continued to harm nature until today. *Spirited Away*'s main character must work hard to fit into the imagined society. By working hard, she connects with nature/spirit world and eventually matures. Thus, with her new relationship to nature/spirit world, she sees the modern world and the problems of our environment with a new perspective. In *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, we meet with a post-apocalyptic world where humans altered the balance of nature because of wars. The main character shows us a way to establish a good relationship with nature and humans. In all of them, Miyazaki creates a mediator, a balancing character in a setting with different disasters or ecological problems. While he is depicting these worlds/settings he does not separate the social problems and the environment. On the other contrary, he approaches them together as one.

Moreover, technology is not seen as malign. It takes a liberating role in his animations: "(...) Vehicles should run over the ground, dive into the water, and fly through the air in order to liberate humanity from the things that hold us back."¹³ For him, technology is not non-natural, and hence he did not reject it. Additionally, he believes that a moving perspective in animation creates a sense of liberation which "(...) makes our souls want to greet the wind, the clouds, and

¹² Kozo Mayumi, Barry D. Solomon, and Jason Chang, "The Ecological and Consumption Themes of the Films of Hayao Miyazaki," *Ecological Economics* 54, no. 1 (July 1, 2005): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2005.03.012>.

¹³ Hayao Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, trans. Beth Cary and Frederik L. Schodt (San Francisco: VIZ Media LLC, 2014), 46.

the beautiful earth we see unfolding far below.”¹⁴ This quote demonstrates that the relationship between technology and nature is not discriminative but rather connective. Furthermore, in his films, nature is not something that humans need to go back to. He does not create his worlds as tools to simply refusing the modern world. He does not differentiate between nature, human and technology. On the contrary, he tries to bring them together on common ground.

Miyazaki emphasizes the conflicts between the dualities of the mother earth-modern world / femininity-masculinity / humans-animals and translates these philosophically relevant conflicts into a visual language when depicting the issues related to human-induced environmental degeneration. Therefore, this dissertation aims to analyze his perspective on these conflicts in the light of ecocriticism.

¹⁴ Miyazaki, 46.

CHAPTER 1

SITUATING ECOCRITICISM HISTORICALLY AND POLITICALLY

Ecocriticism was established as a literary theory in the late 1970s. In that period the human-induced environmental degeneration forced mainly artists and philosophers to re-evaluate their relationship with nature. Glotfelty states that ecocriticism is simply the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment. She adds that whereas feminist theory analyzes text from a gender-conscious perspective and Marxism examines it in the light of production and economic class, Ecocriticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies. As a theoretical statement, ecocriticism tries to find a middle ground between the human and the nonhuman, taking a critical stance that sits squarely between literature and earth.¹⁵

Greg Garrard states that from an academic point of view, ecocriticism is dominated by the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE), a professional association that started in America but now has major branches in the United Kingdom and Japan. Early ecocritical publications have been distinguished by an exclusive focus in Romantic poetry, wilderness narrative and nature writing. However, ASLE has leaned towards a more general cultural ecocriticism with studies of popular scientific writing, film, TV, art, architecture and other cultural artifacts such as theme parks, zoos, and shopping malls. As ecocritics try to provide a truly revolutionary discourse that enables us to analyze and criticize the world in which we live, attention is increasingly paid to the broader range of cultural processes and products in which and through which complex negotiations of nature and culture take place.¹⁶

Despite significant advances since its beginnings, ecocriticism still has great potential for further growth and cultivation.¹⁷

¹⁵ Glotfelty and Fromm, *The Ecocriticism Reader*, xviii-xix.

¹⁶ Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism* (Routledge, 2004), 4.

¹⁷ John Tallmadge and Henry Harrington, *Reading Under the Sign of Nature: New Essays in Ecocriticism* (University of Utah Press, 2000), xv.

1.1. A Genealogical Look at Ecocriticism

Ecocriticism, in broad terms, is the study of the relationship between the human and the non-human through cultural history and entailing the critical analysis of the term ‘human’ itself.¹⁸ However, definitions of ecocriticism are varied. If we look at the development process of this theory, the term “literary ecology” is first used by Joseph W. Meeker in his *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology*. He employs the term to refer to the investigation of biological themes and relationships which appear in literary works, stating “it is simultaneously an attempt to discover what roles have been played by literature in the ecology of the human species.”¹⁹ On the other hand, the term “ecocriticism” itself was first coined by William Rueckert in his essay “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism”. What he meant by this term was “the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature.”²⁰ Contemporary theorists use ecocriticism as a critical tool to study nature itself, whereas Rueckert originally applied this concept to study texts using nature. However, similar to modern ecocritics, he was also concerned with the literary representation of humanity’s connection to nature as well as its vile treatment of it: “In ecology man’s tragic flaw is his anthropocentric²¹ (as opposed to biocentric) vision, and his compulsion to conquer, humanize, domesticate, violate, and exploit every natural thing. The ecological nightmare ... is of a monstrously overpopulated, almost completely polluted, all but totally humanized planet.”²² This quote suggests Rueckert was also aware of the problems that an anthropocentric vision

¹⁸ Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 5.

¹⁹ Glotfelty and Fromm, *The Ecocriticism Reader*, xx.

²⁰ This essay originally published in 1978 then re-published in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmark in Literary Ecology*.

²¹ Buell’s definition of anthropocentrism is “The assumption or view that the interests of humans are of higher priority than those of nonhumans [or nature]”. Anthropocentrism stands in direct contrast to biocentrism, which Buell defines as “The view that all organisms, including humans, are part of a larger biotic web or network or community whose interests must constrain or direct or govern the human interest”. (*The Future of Environmental Criticism*, 134).

²² William Rueckert, “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism,” in *The Ecocriticism Reader* (University of Georgia Press, 1996), 113.

brings. However perilous the problems it raises are, though, there is no real consensus on the subject itself, as observed by Buell in his *The Future of Environmental Criticism*. For some ecocritics health of the physical environment is more important than social welfare or interhuman equity and vice versa.²³

Thus, it was Rueckert who laid the foundation for a new and applicable literary theory to which ideas and concepts have been added, subtracted and updated over time. As much as the perspective of the modern theory of ecocriticism differs from Rueckert's view of the term, he and contemporary critics share some basic principles, one of which is genuine concern for the improvement of the relationship between humanity and nature. Under the present ecocritical approach, critics use ecological principles to explore this relationship, a task that is evident in the very name of "ecocriticism."²⁴

The word "eco" is derived from Greek *oikos* (household) while "critic" comes from the Greek *kritis* (judge). Poet-critic Gary Snyder indicates that in modern usage *oikos* have come to imply "the study of biological interrelationships and the flow of energy through organisms and inorganic matter." He goes on to state that "the term 'ecology,' which includes energy-exchange and interconnection, can be metaphorically extended to other realms."²⁵ However, William Howarth in his essay "Some Principles of Ecocriticism" states that *oikos* and *kritis* in tandem means "house judge" which is a "person who judges the merits and faults of writings that depict the effects of culture upon nature, with a view toward celebrating nature, berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through political action."²⁶ The two writers approach the role of an ecocritic through different perspectives. Howarth asserts that an ecocritic analyzes "culture

²³ Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination*, 1 edition (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005), 97–98.

²⁴ Karl Van Wyk, "Different Natures: An Ecocritical Analysis of Selected Films by Terrence Malick, Werner Herzog and Sean Penn" (Thesis, 2012), 10, <http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/handle/10539/11724>.

²⁵ Gary Snyder, "Ecology, Literature and the New World Disorder," *Irish Pages* 2, no. 2 (2004): 9.

²⁶ William Howarth, "Some Principles of Ecocriticism," in *The Ecocriticism Reader* (University of Georgia Press, 1996), 69.

upon nature.” On the other hand, for Snyder, an ecocritic has a much broader area, where he or she can study the textual representation of the ways nature affects culture, culture affects culture, and nature affects nature.²⁷ Thus we can state that ecocriticism acknowledges the relation between nature and culture and the possibility that they can affect each other and themselves. However, when we look at the history of this ramulous theory we can see a difference of opinions in theoretical stances.

Several scholars divided ecocriticism into two waves. First and second-wave ecocriticism differs in the use of “environment” as a term from a theoretical point of view. For the first-wave ecocriticism “environment” meant only “natural environment.” This means that, even more so than second-wave ecocriticism, first-wave ecocriticism focuses on the preservation and protection of the natural environment, and accomplishes these objectives and reversing the harm, especially through political action.²⁸ In the process, the ecocritic might pursue to reformulate the concept of culture in organicist terms with a perspective to imagining a “philosophy of organism” that would break down “the hierarchical separations between human beings and other elements of the natural world.”²⁹ In brief, the first-wave “speaks for” nature and differs from the second-wave by its keeping the cultural characteristics of humans and nature separate, and in doing so promoting the worthiness of nature.³⁰

Following the first-wave, a more modern approach to ecocriticism was developed, significant for questioning the separation of human and non-human.³¹ This new wave established a new meaning for ‘environment’, one that would incorporate not only ‘nature’ but also the ‘urban’.³² A more political branch of this

²⁷ Van Wyk, “Different Natures,” 10.

²⁸ Howarth, “Some Principles of Ecocriticism,” 69.

²⁹ Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, 21.

³⁰ Purdue Writing Lab, “Ecocriticism // Purdue Writing Lab,” Purdue Writing Lab, accessed December 9, 2019, https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/writing_in_literature/literary_theory_and_schools_of_criticism/ecocriticism.html.

³¹ Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 5.

³² Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, 11.

second-wave is the ‘eco-justice’ movement which mainly aims to raise an awareness of “class, race, and gender through ecocritical reading of text”, analyze the predicament of the poorer classes who more often than not are the sufferers of pollution and do not have sufficient contact with traditional ‘nature’. Although the divide between the first and the second wave is not fully agreed upon, and the exact lines have not been drawn the reality of ever-evolving ecocriticism is apparent and the shift in its direction and the approaches it takes will probably continue onwards in the future.³³

However, the first and second waves of ecocriticism cannot be regarded as two opposites, because usually they both “show what superficially seems an old-fashioned propensity for ‘realistic’ modes of representation and a preoccupation with questions of the factual accuracy of environmental representation.”³⁴ Also, it would be an oversight, “to suppose that ecocriticism has unfolded in a tidy, sequential manner, with a new dispensation displacing the old,” because different approaches can rest upon older practices.³⁵

1.2. Different Approaches in Ecocriticism

Although environmentalism as a cultural, political and philosophical phenomenon is relatively new, it has already given rise to different eco-philosophies have such as Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, Posthuman Ecocriticism, Dark Ecology, as well as other approaches. Every approach has its own way of defining environmental crises and offers solutions in terms of the values it holds dearest.³⁶ Deep ecology and ecofeminism are two positions that are relevant to this thesis, as the former embraces the intrinsic value and inherent worth of living things, while the latter questions the stereotypical gender roles of wilderness; and

³³ Lab, “Ecocriticism // Purdue Writing Lab.”

³⁴ Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, 31.

³⁵ Buell, 138.

³⁶ Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 16.

they will, therefore, be presented more thoroughly in the following section along with the posthuman approach of ecocriticism.

Recent times have seen an impact of posthuman on ecocriticism, and with this impact, ecocriticism has become “post-human, post-natural, and post-green” in the assessment of the classification of the human and the non-human.³⁷

1.2.1. Deep Ecology

Deep Ecology is among the most influential approaches outside academia. Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss explains key points of this approach in *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century* (1995). One of the crucial key points is that human and non-human life has “intrinsic value and inherent worth”, independent of its usefulness to human gains. Another is that the growth of nonhuman life necessitates a smaller human population. Therefore, deep ecologists demand a shift from anthropocentric to eco-centric value systems, criticizing the dualism between humans and nature promoted by Western culture.³⁸

One of the major criticisms against Deep Ecology is that ecocentrism is misanthropic. However, within the approach, there are varying stances on the priority of human needs vs that of the nonhuman. Arne Næss, for instance, states that ‘vital’ human needs may trump the good of others, “thus ruling out difficult conflicts between the interests of humans and the interests of a man-eating tiger or a bubonic plague bacillus.”³⁹

Though briefly put, Deep Ecology views “the anthropocentric dualism of human/nature as the ultimate source of anti-ecological beliefs and practices.”⁴⁰

³⁷ Serpil Oppermann, “From Posthumanism to Posthuman Ecocriticism,” *Relations. Beyond Anthropocentrism* 4, no. 1 (June 27, 2016): 1, <https://doi.org/10.7358/rela-2016-001-oppe>.

³⁸ Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 21–22.

³⁹ Garrard, 21–22.

⁴⁰ Garrard, 21–22.

1.2.2. Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism claims that environmental crises not only stem from anthropocentrism as Deep Ecology says but also androcentrism, which assumes male superiority over women, and by doing so attempts to unite women's movement with the ecological movement.

Both anthropocentrism and androcentrism assume superiorities based on the same dualistic logic, that "women have been associated with nature, the material, the emotional, and the particular, while men have been associated with culture, the nonmaterial, the rational, and the abstract." Radical ecofeminists attack hierarchy by reversing the implied values of the very terms it utilizes to illustrate this supposed dualistic nature and thus "exalting nature, irrationality, emotion and the human or non-human body as against culture, reason and the mind." However, as this perspective ignores that gender distinctions are a product of patriarchal societies, it has been criticized by other ecofeminists through identifying that "a truly feminist perspective cannot embrace either the feminine or the masculine uncritically, [but] requires a critique of gender roles, and this critique must include masculinity and femininity." On the other hand, Val Plumwood's analysis points out that just showing the dualistic natures between man/woman, nature/human does not create problematic anthropocentrism or androcentrism. Pointing to how René Descartes introduced the separation of mind and body, she critiques the gendered reason/nature dualism. Only after liberating reason from the androcentric philosophy, we can respect 'earth others'.⁴¹

1.2.3. Posthuman Ecocriticism

With the posthumanist, perspective humanities have been put in a serious conversation with technology and life sciences, animal and gender studies. With

⁴¹ Garrard, 23–26.

posthumanism one can see the radical incompleteness of the human, thus pointing to “a refusal to take the distinction between ‘human’ and ‘nonhuman’ for granted, and to found analyses on this presumably fixed and inherent set of categories.”⁴² As Serpil Oppermann states “In posthuman terms, agency, subjectivity, and intentionality are not the sole attributes of human beings. Hence, the most obvious manifestations of posthumanism are in movements against the exploitation of women, animals, and the natural environment.”⁴³ Posthumanism allows us “to move beyond the paradigm of humanist condescension and to engage meaningfully with animality, both human and nonhuman.”⁴⁴ While material ecocriticism has meshed with many of the posthuman visions, Oppermann argues that ecocriticism already contains posthumanist aspects and therefore needs to be called posthuman ecocriticism.⁴⁵

Recent posthumanist theories about the environment, on the other hand, stress the importance of ‘decentering’ nature by placing it in the background, that is, in areas ‘surrounding’ the center. From this perspective, a major change from ‘deep ecology’ to ‘dark ecology’ has taken place at the turn of the twenty-first century.⁴⁶

Timothy Morton and Paul Kingsnorth coined the term “dark ecology” to draw attention to the current ecological condition affected by global pollution. Morton and Kingsnorth suggest that green ecology is insufficient to describe today’s environmental dilemma since, as Morton puts it, “[e]xcluding contamination is part of performing Nature as pristine, wild, immediate and pure.” Is it even possible to consider a remote place that does not bear the pollution caused by socio-cultural activities and practices? For them, such a thing as wild

⁴² Serenella Iovino, “Posthumanism in Literature and Ecocriticism,” *Relations. Beyond Anthropocentrism* 4, no. 1 (June 27, 2016): 13.

⁴³ Serpil Oppermann, “Feminist Ecocriticism - A Posthumanist Direction in Ecocritical Trajectory,” in *International Perspectives in Feminist Ecocriticism*, Routledge Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Literature Ser. (London, UNITED KINGDOM: Routledge, 2013), 28.

⁴⁴ Iovino, “Posthumanism in Literature and Ecocriticism,” 13.

⁴⁵ Oppermann, “From Posthumanism to Posthuman Ecocriticism,” 29.

⁴⁶ Emmanouil Aretoulakis, “Towards a PostHumanist Ecology,” *European Journal of English Studies* 18, no. 2 (May 4, 2014): 172, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13825577.2014.917005>.

nature without pollution does not exist. Consequently, pollution is the central factor in Dark Ecology.⁴⁷

Overall, in posthuman ecocritical analyzes, “we are confronted with how the human is submerged in inhuman loops, and how literature, biology, chemistry, technology, aesthetics, and politics became inseparable from the material networks, forming a naturalcultural space as an intermingling spillway of science and literature.”⁴⁸

1.2.4. Other Approaches in Ecocriticism

Just as in Ecofeminism, *Social Ecology and Eco-Marxism* also suggest that environmental issues are caused by anthropocentrism. On the other hand, it adds that the systems of domination and exploitation, the unequal hierarchy among humans is the main problem in environmental issues.

Environmentalism as Greg Garrard puts it is formed by people who are concerned about environmental issues like global warming and pollution but want to preserve their living standards and hence don't accept radical social changes. The radicals by their “Arcadian” approach, encourage de-urbanization, usage of non-synthetic materials and low-technology solutions.⁴⁹ On the other hand, environmentalist Martin Lewis, in his book *Green Delusions* (1992) promotes “Promethean” environmentalism which decouples the human economy and natural ecology to protect nature. He further states that “Prometheans maintain (...) that for the foreseeable future we must *actively manage* the planet to ensure the survival of as much biological diversity as possible.”⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Kerim Can Yazgünoğlu, “The Postecological World of John Burnside: Dark Green Nature, Pollution, and Eco-Grief in Glister,” *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 59, no. 1 (n.d.): 42.

⁴⁸ Oppermann, “From Posthumanism to Posthuman Ecocriticism,” 32.

⁴⁹ Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 20.

⁵⁰ Martin W. Lewis, *Green Delusions: An Environmentalist Critique of Radical Environmentalism* (Duke University Press, 1994), 251.

And lastly, the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and his critiques of industrial modernity also affect some ecocritics and is named Heideggerian Eco-philosophy. Its focus is on what makes ‘being’ different from a simple materialistic existence. The act of ‘being’ is not merely existing but a conscious act that necessitates human consciousness as space where the material existence can ‘be’. Through this act, the human being can be accurately realized. The consciousness and the material have a grave need for each other to complete the act of ‘being’.⁵¹

1.3. Analyzing Animations with Ecocriticism

Literary ecocriticism has investigated how the author’s use of language and metaphor reveals their perception and experience of nature. On the other hand, cinematic ecocriticism –what others term “green film criticism” or “ecocinecriticism”– must discuss how visual representations portray nature and natural features, how they are framed by the lens of the camera or formed by the editing process. While the camera fosters a greater sense of objectivity and realism – objective representations being the result of a single dominant ideology and way of seeing – there is nothing more politically decided than the classical cinema’s so-called invisible form which tries to conceal the constructed nature of images. Nature in cinema is constructed socially through a number of factors: the capabilities of the cinematic technology, the filmmakers’ objectives, the economy of the entertainment industry, the dominant concepts of nature, and the assumed preferences of viewers.⁵²

On the other hand, animation studies were thought as separate from film studies until quite recently. This change can be clearly observed in different editions, the second edition from 1986 and the 9th edition of the prominent book

⁵¹ Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 31.

⁵² Paula Willoquet-Maricondi, “Introduction: From Literary To Cinematic Ecocriticism,” in *Framing the World*, Explorations in Ecocriticism and Film (University of Virginia Press, 2010), 8–9, www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt6wrgnd.5.

Film Art: An Introduction from David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson⁵³, in which discussions on animation advanced from being sub-chapters to having their own chapters. Moreover, writings that focus on animation are now being included in series on cinema from publishers such as Wallflower and Rutgers University Press. It can be clearly seen that animation has managed to distinguish itself as a valid cinematic form.⁵⁴

Ecocritics as well initially paid little attention to animated films, especially Japanese animation – Jhan Hochman’s *Green Cultural Studies: Nature in Film, Novel, and Theory* (1998), Gregg Mitman’s *Reel Nature: America’s Romance with Wildlife on Film* (2009 [1999]), and Robin L. Murray and Joseph K. Heumann’s *Ecology and Popular Film: Cinema on the Edge* (2009) do not mention animation. In recent years, though, the animation genre has been analyzed in greater depth: Alexander Wilson’s *The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez* (1992) and David Ingram’s *Green Screen: Environmentalism and Hollywood Cinema* (2000) have provided analyses of Disney’s films. Susan Napier’s *Anime* (2005 [2001]) and Sean Cubitt’s *EcoMedia* (2005) examine Miyazaki’s engagement with environmental issues, and the first book-length study on Disney is David Whitley’s *The Idea of Nature in Disney Animation* (2008). Murray and Heumann’s *That’s All Folks? Ecocritical Readings of American Animated Features* (2011) and Deidre M. Pike’s *Enviro-Toons: Green Themes in Animated Cinema and Television* (2012) broaden the research on American animated works.⁵⁵

Overall these critical studies as Heise puts it, emphasize how animated films “mobilize particular cultural templates [it uses] in portraying nature, how they define humans’ relationship with nonhumans, to what extent they engage with ecological crisis, and what sociopolitical ideologies they criticize or

⁵³ David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 9th edition (McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages, 2009).

⁵⁴ Robin L. Murray and Joseph K. Heumann, *That’s All Folks?: Ecocritical Readings of American Animated Features* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 22–23.

⁵⁵ Ursula K. Heise, “Plasmatic Nature: Environmentalism and Animated Film,” *Public Culture* 26, no. 2 (73) (May 1, 2014): 303, <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-2392075>.

encourage.” She explains that mostly as a matter of thematic content, they construe the relationship between animation and environmentalism. In the process, they approach animated film much as they do other works of fiction in film or literature. While doing it they treat animated film just as they do cinema and literature.⁵⁶ On the other hand, Heise focuses on the “plasmaticness” (“the infinite ability to expand, contract, stretch, bulge, flatten, implode, explode, fragment, and yet return to their original shapes”) of the animated body. Recalling the term from Eisenstein’s essay on Disney, and states that from an environmentalist view, “plasmaticness strikingly envisions an escape not only from the social but also from the biological order, an organism ‘capable of assuming any form (...) which, skipping along the rungs of the evolutionary ladder, attaches itself to any and all forms of animal existence.’”⁵⁷ Following the same essay, Hadl says that animation “preserves and revives animist (or post-humanist) thoughts through its technology” (by animating the inanimate). The nonhuman acting like humans, such as animals and plants with speech, cause the audience to entertain the notion of humanity not being the sole possessor of “liveliness, intentionality, and agency in the fictional worlds of animation, in which human interests and endeavors are often pitted against those of animals, machines, or objects.”⁵⁸

Especially in Studio Ghibli animated films, human characters are prominent but not different, special or superior to other beings. Spirits, plants, gods, monsters, animals, robots and ecosystems all have a human-independent agency and their own worlds. The films depict ways of rethinking the relationships between humanity and nature. Therefore, I aim to analyze Studio Ghibli’s prominent director Hayao Miyazaki’s films by using ecocriticism as a conceptual tool. However, before doing so, I depict the history of Japanese animation, partly with a perspective of nature.

⁵⁶ Heise, 303.

⁵⁷ Heise, 311.

⁵⁸ Gabriele Hadl, “Nature, Media and the Future,” in *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Media* (Routledge Handbooks Online, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315689036-23>.

CHAPTER 2

JAPANESE ANIMATION

2.1. A Brief History of the Japanese Art of Animating

Examples of modern Japanese animation, or *anime* as it's widely known, emerged around the end of World War II (WWII). By that time the West already had cartoons produced by the popular animation studio of Walt Disney and Max Fleischer. Also in the East, China had *Donghua* mainly created by Wan Brothers who led the way in the industry.

While the history of modern Japanese animation can be written starting with WWII, for fully understanding anime, one should trace back to the roots which nurture this medium. Anime and manga have a long history in Japanese art. *Ukiyo-e* (woodblock prints of Edo period) and narrative picture scrolls (*emaki-mono*) such as *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals (Chōjū-jinbutsu-giga)* from the 12th and 13th centuries are widely considered the earliest artistic ancestor of the manga. Brigitte Koyama-Richard argues that these are ancestors of not only manga but also anime.⁵⁹

Associating Japanese animation's history with art from the 12th or 13th centuries can be seen as a forced attempt. However, there have been similar assertions on cinema and comics from the same perspective. Scott McCloud defines comics as sequential art and traces its roots back to cave paintings and ancient Egyptian paintings.⁶⁰ Siegfried Zielinski also takes cinema's prehistory to antiquity.⁶¹

For Japanese animation, Imamura Taihei was the first to open a debate on early roots. Famous Japanese animation director Rintarō also expresses the same

⁵⁹ Brigitte Koyama-Richard, *Japanese Animation: From Painted Scrolls to Pokemon* (Paris : London: Flammarion, 2010), 13.

⁶⁰ Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, Reprint edition (New York: William Morrow Paperbacks, 1994), 8–16.

⁶¹ Lamarre, *The Anime Machine*, 13.

idea in his interview with Brigitte Koyama-Richard.⁶² Moreover, Studio Ghibli's famous director Isao Takahata promotes the idea that Japanese animation has its roots in *emaki-mono*, which were handscrolls from classical or early medieval Japan (the late Heian and early Kamakura eras).⁶³

To examine the anime's origins, we need to look at the second half of the 6th century, an era when Buddhism was spreading to Japan. Chinese culture had a widespread effect in Japan in the Asuka period (552-645). Furthermore, Buddhist statuary, painting, and temple architecture of the Asuka period were mostly produced by Chinese and Korean craftsmen.⁶⁴

In addition, horizontal handscrolls were first introduced to Japanese culture in the same era. In the late Heian period (794-1185) Japanese artists utilized these scrolls in the creation of a major art form.⁶⁵ *Yamato* was created as a native art form "that dealt with Japanese people in Japanese settings." It was called Yamato to distinguish the pictures from works categorized as Chinese. Major themes of the Yamato style were tales from Japanese literature and history. With motifs and activities identified with seasons (nature) and famous places, this type of painting illustrates Japanese people and the countryside⁶⁶ and has carried on to later periods as well. The most ascendant of seasonal motifs were spring and fall, particularly favored by the Japanese. Yamato paintings specializing in seasonal motifs were called *Shiki-e*. *Cherry Blossoms in Yoshino and Maple Leaves in Tatsuta* (**Figure 2.1**) is a good example of the *shiki-e*. The chief curator of Nezu Museum, Takeshi Noguchi explains this work as follows:

The titles incorporate places in Nara Prefecture famed for the flower and the leaf, and the screens, seen as a whole, are most notable for the vivid contrast of spring and autumn scenes. Also

⁶² Koyama-Richard, *Japanese Animation*, 13.

⁶³ Lamarre, *The Anime Machine*, 13.

⁶⁴ Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture: 3rd Edition*, 3 edition (Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., n.d.), 24.

⁶⁵ Varley, 79.

⁶⁶ Anna Willmann, "Yamato-e Painting | Essay | Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History | The Metropolitan Museum of Art," The Met's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, accessed December 13, 2019, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/yama/hd_yama.htm; Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 77.

depicted are poem strips of compositions about cherry blossoms or autumn leaves. This pair of Yamato-e screens, an Edo-period work, distinctly celebrates the rich features of each season.⁶⁷

Figure 2.1. *Cherry Blossoms in Yoshino and Maple Leaves in Tatsuta (Yoshino tatsuta-zu byobu)*, Japan Edo Period, 17th Century.



Source: Nezu Museum.

Another special type of *Yamato* is *emaki-mono*. It is the oldest surviving example of Japanese narrative art. This style was established in the Kamakura period (1185-1333). Originally from Tang-dynasty China, the style changed in the hands of the Japanese artists. It also acquired several names such as *emaki-mono* or the “narrative picture-scroll,” *monogatari-emaki* or the “tale picture-scroll,” *nikki-emaki* or the “diary picture-scroll,” *sōshi-emaki* or the “sketches and short

⁶⁷ Takeshi Noguchi, “Four Seasons and Art,” *Niponica*, accessed December 13, 2019, <https://web-japan.org/niponica/niponica19/en/feature/feature02-2.html>.

writings picture-scroll,” *e-kotoba* or the “drawings and phrases picture-scroll,” *e-den* or the “painting-tell picture scroll,” and *engi* or the “cause/reason-origin picture scroll.”⁶⁸

Lamarre mentions that Isao Takahata discovers both cinematic (*eigateki*) and animetic (*animeteki*)⁶⁹ features in medieval handscrolls,⁷⁰ especially in *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals and Figures* (Figure 2.2). It is the name of a series of four monochrome scrolls painted with brush and ink. It is believed that Bishop Toba (1053-1140) created *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals and Figures*, however, the evidence suggests only the first and second scroll was drawn by him.

Figure 2.2 *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals and Figures* (*Chōjū-jinbutsu-giga*), Section of the First Scroll.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

⁶⁸ Hu, *Frames of Anime*, 26.

⁶⁹ Thomas Lamarre uses this term for referring “to qualities of the animated moving image more generally, of which the anime-ic might apply to one variety or, more probably, a series of varieties.” (Lamarre, *The Anime Machine*, 324.) He also summarize that “with the animation stand, the tendency is toward an open compositing and thus animetism—an “animetic” rather than cinematic sense of depth and movement.” (Lamarre, *The Anime Machine*, 38).

⁷⁰ Lamarre, *The Anime Machine*, 13.

Emaki-mono formed a continuum as we see in the first scroll of *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals and Figures* (**Figure 2.2**). *Emaki-mono* usually combines both texts and pictures. These scrolls do not have frames or pages as in contemporary comics but when they are read and rolled out right to left –which is still the norm in the manga and Japanese books of today– people can observe a story. Specifically, in *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals and Figures*, the artist’s lines are simple whereas the imagery is exaggerated as in the artistic expression of modern manga – simple lines and exaggerated expressions are essential elements of the manga. The sense of movement also helps create more of an expressive medium. The manga artists of long ago combined these three elements (simple lines, exaggerated expressions, and impression of movement) to lay the foundation for today’s anime.⁷¹

An expert in manga and satirical drawings, Isao Shimizu, who is a professor at Teikyo Heisei University, gives another example on the roots of anime:

The scroll *Shigisan Engi Emaki*, (**Figure 2.3**) dating from the mid-12th century, depicts dynamic movement. In one scene, the Buddhist priest Myoren makes a magic pot fly into the air and carry a rich man’s rice storehouse to the top of a mountain. In another scene, bags of rice fly out of the storehouse. The flow of the pictures, from right to left, adds to the feeling of movement . . . The artist illustrates time and place – first there is a quiet scene where a priest is teaching a young girl how to read and write, then some women are alarmed by something, then the bales of rice miraculously descend from the sky.⁷²

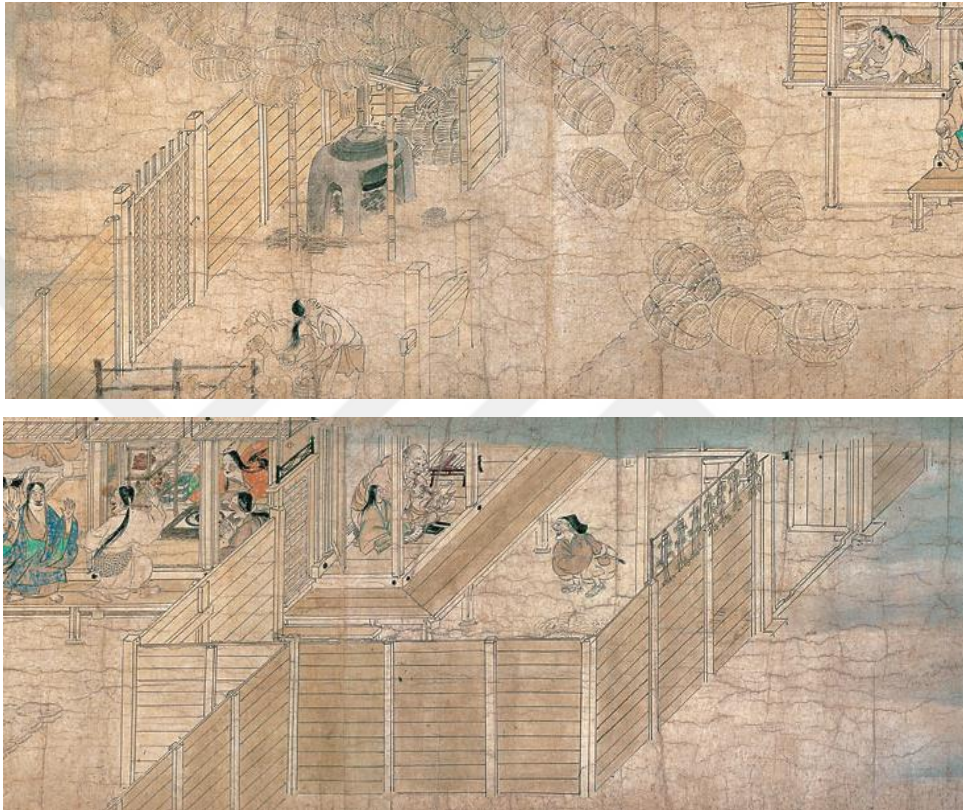
One can question why scholars do not mention the art styles before *Yamato* and *emaki-mono* in terms of the origin of manga and anime. Jean-Marie Bouissou, in the “Manga: A Historical Overview” article also asks why the *Eingakyô* from the 8th century, a scroll that utilizes both text and images in a narration of the story of Buddha, never has been acknowledged as part of this

⁷¹ Isao Shimizu, “Discovering the Origins of Animé in Ancient Japanese Art,” *Nipponia*, 2003, 12–13.

⁷² Shimizu, 12–13.

history; and similar to Isao Shimizu, he comes up with an answer emphasizing two essential criteria: Content and technique.⁷³

Figure 2.3 *Scroll of the Legends of Mt. Shigi Temple (Shigisan Engi Emaki)*, Japan Fujiwara Period, 12th Century.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

The simplicity of lines in technique continues in *Zenga* (Zen pictures). In the middle of the 17th century, *Zenga* developed as a form of religious drawing utilizing spontaneous humor in dealing with serious issues. In their simplicity, *Zenga* demonstrated a trait common to all Japanese art, including manga and anime – “an economy of line”. But just as *Yamato*, *Zenga* couldn’t be seen by the common people, either. They were produced strictly for the eyes of aristocrats and powerful families. Then came *ōtsu-e* and *ukiyo-e*. *Ōtsu-e* started as a religious

⁷³ Jean Marie Bouissou, ed., “Manga: A Historical Overview,” in *Manga: An Anthology of Global and Cultural Perspectives*, Reprint edition (New York: Continuum, 2010), 17–18.

form, only later evolving into secular paintings with themes of beautiful women, demons and warriors. Nevertheless, it was the ukiyo-e which gained a truly popular and secular art form in the Edo period (1600-1867).⁷⁴ *Ukiyo-e* literally means ‘illustrations of the Floating World’ and were mass-produced woodblock prints. The “manga” word also came from the world-renowned ukiyo-e artist Hokusai Katsushika. As with manga, the *ukiyo-e* were also a popular cultural phenomenon in their time: they were lively, topical, cheap, entertaining and playful.⁷⁵ Like *ōtsu-e*, the genres of *ukiyo-e* also had beauties, but this style expanded to draw pleasure quarters and *kabuki* actors as well. Moreover, just as with *shiki-e*, *ukiyo-e* also made nature one of its popular subjects. Travel was a popular form of leisure, and the pleasures of the natural environment and therefore the interesting landmarks, as well as the adventures encountered on a journey, became a popular inspiration for *ukiyo-e* artists.

Figure 2.4. *Great Wave off Kanagawa (Kanagawa oki nami ura)*, Katsushika Hokusai, from the series *36 Views of Mount Fuji, (Fugaku sanjūrokkei)*.



Source: Adele Schlombs, *Ando Hiroshige* (Taschen GmbH, 2007), 41.

⁷⁴ Frederik L. Schodt, *Manga! Manga!: The World of Japanese Comics*, Reprint edition (New York: Kodansha International, 2013), 30–32.

⁷⁵ Schodt, 34.

Thanks to the introduction of Hokusai's *36 Views of Mount Fuji* and Hiroshige's *53 Tokaidō stations*, *ukiyo-e* were largely dominated by depictions of the landscape. Previously landscape served merely as a backdrop for beautiful ladies, for the portrait of actors and warriors but after 1830 it became the main theme of *ukiyo-e*. One of the most popular *ukiyo-e* belongs to Hokusai and is called the *Great Wave off Kanagawa* (**Figure 2.4**). In this picture, three boats are depicted on the brink of being swallowed by the gigantic wave, overpowered by the forces of nature.⁷⁶

As Frederik L. Schodt puts it, by the mid-19th century, the Japanese enjoyed a rich, at times irreverent and often a narrative tradition of entertaining art. The old forms of art including *ukiyo-e* would disappear in the years ahead, but their spirit would continue inspiring manga artists and was a major influence in how the Japanese embraced comics and books during the twentieth century.⁷⁷ Miyazaki sees a connection between these older art forms and manga as well:

Recently, some wonderful reproductions have been made of picture scrolls executed from Japan's Heian period and Kamakura period. And when you look at these, you can tell that Japanese people really believed they could depict the human world in its entirety in this format. They thought they could express nearly anything with drawings and words, whether it was related to politics, economics, art, religion, the supernatural world, or even erotica.

Illustrated narrative scrolls disappear at a certain point in Japanese art history, but during times of peace they become *ukiyoe*, or illustrations of the floating world. Ukiyoe had little in the way of a narrative element, but since we're dealing with hypothesis here, I'm going to take the liberty of postulating that this was because during Edo period Japan was at peace. When I tell my interviewers from abroad that we see same the same phenomenon in the turbulent history of modern Japan, as we did in the ferment of the late Heian period or the Kamakura periods, and that in this period

⁷⁶ Adele Schlombs, *Ando Hiroshige* (Taschen GmbH, 2007), 7, 41, <https://www.bookdepository.com/Ando-Hiroshige-Adele-Schlombs/9783822851647>.

⁷⁷ Schodt, *Manga! Manga!*, 36.

narrative picture scrolls were resurrected as manga then they all go home happy.⁷⁸

Cavallaro states that the visual register of Miyazaki could be expressed as an intertextual collage of images and pictorial language, extracted from a careful study of the numerous western sources, however, it also recalls the graphic styles that Japanese art immortalized from the medieval period up to the 20th century especially *ukiyo-e* and the paintings of Utamaro Kitagawa, Hokusai Katsushika and Utagawa Hiroshige. Pervading these profoundly local facets of the art of Miyazaki is a distinctly Japanese awareness to objects, their elegance, and the sorrow of their death, encapsulated by the concept of *mono no aware*.⁷⁹

Napier defines *mono no aware* as a long lyrical tradition in which poetry and romance praised the elegance of transience and the bittersweet joy which can be received from the passing of love, youth, and beauty. In the past *mono no aware* mostly associated with the natural world, the cycle of seasons and changes that best reflects the feeling of transience. Therefore, the classical Japanese concept of ephemerality, “*mono no aware*” (the sadness of things), is often connected to natural objects such as the cherry blossoms or water imagery.⁸⁰ When analyzing *Mononoke-Hime* Napier touches *mono no aware* again as a Japanese perspective to look at devastating disasters which Japanese archipelago usually confronts such as earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions. The vulnerability of human civilization is a philosophy based on transience and closeness to destruction which is supported by the Japanese archipelago itself. She continues that, this notion of Japanese culture can be seen in popular culture products as a sense of elegiac in the vision of an apocalypse.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 96.

⁷⁹ Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, 8.

⁸⁰ Napier, *Anime from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle*, 31.

⁸¹ Napier, 253-255.

2.2. Western Influences

In 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry, leading a fleet of two steamers and two boats, sailed to the Tokyo harbor and forced Japan into trade with the United States.⁸² Japan, leaving years of self-isolation behind, started to become an industrialized modern nation.

European-style drawings and cartoons were introduced in this period by the British Charles Wirgman and George Bigot.⁸³ Wirgman, a correspondent of the Illustrated London News in China, had later moved to Japan. In that era cartoon caricatures of London's *Punch* magazine were quite famous, leading Wirgman to publish the *Japan Punch* between 1862 and 1887. It became a renowned satirical magazine, popular with both foreigners and the locals.⁸⁴ He was a self-taught artist and journalist, and his cartoons had a new brand of humor to them.⁸⁵

George Bigot began to live in Japan in 1882 and was employed as an art teacher in the army officers' school. In 1887 he started his own magazine called *Tôbaé*. He also satirized the Japanese people and government, therefore attracting attention from the authorities. Both men introduce perspective, anatomy and shading to Japanese art. Wirgman usually used balloons to encapsulate words and Bigot used sentences in a sequence, therefore, creating a narrative pattern.⁸⁶

In Japan, drawing a real person and criticizing current events was banned by Shogun. However, the new Western-style drawings called *Ponchi-e* (Punch drawings) began to catch the eyes of Japanese artists and they started to publish their own magazines. Through his work in the *Marumaru Chinbun* which was published in 1877, Kinkichiro Honda merged the Western-style cartoon and

⁸² "Commodore Perry and Japan (1853-1854) | Asia for Educators | Columbia University," accessed December 28, 2019, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/japan_1750_perry.htm.

⁸³ Schodt, *Manga! Manga!*, 38.

⁸⁴ Katalin Ferber, "Race For Entry: The Opening of Japan1," *Itinerario* 31, no. 1 (March 2007): 127, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0165115300000103>.

⁸⁵ Schodt, *Manga! Manga!*, 40.

⁸⁶ Schodt, 40.

Japanese cultural elements together. In the 1890s the term “manga” started being used instead of the cynic term *Ponchi-e* and came to involve all kinds of cartoons.⁸⁷

The change of emphasis from this European political cartoon style to that of the United States, which was far livelier and less political, took place at the end of the 19th century. It was Rakuten Kitazawa and Okamoto Ippei, Japan’s most famous cartoonists of the era, who made the American style popular. In 1902 Kitazawa started the first serialized comic strip, a style popular in American newspapers, with his *Tagosaku and Mokubē Sightseeing in Tokyo (Tagosaku to Mokubē no Tōkyō Kembutsu)*, but word balloons were still not used in this series.⁸⁸

During this period, the numbers of comic strips and comics started to rise; they were an immediate hit with the public just like *ukiyo-e*. Many of the comics were published in children’s magazines such as *Shonen Club*. These magazines were collections of news, articles, games, and drawings but comics started to seize more pages from these magazines. When these comics series and strips were published as books, they became best sellers immediately, so the tradition of publishing manga in magazines and then collecting them in volumes can be traced back to this era.⁸⁹ Gravett summarizes the style of this period’s comics as theatrical, with characters drawn from head to toe, and the artists not making use of different angles.⁹⁰

Schodt points out the 1920s as a transitional period from liberal to oppressive. With the onset of ultra-nationalism of that era, many artists were arrested. He adds that for Japan, World War II started in 1937 in China. The artists who did not share the same idea with the government were banned from writing or punished by preventive detention. Government-supported organizations

⁸⁷ Paul Gravett, *Manga Japon Çizgi Romanının Tarihi* (Plan B, 2008), 21.

⁸⁸ Schodt, *Manga! Manga!*, 41–42.

⁸⁹ Robin E. Brenner, *Understanding Manga and Anime*, Annotated edition edition (Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited, 2007), 5.

⁹⁰ Gravett, *Manga Japon Çizgi Romanının Tarihi*, 23.

such as *Shin Nippon Mangaka Kyōkai* (New Cartoonists Association of Japan), while oppressing others. Propaganda cartoons or harmless family-oriented strips were the only ones that could be published in this era.⁹¹

Animation production also took its initial steps in this era (with the first animated work produced in 1917). These were short animations mostly used for commercial reasons. The earliest one was *Mukuzo Imokawa, the Doorman* (*Imokawa Mukuzo genkanban no maki*) by Shimokawa Oten.⁹² After the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923, the industry suffered a big blow. During this period, Noburō Ōfuji's *The Thief of Baguda Castle* (*Bagudajō no tōzoku*), which was made by cutting and pasting Japanese colored paper, won international acclaim.⁹³

With the war approaching it was hard to find materials and money. Therefore, the first Japanese animated feature film was only released with the help of the navy in 1945. *Momotarō's Divine Sea Warriors* (*Momotarō: Umi no shinpei*) was actually a propaganda film aimed for children to lift the morale.⁹⁴

During the fifties, Japanese films underwent a surge of imagination that would make them popular all over the globe. For Poitras, it was due to the US occupying forces, because it was with the help of America that Japan was liberated from the repression of domestic conservatism of the militaristic period. On the other hand, Yamaguchi states that as far as animation is concerned, although the General Headquarters of the Allied occupation (GHQ) had brought in a hundred artists to animate films supporting democracy and propagate occupation policies, these artists were independent and territorial to the point that the project itself ultimately fell prey to disagreements and finally disbanded.⁹⁵

During these years Hiroshi Ōkawa founded Tōei Dōga (now Tōei Animation). He was influenced by Disney's *Snow White* and wanted to become

⁹¹ Schodt, *Manga! Manga!*, 51–56.

⁹² Gilles Poitras, "Contemporary Anime in Japanese Pop Culture," in *Japanese Visual Culture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 49.

⁹³ Yamaguchi Yasuo, "The Evolution of the Japanese Anime Industry," nippon.com, December 20, 2013, <https://www.nippon.com/en/features/h00043/the-evolution-of-the-japanese-anime-industry.html>.

⁹⁴ Yasuo.

⁹⁵ Yasuo.

the Disney of the East. They produced Japan's second feature animation *Hakujaden* (The Legend of the White Serpent, aka. Panda and the Magic Serpent) in 1958.⁹⁶

Manga also changed after WWII. Osamu Tezuka re-shaped the form of manga. He is still revered to the point of actually being called *kami-sama*, the god of manga anime. Schodt explains Tezuka's main sources of inspiration as Walt Disney and Max Fleisher and not comics per se.⁹⁷

The animation technique Tezuka reduced the frame rate of animation, therefore, made it easier to produce for TV series. In the 1960s television was the biggest influence on anime. *Otogi Manga Calendar* (*Otogi Manga karendā*) was the first made-for-television show in 1962. It was a collection of 312 installments of three-minute instructional clips explaining the history. The next year, the first half an hour children's show was produced, clearly defining the anime style of Japan's television media. *Astro Boy* (*Tetsuwan Atom*), *Gigantor* (*Tetsujin 28-go*) and *8 Man* were some of the most famous series to launch in 1963. They were also attracting attention from Europe and the United States. The anime of the 1960s usually used anthropomorphic animals, there was also adaptations of European fairy tales. Mostly television shows created for boys or both girls and boys. There were also exceptions such as *Little Witch Sally* (*Mahōtsukai Sari*) in 1966 which was created by Tōei when Hayao Miyazaki was a part of the production team.⁹⁸

Before continuing Hayao Miyazaki's life, his inspirations and early works, it is important to show why other than Japanese traditional styles, manga too influenced his visual style. Cavallaro connects manga to Miyazaki's cinematographical style by his usage of camera angles. He explains that in the manga, the narrative technique by still pictures enables artists to use each frame in order to show details cumulatively, to slow down or to speed the action. Anime adopts a similar approach, frequently taking a still picture and shifting the camera

⁹⁶ Yasuo.

⁹⁷ Schodt, *Manga! Manga!*, 63.

⁹⁸ Poitras, "Contemporary Anime in Japanese Pop Culture," 50.

from the left to the right to create an illusion of motion. First and foremost, Miyazaki is enthusiastically aware of the manga or comic book's requirement that something elegant or moving should happen on every page and he has been able to apply it from page to screen. Spectators are often faced with scenarios that encourage responses close to comic books. Looking at a comic book page, our eyes tend to move to anything grabs us. So, it is up to us how we view and absorb the story. Miyazaki too uses the same approach and shows us highly detailed images, he puts importance to some elements, but the freedom of the viewer is still there.⁹⁹ On the other hand, Miyazaki does not use conventional manga-anime style excessive expressions. Andrew Osmond also comments about this subject, he says Miyazaki's characters use characteristics of anime such as wide eyes, lipless mouths, stylized features which make characters look like a Caucasian to Western viewers, however, they are not depicted with overt stylization like other anime.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, 10.

¹⁰⁰ Cavallaro, 10.

CHAPTER 3

THE LIFE OF HAYAO MIYAZAKI

Director Hayao Miyazaki's works cannot be understood fully unless we also understand his experiences in life. He was born into a world of war. His childhood experiences shaped his character. In adulthood, his workplaces teach him the ABC's of animation. With every manga and book he read, every animation and film he watched, his political and social worldview refined. Napier states that he is "his own best spokesman" by what he depicts in his films and what he wrote in magazines and his book.¹⁰¹ Therefore, in this chapter, I will use his interview and article collections *Starting Point 1979-1996* and *Turning Point 1997-2008* and as secondary sources, I will consult Raz Greenberg's *Hayao Miyazaki: Exploring the Early Work of Japan's Greatest Animator* and Susan Napier's *Miyazakiworld* for illuminating his life, early works and his nature-based worldview.

3.1. Living in World War II

Japan after years of isolation, opened her doors to foreign influence in 1853 and with the coca-colonization¹⁰² in the occupation period, Japan has become the first non-Western nation to modernize prosperously. However, by the end of the 19th-century nationalism and imperialism were on the rise and in the late 1920s, Japan had an emphasis on preserving traditional Japanese values and rejecting "Western" influence.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, Japan eventually seemed to

¹⁰¹ Susan Napier, *Miyazakiworld: A Life in Art* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2018), chap. Prologue.

¹⁰² Coca-colonization (or cocacolonization) refers to the globalization of American culture.

¹⁰³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised edition (London ; New York: Verso, 1998), 94–99.

Benedict Anderson shows the process in Japan. In his book *Imagined Communities* he argues that after the long isolation of Japan, they found themselves in a world with global conquerors. "For Japan to be accepted as 'great,' she too should turn Tenno into Emperor and

achieve approval of what historian Roger Louis called “the white man’s club of imperial domination.”¹⁰⁴ Declaring war on China, making an alliance with Nazi Germany and entering WWII with a surprise attack at Pearl Harbor,¹⁰⁵ Japan set out on her journey to becoming a nationalistic and militaristic country.

In the same year with Pearl Harbor attack, in 1941, on January 5, Hayao Miyazaki was born.¹⁰⁶ There was a special connection between the Pearl Harbor attack and the Miyazaki family, which would leave a lasting mark on Miyazaki’s life: His father, Katsuji Miyazaki was the director of Miyazaki Airplane, a factory manufacturing parts for Mitsubishi Zero Fighter planes which were used in the Pearl Harbor assault and later in the kamikaze attacks. The family business bred in Miyazaki a love of technology and flying.¹⁰⁷ In 1980 he wrote to *Gekkan Animeshon* magazine about it:

Now, I have to admit that ever since I was a child, I, too, have been a fan of military planes, warships, and tanks. In fact, I grew up being very excited about war films and drawing military things all over the place. I was an overly self-conscious boy and I had a hard time holding my own in fights with others, but my classmates eventually accepted me because I was good at drawing. I expressed my desire for power by drawing airplanes with sleek and pointed noses and battleships with huge guns. And I found myself thrilled with the bravery of sailors who –even as their burning ships sank– continued to fire guns until the bitter end, by the men who plunged into the hail of fire and flak spewed forth by an enemy formation’s guns. It was only much later that I realized that in reality these men had desperately wanted to live and been forced to die in vain.¹⁰⁸

launch overseas adventures.” So as Japanese empire getting bigger and bigger with nationalist and imperialist attitude of mind after 1900, “Japanification à la Macaulay was self-consciously pursued as state policy” and Western influences rejected.

For more detailed information: Maruyama Masao, *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics* and Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*.

¹⁰⁴ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

¹⁰⁵ “Japan Profile,” *BBC News*, April 26, 2019, sec. Asia, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-15219730>.

¹⁰⁶ Most sources like Britannica refers it as 5th January but Susan Napier, in her book *Miyazakiworld*, noted that Hayao Miyazaki’s birthday is 4th January.

¹⁰⁷ “Miyazaki Hayao | Biography, Movies, & Facts,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed October 9, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Miyazaki-Hayao>.

¹⁰⁸ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 45.

Miyazaki as a young child started to draw red fire engines and then moved on to drawing airplanes. His brother Arata thinks the fascination for the planes may date back to the journeys they used to make to the family's closed factory after the war. He recalls their search for airplane parts, which they would later use for showing off to other children. Moreover, his grandfather held patents on some inventions and was fascinated with machinery, which might also have affected the child Miyazaki.¹⁰⁹

It was not only Miyazaki but the whole of Japan that held a particular fascination for the Zero planes, which was a leading-edge technology of that time and evidence of Japan catching hold of the West. Napier states that Miyazaki sees the 1920s and 1930s as an important era: It was an era of technological advances, natural disasters, and rising militarism.¹¹⁰ He depicted all of these in his film *The Wind Rises*.

On the other hand, *The Wind Rises* is not a conventional war film. The main character Jiro Horikoshi is an engineer and all he wanted to do was “to make something beautiful.”¹¹¹ Miyazaki said that he was drawn to this statement. Both Horikoshi and Miyazaki fascinated by airplanes. However, not only airplanes but also tanks, ships, war machines also gain the attraction of the pacifist director. Apart from his films, his whole *Daydream Notes* book with its 138 pages is dedicated to machines as seen in **Figure 3.1**.

However, the fascination is one thing and war is another. As all other people living in Japan, the child Miyazaki, too, witnessed the horrors of war. Throughout the war, the Miyazaki family were among the lucky and prosperous of Japan, not just because of their relationship with the war industry, but also because of the family fortune made by the grandfather after the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923.

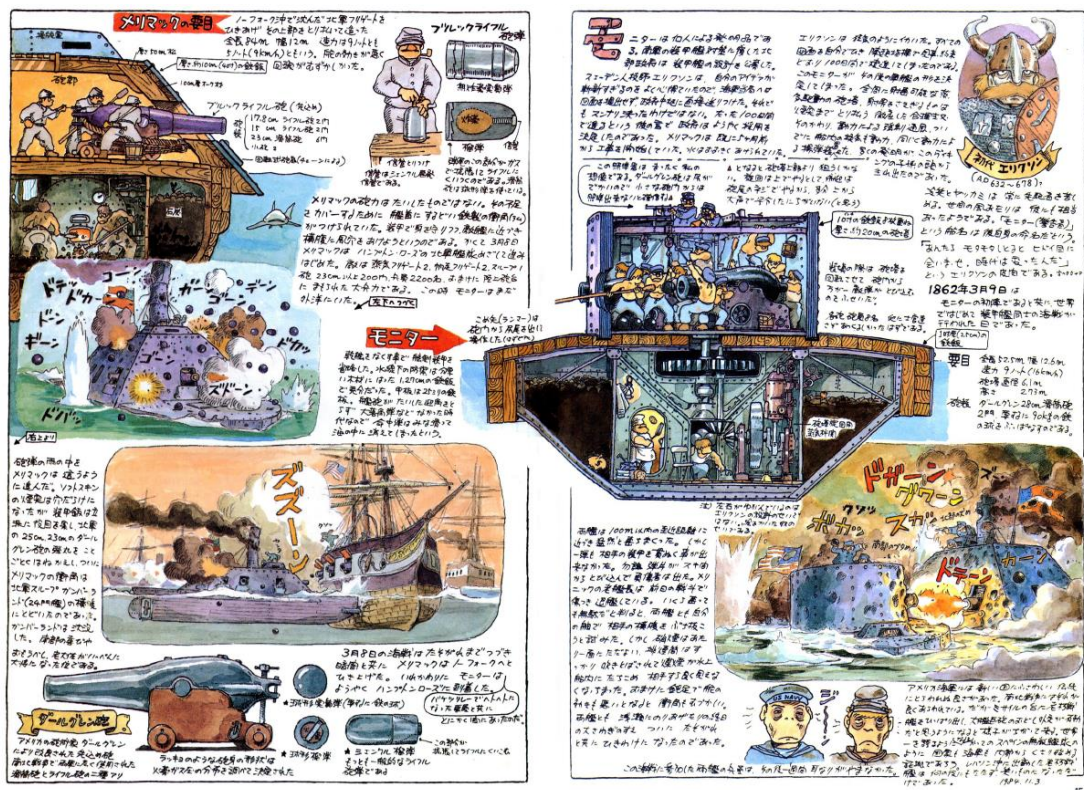
¹⁰⁹ Oizumi Mitsunari, *宮崎駿の原点：母と子の物語 Miyazaki Hayao no Genten - Haha to Ko no Monogatari* (潮出版社 Ushio Shuppansha, 2002), 57.

¹¹⁰ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

¹¹¹ Sam Byford, “‘The Wind Rises’: The Beauty and Controversy of Miyazaki’s Final Film,” *The Verge*, January 23, 2014, <https://www.theverge.com/2014/1/23/5337826/the-wind-rises-the-beauty-and-controversy-of-miyazakis-final-film>.

Miyazaki was born and raised in Tokyo. Between 1944-1946, the family lived in a great estate with a big garden owned by the director's grandfather in Utsunomiya – a small city near Tokyo. On July 19, 1945, the city was the target of an air raid that destroyed half of it. Not coming to harm, the Miyazaki family found a way to escape, but the memory of that night remained in the director's mind as a traumatic event akin to a nightmare.¹¹²

Figure 3.1 One of the pages of Miyazaki's *Daydream Notes*



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Hayao Miyazaki's Daydream Notes* (Dainippon Kaiga, 1992).

Considering that Hayao Miyazaki would become a pacifist who condemns wars, one of his major themes in his works, the love-and-hate relationship between war and machinery is deeply rooted in that night. We can see the terror of the air raids in his movies *The Wind Rises* and *Howl's Moving Castle*. On the

¹¹² Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

other hand, the very same movies not to mention all other Miyazaki films except for *Princess Mononoke* use flying as a metaphor for freedom as well. This conflicted nature of the animated world of Miyazaki will be analyzed in the fourth chapter.

Interestingly, what disturbed him more that night was not the air raid but a different incident. The effects of this incident would become another major theme and “a kind of ‘starting point’ (genten) for the director” says Oizumi, Miyazaki’s biographer.¹¹³

When I was four and a half, Utsunomiya was bombed. (...) Even though it should have been the middle of the night, outside it was bright red or maybe pink as if it was sunset. Even the inside of the room was colored pink. (...) My uncle came by with a company truck, smaller than the vehicles that we have these days; the space for luggage was really tiny. (...) We were trying to get out of the city. We covered ourselves with a futon, we had somehow get through the fires. Just as we were passing, a bunch of other people had also arrived for shelter. While my memory is not totally clear on this, I’m certain of hearing a woman saying, “Please let us on.” I’m not sure if this was my own memory or something I had heard from my parents later on but I remember a woman I knew from our neighborhood carrying a little girl, asking us to let her into the car. But we just went on going. The woman’s voice got further away and this started to take root in my mind as a traumatic event. We got of in a field outside the city with still our futon’s covering us. Although it was night, the sky of Utsunomiya was bright red like a sunset. I remember thinking “So Utsunomiya is that way!”¹¹⁴

Susan Napier states that the guilt he feels because of the family fortune which was provided by the Zero fighter plane, the resentment against his parents and the responsibility for the helpless women and child is evident¹¹⁵ in the following words of Miyazaki:

The reality of my comfortable childhood during the wartime when the financial situation of most people was quite dire, that we could

¹¹³ Napier.

¹¹⁴ Oizumi, *宮崎駿の原点：母と子の物語* *Miyazaki Hayao no Genten - Haha to Ko no Monogatari*, 25-26.

¹¹⁵ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 1.

escape using a car when finding gasoline was a feat onto itself and my memories of us abandoning people asking for our help become an integral part of my four-year self. The belief children have that their parents can do no wrong had pushed these memories to the back of my mind until my teenage years when I felt I needed to face them once again. (...) I think my parents would have stopped if I had told them to but I did not. I would have stopped if my child asked me to. There are plenty of reasons why you couldn't do that (...) but I still think how much better it would have been if I had told them to stop. Or if my older brother had said it.¹¹⁶

But Miyazaki's big brother Arata tells the incident in a different way. For him, there was no way another person could fit into the small truck. And it was a male neighbor who had a child at home, not in his arms. Taking into account that he can remember the incident more vividly because of his older age, it can be argued that Miyazaki's reminiscence seemingly turned the situation into one his family *could* have helped, as well as conjuring a helpless mother carrying a baby – for Oizumi an early case of the role that mother figures would play in Miyazaki's works,¹¹⁷ such as Sophie from *Howl's Moving Castle*, Nausicaä from *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* and Lisa and Granmamare from *Ponyo on the Cliff*.

The lingering death in the shadow of war and the hopelessness in this memory was related to something Miyazaki experienced himself in childhood days. His mother was bedridden for nearly eight years because of tuberculosis. It can be seen that it must be this experience influenced to create a sick mother for Mei and her older sister Satsuki in *My Neighbour Totoro*. As a child, experiencing both war and the possibility of a mother's death can be considered traumatic.¹¹⁸ However, on this subject, Miyazaki states: "I don't think I use the [emotional] scars I have as a theme in the movies and manga I create." Instead, Miyazaki argues that trauma is universal, "Everyone has them. You either carefully carry it or make it into something else. If one asked whether these scars could be healed,

¹¹⁶ Oizumi, 宮崎駿の原点: 母と子の物語 *Miyazaki Hayao no Genten - Haha to Ko no Monogatari*, 27–28.

¹¹⁷ Oizumi, 32.

¹¹⁸ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

the answer would be; no, they are to be endured.” Moreover, he announces emotional scarring is one of the “fundamentals of human existence.”¹¹⁹

From the quoted interview it can be surmised that the director’s approach to trauma is not destructive but constructive and that he sees emotional scarring as a means of potential growth. This issue is also expressed through his characters such as Sophie, Nausicaä, and Chihiro from *Spirited Away*; they are not bound down with depression when they confront their major challenges and responsibilities. In the light of these, one can argue that the idea of ‘perseverance’ better represents his personality and the characters he creates.

Going back to Miyazaki’s words about the mother and child in the night of the air raids, he is of the thought that it would have been better if he had told his family to stop. His presumption of responsibility for his four-year-old self is thought-provoking. Suggesting that he should have stopped his parents, he adds “I guess it doesn’t seem realistic that a four-year-old child would tell his parents to stop the car, but I felt that *if such a child were to exist*,¹²⁰ this would have been a good time to tell them to stop.” Napier states that from this childhood memory we already identify children as the “voices of conscience” transmuted sentiments into action.¹²¹ This comes as no surprise when we think about the director’s movies. Nearly in all his movies, we encounter young voices of conscience, be it one that simply takes care of the house as Satsuki does or one that saves the world as Sheeta and Pazu does in *Laputa: Castle in the Sky*.

3.2. Living in the Post-War Era

In the post-war era, the Miyazaki family tried to keep the factory working by producing house-hold items. The family was not in the economical state they

¹¹⁹ Oizumi, *宮崎駿の原点：母と子の物語 Miyazaki Hayao no Genten - Haha to Ko no Monogatari*, 174; Hayao Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, trans. Beth Cary and Frederik L. Schodt, Reprint edition (San Francisco: VIZ Media LLC, 2014), 168.

¹²⁰ Emphasis added.

¹²¹ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

were before, but still in a better situation than most of Japan. It was the Occupation era. The school system had been changed by the Americans. Prewar schooling had promoted sacrificing self for the nation, whereas occupation schooling focused on democracy and democratic demeanor. In these schools, the Japan of recent history was framed as the perpetrator of terrible actions.¹²² This drastic change that would lead to a generation gap in Japan had a deep impact on Miyazaki's identity as well, which is evident in an interview he gave in 1990, where he described his childhood as "shamefully pathetic" and acknowledged that as he grew older, he locked his childhood away from himself. He recalls those days as follows:

My father's family had run a military equipment company before the war. My father would say things like, "Even Stalin said the people have no sin." But these older men who were part of "the people" occasionally talked about having killed people in China. Weren't Japanese perpetrators in the war? Weren't my father and others mistaken? Those were days when I couldn't help but indulge in self-negation."¹²³

In another interview, showing yet another side to his resentment of his father, Miyazaki described him as a pleasure-seeking anarchistic guy who resists authority. Having a father who is bragging about his relationships with other women must have created complex feelings. We can see characters similar to his father who are anarchistic also a playboy such as Marco in *Porco Rosso* and Lupin in *Castle of Cagliostro*.¹²⁴

Susan Napier states that Miyazaki in his earliest school years was characterized by loneliness and a feeling of powerlessness. By fifth grade, he had already transferred from school to school three times. The family had just moved into a new home in Tokyo. He was a child who tried to stay in the shadows and continue to read and draw. With their mother Yoshiko confined to bed, the brothers had to take over the housework. The only connection between Yoshiko

¹²² Napier.

¹²³ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 200.

¹²⁴ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

and the world was her children. So, they visited their mother in her bed and reported on their life and school activities. His father's behavior might have also caused the bonds between Miyazaki and his mother to grow stronger,¹²⁵ as Arata says it was mostly his little brother Hayao who talked with their mother. Although Yoshiko was sick and bedridden, Arata describes her as "strong-willed, meddlesome, kind to others, strictly brought up and loud. Moreover Miyazaki adds she was "Just like Dola from Laputa as I have used her as a model for the character."¹²⁶

Moreover, Arata states that also Hayao and Yoshiko's characters are similar, and both were stubborn when challenged with a different perspective from the one that they held. Yoshiko was interested in politics and kept up with the political world around herself. This also affected Hayao Miyazaki. He was leaning toward the leftist view from an early age and Yoshiko being a conservative person, they argued a lot. Arata remembers that after the controversial Matsukawa incident¹²⁷ in 1949, people were divided into two as union and government supporters. The issue, which to this day remains an unresolved subject, was a never-ending source of conflict in the Miyazaki family. While Yoshiko supported the government's arguments, Hayao was thinking otherwise, and one day the dispute between the two resulted in Hayao leaving the room crying.¹²⁸ Napier states that the intensity of their argument also reveals the closeness of their relationship and the respect Miyazaki had for his mother. He

¹²⁵ Napier.

¹²⁶ Napier, chap. 2; Oizumi, *宮崎駿の原点：母と子の物語 Miyazaki Hayao no Genten - Haha to Ko no Monogatari*, 38. Napier states that the word "hade" used for loud also means showy or flashy. These two translations also can be true. She describes Yoshiko as a petite and delicate woman, also adds that Yoshiko really loved shoes and had a lot of pairs. Moreover, Yoshiko was studying clothing design while she met Miyazaki's father.

¹²⁷ Matsukawa derailment caused deaths of three train crewmembers in 1949. The incident was blamed on the Japanese Communist Party and Japan National Railway Union by the government. Twenty people were arrested and seventeen were convicted in 1953 (four of whom received death sentences), but all were acquitted on appeal, and the case was closed without determining the real cause in 1970.

¹²⁸ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 2.

was twenty-two years old then, having just finished Gakushūin University with a degree in politics and economics.¹²⁹

Although he chose to study politics and economics, his heart was in drawing ever since his childhood. In his adolescent years, the manga industry was blooming. Mostly targeting children, the publishers started to issue manga magazines on a weekly basis. In his high school years, during which *gekiga*¹³⁰ (story-oriented manga magazines) gained popularity, Miyazaki had already decided to spend his future drawing. However, being a student who was getting ready for the university exam, his anxiety was ever-growing, and he chose manga as a weapon to fight against this anxiety. Reminiscing about those years, he recounts how he started drawing *gekiga* in the first place:

As a child, I was what everyone calls a good kid. I wasn't living according to my own will, because I was trying to follow my parents' will without any self-reflection. I wasn't conscious of this, which is scary in itself.

As I developed into youth and young adult, I came to realize that I shouldn't be just a good kid, that I should look at things with my own eyes and have independent ideas. This led me to attempt to turn my back on even my fundamental purity as a child and, combined with the dark time of studying for the entrance exams, I came to draw nihilistic *gekiga*.¹³¹

However, at the end of Miyazaki's junior high school years, there was a tendency to stop reading manga among his peers, because the manga was considered as a medium strictly for children and they were becoming adults: Graduating high school in effect meant graduating reading manga too. In respectable middle-class families, children were supposed to go into white-collar careers.¹³² About those times, he adds:

¹²⁹ Napier, chap. 2.

¹³⁰ Literally means "dramatic picture" Gekiga manga differs from the manga targeting children. It is aimed at older audiences and handle more complex, mature themes with a cinematic style.

¹³¹ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 49–50.

¹³² Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

I was probably the only guy I knew in high school who actually read manga. If I'd told people then that I also drew comics, they would have treated me as though I were an idiot. I had an alibi ready, of course, so it was easy for me, because at the time I thought that anyone who didn't appreciate the potential of manga has to be an idiot.¹³³

When he turned eighteen, Miyazaki decided to draw his own manga. Having read Osamu Tezuka's manga in his childhood, its influence was evident in his drawings and though at first, he denied this influence, eventually he would come to admit it, which would cause him to collect all his drawings stored in his drawer and burn them, focusing on his own style from then on.¹³⁴ During the same period, he watched the first true full-length color animated film made in Japan, *Hakujaden*¹³⁵ which released in 1958.

I was in my final year of high school and busy studying for my college exams. (...) I was moved to the depths of my soul (...) after seeing the dedication and earnestness of the heroine, I felt awkward and pathetic. (...) At the time I dreamed of becoming a manga artist (...) but *Hakujaden* made me realize (...) in actuality I really was in love with the pure, earnest world of the film (...) I was no longer able to deny the fact that there was another me— a me that yearned desperately to affirm the world rather than negate it.¹³⁶

Because of *Hakujaden*, he became distant from *Gekiga*, but the violence and bitterness in those stories can be seen in his works *Conan* and *Mononoke*. It is obvious that the impact of *Hakujaden* was huge. Based on an ancient Chinese legend, the movie follows a forbidden love story between Bai-Niang and Xu-Xian. When it was revealed that Bai-Niang is a white serpent, the Buddhist monk Fa-Hai attempts to keep the two lovers separate. He sends Xu-Xian to exile. Whereas Xu-Xian wallows in his suffering there, Bai-Niang takes charge, confronting Fa-Hai for her right to love and be loved, and sacrifices her immortal body to be with

¹³³ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 96–97.

¹³⁴ Miyazaki, 193–94.

¹³⁵ The Legend of the White Serpent, aka. Panda and the Magic Serpent. It was produced by Tōei Animation, first established in 1948 under the name Nihon Dōga (Japan Animation).

¹³⁶ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 70.

Xu-Xian again. Miyazaki fell in love with this earnest, strong-willed and independent female character.

Looking closely at Miyazaki's leading characters, who are mostly strong-willed girls, one can clearly see the influence of not only his own mother but the character Bai-Niang as well. Yet another important part of the impact the movie made on Miyazaki was in effect causing him to fall in love with the animated medium itself. Thus, he started to move away from the violent and bitter world of *gekiga* to another (fantasy) world, a pure and earnest world that made him follow the steps of an animator.

Consequently, it can be argued that having a sick mother at home, struggling with anxiety in the high school period, being an introverted character through those years and trying to lock his childhood also made Miyazaki a strong storyteller. Napier adds that because of this "lost childhood", Miyazaki was able to expertly blend the fantasy worlds and the agonizing realities of his childhood.¹³⁷

3.3. Early Works and Inspirations¹³⁸

After high school, Miyazaki studied politics and economics at the prestigious Gakushūin University. In Japan, participating in university clubs and study groups is vital, but in Miyazaki's times, forming pop-cultural study groups like manga, sci-fi and music was forbidden in universities, and hence he joined the children's literature research group. Children's literature, which he already had a deep passion for ever since childhood, would later have a deep effect on Miyazaki's movies. Arata recalls how in childhood Hayao spent all his money on books, and the director adds he bought books like *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *The Three Musketeers*, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, *Gulliver's Travels*.¹³⁹ He was not only

¹³⁷ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*.

¹³⁸ For the whole list of works see Attachment.

¹³⁹ Oizumi, *宮崎駿の原点：母と子の物語 Miyazaki Hayao no Genten - Haha to Ko no Monogatari*, 59–61.

interested in adventures but also dramas such as *Heidi* and *The Secret Garden*. The books he used to read were mostly European, but he also talks highly of some Japanese books like *Night on the Galactic Railroad*.¹⁴⁰

Raz Greenberg speculates that his decision to enter children's literature group shows an endurance of his love for art and that to Miyazaki, who was growing more and more reluctant to be part of the Japanese economic system due to his radical leftist worldview, pursuing a career in animation felt more fitting. After a short training period, he started to work as an animator at Tōei-Dōga (Tōei Animation), the company which produced the *Hakujaden* movie that Miyazaki fell in love with.¹⁴¹ In those times the animation was prepared by hand drawings on celluloid sheets known as cels. Drawing action in its entirety was a joint effort: Everything starts with a key drawing, which corresponds to the starting frame of action. After that, the “inbetweeners” take this drawing by the “key animator” and creates several versions of it to fill in the sequence up to the next key, which constitutes the ending frame of that action. Then a colorist comes in and adds the finishing touches.

Yasuo Ōtsuka states that Miyazaki was able to create sketches at an amazing pace from the start and recalls Tōei's entrance exam which highlighted the importance of “showing through movement.” This speed was one of the reasons he was able to acquire his position at Tōei as his job not only required superior drawing skills but also a talent for drawing at a fast pace.¹⁴²

In the Tōei features, the young Miyazaki got involved with remarkably rich emotional depths. Ōtsuka indicates that, even at that period, Japanese animation favored “story and characters” rather than “gag-based cartoons” from American animation studios. Ōtsuka claims that Japanese audiences are more involved with *fun'iki*. Its dictionary meaning is atmosphere but the word has a strong emotional impact too. He also asserts that American audiences are more

¹⁴⁰ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 2.

¹⁴¹ Raz Greenberg, *Hayao Miyazaki: Exploring the Early Work of Japan's Greatest Animator*, ed. Chris Pallant (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), chap. 1.

¹⁴² Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 3.

“utilitarian” in their behavior while suggesting that Japanese animation is more likely to go in different ways, with unexpected twists and turns.¹⁴³

At Tōei Miyazaki often worked as an animator in television shows during the 1960s. Studio’s first TV show *Wolf Boy Ken* (*Ōkami Shonen Ken*) is an important one which also gave Isao Takahata his first opportunity to direct. In the series, we see a young orphan boy raised by a group of intelligent wolves in the Himalayan region. He protects the jungle and its inhabitants from predators and greedy humans.

Raz Greenberg states that inspired by Rudyard Kipling’s *The Jungle Book* and *Tarzan* by Edgar Rice Burroughs, this show could be categorized as the first work by Miyazaki with environmental awareness. A more national inspiration for Miyazaki could be *Momotarō’s Divine Sea Warriors*; a work that displays an ideal existence in the Asian jungles.¹⁴⁴

Shortly after starting at Tōei, a union dispute led to demonstrations in which Miyazaki led the animators. By 1964, Miyazaki was the Chief Secretary and Takahata was the Vice-Chairman of Tōei’s labor union. Takahata had started his work at Tōei in 1959, similar to Miyazaki, he was attracted to the opportunities in the field of animation. Their partnership in the labor union evolved into a friendship from which emerged a collaborative spirit between Takahata and Miyazaki in their animations.¹⁴⁵

While working at Tōei, Miyazaki began establishing a new image of himself as a young Japanese man who is politically conscious and concerned. When Miyazaki said, “My real schooling was at Tōei Animation,” he was, in fact, hinting, at least partially, to his participation in the union.

Working with Takahata and other animators in the studio, Miyazaki was acquainted with different animation works from around the world. He was most significantly affected by the two adaptations of Hans Christian Andersen. The first one is *La Bergère et le Ramoneur* (The Shepherdess and the Chimney Sweep, aka.

¹⁴³ Napier, chap. 3.

¹⁴⁴ Greenberg, *Hayao Miyazaki*, chap. 1.

¹⁴⁵ Greenberg, chap. 1.

The Adventures of Mr. Wonderbird) from the collaboration between French animator Paul Grimault (1905-1994) and poet Jacques Prevert (1900-1977).¹⁴⁶

The film follows the romance between a shepherdess and a chimney sweep. The land's evil king falls for the beautiful woman and determines to marry her but a kind mockingbird helps two lovers evade the evil king. Grimault's influence can be seen in the narrative, the stylistic and conceptual elements in Miyazaki's works. The film's spectacular use of height and depth which offers a sense of texture is outstanding for its time; it also serves as a political metaphor: the evil king resides on the top floor of his palace's high tower.¹⁴⁷

The other Andersen retelling that influenced him was *Snezhnaya koroleva* (The Snow Queen), a Soviet production released in 1957. It tells the story of Gerda, a courageous little girl who goes on a dangerous journey to save her friend Kay from the hands of the fearsome Snow Queen who froze his heart and turned him into a mean, but also terrified boy. Miyazaki first saw the movie at a time when he was questioning his career choices and *The Snow Queen* rekindled his faith in animation and restored his confidence in the artistic integrity in his career of choice.¹⁴⁸ *The Snow Queen*, similar to Grimault's movie, tells an epic story that takes place in a Scandinavian setting with a strong Nordic feel. Aside from the masterful illustrations that portray the snow-filled wastelands, palaces, and Scandinavian cities, what drew Miyazaki to this movie was the depiction of powerful female characters.¹⁴⁹

Like *Hakujaden*, this animation also gave important roles to women, young and old, heroines and villainesses alike. The courageous main character Gerda had a deep impact on Miyazaki. She gets help from other strong-willed women throughout her journey, such as the princess from the palace who gives her a carriage and clothes for her quest, the robber-girl who saves Gerda from the captivity of a bandits' gang (especially this part is as important as saving Gerda's

¹⁴⁶ Greenberg, chap. 1.

¹⁴⁷ Greenberg, chap. 2.

¹⁴⁸ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 70-71.

¹⁴⁹ Greenberg, *Hayao Miyazaki*, chap. 1.

friend Kay for Miyazaki), and the wise old woman who assists Gerda to find the Ice Queen's palace. In Miyazaki's subsequent works, such characters become kind of archetypical for female characters. He is also inspired by the similar dominant roles given to less positive female characters.¹⁵⁰

Initially, Miyazaki became an inbetweener, one of the most laborious work in animation. It is also a job that teaches the ABC's of animation. Having a strong work ethic isn't the only thing that made Miyazaki a legend in Tōei. The main reason was his contribution to the movie *Gulliver's Travels Beyond the Moon* (*Garibā no Uchū Ryokō*). He offered an unexpected ending to the movie. Originally, the movie's ending follows as Gulliver defeats the bad robots and saves the good robot princess who has been carried inside a giant horse-shaped chess piece. Miyazaki offered a small change in the scene (Gulliver will open the piece at the same time the princess robot also splits apart to expose a human girl) but the change will be drastic. On this matter, Ōtsuka says: "The change was only a single cut, but, from the point of view of the work as a whole it was an enormous departure." With this one scene, human beings have been put inside a larger cultural matrix with robots and many "others" in it.¹⁵¹

In 1965 Miyazaki started to work in *The Great Adventure of Horus, Prince Of The Sun* (*Taiyō no Ōji Horusu no Daibōken*). Takahata was the director and Ōtsuka was the animation director. Although *Horus* has many of the clichés of adventure stories, Napier emphasizes that it also has absolutely fresh and interesting aspects. For example, the backgrounds that often created by Miyazaki, provide a clear sense of the rustic setting of villages. The director of the movie, Takahata created emotional action scenes such as Horus being attacked by silver wolves or in the sequence in which Horus fights a giant pike. The dynamic movements balance out with the modest depictions of faces and hair. While Grunwald is a commonplace evildoer, the rock man at the beginning of the movie is more interesting. By rising out of the earth, he suggests a connection with a

¹⁵⁰ Greenberg, chap. 1.

¹⁵¹ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 3.

wider and older natural world that the narrative largely ignores. Not surprisingly, this character was created by Miyazaki. Furthermore, Japanese critics draw our attention to the connection between the rock man in the primordial figure of the *shishigami*, the godlike creature who dominates the forest in *Mononoke*. In an interview about Horus Miyazaki reminisces, “I can’t count the number of things I learned from Horus.” He especially gives credit to Ōtsuka who gave responsibility to him, the “lowest inbetweener in the company.”¹⁵²

Another animation series that Miyazaki worked on was *Sally the Witch* (*Mahōtsukai Sari*, 1966-1968). This was also a series in which the main character is a female like the one in *Hakujaden* and the *Snow Queen*. The following Tōei animation that involved Miyazaki was *Puss’n Boots* (*Nagagutsu o Haita Neko*) which was released in 1969 and instantly gain popularity. Miyazaki worked as a key animator. One can say that, in this movie, he found an opportunity to create scenes for purely entertainment purposes. After *Puss’n Boots*, *The Flying Phantom Ship* (*Sora Tobu Yūreisen*) was released in 1969. One scene, in particular, had an effect on Miyazaki. A giant robot attacks to an urban area, causing panic and death in a brutal way that doesn’t feel like a Tōei feature. Miyazaki was the one who suggested this scene and in his later works, he created more scenes like this. In the movie, the director Hiroshi Ikeda wanted to show a deep consideration of distrust in Japan’s business and political environment by showing the corruption and suffering underneath the happy consumers’ society. The way in which the movie reflects anti-establishment and anti-capitalist agenda had a powerful influence over Miyazaki.¹⁵³

In 1971 *Animal Treasure Island* (*Dōbutsu Takarajima*) was released and it was the last Tōei feature that Miyazaki worked on (he was one of the key animators and engaged in the script). The film’s director was Hiroshi Ikeda, who also worked alongside Miyazaki on *Doggie March*, *The Flying Phantom Ship*, and episodes of *Wolf Boy Ken* and *Sally the Witch*.

¹⁵² Napier, chap. 3.

¹⁵³ Greenberg, *Hayao Miyazaki*, chap. 1.

Greenberg states that, from a creative point of view, *Animal Treasure Island* is a glorious return to the studio's early years of films such as *Hakujaden* with a fast-paced and compact plot. With this film, Miyazaki closed some kind of a cycle: in essence, the movie has the same magic *Hakujaden* has.¹⁵⁴

Miyazaki states that he was influenced by “the tradition that flowed from firms such as Nihon Dōgasha and Tōei Animation, as well as by the ideas in Sanpei Shirato's manga of the time.” He also adds Tetsuji Fukushima's manga *Devil of the Desert* (*Sabaku no maō*) struck him more than Tezuka.¹⁵⁵

Miyazaki worked nearly ten years at Tōei, mostly on action-oriented, quick-paced adventure films with male protagonists. On the contrary, the new studios Miyazaki started to work, produce different kinds of productions – slow-paced, focused on the daily life of their (mostly female) protagonists. Greenberg declares that if Miyazaki learned about animation on the move in his Tōei period, he learned how to stand still, acknowledging the beauty of the landscape in the latter part of his career. The first production was *Moomins* (pronounced in Japanese as *Mūmin*), The series was an adaptation of the book series by Finnish author Tove Jansson. In one episode, Miyazaki draws a military vehicle and in doing so, he creates a contrast between the military element and the non-violent story. The writer was annoyed with this introduction of violence and modern elements to her series. But this production paved the way to a new direction for Miyazaki's career.¹⁵⁶

After working on *Moomins*, he joined another attempt to adapt Astrid Lindgren's seminal book series *Pippi Longstocking* which is a popular work of Scandinavian children's literature. Miyazaki's first trip abroad was to Sweden in order to persuade Lindgren to sell the studio the rights for her work. He accompanied Yutaka Fujioka, the president of Tokyo Movie Shinsha. According to Greenberg, this trip left a deep impression on him. It was his first experience of the European landscapes that he knew only from books and films back then. He

¹⁵⁴ Greenberg, chap. 1.

¹⁵⁵ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 194.

¹⁵⁶ Greenberg, *Hayao Miyazaki*, chap. 2.

mentioned that upon visiting the city of Visby he felt as though he stepped into “the world of Grimm and Andersen.”¹⁵⁷ European cityscapes and nature continued to be an inspiration for other works of Miyazaki and Takahata.

The most famous example is the city of Koriko, where Miyazaki’s 1989 movie *Kiki’s Delivery Service* is shot. He modeled it partly in the Swedish cities of Visby and Stockholm. However, *Pippi*’s influence was not only visual. The red-haired, adventurous and autonomous character in Lindgren’s books was a highly memorable character. *Pippi* was a new kind of idol at a time when women’s social roles were beginning to change. She is unquestionably another inspiration for Miyazaki’s resilient and adventurous young girls from at least as early as *Nausicaä* to *Ponyo*. Both are redheads.¹⁵⁸

Miyazaki could not get the rights for the adaptation of *Pippi Longstocking*; instead, he decided to retell the story with a Japanese touch. Subsequently, two short movies that were directed by Takahata based on Miyazaki’s scripts were released in 1972 and 1973 respectively: The 33-minute *Panda! Go Panda!* (*Panda kopanda*) and the 38-minute *Panda! Go Panda! Rainy Day Circus* (*Panda kopanda: amefuri sakasu no maki*). Both movies follow the (mis)adventures of Mimiko, who is a 7-year-old orphaned girl raised by her grandmother in a quiet Japanese town. Mimiko assumes the responsibility of being in charge of her house after her grandmother leaves the town for a trip. She quickly becomes friends with a giant panda bear and his cub that escaped the local zoo. In *Rainy Day Circus*, Mimiko and the pandas come to help the tiger cub from a traveling circus, again causing much chaos throughout their journey.

Miyazaki’s future masterpiece *Totoro*’s characters are also the zestful little girl and a large cuddly creature. There are other similar aspects in both movies. For example, one scene of Mimiko jumping onto Papa Panda’s stomach clearly anticipates the well-known shot of Mei jumping onto Totoro’s furry chest, followed by her older sister, Satsuki. Nonetheless, *Totoro* is very far from the

¹⁵⁷ Greenberg, chap. 2.

¹⁵⁸ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 3.

Panda movies that are lighthearted and simple works while *Totoro* has multilayered and has subtle qualities.¹⁵⁹

Visually, both films feature a style that later became recognized as being associated with both Miyazaki and Takahata, which is, the intricate detail in which the film presents the modern society, roads, houses, and vehicles which co-exist with the lush natural environment. Both films celebrate the joy of childhood, but they also hint that the adult world is something to aspire to. This seemingly paradoxical approach to childhood – the celebration of it as a period of joyful, reckless behavior alongside the realization that it must, at a certain point, come to an end, and that growing up has its own benefits, became a recurring theme in the following adaptations of children’s literature that involved Miyazaki, and it is strongly present in his future works as a feature-film director.¹⁶⁰

The *Panda* movies took place in Japan but much of the animation Miyazaki worked in the 1970s had a European setting, like the next animation, *Heidi, Girl of the Alps* (*Arupusu no Shōju Haiji*). *Heidi* broadcasted in 1974, it was adapted from Johanna Spyri’s 1880 novel. Heidi goes to live with his grandfather in a mountain village in the Alps, but she has to leave the village to look after a disabled city girl, Clara. In Frankfurt, Heidi does not fit in well in the city and misses the village and her grandfather.

The most appreciated thing about this series is its rich background design. Miyazaki had been sent to Europe to sketch the scenery of the show, and every episode, his work produced a beautiful and very detailed look that emphasizes the nuances of time and space. In its quiet, pastoral springs and summers as well as violent, stormy winters, the wild nature of the Swiss Alps is presented in the show. The seasonal passage reminds the audience not only of natural cycles but also of the passage of time.¹⁶¹ As explained in the second chapter, natural cycles and four seasons are especially appreciated by Japanese people and therefore used a lot in

¹⁵⁹ Napier, chap. 3.

¹⁶⁰ Greenberg, *Hayao Miyazaki*, chap. 2.

¹⁶¹ Greenberg, chap. 2.

Japanese art. It could be possible that Miyazaki was greatly influenced by Japanese art themes.

On the other hand, the series represents Frankfurt as an infinite maze of gloomy town buildings, in opposition to the lively existence of the Alps. In both environments, the show emphasizes and utilizes everyday life as a metaphor for the conflict between childhood and adulthood – not unlike Spyri's original novel. The beauty of high mountains, wild trees, and animals that wander freely around are not guided by humans, it is a free environment, therefore nature represents the childhood where the desires and emotions can be celebrated. Though at the end of the series, it is hinted that children at some point, need to grow. Moreover, it can also be seen as a way of showing that a good childhood brings good adulthood. As Greenberg states, improper adulthood takes the joys of childhood away.¹⁶²

On the other hand, in the next adaptation Miyazaki worked, the protagonist had no say on anything about her childhood. Originally broadcasted in 1979, Lucy Maud Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* adaptation *Akage no Anne* also showed gorgeous landscapes and was again set in a pastoral area. The series followed the story of Anne Shirley, a young orphan girl adopted by aging siblings Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert who work on their farm on Prince Edward Island. Much like Mimiko and Heidi, Anne is also a dynamic, energetic girl with a rich inner world. But different than Mimiko and Heidi, she is restricted by norms and etiquette of the society that surrounds her. Like *Heidi*, *Anne of Green Gables* shows a harmonious nature and hard labor.

In the Japanese animation industry, these two works created a new pattern within the shōjo genre. Both series widened the area of storytelling and character development in this genre and added a realistic portrayal of girls who go through a lot of hardships but are also be able to see the beauty in their everyday lives.¹⁶³

Another one of Miyazaki's important works from the same period was *Future Boy Conan* which was broadcasted in 1978. It was Miyazaki's first and

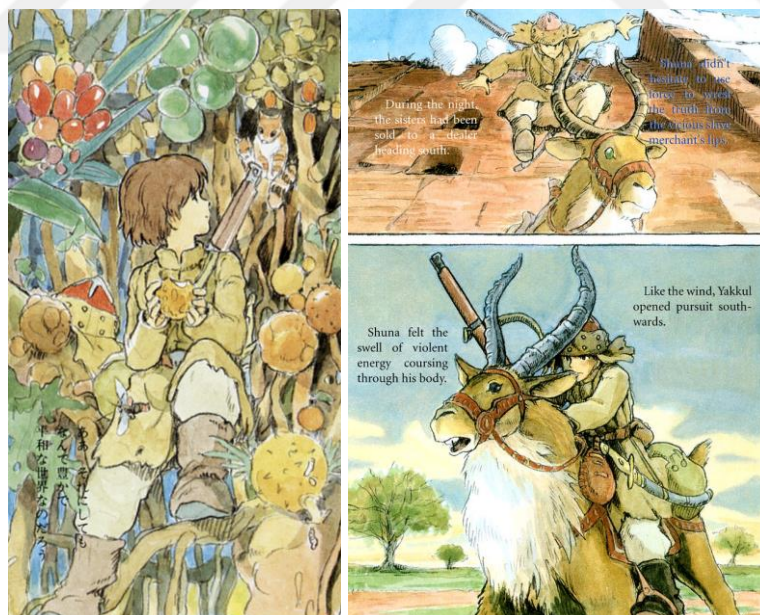
¹⁶² Greenberg, chap. 2.

¹⁶³ Greenberg, chap. 2.

only work as a sole series director. Moreover, after a long break, Miyazaki created a boy protagonist. Napier states that *Conan* is a significant series in Miyazaki's filmography, the twenty-six episodes allow us to glimpse into the developing world of Miyazaki.

Lastly, another important early work is *The Journey of Shuna* (*Shuna no Tabi*), a watercolor manga of Miyazaki which is published in 1983.¹⁶⁴ The main character is a prince, living in an isolated valley where famine and poverty rules. He hears about a Golden Wheat which grows in a distant Land of God. To save his people, he starts his journey to face the ugly side of the world seething with slavery, greed and even cannibalism. This manga of Miyazaki became an inspiration for both *Nausicaä* and *Mononoke*. As seen in **Figure 3.2**, in the first panel, the male character Shuna resembles Nausicaä in this forest. In the second panel, with the same elk Yakul from the *Mononoke*, it is the facsimile of Ashitaka.

Figure 3.2 Two panels from the manga *The Journey of Shuna*



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *The Journey of Shuna* (東京: Tokuma Shoten/Tsai Fong Books, 1983)

¹⁶⁴ Hayao Miyazaki, *The Journey of Shuna* (東京: Tokuma Shoten/Tsai Fong Books, 1983).

Overall, as explained in this chapter, Miyazaki's recurring themes have deep roots in his previous works and childhood. Miyazaki's dynamic young female characters are inspired by his sickly but strong-minded mother, the protagonists from the books he read and the movies he watched. The cities he saw affected the landscape he depicts in his animations.

3.4. Miyazaki's Nature-Based World View

“ ... [but] I do endeavor to make films that express my own ideals about what is important and what is wrong with the world that we currently live in,” says Miyazaki in one of his interviews.¹⁶⁵ In a broad sense in Miyazaki's movies, the main drive of typical heroines and heroes is not to achieve fulfillment but balance and peace between different worlds; romance is mostly a side-theme; the settings are incredibly detailed and realistic, even when they belong to a fantastic world; discrepancies between good and evil are mostly insignificant or deliberately indistinct. He does not offer easy or simple solutions for complex problems. Moreover, the endings of the movies, which are more relieving than happy, are usually beginnings of an ambiguous future. Environmental scholars say that Miyazaki's movies promote eco-centric values like Studio Ghibli's other popular movies.¹⁶⁶

Miyazaki came to be known as an environmentalist director because of his skill to create and animate insects and plants then successfully placing them in a multilayered ecosystem. Furthermore, he is an artist who is particularly sensitive to environmental stress and is capable of expressing the relations between human and non-human in intriguing ways. For example, one of his movies, *Nausicaä* which will be analyzed later on in the thesis, shows the effects of a series of environmental crises that took place in the 1950s and 1960s in Japan.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 173.

¹⁶⁶ Hadl, “Nature, Media and the Future,” 354.

¹⁶⁷ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

Japanese industry flourished for many years. Before and after the war, further, development was not an important concern for the Japanese Government except that these companies employed people and made the economy better. For example, Chisso Corporation was the foundation of the Minamata town. In reference to the capital cities of feudal lords who ruled Japan during the Edo period, Minamata was called Chisso's "castle town". The corporation released chemicals such as methylmercury to Minamata Bay between 1932 to 1968. These highly toxic chemicals bioaccumulated in shellfish and fish, resulting in mercury poisoning when eaten by the locals. It was by far the most calamitous ecological crisis, resonating in the word "Minamata disease" to this day. Originally recognized as "dancing cat disease" when cats consuming the infected bay fish went insane and perished of convulsions, the infection soon spread to humans. After people, domestic animals and wildlife began to show the consequences of this pollution, people started to protest. These protests were mostly led by women who were afraid for their children or grandchildren's health. The protagonist of *Nausicaä* reflects the real-life female protestors in the environmental demonstrations through her assertive motherliness.¹⁶⁸

After dumping was banned in the Minamata Bay, fish started to come back. Miyazaki's vision of nonhuman beings recovering after the pollution human-caused in the *Nausicaä* movie comes from the news about the fish returning. He commented that the news about the fish "coming back in numbers otherwise never seen in Japan's other seas" had "sent a cold shiver down my spine."¹⁶⁹

The influences from other sources about environmental issues do not consist of only these kinds of catastrophes. He also recognizes fictional inspirations like *Dune*, and most importantly Brian Aldiss's *The Long Afternoon*

¹⁶⁸ Andrew Pollack, "Mercury, Mostly Gone From Bay in Japan, Still Poisons Town's Life," *The New York Times*, August 23, 1997, sec. World, <https://www.nytimes.com/1997/08/23/world/mercury-mostly-gone-from-bay-in-japan-still-poisons-town-s-life.html>; EJOLT, "Minamata Disease, Japan | EJAtlas," Environmental Justice Atlas, accessed December 18, 2019, <https://ejatlas.org/conflict/minamata-disease-japan>; Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

¹⁶⁹ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

of *Earth* book. Brian Aldiss creates a world that is overwhelmed by plants and giant insects and where a few diverged human communities try to survive. Napier speculates that for Miyazaki who “really hated Japan” because of WWII as explained in this chapter, Aldiss’s eco-oriented book may have helped to gain consciousness about Japan’s deep connection with nature.¹⁷⁰

Actually, the book *Saibai shokubutsu to nōkō no kigen* 栽培植物と農耕の起源, (Cultivated Plants and the Origins of Agriculture, 1966) by Sasuke Nakao (1916–1993) had a more profound effect on Miyazaki. Nakao was a professor at Osaka Prefecture University who introduced a hypothesis of “Culture of Broadleaf Evergreen Forest”. In this hypothesis, Nakao explains that because of the high productivity of Japanese oak, many animals, fish, and other plants can exist side by side and its cultural background consists of not only Japan but a larger part of Asia. With his theory, Nakao also confirmed Eiichi Fujimori’s hypothesis that Japan began agriculture within the Jomon Period (about 13,000–300 B.C.E.). Because of this theory, Miyazaki’s thinking shifted to a significant extent, especially about the Japanese people’s roots.¹⁷¹ Miyazaki was to adapt Nakao’s ideas more clearly into *Mononoke* and more implicitly into *Totoro*, but *Nausicaä*’s power dynamics and animistic components already indicate a major shift towards a more east-Asian and environmental world-view.¹⁷² We can understand the influence of this book from an interview given by Miyazaki:

I felt greatly relieved when I realized that the country I had thought was confined to the Japanese archipelago (...) actually connected to the wider world borders and ethnic groups. (...) I felt the clouds are clear when I realized that even though Japanese may have committed various mistakes, we are not limited to that history (...) It allowed me to look with more freedom than ever before at history as a whole (...) Looking at Japan with this perspective, I was able to reassess myself, to figure out what sort of baggage I carried (...) I realized I had many bottled-up feelings inside. I was

¹⁷⁰ Napier, chap. 5.

¹⁷¹ Mayumi, Solomon, and Chang, “The Ecological and Consumption Themes of the Films of Hayao Miyazaki,” 3.

¹⁷² Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

able to pull all that aside, to suddenly liberate myself, and embrace the broadleaf evergreen forest culture. (...) It was then that I realized how valuable plants are and how important the issue of cultural climate is to us. If we were to destroy that climate, I would lose my last connection to being Japanese.¹⁷³

From Miyazaki's comments, we can understand that it changed him profoundly as a person and his perception of being a Japanese. It is also evident that he came into terms with being a Japanese and reshaped himself in the light of nature, human and nonhuman relations.



¹⁷³ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 357–58.

CHAPTER 4

NATURE NARRATIVES IN MIYAZAKI

Miyazaki's filmography consists of 11 films. Six of them has Western settings: *Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro* (1979), *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (1984), *Laputa: Castle in the Sky* (1986), *Kiki's Delivery Service* (1989), *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004) *Porco Rosso* (1992). On the other hand, five films use Japan as a setting: *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988), *Princess Mononoke* (1997), *Spirited Away* (2001) and *The Wind Rises* (2013). Moreover, environmental issues are a common theme in all his films. However, As Cavallaro states Miyazaki tackles these persisting issues over a diverse time scale as it can be observed in the different sets he has used in his films from ancient Japan in *Mononoke* to the present day in *Spirited Away* or a post-apocalyptic future he used in *Nausicaä*.¹⁷⁴ Hence, for understanding nature narratives in Miyazaki I will analyze these three films with the perspective of ecocriticism. On the basis of thematic discussions and visual analyses I will explain how Miyazaki addresses the conflicts between the dualities of the mother earth-modern world / femininity-masculinity / humans-animals and what his perspective on these dualities suggests about the human-nature relationship.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Miyazaki himself suggests that Sasuke Nakao's book changed his nature-based worldview and his connection to Japan. Therefore, it is important to understand his perception of the nature of Japanese culture. Moreover, another common theme in Miyazaki's films is animism which is also connected to his vision on nature. Thus, I will also explain animism specifically *Shinto*'s history briefly. Then with a time scale, as depicted in Miyazaki's films, I will analyze *Princess Mononoke* as past, *Spirited Away* as present and *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* as future visions of nature.

¹⁷⁴ Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, 9.

4.1. Japanese Perception of Nature

The Japanese are often known as people who have a deep love of nature, a passion that is often expressed in their art and material culture. Over the decades, Japanese and Japanese scholars have reflected on this common view again and again.¹⁷⁵ Moreover, the idea that the Japanese live in harmony with nature, a characteristic that is often contrasted with the quest for the “conquest of nature” that allegedly exists among the Western world, is closely connected with this concept of love as well.¹⁷⁶

One of the important examples of the relation between Japanese culture and nature in the light of four seasons is the book *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji Monogatari*, early eleventh century). In this book, the women characters named after nature (like plants and flowers). Haruo Shirane states that these names are also connected with seasons and these kinds of connections like love and harmony about nature can also be found in other literary sources like *waka* (classical poetry).¹⁷⁷ As we see in Chapter 2, the seasons are a significant theme in Japanese art. But Haruo emphasizes that aristocratic women couldn't go out from their palaces, the only nature they came across was their human-controlled gardens of their *shinden-zukuri* (palace style residences) and the artworks like *byōbu-e* (screen paintings), *fusuma-e* (the door or partition paintings) and *emaki-mono* with nature depictions from the hands of humans. And this *nijiteki shizen* (meaning secondary nature) “became a substitute for the primary nature.” He explores how this secondary nature established from the Nara period (710-784) to

¹⁷⁵ Stephen R. Kellert, “Japanese Perceptions of Wildlife,” *Conservation Biology* 5, no. 3 (1991): 299.

¹⁷⁶ Arne Kalland and Pamela J. Asquith, “Japanese Perceptions of Nature - Ideals and Illusions,” in *Japanese Images of Nature*, 1, accessed December 10, 2019, https://books.google.com/books/about/Japanese_Images_of_Nature.html?hl=tr&id=XbvX9LKrgI8C.

¹⁷⁷ Haruo Shirane, *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons : Nature, Literature, and the Arts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 1, <http://libproxy.temple.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=461132&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

the Edo period (1600-1867) in his book *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons*.¹⁷⁸

Shirane explores the concept of “secondary nature” which is not on overt awareness or involvement in the natural world, but on a culturally-built conception of the non-human realm as a representation of feelings linked to the turning of the seasons and cycles of the year that are important because of their metaphorical and aesthetical meaning. Throughout traditional Japan, he points out that nature was often viewed as an untamed and undoubtedly violent power, held in check by ceremonies and stories about supernatural forces which are capable of controlling the environment. Modern times, rapid industrialization and urbanization intensified a deforestation cycle but Shirane states that it actually started a lot earlier with the development of large rice fields in rural areas, because of it, the scale and value of the natural landscape for society was greatly reduced.¹⁷⁹

Moreover, in Kellert’s research of “Japanese Perceptions of Wildlife”, one can see Japanese respect for nature was very limited and idealized, also show no ethical or ecological concern towards protecting nature and wildlife.¹⁸⁰ In brief, the Japanese perception of nature is not, as some observers want us to believe, actually is a “secondary nature”, actually an idealized version of nature.

One of the best examples of this idealized nature can be seen in the Japanese gardens. Joy Hendry states that gardens are models of the outside world that are shaped and controlled by human hands, meaning by the cultural and social world. Thus, this model becomes more than just a model but nature itself in an idealized version that can be used for a “model for nature”.¹⁸¹ This idealization

¹⁷⁸ Shirane, 2.

¹⁷⁹ Steven Heine, “Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts by Haruo Shirane (Review),” *Philosophy East and West* 64, no. 4 (October 2014): 1101, <https://doi.org/10.1353/pew.2014.0080>.

¹⁸⁰ Kellert, “Japanese Perceptions of Wildlife,” 305.

¹⁸¹ Joy Hendry, “Nature Tamed: Gardens as a Microcosm of Japan’s View of the World,” in *Japanese Images of Nature*, 83–105, accessed December 10, 2019, https://books.google.com/books/about/Japanese_Images_of_Nature.html?hl=tr&id=XbvX9LKrgI8C; Kalland and Asquith, “Japanese Perceptions of Nature - Ideals and Illusions,” 18.

can be seen in the bonsai trees and the “de-eroticized” beauty of women: “the pure, original nature as it existed before it was hidden behind a chaotic veil of profusion.”¹⁸² Moreover, this idealized nature also used for the legitimation of gender differences. Nancy Rosenberg states that the future rulers of Japan can learn about “the way of nature: the obedience, calmness, perseverance, and malleability that ideal nature taught” from the hands of higher-class women who mastered the art of *ikebana* (art of flower arrangement) and *chadō* (lit. the way of tea, tea ceremony).¹⁸³

Outside of this human-controlled and shaped “secondary nature” world, Japanese people feared the wilderness, the untamed nature and the *kami* (gods) in it. In *Hizen no kuni fudoki* (Hizen Province Gazetteer) one can see the untamed nature is viewed as a realm of the *araburu kami* (violent gods) in which the gods are described as the obstacles in cultivating and controlling the region for humans: “To the west of the county, there was a river. The name of it was the Saka River. At the upper reaches of this river were violent gods [*araburu kami*] who let live half of the people who came and killed the other half.”¹⁸⁴

Another example can be seen in the *Kojiki* (Ancient Matters Record, 712) and the *Nihon Shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, 720) in which a river serpent be told to give damage to crops and wants a girl sacrificed every year. This serpent poses a threat to wet-field rice agriculture because the river can overflow and the agricultural area near the river will be flooded. Eventually, the god *Susano-o* conquers the serpent. *Susano-o* can be seen as a metaphor for controlling the river’s raging waters. From the early chronicles and provincial gazette, one can see the separation between *araburu kami* and the Japanese people which

¹⁸² Kalland and Asquith, “Japanese Perceptions of Nature - Ideals and Illusions,” 18.

¹⁸³ Nancy Rosenberger, “Interpretations of Nature and the Legitimation of Gender Differences: ‘Natural’ Links in the Japanese Social Field,” in *Japanese Images of Nature*, 153, accessed December 10, 2019, https://books.google.com/books/about/Japanese_Images_of_Nature.html?hl=tr&id=XbvX9LKrgI8C.

¹⁸⁴ Shirane, *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons*, 14.

established shrines at the base of mountains “to honor and pacify” these violent gods.¹⁸⁵

A big change in attitude towards nature took place from the middle to late Heian period. Inuma Kenji states that from the archaeological findings one can see that many of the *araburu kami* which are opposed to the agricultural enlargement were altered to be gods for agriculture. By doing so, from the point of view of humans, a harmonious relation was born. This transformation also mirrors the increased control of human beings, especially the technological advancement of water and irrigation management.¹⁸⁶

Before analyzing Miyazaki’s films, I need to note that, the *kami* as I use in the latter part of this chapter does not refer to the religion of Shinto which was re-interpreted by the Meiji government to serve the purposes of nationalism. On the contrary, I use it as animism without implying any religious sect or institution. Miyazaki himself also said that “I do like animism. I can understand the idea of ascribing character to stones or wind. But I didn’t want to laud it as a religion.”¹⁸⁷

Moreover, as Teeuwen and Scheid put it, the concept of *Shinto* does not have a clear reference structure.¹⁸⁸ Further thought, the Japanese have worshipped animist deities and gods called *kami* since prehistoric times. Ultimately, the worship of *kami* was developed into a religious system called “*Shinto*” or “*kami way*.” The kanji characters used for *Shinto* came from China. The meaning of these kanji characters is supernatural or mysterious. These characters embraced by the Japanese people at the end of the sixth century A.D. for differentiating native *kami* worship from Buddhism. Once Japan’s national religion is accepted as *Shinto*, *kami* worship had progressed beyond the reverence of natural forces to the institutionalized ceremonies. The *Uji* (clans) put faith in these ceremonies so they

¹⁸⁵ Shirane, 14.

¹⁸⁶ Shirane, 14.

¹⁸⁷ Eric Reinders, *The Moral Narratives of Hayao Miyazaki* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2016), 2.

¹⁸⁸ Mark Teeuwen and Bernhard Scheid, “Tracing Shinto in the History of Kami Worship: Editors’ Introduction,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, November 1, 2002, 195, <https://doi.org/10.18874/jjrs.29.3-4.2002.195-207>.

can protect themselves and gain prosperity also “provide religious sanction for the clan chieftains and territorial rulers.”¹⁸⁹

4.2. *Princess Mononoke* – Past

A magical tale unfolding during the Muromachi Period (1333-1568), *Princess Mononoke* (Mononoke-Hime) gives us a battle of epic proportions between humanity and nature. Princess Mononoke, our protagonist otherwise known as San is a human girl brought up by Moro, the wolf god leads the fight against humans who are led by Lady Eboshi. Lady Eboshi wishing to cut down the forest to get her iron-making operation to flourish. Between San and Lady Eboshi, Ashitaka, a prince from a dying race wishes to find a peaceful solution where all sides can continue living in harmony but as the fighting heats up, a hope for a peaceful solution dissolves. *Princess Mononoke* as a projection of past tells us the disengagement between humans and nature, therefore forces of nature *kami*. In the film, it is the beginning of industrialization, and we see that the perspective of human beings’ changes for this reason. Miyazaki wants us to understand both sides of the medallion without depicting the characters or the actions in terms of good vs evil.

4.2.1. Story

The film starts in the village setting where Emishi people live. They live in the mountains. The prince, Ashitaka sees a creature that is covered in worm-like tendrils; it is revealed shortly after that this creature is a wild boar from a watchtower. The boar which the people realize turns into a *tatarigami*, a cursed god. Ashitaka pleads with it but the boar continues to move towards the village.

¹⁸⁹ Matsumae Takeshi and Janet Goodwin, “Early Kami Worship,” in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, ed. Delmer M. Brown (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 317, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521223522.009>.

When it attacks, Ashitaka has no choice but to kill it. During their fight, its tendrils burn Ashitaka's arm.

The same evening the elders meet and perform a ritual. Ashitaka shows them his arm and Hii-sama tells him that the scar will spread and kill him and she gives him an iron ball telling him that she believes it to be the source of the boar's curse. Hii-sama tells Ashitaka that he should go west, instead of waiting to die there but if he goes he can never return. Ashitaka agrees and begins his travel with his red elk Yakul. As he is leaving one of the village girls, Kaya gives him a dagger necklace and tells him that it will protect her. They travel west across fields and mountains. During their travel, Ashitaka encounters a fight between samurai and unarmed villagers. He intercepts the fight but when he uses his bow and arrow, his cursed arm makes the arrow with such power that he takes the samurai's arms together with his sword. Ashitaka runs away and cools his arm underwater, noticing the wound getting bigger.

In the town market, he meets a monk named Jigo, who follows him as he leaves the town. Jigo talking about Ashitaka's fight with the samurai from earlier. Ashitaka tells Jigo of the *tatarigami* and shows him the iron ball. Jigo talks of a mining town further west, that is surrounded by mystical forests where gods and giants dwell. The following morning Ashitaka leaves while the monk is still sleeping.

A caravan carrying rice is on a mountain road. The leader, Lady Eboshi notices two wolves coming down and on one of them a masked girl holding a spear. Lady Eboshi orders her men to shoot at them with their *ishibaya*. The wolves run back after the shots, one of Lady Eboshi's men Gonza says the wolves were not so giant and she responds saying they were just children and that their mother is the real problem. Just as she says this, Moro attacks. Moro is twice the size of the earlier wolves and has two tails. The men use a flame-thrower and Lady Eboshi shoots her in the chest, Moro falls off a cliff. The men are pleased but Eboshi tells them it is not so easy to kill a god.

Ashitaka has just arrived at the river at the base of the mountain. He realizes the floating bodies and pulls out some of the injured men, who fell during

the fight between Moro and Eboshi's caravan. On the other side of the river, an injured Moro is with her children and San, who is treating Moro's injury. Moro's growls make San realize Ashitaka's presence. He introduces himself, asking them if they are gods. As they are going into the forest, San tells him to go away. One of the injured men scream and Ashitaka goes back to their side. One of the men have woken up and he is trying to run from a small spirit with its head bobbing. Ashitaka goes to him to calm him down. He tells the man that it is a *kodama*, a tree spirit. As more *kodama* begin to appear, he tells him that their appearance means the forest is in a healthy state. Ashitaka asks the spirit for safe passage and carries the unconscious man, while the other man rides Yakul. Following the *kodama* they arrive at a mysterious part of the forest, to a clear lake. He sets the unconscious man down to drink some water and he notices track marks from an animal he does not know. As he scans the area he sees a herd of deer with one that has many antlers. When the one with the antlers stops, Ashitaka's arm starts to hurt and move on its own. Only when the mysterious animal leaves his arm stops throbbing.

After they leave the forest, they arrive at Tatara, the iron town. Kouroku, one of the men Ashitaka rescued explains what happened. Eboshi comes and apologizes to the men then asks Ashitaka to come to see her later. While he eats with the men, some of the women invite him to see where they work. He learns that the women are former prostitutes. Eboshi buys the contracts and has them work here, they tell Ashitaka that after Lady Eboshi came to Tatara, everything has been changing for the better. The men tell Ashitaka of Nago, the boar god that used to reside in the forest. Nago became enraged and attacked when the men started cutting trees. Eboshi is the one that shot Nago. Upon hearing this, Ashitaka's cursed arm starts throbbing and he realizes Eboshi is the one who turned Nago into a *tatarigami*. Ashitaka confronts Eboshi about her role in his curse and she does not deny it. When asked by Eboshi what he will do about the situation, he tells her that he wants "to see with eyes unclouded by hate." Hearing this Eboshi tells him she will share with him her secrets. She takes him her gunsmiths, who are a group of lepers Eboshi enlisted. She once again apologizes

to him about his curse but Ashitaka is angered by the production of the guns even if they are for the use of the women in the town for protection. An elderly leper asks Ashitaka to have mercy on the Lady, telling him that she is the only one who has sheltered them.

Eboshi asks Ashitaka to live in town, she tells him that when she kills *Shishigami* (Forest Spirit) all other deities will return to being mere animals and San will become human. She talks about the legend that says *Shishigami*'s blood grants immortality and the possibility of it curing the lepers and maybe even Ashitaka's curse.

San and her wolf siblings attack the town. Ashitaka tries to get her to leave but is not able to do so. San and Eboshi start fighting. Ashitaka's anger grows and his arm now has tendrils, he bends Gonza's sword who thinks Ashitaka is San's ally. He goes through the crowd and stops the fight. He speaks to the people: "This is what hate looks like. It's eating me alive, and soon it will kill me. Fear and anger only make it grow faster." Eboshi tells him she will cure him by chopping his arm off but he knocks her and San out, ending the fight. He hands Eboshi to townspeople and takes San away. One of the women, angry at Ashitaka shoots her gun, he is shot but curse keeps him alive and he keeps walking. San's wolf siblings are waiting for her outside, Ashitaka leaves with them and Yakul. He falls off Yakul because of blood loss and when one of the wolves attacks him, San intervenes but asks him with a knife on his throat why he did not let her kill Eboshi. Ashitaka tells her to keep living and that she is beautiful. Afterward, the ape clan comes and demands to eat Ashitaka. When they insult San about her being human the wolves chase them off. San convinces her siblings to leave Ashitaka alone and with the help of Yakul she carries him into the forest. San takes him to *Shishigami*'s area, to the island in the lake. She leaves Ashitaka half-submerged in the water. *Deidarabotchi*, *Shishigami*'s night form comes into view and it comes to the island where San has put Ashitaka.

Jigo is watching the *Deidarabotchi* hiding on the mountainside wearing a bearskin. He shows his men a notice from the emperor with permission to kill *Shishigami*. They watch the god transform back into its deer-like shape. On the

island inside the lake where Ashitaka lays, *Shishigami* takes a sapling as a sacrifice and when he breathes on it, it dies. Jigo and his men are climbing down the mountain when they see boars going up, the men do not recognize them as native to the land. They see the leader of the group, Lord Okkoto, a boar god. They start to run when they realize the leader is aware of their presence.

Ashitaka wakes up with Shishigami healing him. The wounds he received during the fighting are gone but his curse is still there and has even spread to a broader area. San comes to his side telling him she now knows what has happened to him and his village from Yakul. She agrees to help him as Shishigami saved his life. Okkoto and his boars arrive and demand to know why Shishigami saved a human and not their previous leader, Nago. Moro tells them Shishigami has its own reasons. Ashitaka tells them it was he who killed Nago showing them his curse. Okkoto looks at his curse and is saddened by all that has happened. He then tells Moro of his plan to attack the humans.

Near the town of Tatara, Eboshi and her people are fighting with Lord Asano's warriors. Eboshi with her guns have the upper hand. When Lady Eboshi gets back to the town she meets Jigo, telling him Asano has agreed to leave them alone if she gives him half the iron. A messenger of Asano's arrive at the gates and she leaves her women to fend off the messenger. Jigo shows a request from the Mikado (emperor) to get *Shishigami*'s head, as he believes it will give him immortality. Eboshi shows her women the Mikado's note and the women have no clue as to who the Mikado is. Eboshi tells Jigo that she will cooperate but the hunt will be done her way and asks Jigo to withdraw his riflemen from where they are hiding. Eboshi talks to the women explaining to them that they must guard the town against Asano.

Meanwhile, Ashitaka is in Moro's cave. When he wakes up he sees San sleeping next to him. He exits the cave and finds Moro on the rocks. Moro tells him that was asleep for days and that she was disappointed that he did not cry as that would have given her an excuse to kill him. She then tells Ashitaka that the boars are moving. Ashitaka asks her why humans and the forest are not able to live in harmony and she says that it will not happen. Moro predicts that there will

be a battle between them and humans and San will die alongside them. Ashitaka objects to this telling her San is human. However, this enrages Moro as she tells him how she had attacked some people invading the forest and that San's parents threw her as a baby at her before running away. Moro talks about her love of San but knows that she will never truly belong anywhere. The next time Ashitaka awakens, San and Moro have left. One of her wolf siblings leads him through the forest and Ashitaka gives him the dagger necklace of Kaya and asks him to deliver it to San.

San is riding one of her siblings to meet with Moro. Eboshi's men have cut down a part of the forest and have started fires with sulfur in them to kill the animals' sense of smell. The boars rush to fight the humans but Moro realizes that there is a trap but San says she will go with Okkoto as he is blind and with the sulfur burning he needs San more than Moro. She tells San that if she wants she can leave with Ashitaka but San says to her that she hates humans. However, when her wolf brother gives her Ashitaka's gift, she is touched and puts the necklace on. San and her siblings join the boars and the fight.

Ashitaka is going towards the town when he hears the explosions from the traps set off by the boars. Moments later, his attention is drawn towards the gunfire that we hear coming from the town. He realizes the town of Tatara is under attack. Asano's men try to stop him from going into town but he jumps over them with Yakul. The outer wall of the town has been breached but the women are in the center still fighting. The women ask him to get Lady Eboshi. Ashitaka leaves the town with Asano's men after him. One of the men shoots an arrow at Yakul, wounding him. Enraged by this, thus triggering his curse, Ashitaka starts to fight. Shooting his arrows he takes the arm of one of the men and decapitates the other. Ashitaka asks Yakul to stay behind but Yakul does not leave him. Together they reach the battle, Eboshi and Jigo's men are burying their dead. He also sees dead boars everywhere. Ashitaka finds out that San had also participated in the battle but she is not amongst the fallen. He tells the men of the danger Tatara is in and that he needs to talk to Lady Eboshi about it. Ashitaka then sees one of San's siblings under a boar and tries to get him out. Jigo's men see this as a

betrayal and attack him however the ironworkers of Tatara defend him and even help him free San's brother. Ashitaka leaves Yakul with the workers and goes into the forest with the wolf.

A hunter reports to Jigo and Eboshi of Lord Okkoto, telling them he is badly hurt and he is going to the area of Shishigami with San. Okkoto who is, in fact, losing blood stops as the ape clan arrives and starts throwing sticks and blaming San for the bad things that have happened. A boar comes into sight behind them but San realizes that they are actually humans wearing the skins of the boars, however, Okkoto believes them to be the souls of his fallen warriors. He walks towards Shishigami's area of the forest. San is worried about Okkoto becoming a *tatarigami* like Nago. She sends word to Moro but stays with Okkoto. She tries to stop him but he becomes a *tatarigami*. She fights the humans wearing boar skin, she hears her sibling telling her that Ashitaka is looking for her. To Ashitaka the other wolf sibling tells that San is in a dangerous situation. She gets shot and then Okkoto's tendrils suck her in. Ashitaka rides one of her siblings to get to her fast but sees Eboshi. He tells her to get back to Tatara. Eboshi tells him the women will take care of themselves as she is on a mission to kill Shishigami. Jigo is not sure on whose side Ashitaka really is.

Ashitaka reaches the lake and finds Moro dying by the water. Okkoto as a *tatarigami* comes into view with the men in boar skin following him. Ashitaka sees San struggling. He tries to get San out, as her wolf siblings fight the hunters wearing boar skin. Moro gets up with her last strength and pulls San out of the tendrils of Okkoto. As this is happening Shishigami comes walking on water. Jigo and Lady Eboshi are able to see this view from where they are hiding. With Shishigami's arrival, Okkoto's tendrils begin to fall.

Ashitaka hears Moro's voice in his head. She asks him to rescue San. He comes out of the water just in time to see Eboshi shooting. *Shishigami* is on the water when it is shot and sinks in a little bit but continues to walk. Ashitaka washes San in the water to get the tendrils of the *tatarigami* off her. *Shishigami* kills Okkoto and Moro. Eboshi says it decides what lives and dies. *Shishigami* starts to transform into its night form. Ashitaka sees Eboshi taking aim and he

throws his sword and hits her *ishibaya* which distracts her. *Shishigami* looks at her and plants start to come out of her weapon but not even this is enough to halt her. She fires, hitting *Shishigami* just as it is transforming to its night form severing its head. Black liquid starts sprouting from its neck killing all it comes into contact with. Eboshi gives the head to Jigo who then puts it into a metal box. Jigo and his men start running.

Moro's head, detached from its body bites off Eboshi's arm. San and her siblings are in the holy island, Ashitaka takes Lady Eboshi to the island as well. San wants to kill Eboshi but Ashitaka tells her Moro has taken her revenge and that he has promised the town's women he will bring her back safely. An angry San stabs him a dagger but Ashitaka hugs her and tells her they can still save the forest if they work together.

Deidarabotchi is searching its head, destroying the forest as it walks. The town of Tatara is silent, the women are keeping a watch on Lord Asano's camp. They see the headless *Deidarabotchi* heading towards the town. Asano's camp is destroyed. Ashitaka, San and her siblings arrive to tell the women and the lepers to get to the lake to escape. Ashitaka, San and the wolves are after Jigo who has the head, Ashitaka wants the head to be reunited. Jigo attacks and tells the people to run. San follows them when they catch up Ashitaka convinces him. Ashitaka and San hold up the head, *Shishigami* takes its head and a bright light is seen.

The people that are able to escape Tatara are on the lake, a raft comes with Eboshi and the rest of the townspeople. *Deidarabotchi* collapses at dawn on Tatara, destroying much of it with a strong wind. When the remains of the town and the camp float to the hills, they start turning green and plants begin sprouting. Yakul finds San and Ashitaka sleeping by San's wolf siblings. San is distressed over *Shishigami*'s death but Ashitaka convinces her it can not die as *Shishigami* is life itself. His hand is still scarred but the curse is gone. San says that she likes him but that she is not able to forgive humans. Ashitaka tells her he will start living at Tatara so that he can live by the forest. He tells her he will visit her and San goes back into the forest with her wolf siblings.

Lady Eboshi is recovering from her injury and she seems optimistic about the future. She promises to her people that she will build a better town. Near the dead trees by the lake, trees have begun to grow. Between the new trees, a little *kodama* is walking.

4.2.2. Analyses

As I have explained in the previous title, the wildlife is often cast out in classical poetry and art. Instead, human-controlled secondary nature is appreciated. Even *Shinto's kami* changed their nature from feared gods to guardian deities. On the other hand, in the opening scenes of *Princess Mononoke*, Miyazaki shows us the wildlife where nature rules. And there are some intertitles which appear on the forest background: “In ancient times, a land lay covered in forests, where, from ages long past, dwelt the spirits of the gods. Back then, man and beast lived in harmony. But as time went by, most of the great forests were destroyed. Those that remained were guarded by gigantic beasts who owed their allegiance to the great forest spirit for those were the days of gods and demons.”¹⁹⁰

The film was set in the fourteenth and fifteenth-century Muromachi period which is viewed as the pinnacle of Japanese high culture and Zen influence on art like Zen gardens and tea ceremonies. Mikiso Hane explains that Zen expanded Japanese aesthetic awareness to many different areas of life and art.¹⁹¹ Moreover, the regional warlords, known as daimyo, held a great deal of power because of this power the political and cultural atmosphere of this era strongly influenced by them. The conflicts between daimyo soon generated tension and resulted in the Ōnin War (1467-77). The fall of Kyoto and the decline of the authority of the

¹⁹⁰ Hayao Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke* (Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2014).

¹⁹¹ Mikiso Hane, *Premodern Japan: A Historical Survey* (Westview Press, 1991), 103.

Shogunate threw the country into a period of war and social chaos.¹⁹² In the film pamphlet of *Princess Mononoke*, Miyazaki describes this period as follows:

Disorder and fluidity were the norms in the world of the Muromachi period (1336-1573), the setting for this film. It was a time when present-day Japan was being formed out of social upheaval. (...) This was a more unpredictable and fluid time, more magnanimous and free, with less clear class distinctions between warriors and villagers and women as depicted in the drawings of artisans and tradespeople. In such a time, the contours of life and death were very clear. (...) Life was not full of ambiguities. (...) Herein lies the meaning in creating this world, as we face the coming chaotic era of the twenty-first century.¹⁹³

As seen in Miyazaki's words, even the times are chaotic, the life of people and the contours of that life was clear. However, the characters we see are not common characters of the genre this film belongs to. *Princess Mononoke* goes into the *jidaigeki* genre (period dramas) in Japanese cinema where Kurosawa deployed the standard motifs. *Jidaigeki*'s common characters are samurai and peasants, on the contrary, in *Princess Mononoke*, we encounter ironworkers, ox drivers, laborers, ethnic minority Emishi's and the spirits of nature who lives in the broadleaf evergreen forest. Miyazaki said that he deliberately created the characters this way.¹⁹⁴ With this film, Tucker argues that Miyazaki used history and *jidaigeki* genre innovatively with the influence of revisionist historian Yoshihiko Amino.¹⁹⁵

In the opening scenes, Miyazaki shows us a dark forest and wriggling black worm-like things that harm the forest, knocking down the trees. Then we cut to Ashitaka, an inhabitant of Emishi village. He warns the village girls, tells them to go back and climbs to the human-made observation tower where he can

¹⁹² Department of Asian Art, "Muromachi Period (1392–1573) | Essay | Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History | The Metropolitan Museum of Art," The Met's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, accessed December 23, 2019, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/muro/hd_muro.htm.

¹⁹³ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 16.

¹⁹⁴ Miyazaki, 16.

¹⁹⁵ John A. Tucker, "Anime and Historical Inversion in Princess Mononoke," *Japan Studies Review*, VII (2003): 67.

look down on the forest (**Figure 4.1.1**). He puts himself in a powerful position in nature/human duality. Making your own weapon or construction is what makes humans a dominant figure against nature. However, from the peaceful depiction of the village, one can argue that this kind of technology is not a problem for nature or the director himself. The upcoming problem is a consequence of a different kind of technology. Miyazaki coded this visually as a shadow, a darkness in the opening scenes of the film. Yet the darkness and light duality does not have the meaning of good or evil, more like seeable, perceptible or not. In one of his interviews, Miyazaki said that he dislikes dichotomy of light/darkness as good/evil and added that he doesn't consider things this way.¹⁹⁶

As shown in **Figure 4.1.1**, the human side (tower) is on the bright side and the forest lays in darkness. Then Miyazaki cuts to the forest (**Figure 4.1.2**) where we see a movement of something in the darkness. Ashitaka asks "What is it?" to the elder and he answers, "I don't know but it is not human."¹⁹⁷ Ashitaka turns back to the village and tells the elder that Hii-sama¹⁹⁸ called everyone back (**Figure 4.1.3**). We understand that Hii-sama, like an oracle, saw that something wicked is coming and warned people. Seeing and perceiving which is hinted now will become one of the important themes in the course of the film.

In **Figure 4.1.3**, the brightness of the village and darkness of the forest makes a deliberate contrast. Miyazaki coding humans as something under the light, perceptible. The non-human emphasis also shows us that the forest is not a realm of humans but the realm of the non-human, the imperceptible. In 1988, much before *Princess Mononoke* came to the theaters but after Miyazaki finished *Totoro*, he explains his thoughts about this subject:

For Japanese (...) the gods are in the darkness. They may come out into light at times, but they are usually deep in the forest or mountains. (...) When a holy spot is created, the gods drop down

¹⁹⁶ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 359.

¹⁹⁷ Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke*, pt. 02:41.

¹⁹⁸ In English Hii-sama means grand grandmother, elder. It is also important to remember that she is the shaman of the Emishi village. She reads signs from the stones. Like an oracle, she catches a glimpse of future.

onto it. That is why, in the shrines that are closest to their original form that still exist in Okinawa, though there are altars in the shrines, the image of the god is just a tree or a stone. And such a shrine isn't in a bright, shining place, it's in an overgrown dark area where the silence is deep (...) When I went there with my children, they felt the eeriness and said it was scary. It felt as if something were there. This sense of dark awe is the sort of veneration that Japanese have toward certain forests and natural objects – in short, it's an animistic primitive religion. (...) I'm not a believer in the occult, but the world is more than we can fathom with our five senses.¹⁹⁹

With the blue sky in the background and the sunlight on Ashitaka's face, he puts his arrow in position (**Figure 4.1.4**). The next scene shows the onset of darkness. The shadow line (**Figure 4.1.5**) extends (**Figure 4.1.6**) in a second. The wickedness or the power of the upcoming non-human greaten, Ashitaka's face and the background (**Figure 4.1.7**) fully stays in the darkness. Something black starts to ooze from the stones of the wall (**Figure 4.1.8**). With the destruction of the wall, we see the *tatarigami*, red-eyed cursed god. However, from the depiction of *tatarigami*, we do not understand the form of the *kami*, just the curse itself. The areas of the forest where *tatarigami* passed became scorched (**Figure 4.1.9**). When it comes to the bright area, we understand that it's a boar *kami* (**Figure 4.1.10**).

As we see in the latter part of this scene, the reason for the curse is an iron ball, a bullet that is made by the technology/industrialization. Boar *kami* tries to protect its forest, but humans consume the earth for iron, cuts down trees and pollute rivers because of byproducts. Though humans with the leadership of Lady Eboshi pollute the area in a different part of the country, the pollution/the curse shows its effect in the Emishi village. It is not important that Emishi people live in harmony with nature, after the industrialization, the pollution effects anywhere, just like deep ecology scholars say, we cannot find a remote place that is not polluted. Moreover, as Miyazaki shows, for nature itself, it is not important who

¹⁹⁹ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 359.

pollute, the consequences affect everybody. The animation indicates that pollution is caused individually but its consequences are shared collectively.

In **Figure 4.1.10**, for a very brief moment, Miyazaki makes people think that, with the effect of the light, the curse may be gone but with the rageful roar, the boar embraces the curse and its hate for humans. After leaving the forest, *tatarigami* directly attacks the human-made tower and then changes the direction of its attack to the Emishi village (**Figure 4.1.11**). Ashitaka tries to ease the hearth of the *kami*, asks the reason of its rage. However, his words could not find an addressee. When the village girls are in danger, Ashitaka tries to save them by drawing the attention of *tatarigami* to himself, in the process the curse wraps up his arm (**Figure 4.1.12**). The curse is a consequence of technology. In the body of *tatarigami* “natural, supernatural and technological” gathers. Thus, it is a hybrid, “a supernatural beast with a trace of human technology” which makes also Ashitaka a hybrid too.²⁰⁰ Then Hii-sama comes and gives water to village people and they wash Ashitaka’s cursed arm both with earth and water as a purification. As seen in **Figure 4.1.13**, after the water poured steam come out from the earth, it is like a reminder of the process for making the iron ball.

In the last breaths of Tatarigami we see that Hii-sama bows and scrapes, also to “*araburu kami*”,²⁰¹ she says “Bear us no hate and be at peace.” But *tatarigami* answers “You loathsome humans, you shall know my hate and my grief.”²⁰² Then with steam coming from its body, it decays and leaves its carcass behind (**Figure 4.1.14**). The last words of *tatarigami* is an indication that for the forces of nature there is no differentiation of human beings. Such as if people cannot find a place polluted by pollution, therefore it does not make a difference for nature who polluted it.

²⁰⁰ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

²⁰¹ It is important to notice that Hii-sama says “*araburu kami*” then bows. As explained in the “Japanese Perception of Nature”, before *kami* turned into guardian deities, the “*araburu kami*” expression used for violent gods in the *Hizen no kuni fudoki* (Hizen Province Gazetteer). Therefore, this usage makes clear at least that Emishi people still show respect for *kami* and fear them. As Miyazaki puts it, this is the original belief, before it changed by Buddhism and Meiji government.

²⁰² Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke*, pts. 6:50-7:20.

It is important that after this scene Hii-sama tells Ashitaka that the curse will seep into his bones and he will die. She adds “You cannot change your fate. Though you can rise to meet it.”²⁰³ She shows the iron ball and then she says which will become one of the most important statements of Miyazaki: “Journey there, and see with eyes unclouded.”²⁰⁴





Figure 4.1. The Opening Scene of *Princess Mononoke*

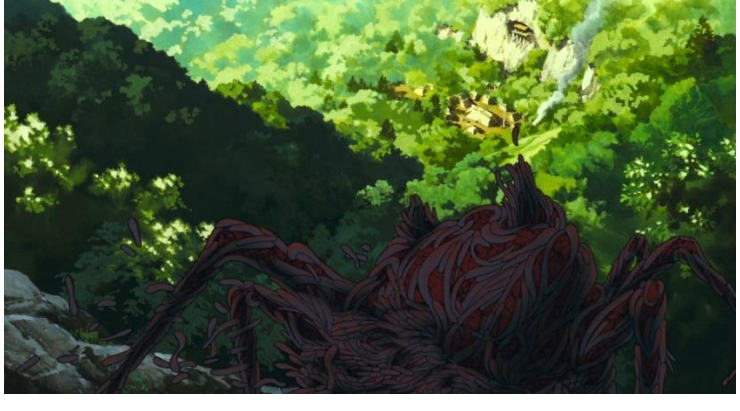





²⁰³ Miyazaki, pt. 09:00.

²⁰⁴ Miyazaki, pt. 09:32.

4.1.3	 An aerial view of a village nestled in a dense, lush green forest. The buildings are small and clustered together, with a few taller structures visible on a slight rise in the background.
4.1.4	 A man in a blue tunic and red pants is shown from the side, aiming a bow. He has a white beard and is looking intently at his target. He is wearing a backpack with various items, including a scroll and a basket. The background shows a thatched roof and a clear blue sky.
4.1.5	 A close-up shot of a hand in a blue sleeve holding a bow. The hand is positioned on a wooden structure, possibly a railing or part of a building. The background shows a dense green forest.
4.1.6	 A close-up shot of a hand in a blue sleeve holding a bow, similar to the previous frame. The hand is positioned on a wooden structure, and the background shows a dense green forest.

4.1.7	
4.1.8	
4.1.9	
4.1.10	

4.1.11	
4.1.12	
4.1.13	
4.1.14	

Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke* (Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2014)

To “see with eyes unclouded” as Napier puts it, one has to sever his or her ties with prejudices and bias so that he/she can observe in a clear, objective way.²⁰⁵ This is also evident in Miyazaki’s other films. Using child characters who are not shaped by prejudices and bias, making them call their own shots, then showing the child characters’ transition to adulthood is very characteristic of Miyazaki animations.

Therefore, Ashitaka has to go to the source of the curse, which, if done correctly, will turn him into an immortal being. In his journey, he tries finding a cure, observing, deciding upon what is right or wrong with a clear vision. He acts as a mediator between nature and humanity, primal and modern.

The first character he encounters is Buddhist monk Jigo. After he hears Ashitaka’s befalling he briefly talks about his worldview and says, we live in a cursed world.²⁰⁶ The emphasis on the “cursed world” which will also be the subject of the talk in Lady Eboshi’s private chambers where Ashitaka meets the leprous people, hints the world for both human and non-human. From the curse narrative in the film, Napier argues that Miyazaki asks “Can we live ethically in a cursed world? And if so, how?”²⁰⁷ One of the answers is obvious: Seeing with eyes unclouded.

In the continuation of Ashitaka’s journey, we see ox drivers climbing a mountain. It makes us remember the memorable scene of Werner Herzog’s *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*’s opening scene. With a colonialist subtext, Eboshi’s men seem challenging nature. Then we see San and wolf clan standing up to this challenge. At the end of this scene, Ashitaka finds two ox drivers near the river and rescues them. Then one of the ox drivers fears a *kodama*, a semitransparent childlike figure of nature. Ashitaka looks unafraid and tells that *kodama* is a sign of a healthy forest and puts the ox driver’s mind at peace and tells him that Yakul

²⁰⁵ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

²⁰⁶ Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke*, pt. 16:37.

²⁰⁷ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

is not afraid. This scene is also another hint of Ashitaka's view of life and nature, that he is a mediator, a balance giver in the film.

Ashitaka's kindness, perseverance, and patience remind us of the young Miyazaki with his ideals.²⁰⁸ Moreover, San, the wolf princess that Ashitaka meets in the forest, symbolizes the primal human. Her other name, mostly used by Tataru people, Princess Mononoke means literally possessed princess, possessed by the spirits of nature. Miyazaki specifically designs San's appearance, inspired by the Jōmon period (8000-300 BC).²⁰⁹ Jōmon²¹⁰ period is the name of Japan's Neolithic era. People from this era adopted a semi-sedentary life, ate fish, game meat and things collected from nature. For Napier, San's rage against humans is also an indication of the director's rage itself.²¹¹ On the opposite side of San, we see Lady Eboshi. She is the embodiment of the modern era. She is also Miyazaki's favorite character.²¹² He describes her as follows: "I think of Lady Eboshi as the ideal of a twentieth-century person. She differentiates between her ends and her means and engages in risky actions, but she doesn't lose her ideals."²¹³ She is smart, and she is a leader who is loved by her people. She is not afraid of *kami* or gods, and just like the people who live in the "enlightened world", she does not believe in curses. The "enlightenment" as leaving the belief of the supernatural behind, can be seen perfectly in the scene where Jigo and hunters follow Shishigami. The hunters are afraid to look at Shishigami, they believe it can make themselves blind. After Jigo's encouragement, one of them sneaks a peek. Not turning blind, he loses his fear and, in the end, *Shishigami* turns into prey for the hunter. The depiction of the night version of *Shishigami* which is called *Deidarabotchi* in this scene is also interesting. As seen in **Figure**

²⁰⁸ Napier, chap. 11.

²⁰⁹ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 15.

²¹⁰ "Jōmon Culture (ca. 10,500–ca. 300 B.C.) | Essay | Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History | The Metropolitan Museum of Art," The Met's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, accessed December 28, 2019, https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/jomo/hd_jomo.htm.

²¹¹ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

²¹² Napier, chap. 11.

²¹³ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 61.

4.2, for a long time, in this scene *Deidarabotchi*'s arm overlaps with the moon. If it is drawn like that in a way that shows its semitransparency, we still understand that from its legs. Therefore, it seems deliberate. Moreover, the overlapping part reminds us *yin-yang*, harmony; and being a *kami* for life and death *Shishigami* is also a balancing element in the world.

Figure 4.2. The Forest God *Shishigami*'s Night Version Giant *Deidarabotchi*.



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke* (Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2014)

Miyazaki in all of his films put his characters in hard situations and make them deal with the consequences. In *Princess Mononoke*, he puts characters in a position where they can assess the damage that they inflict upon nature and each other. Mayumi argues that Miyazaki helps us to recognize the intricacy of our world also by depicting power relationships between characters, he shares his understanding of contemporary environmental problems.²¹⁴

As Hadl puts it, *Princess Mononoke* with its characters shows us a “clash of ideologies”, Ashitaka and Emishi people are shamanic, San and clans of animals/*kami* are bio-centric. Lady Eboshi has materialistic tendencies. She is a techno-feminist and anthropocentric just like the people of patriarchy such as

²¹⁴ Mayumi, Solomon, and Chang, “The Ecological and Consumption Themes of the Films of Hayao Miyazaki,” 6.

emperor, warlords, and samurai. Jigo brings Buddhism to the equation and the *kami* represent animism.²¹⁵

In a patriarchal world, Lady Eboshi empowers women in Tatara. She saves enslaved brothel girls and brings them to Tatara to live freely. Even for Tatara men, the presence of women working in bellows defile iron. They say Lady Eboshi spoils them, but as Ashitaka puts it, “a good town has happy women”.²¹⁶

The patriarchal constructions of femininity associate the female figure with nature. As Garrard puts it, some radical ecofeminists embrace this approach. But this ‘feminine essence’ criticized by ecofeminists who comes from philosophical and sociological background. They emphasize that “a truly feminist perspective cannot embrace either the feminine or the masculine uncritically”²¹⁷ From the lifestyle of Tatara and its leader Lady Eboshi, we see Miyazaki also challenges preconceptions about associating women with nature.

The “otherness” is also a strong theme in this film. The people of Tatara are outcasts, people who do not fit in the social order. San is also a girl left in the forest by her parents. She is not human nor animal, she is also an outcast, an “other”. Ashitaka, because of the curse, has to leave his village therefore he cuts his topknot and became an “other” too.

Moreover, the otherness of the non-human, especially Shishigami keeps the film from succumbing to clichés such as simplifying nature as cute, noble and vulnerable. As Napier argues Miyazaki presents the ‘Other’ in a fresh and different way.²¹⁸ The *kami* depicted in the film is not “humans in another guise” as Ursula Heise explains. She puts emphasis on the fact that the animation as a medium is highly skilled at “open[ing] up a world that is being worked on by nonhuman agents in ways that resonate with environmentalist thought – all the more so if they are not simply presented as humans in another guise but inhabit

²¹⁵ Hadl, “Nature, Media and the Future,” 355–56.

²¹⁶ Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke*, pt. 34:25.

²¹⁷ Garrard, *Ecocriticism*, 24.

²¹⁸ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

modes of thought and being all their own.”²¹⁹ Moreover, Napier utilizes the explanation of Heise and adds that the film discusses the idea of nonhuman entities “inhabit[ing] modes of thought and being all their own” with passion and vivacity. The stylish animation “allows for a distinctive variety of nonhuman faces, from the appealing and expressive visage of Yakul, Ashitaka’s red elk steed, to the simplified, masklike countenances of the little tree spirits known as kodama.”²²⁰ Through *kodama* Miyazaki explains his perspective of nature:

Essentially, they don’t do anything, and their presence is to be there as witnesses, isn’t it? If nature is seen to be either useful or not useful, these kodama spirits are not useful, and in a way nature is full of things that aren’t useful to us. This is why I think the solution to environmental issues must be to shift our perspective from preserving nature because it is useful, to preserving it because it is not useful.²²¹

In the same interview Miyazaki mentions *Environmental Archeology* (Myra Shackley, 1982; Japanese translation, 1985) and *A Green History of the World: The Environment and the Collapse of Great Civilizations* (Clive Ponting, 1991; Japanese translation, 1994) books:

They indicate that there is an inextricable relationship between nature and human beings; that the human race has repeatedly encountered failures, discovering that what was purported to be productive is actually destructive, and even facing the collapse of their civilization. These have occurred in the past on a regional basis, but now the destruction is happening on a global scale. Before we judge whether this is good or bad – since they result from well-intentioned human actions – we must realize that the issue is way too complicated to be settled by a sweeping condemnation.²²²

The story suggests that, without respect to *kami* and nature, destruction is inevitable. However, even those who bring about this destruction, Lady Eboshi

²¹⁹ Ursula K. Heise, *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global*, 1 edition (Oxford : New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 304.

²²⁰ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

²²¹ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 32.

²²² Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 28.

and the people of Tatara, are not depicted as villains. Therefore the symbolism of them as industrialization and technology is also not depicted as a villain. As Ashitaka tries to observe both sides with eyes unclouded, Miyazaki too, shows us two sides of nature-human dichotomy in a complex but neutral way. On the other side of the dichotomy, Miyazaki does not depict nature as vulnerable and noble. For him, “the real character of nature is more cruel and brutal. If we discuss environmental issues or issues of nature without mentioning the irrationality, cruelty, and brutality of life itself, it becomes a shallow and insipid exercise.” He also adds “Deep in the forest, there is something sacred exist without a perceptible function. That is the central core, the navel, of the world, and we [Japanese] want to return in time to that pure place.”²²³

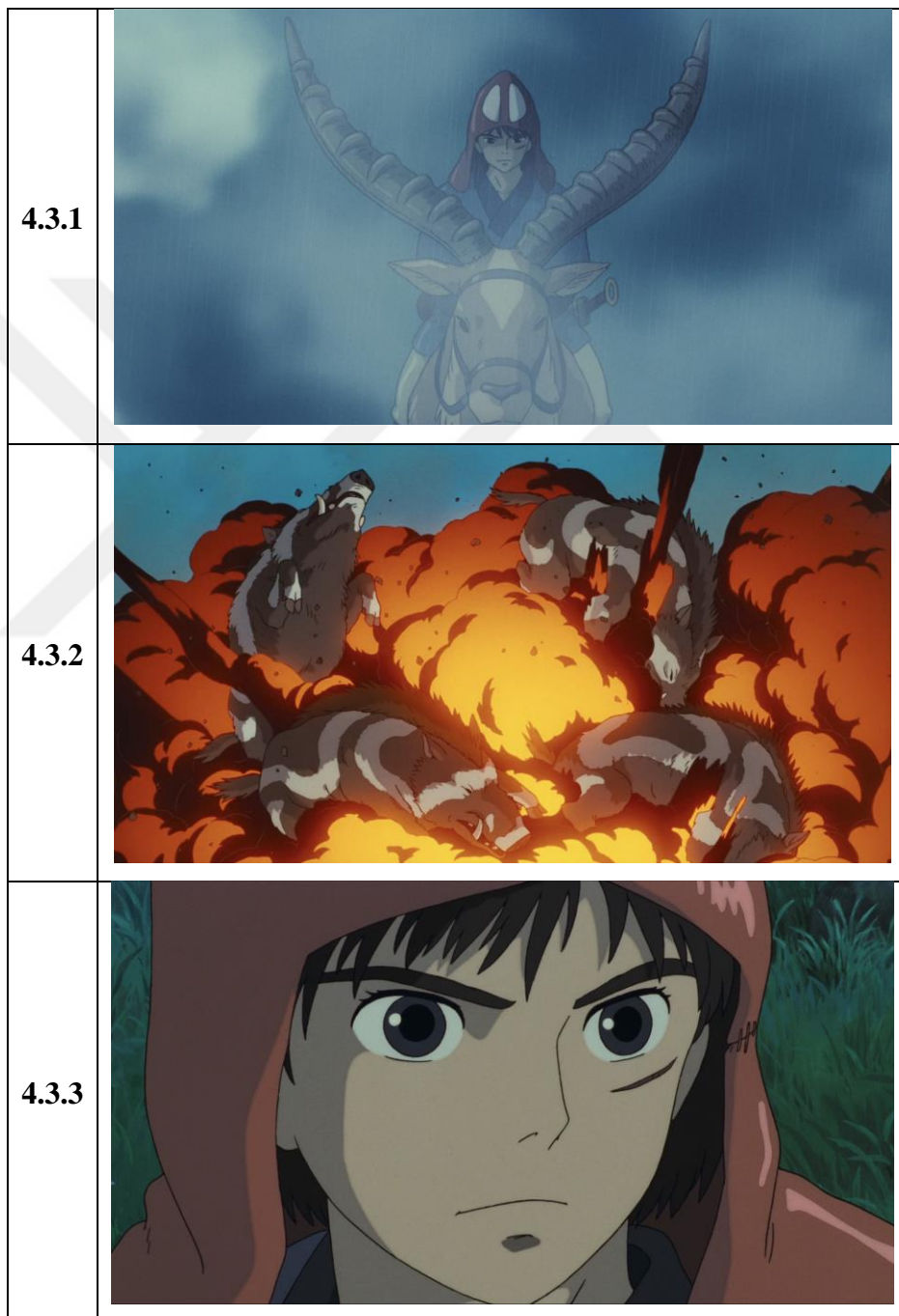
As seen in the scene where San infiltrates Tatara and attacks Lady Eboshi, Eboshi brings two women whose husbands killed by the forces of nature. Ashitaka tries to be a mediator but as a result he has to put San and Lady Eboshi to sleep. Every time Ashitaka helps one side, the other side puts blame on him. This duality of choosing a side visually depicted in the scene where Ashitaka rides Yakul in changing weather (cloudy/sunny, rainy/clear). Moreover, it reminds us of the opening scene where Ashitaka looks back to his village (**Figure 4.1**). However, this time he has to see with eyes unclouded. The literal cloudiness of weather seems deliberate while Ashitaka is immersed in thought (**Figure 4.3.1**). This long and calm scene interrupted with a quick succession of cuts which is unusual for Miyazaki. Normally, he avoids very long shot lengths and quick cuts, his average shot length is calculated as four seconds in the research of Kohara and Niimi.²²⁴ The shots in the calm scene (**Figure 4.3.1**) nearly goes for 13-14 seconds. Then, approximately in three seconds, we see boars in an explosion (**Figure 4.3.2**), Ashitaka’s face darkens just like **Figure 4.1.7** (**Figure 4.3.3**) then we zoom in to an explosion (**Figure 4.3.4**) and see San fighting execrably (**Figure**

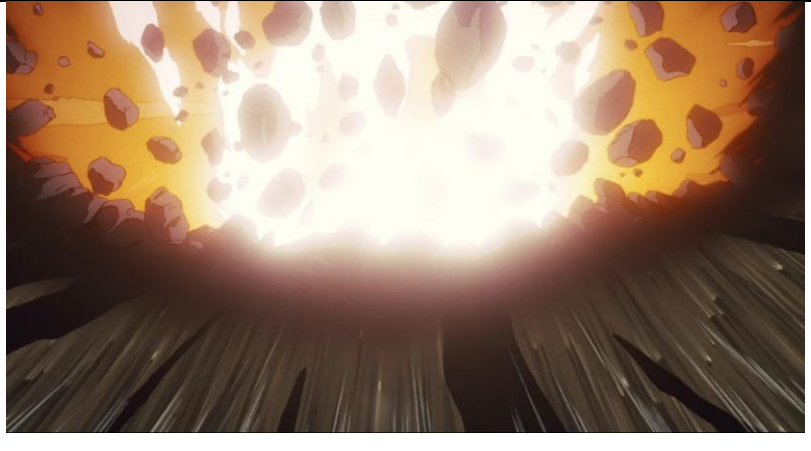
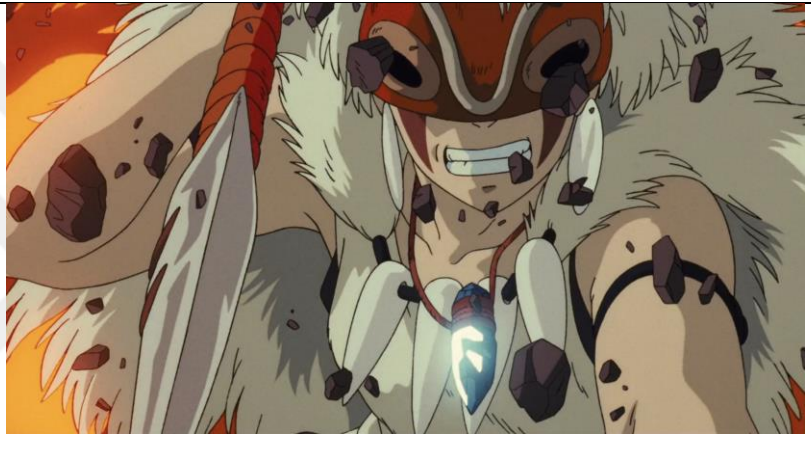

²²³ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 43.

²²⁴ Itsutoshi Kohara and Ryosuke Niimi, “The Shot Length Styles of Miyazaki, Oshii, and Hosoda: A Quantitative Analysis,” *Animation* 8, no. 2 (June 11, 2013): 174, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1746847713487472>.

4.3.5). Ashitaka hears gunshots from the village and when he chooses to go there, at the same time rain stops, the mountain brightens under the sun (Figure 4.3.5).

Figure 4.3. Ashitaka Before the War, Between Human and Forest



4.3.4	
4.3.5	
4.3.5	

Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Princess Mononoke* (Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2014)

For M. Jimmie Killingsworth, the main point of the film is “the survival of animism in the modern world” especially in the scene where Lady Eboshi severs

the head of the *Shishigami*.²²⁵ Ashitaka and San give its head back with an emphasis that it has to be given in the hands of a human. The forest where, in the beginning of the film, be seen as a dark and fearful place turns into a gentler forest, a modern version of Japan. As told in the Japanese Perception of Nature, *Shishigami*'s forest now became a *beautiful, gentle, calm* forest for Japanese people. *Shishigami*, as Killingsworth puts it, "loses any identity separate from the forest."²²⁶

In his book, *The Moral Narratives of Miyazaki* Reinders, argues that Miyazaki identified as a deep ecologist because he does not believe nature is preserved for its usefulness, also all nonhuman have an intrinsic value separate from their usefulness. Furthermore, Reinders adds that Miyazaki's "animism is heavily accented with Post-war Shinto, but also deep ecology and a Romantic sense of the sublime."²²⁷

Deep ecology scholars emphasize that human and non-human life has intrinsic value and inherent worth, independent of its usefulness to human gains. However, Barkman states that because *Shinto* is monistic, one can not find any moral law, there is no right or wrong, "since these would presuppose something outside of the monistic whole that can judge the rightness or wrongness of a particular action within. This denial, it must be noted, should include denial of any intrinsic or absolute value for anything since if there is no absolute Value-Giver or Source, no absolute or intrinsic value can be spoken of."²²⁸ However Barkman adds that *Shinto* scholars adopt a form of cultural relativism, by doing so, they argue that decisions of morality and value are linked to the community, country, culture or *uchi* of a given unit. Right and wrong, therefore, gain the meaning of

²²⁵ M. Jimmie Killingsworth, "'As If the Beasts Spoke': The Animal/Animist/Animated Walt Whitman," *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 28, no. 1–2 (October 1, 2010): 28–29, <https://doi.org/10.13008/2153-3695.1949>.

²²⁶ Killingsworth, 28–29.

²²⁷ Reinders, *The Moral Narratives of Hayao Miyazaki*, 2.

²²⁸ Adam Barkman, "'The Earth Speaks to Us All': A Critical Appreciation of Filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki's Shintō Environmental Philosophy," *Christian Scholar's Review* (blog), July 15, 2019, <https://christianscholars.com/the-earth-speaks-to-us-all-a-critical-appreciation-of-filmmaker-hayao-miyazakis-shinto-environmental-philosophy/>.

helping or harming the group.²²⁹ Therefore, when a group harms the system the whole group affected. As seen in the film, Eboshi's disruption affected Emishi village. Moreover, Barkman emphasizes that Ashitaka says you have a demon inside to Lady Eboshi, such as the demon in Tatarigami, therefore, for gaining harmony again, each group needs to expand their "sense of what constitutes the *uchi* group."

Furthermore, Killingsworth debates, the indigenous animism has turned into a modern neo-animism, where imagination is required to feel the sacredness as all of it has now become mundane and has lost the mystic touch. *Princess Mononoke* does a great job questioning the unrestrained military-industrialism that can be highly destructive while accepting that the developments in technology do improve people's lives. Furthermore, this change for the better is not confined to the material world only as it can be seen in the lives of the prostitutes, who are now living in Tatara. In the end, the film acknowledges the collapse of animism. The destruction of indigenous animism creates a void that is later filled with neo-animism, which struggles with consistency in a world where the view of nature has become scientific and demystified. On the other hand, the movement also explores whether more mystified animism is possible or not as it would subtly relinquishing the progress humanity has made modernizing. It uncovers a conflict between the progress brought on by modernization and the preservationist ideas now trending in cultural environmentalism. Spirits, visions, happenings of a supernatural sort have now become a fictional instrument to utilize in literature or cinema, but this returns to nature what was taken by religion and science; the meaning to a commodified and demonized nature. Nature does have some value in religious discourse, however, it is only as an instrument of God. This lets the capitalist model which is reinforced with consumerism continue unobstructed in a "value-free discourse", as the scientific understanding of nature gives it no real value. Nonetheless, Killingsworth ruminates; "...a poet or cinematic artist or nature writer to say that animals speak to me, or that some

²²⁹ Barkman.

place is sacred, or that some tree possesses a spirit is to say that these things have value beyond any price you can put on them.”²³⁰

Miyazaki believes the forest which is explained by Sasuke Nakao’s book (see 4.2.) disappeared in this period.²³¹ Set in a time where Japan is transitioning from the culture of the broadleaf evergreen forest as a “nature-based conception of life”²³² to the modern era where industrialization and technology reigns. In the end, people lost their fear and respect for *kami* and as a result of this, the connection with nature lost too.

The gentle forest also indicates the loss of wilderness. Snyder explains wilderness in as follows “Wilderness is a place where the wild potential is fully expressed, a diversity of living and non-living beings flourishing according to their own sorts of order. [...] To speak of wilderness is to speak of wholeness.”²³³ As seen in the definition, Miyazaki approaches the forest as a wilderness where non-human can flourish independently from “usefulness” which human beings impose upon.

However, for this loss, Miyazaki does not put blame on anyone, he gets the viewers to watch the complexities of world in which Napier puts “a wide range of human and nonhuman characters cross conventional boundary lines of physicality, gender, species, and the natural and supernatural. Ultimately, the film offers a vision of life as a densely interwoven design, rather than a simple allegory of dichotomized opposites.”²³⁴

4.3. *Spirited Away* – Present

The main character Chihiro is unwillingly moving to a rural Japanese town with her family. During the drive to their new home, her father gets lost and they

²³⁰ Killingsworth, “As If the Beasts Spoke,” 28–29.

²³¹ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 60.

²³² Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

²³³ Gary Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild: Essays* (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2003), 12.

²³⁴ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 11.

end up at a tunnel at the end of an abandoned road leading to a deserted theme park with an adjoining town. They find a restaurant filled with food but no people and Chihiro refuses to eat and starts exploring on her own. She arrives at a bridge where she sees a boy named Haku. The boy tells her they should all go back as they are not safe and Chihiro hurriedly goes back to her parents but much to her dismay finds pigs instead of her parents eating at the restaurant. As the sun sets Chihiro realizes the park is inhabited by *kami*. Chihiro now has to rely on Haku who she believes is a complete stranger in this mysterious town to stay alive and return to her own world with her parents unharmed.

Spirited Away shows us the present day's leaning towards materialism and excess consumption. People forgot *kami* and therefore their roots long ago, the exhausted and harassed forces of nature find a relaxation space only in the Yuya, bathhouse for *kami*. However, Yuya also is a capitalist place. Therefore, Miyazaki shows us how nature affected by our consumerism, capitalism, and materialism.

4.3.1. Story

The scene opens with Chihiro, our protagonist inside a car with her family. She and her family are moving to a new house and Chihiro complains about the situation. Meanwhile, Chihiro's father realizes that the road they are on leads to a dark forest and quite possibly they are not on the correct road, but his confidence does not waver as he drives through dirt and water and they arrive at a building. Chihiro is anxious to turn back but her father wants to explore and clinging to her mother Chihiro and her family go into the tunnel that leads to the building. They arrive at a green field with a few old buildings right and left. The father comments that this place was most likely a theme park abandoned after the burst of the economic bubble. As they move further in, the smell of food lures them and they see restaurants with no one inside but have plenty of food for them to take. Chihiro's mother and father start piling up their plates with food while Chihiro leaves her parents' side and wanders off.

She comes to a bridge, as she looks down she sees a train passing and when looks back up she sees a boy with green eyes looking at her. The boy warns her off and tells her she is not allowed here. He tells her to go back before dark. The boy whistles a mysterious spell and Chihiro grudgingly returns to the little town. Upon returning, she finds two pigs sitting and eating instead of her parents. Horrified of this sight, she aimlessly runs through the streets which are now filled with ghosts. Wishing this to be a dream Chihiro realizes she is disappearing. Looking through her fading hands she sees strange figures disembark from a ferry. She flees in terror, and hides and the mysterious boy from earlier comes to her side. He wants her to eat something originating there as that is the only thing that would stop her from disappearing completely from this world. While not completely believing his promises that she will not turn into a pig, she still accepts the pill. After she seizes to vanish, a bird and an old-woman arrive making the boy nervous as he tells her that they are after her. They start to run through the streets and arrive at the bridge where earlier the boy had warned her not to cross. The boy tells Chihiro not to breathe, they pass the bridge and the creatures on it without issue. But before they arrive at the ornate building, a frog's sudden appearance surprises Chihiro and she gasps. With this, the frog sees her, and the boy does a spell on it while he flies them to safety.

Even though they are able to flee the scene, the strange beings that occupy the building can now smell a human in their midst and are searching for Chihiro. They are calling the boy, whose name we learn is "Master Haku". Haku assures Chihiro that he will help her escape, but he tells her that before he can help her, she must first save her parents. He tells her to go to the boiler room, find "Kamaji" and ask him for work persistently, says that otherwise she might be turned into an animal by the sorceress Yubaba. Haku says goodbye to Chihiro surprising her with his knowledge of her name and tells her that he has known her since she was a little girl. Haku is called by Yubaba and Chihiro is now by herself.

She goes to the boiler room and sees an old man with many arms. Kamaji tells her that there is no work for her, but the soot sprites go to Chihiro's side and stand by her. This confrontation is stopped when a young girl brings Kamaji food.

She sees Chihiro and says that everyone is looking for her. Kamaji surprises everyone as he claims Chihiro to be his granddaughter. Kamaji tells Chihiro to meet with Yubaba and asks her for work. Chihiro leaves with the girl as Kamaji says good luck to her.

They go via elevators while Chihiro looks around the building and at the strange creatures that occupy it. Before they can get into the next elevator a frog-like creature accuses the girl, Lin of hiding a human and Chihiro sneaks into the elevator behind a radish spirit and Lin is able to send the elevator up. Once out, she sees an impressive door with the word “Yu” on it. Inside Yubaba tells Chihiro that she is lazy and there is no work for her. However, Chihiro is insistent and Yubaba gives her the dirtiest job. They are interrupted by a giant baby that is crying. Distracted, Yubaba gives Chihiro the contract and threatens to turn her into a pig if she starts complaining. After Chihiro signs the contract, Yubaba lifts the characters of her name only leaving the character “Sen” telling her that her name is now Sen. Haku arrives but acts distant as he takes her to meet the staff and leaves her with Lin. As Lin and Sen reach their room, Lin gives her clothes and tells her that Haku is Yubaba’s servant.

At dawn, someone comes into Sen’s room and whispers to her to get to the bridge, and that she will see her parents. Sen goes to the bridge and sees one of the creatures from the night before but walks confidently. When she turns her head sees that the creature is not there. Haku leads Sen and tells her that her parents are now fully pigs and do not even remember ever being human. Haku then gives Sen her clothes back, she finds a farewell card addressed to her as Chihiro, realizing the power Yubaba has on her. Haku tells her to hold on to her clothes and name but keep them hidden. He tells her that if Yubaba successfully takes her name she can never escape and that he himself does not remember his own name anymore.

A confident Sen goes back to the Yuya, the bathhouse, as she is walking, she turns her head to see white serpent flying in the sky. As she returns, she does not realize that she is being followed by a faceless spirit with a mask on. Back at the Yuya, Sen struggles to do her duties and is horrified to find out that Yubaba

has assigned her to the 'Big Bath', where the dirtiest guests go. While she is emptying a washing tub, she sees a spirit with a mask and lets him inside. With Sen distracted the bath overflows, while the rest of the Yuya is in panic as everyone realizes that the stink-god is coming there.

Yubaba tells Lin and Sen to take care of the bath that is being used by the stink-god. They try to clean him but the water does not seem to clean anything. While trying to wash him Sen realizes something is stuck. Yubaba thinks this is important and with the help of the staff they pull on it. They are able to pull out a bike and continues their effort, dirt and rubbish pour out and as the steam clears, a sparkly clean spirit is left behind with gold specks on the floor. The guest who is thought to be a stink-god was actually a River God. Now cleansed of its impurities, the River God flies away. The faceless masked spirit also watches this scene and disappears once more.

At night, Sen and Lin eat together under the moonlight. Lin warns Sen when she talks about missing Haku and tells her that Yubaba makes him do her dirty work. In the baths, we see a frog-man go into the big bath where the River-God had been washed to get some of the gold left behind. As the frog-man searches the bath, the faceless spirit comes and offers him more gold. When the frog-man goes to the spirit, he eats him whole. Staff start coming in hearing the commotion, the faceless spirit, who is now talking with the frog's voice asks for a bath.

Sen is back in her room, looking out of the balcony, thinking whether she will be able to recognize her parents who have been turned into pigs. She once again sees the white dragon she had caught a glimpse of before, but this time recognizes it as Haku. She calls out to him and sees that white creatures are attacking him. She sees that the white creatures are actually paper and before she leaves the room one of them gets attached to her clothing. Haku is bleeding and after getting into her room, he starts going up the stairs. Sen follows him, as she makes her way up, she runs into the faceless spirit. He tries to give her some gold, but she does not take it and continues going after Haku. The spirit is not pleased and eats some of the staff standing near him.

While following him, Sen finds herself in Yubaba's room. Trying to hide when Yubaba comes in, she tries to hide in a pile of cushions. Yubaba comes her way but leaves as she sees her baby sleeping. However, before Sen leaves, Bou wakes up and grabs her. He tells her that she will make him sick with the germs she brought from the outside. He wants her to play with him when Sen asks him to let go, so she can go and save her friend, Bou threatens to call Yubaba, or even break her arm. Sen shows him the blood on her hands so that he can understand how badly hurt her friend is. Bou lets go, and Sen returns to Haku's side. As she tries to save him, she is attacked by Yubaba's bird. Bou comes in, the bird and the green heads stop attacking Sen, but the baby is not there to help Sen. The paper that had attached itself to Sen's clothes speaks and transforms into Yubaba. Bou calls out to her but Yubaba turns him into a mouse saying he is not able to tell apart his mother, she also transforms the bird into a mosquito-like bird afterward she also turns the green heads into Bou. The Yubaba look-alike tells Sen that she is her twin sister. She tells her she is after Haku who stole her seal and that the seal has a deadly curse. At this moment Haku tears the paper and the woman disappears. The movement ends in Haku falling down and Sen clings to him. The mouse and the mosquito-bird cling to Sen. She pulls on Haku's horns and a memory from her past surfaces, of her being underwater. Haku gains consciousness and is able to avoid crashing.

They are in the boiler room and Sen tries to feed Haku the herbal cake she got from the River-God. Eating it he starts to vomit a seal and worm, Sen squashes the worm. Haku is back to his human form. Sen informs Kamaji that she wants to give Zeniba, Yubaba's twin sister, her seal back and ask her to heal Haku. Kamaji gives her train tickets and where to take the train from to get to Zeniba's house. Upstairs No-Face, the faceless spirit has been demanding to see Sen, she goes upstairs where he tries to give her gold. When she refuses, he asks her what is it she wants and Sen tells him she needs to go. This angers him and fearing him Sen gives him a herbal cake. The No-Face's reaction is even worse than Haku's. He starts vomiting and following Sen they go out of the Yuya. They go to the train station, No-Face still following Sen. As they board the train, the conductor

comes and sees No-Face, Sen uses her last ticket for him. They sit together, shadowy figures also on the train with them and watch the peaceful scenery. All other shadow passengers get off until only the four of them remain.

At the Yuya, Haku wakes up and says that he feels Chihiro calling him. Hearing this, Kamaji realizes his feelings and his love that lets him remember Sen's real name. Angry at the destruction caused by No-Face, Yubaba tells the staff to kill Sen's parents. Haku asks Yubaba not to and tells her Yubaba has not realized something important is missing. She starts to count the gold but Bou is distracting here so she does a spell to zip his mouth. The magic cast by Yubaba reacts with Zeniba's spell and Bou transforms into the green heads. She attacks Haku, but when he tells her that Bou is with Zeniba and he will bring him back is she releases Sen's parents she concedes.

Meanwhile, Chihiro arrives at her stop. Together they walk through the dark roads and reach a cottage. Inside Zeniba makes them tea and Chihiro gives back her seal. Zeniba asks how she is alright after holding the seal, and Chihiro tells her how she killed the worm. Zeniba tells her that the worm she killed was not hers but Yubaba's, to control Haku. Chihiro asks Zeniba to break the spell she had cast on her friends, but Zeniba tells her that the spell had been broken for some time and they could actually change back anytime they wished.

They eat cake and drink some tea as Zeniba talks about how different she is from her twin and tells Chihiro she can not help her with her parents or with Haku. Chihiro talks about remembering Haku from her past and Zeniba tells her that while she may not remember the memory itself is not lost. When Chihiro wants to return, Zeniba gives her a hairband telling her it will protect her. A sound comes from the door and when they open it a white dragon is waiting there. Chihiro goes to Haku to embrace him and Zeniba forgives him as he was under Yubaba's control. As they are leaving No-Face stays behind with Zeniba. Chihiro tells Zeniba her true name and they leave.

Haku flies off with Chihiro on his back, as they fly Chihiro's memories start to return. She remembers falling into a river, the Kohaku River, that is now covered. Realizes that is Haku's real name. The scales fall from him and he is

once again the boy she had seen. Haku tells her he also remembers his real name, “Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi”, a name that sounds very much like a god’s. Haku says he also remembers Chihiro falling into the river, losing her shoe. Chihiro remembers him saving her from drowning and carrying her to safety.

At dawn, the staff is telling Yubaba of Chihiro and Haku’s return. Yubaba wants to see Bou and when the mouse turns into Bou she is very surprised. They want Yubaba to fulfill her side of the deal. However, she tells them that she can not do that unless the rules are followed. She tells Chihiro that in order for her to leave she must pick her parents from the pigs. Chihiro tells them that her parents are not among the pigs, which is correct. With her answer, the contract she had signed turns to dust.

Dismissed by Yubaba, Chihiro and Haku head to the river which is now dry. Haku tells her not to look back until she is safely out of the tunnel. While Haku is not able to leave together with Chihiro, as he remembers his name he will quit working there and return to his world. He promises Chihiro that they will meet again. She goes to the empty waiting room where her mother and father are waiting for her. Chihiro realizes they do not remember anything. Together they go through the tunnel, once again Chihiro clinging to her mother. When they are out of the tunnel, their car is covered with leaves and dust as if it has been there for some time. She looks back as they are leaving seeing tunnel getting smaller as they drive through the forest.

4.3.2. Analyses

Spirited Away (*Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi*) is the first Miyazaki film which takes place in the modern era. One could say this at least about the beginning and the ending of the film if not the middle parts. The main character from modern Japan goes into the *kami* world which is depicted as a modernizing Japan, therefore, an industrialized and capitalist world. However, before analyzing the whole film, it is important to look into the opening scene in detail because Miyazaki’s openings give a lot of information about the themes of the film.

In contrast to *Princess Mononoke*, where the opening scene takes place in the wilderness, we see a flower bouquet, a product of human-controlled nature (**Figure 4.4.1**). *Princess Mononoke* symbolizes the past of Japan, where eventually wilderness became a gentle, calm forest. On the other hand, *Spirited Away* illustrates today by showing the consequences of the change that started in *Princess Mononoke*.





She and her family are going to their new house in their car and Chihiro is upset because of moving. On the road, we see a residential area on a quarried mountain peak (**Figure 4.4.2**). The change caused by human hands makes us remember the untouched mountains and forests of *Princess Mononoke*. They choose the wrong way where asphalt road turns to stone pavement and they get lost in the deep forest. Throughout the road, we see some destroyed *hokora* 祠, miniature *Shinto* shrines (**Figure 4.4.2**). This shows us that there is no respect for *kami* in modern days. On the other hand, we understand that gradually we are drifting apart from the modern world.

Then they find an abandoned theme park that remains from the era of the economic bubble. The parents decide over to see the park or not, Chihiro complains and does not want to go (**Figure 4.4.4**). It is visually shown by the upper angle close up, that Chihiro is not a part of the decision making process (**Figure 4.4.5**). While her parents talking, we even cannot see her in the shot (**Figure 4.4.6**). The wind seems like trying to take them inside the building. Only Chihiro seems to pay attention to wind, *hokora* and the stone *kami* protecting the entrance. They walk inside, the wide-open space resembles an abandoned train station. While they walk away from the strange clock tower/train station building, Chihiro wants to go back, however, the gust of the wind nearly drags Chihiro to continue walking towards the inner parts of the theme park (**Figure 4.4.7**). She tells her mother that the building is moaning, rumbling. It is shown again that Chihiro is more perceptive of her surroundings and the forces of nature. Moreover, this last scene makes us remember the *Alice in Wonderland* or *Totoro* but this time it is not a fall into a fantasy world but being dragged.

Chihiro being dragged, this time, by her family, follows them inside the theme park. Her parents smell food and find a restaurant but there is no one around. Her mother says they can pay when someone shows up; then they start to eat. Chihiro still being reluctant says that the owners will be mad. However, this is not a problem for her father because he says they can pay up by credit card or cash.

Figure 4.4. The Opening Scene of *Spirited Away*



4.4.4	 A family consisting of a man in a light blue polo shirt, a woman in a pink long-sleeved shirt, and a young girl in a green and white striped shirt. They are standing in front of a red wall with some peeling paint.
4.4.5	 A close-up shot of the young girl in the green and white striped shirt. She has a surprised or excited expression, looking upwards. Her hands are being held by the man in the blue shirt.
4.4.6	 A close-up shot of the man in the blue shirt and the woman in the pink shirt. They are looking at each other and appear to be in conversation.
4.4.7	 The young girl in the green and white striped shirt is standing alone in a courtyard. She is holding a small green leaf in her hand. The background shows a red wall and some greenery.

Source: Hayao Miyazaki, Spirited Away (GKIDS, 2017).

Their eating becomes an extravagance. Beginning and ending of this eating scene, we see Miyazaki (**Figure 4.5**) put food/material upper than humans in his modern-day description. For Miyazaki, “Our world appears ever more fuzzy and confusing, yet in spite of that it threatens to corrode and devour us.” Therefore, he adds that the main preoccupation of this film is to depict modern Japan in a fantastic frame to have clarity.²³⁵ With the emphasis on money and extravagance, capitalism and materialism are evident in this scene. Moreover, Miyazaki thinks “today’s children are surrounded by a high-tech world and increasingly lose sight of their roots in the midst of so many shallow industrial products.”²³⁶

Figure 4.5 The Parents Turn into Pigs



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, Spirited Away (GKIDS, 2017).

Connection to the Japanese roots is an important subject for Miyazaki. As we have seen in Chapter 3, Miyazaki actually did not have a connection with Japan and said that he hated Japan. However, after reading Sasuke Nakao’s book, he made peace by his ethnic Japanese roots. These roots both hold a harmonious relationship with nature, the non-human and *kami* in nature. The beginning of the industrialization and capitalism which he depicts in *Princess Mononoke* turns into a big problem in modern-day. Moreover, because of them, humans “lose sight” of their roots. This is a subject I will analyze in detail later in this chapter.

²³⁵ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 197.

²³⁶ Miyazaki, 199.

In the film, after Chihiro comes back, she found her parents turn into pigs. They still sit on the stool like humans, her father still tries to eat more but gets a whipping in front of her child. The feared Chihiro runs to the entrance but the river blocks her way. We see a lot of *kami* becomes apparent while she starts to fade away. Haku comes to her rescue and gives her something seems like a berry. One can argue that this looks like a non-cooked, harvest of nature instead of what Chihiro's parents ate, cooked which changed them into pigs. We see Chihiro being dragged by another person again, this time Haku literally tells her to do as he says.

Chihiro is not depicted as a character who stands on her own legs. Even her skinny limbs are a sign of this. The beginning of her inner journey to maturity becomes visual with her weak personality also by been swayed/dragged from side to side. For Miyazaki, children in the modern era have a weak sense of themselves. He adds that they are protected, separated themselves from reality as far as to slightly know what it means to be alive.²³⁷ This weak sense of themselves also includes their weakened relationship with their roots.

Haku takes her to the beautiful garden of the Yuya. The tended garden an element of secondary nature shows even *kami* are affected and therefore changed because of the human world. It is shown as *kami* could not find any place, any wild forest to live after the events shown in *Princess Mononoke*.

Haku says that if Chihiro does not work, Yubaba will turn her into an animal therefore she has to insist to get a job then he leaves Chihiro. She goes to Kamaji, to the boiler room, as Haku said. The beautiful Japanese front facade of the Yuya, and the back, such as an industrial area or a factory, shows us a big contrast (**Figure 4.6**). They look like two sides of a medallion; one side depicted in a traditional Japanese style the other is a product of capitalism and industrialism. Miyazaki, therefore, shows us the changes both in the human world and in the *kami* world.

²³⁷ Miyazaki, 197.

The emphasis on working is been reminded to us again in the boiler room. Kamaji is the embodiment of the best worker for capitalism. He has six arms, eat and stay in the same place, never have a break unless it is for eating. He even says he is a slave to the boilers. Moreover, after *susuwatari* (soot) get distracted because of Chihiro, he yells at them and tells them if they do not want to turn into mere soot by Yubaba breaking their spell, they have to work. Ayumi Suzuki states that this scene shows us that Yubaba has the power to keep them alive just to make them work for herself.²³⁸

Chihiro asks Kamaji to give her a job. However, Kamaji sends her to Yubaba with Lin. This is the first time we see the inner parts of the Yuya. The Yuya is a place for *kami* to relax and purify because they are neglected and polluted by humans. Napier adds that these *kami* also not welcomed in the modern world.²³⁹ However, the interesting part is that they have to pay for the services. This again shows us the Yuya is actually a place of capitalism just like the theme park itself which is the outcome of extreme money and wealth in the bubble economy time.

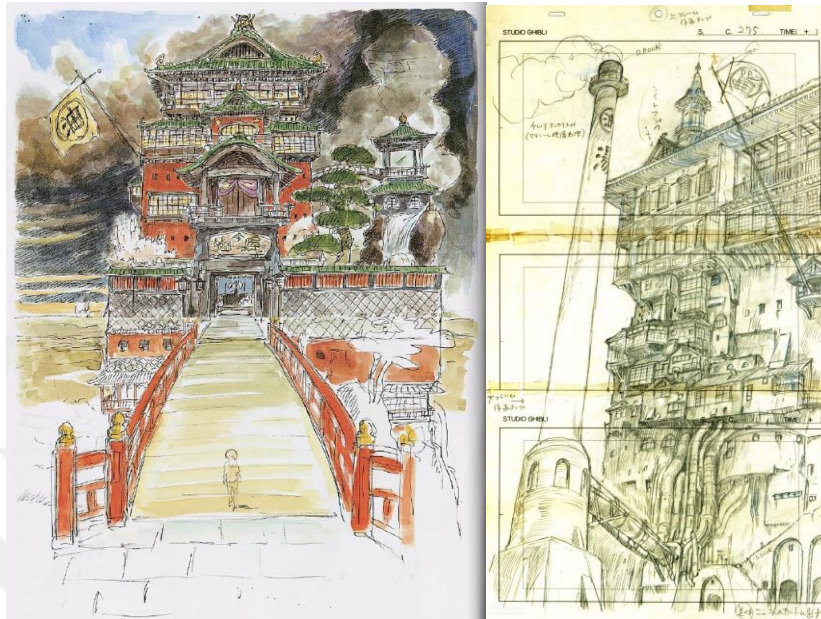
The top floor of the Yuya is where Yubaba lives. The interior is decorated in Western-style just like the outside of the Yuya (the top floor) has Western elements. Yubaba is the only one who does paperwork and dressed in a Western-style dress. She is the symbol of the West. Miyazaki says that for Japanese people, the definition of “deluxe” is a combination of Japanese traditional styles and Western styles. He also adds that the Yuya “is really like one of today’s leisure land theme parks, but it’s something that could also have existed in the Muromachi and Edo periods. So what we’re ultimately depicting is the real Japan.”²⁴⁰

²³⁸ Ayumi Suzuki, “A Nightmare of Capitalist Japan: ‘Spirited Away,’” accessed October 16, 2019, <https://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc51.2009/SpiritedAway/>.

²³⁹ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 12.

²⁴⁰ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 218.

Figure 4.6 Front and Back Facade of the Yuya



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *The Art of Spirited Away*, UK ed. edition (San Francisco, California: VIZ Media LLC, 2002); “宮崎 駿&高畑 勲 / 吉卜力手繪稿巡迴展・巴黎 Le Musée Art Ludique,” *Une Fille aux Cheveux Noirs* (blog), January 25, 2015, <http://a-une fille.com/zh-hant/2015/01/25/ghibli-layout-expo-paris/>.

Both the architecture and the characters show us the hierarchical relationship between the ‘West’ and Japan. Miyazaki shows us the modernizing Japan, the Meiji period with Western masters. After Commodore Perry came, Japan opened its doors to other nations. This period, called the Meiji, was also the period of Western influences therefore it is also a period of cultural changes where ethnic Japan changed again. In *Princess Mononoke*, he shows us ethnic Japan, the roots he believes in. Before Buddhism changes Shinto and Confucianism changes Japanese people. In one of his interviews, Miyazaki talks about the subject of religion, “Some traditional Japanese gods have been lumped in with Buddhism and made into wooden idols of worship.”²⁴¹ Yet in another interview, Miyazaki expresses his view of *Shinto* and being an aboriginal Japan:

It seems to me that Japanese are true natives, or aborigines, in the sense that we’re really people of the land. We’re natives of islands

²⁴¹ Miyazaki, 218.

with an amazing abundance of greenery on the edge of East Asia. I personally like the aboriginal aspect of Japanese, and when I see ancient festivals being performed, I hardly notice any Confucian influence. And while we may have superficially been influenced by Buddhism, if you look at the variety of Shinto rituals, it seems to me that things really haven't changed much from ancient times.²⁴²

If the beginning of the industrialization is depicted in *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited Away* shows us the consequences of that period: consumerism, materialism and capitalism. It can be seen that because of these consequences and Western influence, the disengagement with the spiritual world and therefore with nature deepens. This deepening disengagement depicted in the scenes where we see *okusare*, stink spirit and the No-face.

Before that, Chihiro talks to Yubaba and sign a contract for her working in the Yuya. Because of an old oath she took, Yubaba has to give a job whoever wanted to work there. Miyazaki makes a connection with this oath and old Japan. He says “that’s the kind of society Japan originally was; people had to give work to those who wanted it. To want to work is to want to live. To want to live in a specific place.”²⁴³ Then Yubaba takes three kanjis from her name and family name, therefore, she changes her name to Sen, the pronunciation of the remaining kanji. With this spell, Yubaba gains power against Chihiro, and with this spell, she slowly starts to forget her human world and her connection to the human world.

In this scene, Yubaba does not want to hire her at first and calls her lazy, spoiled and a stupid crybaby. But in the next scene, we see Yubaba spoiling her child. This characterization also makes her more human and puts her out of merely good versus evil dichotomy such as Lady Eboshi in *Princess Mononoke*. Susan Napier shares the same thinking, when Miyazaki finished this film, he was sixty years old, Napier states that he was old enough to perceive the complex nature of the modern times but still spirited to be angry and frustrated. Therefore, *Spirited Away* shares *Princess Mononoke*'s multilayered world building which is

²⁴² Miyazaki, 253.

²⁴³ Miyazaki, 240.

not discriminate things merely as evil or good and contains the angry connotation.²⁴⁴

Moreover, another common ground between *Princess Mononoke* and *Spirited Away* can be seen in the scene where Chihiro and Haku hide in the garden. Workers inside say there is a human intruder because they smell humans. Also, after Chihiro signed the contract Haku takes her to the living quarters of the Yuya. There again, we see workers saying she stinks to high heaven. In *Princess Mononoke*, Miyazaki shows us San and wolf clan do not like the smell of humans, and Jigo uses the word stench this time for animals. This makes us understand that for those characters both human and *kami* belong to other worlds, even living in the same world which makes the mediator characters more important.

Miyazaki also visually depicts two worlds differently. The human world is a realistic image of our world, on the other side the *kami* world is stylistic, has a lot of red and gold color. Art director Yôji Takeshige states that Miyazaki wanted²⁴⁵ the colors to be pompous and using red as a blinding color in the *kami* world. He adds that this kind of unmixed, straight color usage is unusual for Ghibli.²⁴⁶

Suzuki points out that Miyazaki takes advantage of cinematic techniques when depicting the real world, however, when the scenes in the theme park and the Yuya the mise-en-scene is animated more fantastically. For her, the “visual cues that indicate a movement from verisimilitude to the fantasmic indicate the two worlds are now separated or at least that the spirits, neglected in the world of

²⁴⁴ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 12.

²⁴⁵ Miyazaki uses colors as a tool of expressive storytelling. The color palettes of his films play a huge role in determining the tone, mood and narrative also gives a lot of information about the places and characters. The color designer of Miyazaki films, Michiyo Yasuda states that “Color has a meaning and it makes the film more easily understood. Colors and pictures can enhance what the situation is on screen.” For the color palettes of Hayao Miyazaki’s works see the video: Fandor, *Color by Numbers: Hayao Miyazaki*, 2017, <https://vimeo.com/224709240>.

²⁴⁶ Hayao Miyazaki, *The Art of Spirited Away*, UK ed. edition (San Francisco, California: VIZ Media LLC, 2002), 72.

humans, no longer wish to coexist with humans in this highly industrialized world.”²⁴⁷

The next morning, Sen meets with Haku. He gives her clothes back. Inside the clothes, Sen finds the farewell card her friends wrote to her. She reads the name Chihiro and remembers her whole self again. Haku warns her by saying Yubaba controls them by stealing their names. With forgetting your real name, you also forget your roots which is one of the issues Miyazaki wants to warn us through his film. Suzuki states that the change in the name is associated with capitalism because this system changes how people define themselves. Before the definition related to who they were, “but now they identify themselves with what they are in society according to what they own or produce.” She also reminds us that in the Meiji period commoner people permitted to use their family names publicly which was prohibited before, therefore in the older times only the ruling class could use their surnames.²⁴⁸

When Chihiro starts to work as Sen, she works slowly and makes mistakes. Because she is the “new girl”, Yubaba makes her clean big bath, the dirtiest place in the Yuya. While working, she sees No-face and believing it is a customer, takes it inside. Even though she is a klutz sometimes, she works hard and does not complain. Then we see Yubaba saying something is coming, something tries to sneak in by using rain.²⁴⁹ The shops in the theme park close their doors as *okusare* comes. In the meantime, Sen tires to get some tags for an herbal bath but she could not get it, No-face gives her one. In the bath also it tries to give her more, but she says she does not need that much. Therefore, we understand that Chihiro/Sen is also a mediator, a balancing figure in the materialist, greedy world.

When *okusare* approaches the Yuya, workers try to stop it make it turn back. Yubaba then says now that it is here, it is better to greet it.²⁵⁰ Sen has to

²⁴⁷ Suzuki, “A Nightmare of Capitalist Japan: ‘Spirited Away.’”

²⁴⁸ Suzuki.

²⁴⁹ Hayao Miyazaki, *Spirited Away* (GKIDS, 2017), pt. 54:50.

²⁵⁰ Miyazaki, pt. 58:28.

greet *okusare* and after taking money from it, she takes it to the big tub. The pollution and stink even make the food go bad.

She really shows effort to clean *okusare* and finds a thorn. Having her doubts about the identity of the *okusare*, Yubaba wants everybody to help Sen. When Sen removes the thorn, it turns out human garbage thrown to the river and *okusare* turns out to be a noble river *kami*, a white dragon. This scene shows again how Yuya makes money. The business depends on human pollution and neglect. Moreover, Miyazaki uses this scene to show us how humans violate nature. Thrupkaew interprets Miyazaki's intention with a question: "If humans don't tend to the earth, how much can the gods do?"²⁵¹

Heise states that even this scene depicted as supernatural, it makes good use of one of the oldest specialties of animation which is making objects behave and talk in the same manner as sensitive beings. Miyazaki uses this characteristic in an environmentalist perspective with a delicately amusing twist by using water to purify a polluted body of water.²⁵²

It is also interesting to see that the old, noble river *kami* polluted with human garbage cleaned in the hands of humans just like the scene where Ashitaka and San give the head of *shishigami* back to it in *Princess Mononoke*. Therefore, one can say that for Miyazaki it is important to have a balanced relationship with nature but having that relationship is up to humans and their effort to clean their dirt from nature.

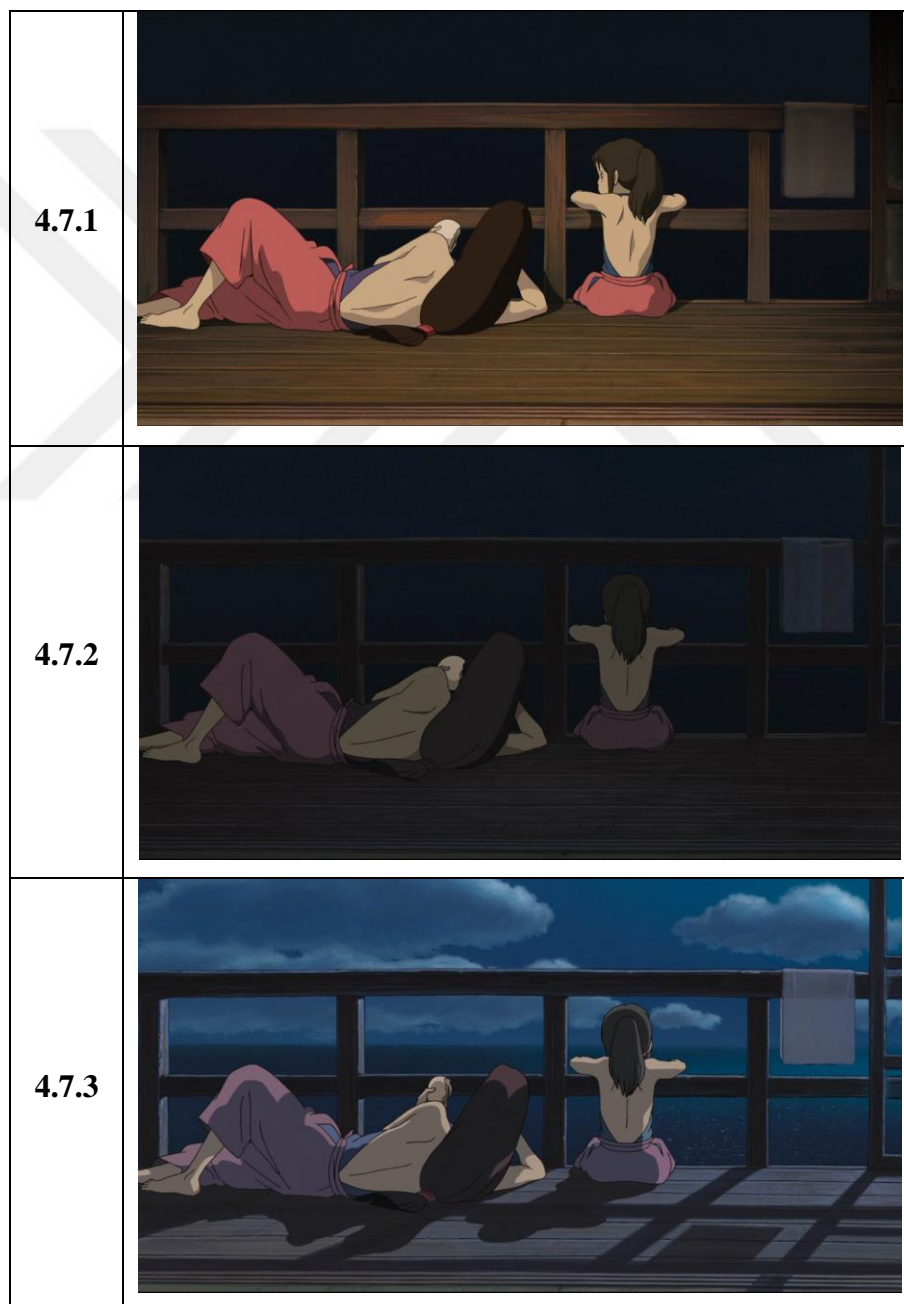
The river *kami* gives a strange looking green thing to Sen as its appreciation. Whole Yuya has a festive atmosphere because river *kami* leaves a lot of gold along with the dirt. It can be seen as for the old, noble nature, the gold is not important but for *kami* in the Yuya it means a fortune. No-face is shown as a lonely figure in this scene. It looks at its hand, we can speculate that in its hand it can be holding gold. The greediness of the Yuya affects No-face.

²⁵¹ Noy Thrupkaew, "Animation Sensation: Why Japan's Magical Spirited Away Plays Well Anywhere. (The Critics Film)," *The American Prospect*, October 21, 2002, <http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A92686794/AONE?sid=lms>.

²⁵² Heise, "Plasmatic Nature," 305–6.

Later we see Lin and Sen sitting in the veranda of living quarters of Yuya. Here Miyazaki shows us another pollution. While the lights are open, we only see human space (**Figure 4.7.1**) when the light is closed (**Figure 4.7.2**) nature dissolves into the view (**Figure 4.7.3**). The light pollution is used for another obstacle between the human-nature relationship.

Figure 4.7 Lin and Sen Sits in the Veranda



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, Spirited Away (GKIDS, 2017).

The greediness of Yuya becomes an important issue in the next scene. A frog comes to find gold to the big tub, No-face gives him some and then eats the frog. For Suzuki, it is the embodiment of capitalist consumption which grows with human greed.²⁵³ For Napier “his protean weirdness suggesting not simply fantasy monstrosity but also the alienation Miyazaki saw everywhere among young Japanese.”²⁵⁴ In his interviews Miyazaki says that one of the producers “apparently telling everyone, ‘No-Face is Miya-san’s [Miyazaki] alter ego.’ Yet even without getting intellectual about it, I think there’s probably a bit of No-Face in all of us.”²⁵⁵ Reider, on the other hand, thinks that No-Face is similar to *Tatarigami* in *Princess Mononoke*.²⁵⁶ I argue that No-Face is like a child, a mirror to its society. Miyazaki wanted to show consumerism and materialism in modern times, therefore, he created a fantasy world where *kami* –which are affected by human greed and industrialism, capitalism– lives. The extravagance and greed we see in No-Face is actually shows us the greed of the people and the place it is in. Like a child learning from its environment and form a character, No-Face too becomes an embodiment of greed. In the following scenes, we see No-Face giving gold to the people of Yuya and eats lavishly just as Chihiro’s parents. When Chihiro comes and rejects gold, he creates chaos in the Yuya. Every time he eats someone or something his appetite grows. Basically, No-Face looks for a company because it is lonely. As Miyazaki puts it “People will realize that money can’t buy happiness.”²⁵⁷

But, before the ending of chaos caused by No-Face, we see Chihiro tries to rescue Haku who is in a bad state because of Zeniba’s paper birds and her curse. It is evident that, in these scenes, Chihiro matured and gives her own judgments. She is not the same person who is dragged from side to side. She hides in the room of Bou, Yubaba’s spoiled child. He warns Chihiro that the outside world is

²⁵³ Suzuki, “A Nightmare of Capitalist Japan: ‘Spirited Away.’”

²⁵⁴ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 12.

²⁵⁵ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 212.

²⁵⁶ Noriko T. Reider, “‘Spirited Away’: Film of the Fantastic and Evolving Japanese Folk Symbols,” *Film Criticism* 29, no. 3 (2005): 19.

²⁵⁷ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 235.

full of germs and sickness, so she has to stay with him in his room. This shows the excess level of spoiling and protecting Yubaba does. While the Kashira, the three heads executing the order, Yubaba gave them and try to push Haku into a chute, Zeniba takes her form from the paper bird and changes Bou into a mouse, Kashira into Bou, and the Bird Yubaba into a fly. When Zeniba tries to kill Haku, he gains consciousness and tears the paper bird. Chihiro makes him eat part of the present river *kami* gave her. Haku vomits the pollution, the curse inside him with the seal he stole from Zeniba. Therefore, Chihiro decides to give the seal back to the Zeniba and Kamaji gives her train tickets so she can go to the Swamp Bottom. At the same time, Lin comes and takes her to Yubaba and No-Face.

Yubaba is so affected by her greed that she cannot recognize her son. Confronted with No-Face, Chihiro says that it cannot give her what she wants. Making No-Face eat a part of the present river *kami* gave her, she makes No-Face vomit all the “pollution, extravagance”. And takes her to the house of Zeniba. Because she understands that Yuya effects No-Face badly.

Then comes the climax of the film, the train scene. Miyazaki says that “All the chasing around, it was leading up to this. (...) I wanted to write a story where the girl catches the train with her own will in a world that she experiences for the first time. We know that she is very afraid and unsure of what to do.”²⁵⁸ This scene visually shows us the matured Chihiro. In Zeniba’s house, they eat moderately and produce what they need. Napier states that food is not just a critique of today’s society’s extravagance, but also a road to a more meaningful life.²⁵⁹

Haku comes to take Chihiro back to save her parents. In the journey, Chihiro remembers his name, Nigihayami Kohaku Nushi. We learn that the river is all built over, but it flows underground. It shows another kind of pollution human beings make. Napier states that it is no surprise that the catchiest characters in the film are river *kami*, one is polluted the other is the victim of

²⁵⁸ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 12.

²⁵⁹ Napier, chap. 12.

urban construction.²⁶⁰ Even Miyazaki says “The whole world seemed covered in concrete.”²⁶¹ Reider comments on Haku’s river being an urban construction site by saying “technology continues to encroach upon nature, destroying natural habitats.”²⁶²

While Miyazaki shows us the maturation journey of Chihiro, he warns us against extravagance by using food and greed. For Miyazaki “People are social animals, so it’s not good for us to live without some sort of connection to society. We have to work.”²⁶³ Anthropologist Kazuhiko Komatsu emphasizes that *kamikakushi* (being spirited away) is social death, the person can be a runaway to see a big city or just want to leave that village or elopement. Moreover, he comments that coming back from *kamikakushi* is a social resurrection, therefore it is a break as a “social being” or entering a different life, the life of the “other world” as a new person.²⁶⁴ And Chihiro comes back from the *kamikakushi* as a mature person who can now make a healthy connection with her society. Moreover, it is obvious that by working she learns about responsibility and purpose, thus can connect to the society of Yuya. When designing the Yuya, he makes Meiji Japan, modernization, a starting point to emphasize the richness of traditional Japan also the values people lost in that process by consumerism, capitalism and materialism. Miyazaki explains the importance of roots as follows:

In this borderless age, a man who doesn’t have a place to put down his roots will be looked down upon. A place is the past and also a history. A man without history, or a people that forgot its past will have no choice but to disappear, like a shimmer of light or to lay eggs endlessly as a hen and consumed.²⁶⁵

Mick Broderick points out, “The post-industrial age for Miyazaki is tempered by a sense of loss, not so much of innocence, but of origin where the

²⁶⁰ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, chap. 12.

²⁶¹ Miyazaki, 235.

²⁶² Reider, “Spirited Away,” 17.

²⁶³ Miyazaki, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*, 222.

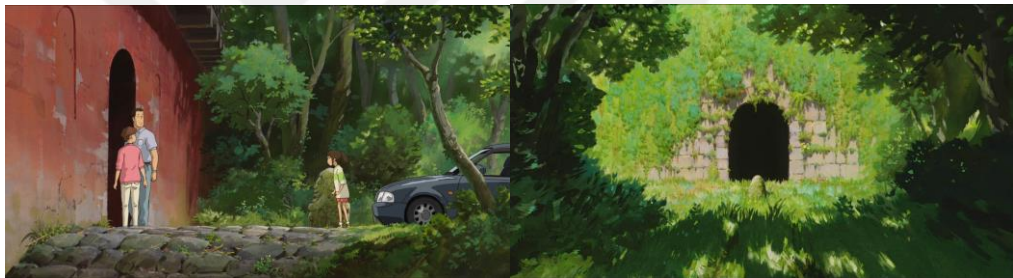
²⁶⁴ Reider, “Spirited Away,” 9.

²⁶⁵ Miyazaki, *The Art of Spirited Away*, 16.

importance of space, place, and context needs reinvigoration.”²⁶⁶ Reider comments on materialism and the pollution created by technology with a different perspective, she states that the *kami* which lost their place in human/physical world, find a new place again with technology such as animation and pc games.²⁶⁷

It is also important to remember that at the ending of the film, Miyazaki shows us it was not a dream. Chihiro forgets everything after she leaves the tunnel with her parents, but we see Zeniba’s hairband still in Chihiro’s hair then we remember Zeniba’s words, “Everything that happens stays inside you, even if you can’t remember it.”²⁶⁸ The passage of time also made visually apparent when we compare the beginning and ending scenes of *Spirited Away* (**Figure 4.8**).

Figure 4.8 The Beginning and Ending of the *Spirited Away*



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Spirited Away* (GKIDS, 2017).

In the beginning, the stone pavement road is clean, the building has a red paint. However, in the end, the whole road and building overflow with weed, the building also lost its paint. It makes us remember the pictures of Pripyat where a long time after the Chernobyl disaster, nature grows strong again, swallow empty buildings by vegetation and it’s “Europe’s largest experiment in rewilding”.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, 138.

²⁶⁷ Reider, “*Spirited Away*,” 21.

²⁶⁸ Miyazaki, *Spirited Away*, pt. 1:50:13.

²⁶⁹ Jessica Stewart, “Chernobyl Has Transformed into an Incredible Nature Reserve Now Open to the Public,” *My Modern Met* (blog), June 7, 2019, <https://mymodernmet.com/chernobyl-wildlife-tours/>.

4.4. *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* – Future

The story takes place in a post-apocalyptic world that has survived a global disaster. The main character of the story, Nausicaä, is the princess of the people of a small valley; the Valley of the Wind, where they live in harmony with nature. Surrounding the valley is the *Fukai*, a grand forest with poisonous fungi. In the story, Nausicaä and the people of the valley are caught in the middle of a war. Fed up with all the conflict, Nausicaä, strives to end both the battle between people and the hatred towards the *Fukai*.

Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind, as an apocalyptic narrative, warns us about future environmental disasters and the misuse of technologies. Just as in *Spirited Away*, so too in *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, it is the greed of humans that ultimately cause wars and the destruction of nature, the non-human, and humans.

4.4.1. Story

A millennium after the “Seven Days of Fire”, the global war has effectively destroyed civilization. The remainders of humanity barely survive as the poisonous forest, the *Fukai* 腐海, covers much of the earth. The *Fukai* is able to grow continuously as it takes its energy from the human-induced pollution that still covers the earth. As the poisonous jungle continues to take over the remaining outposts of humanity, giant insects with their ability to live inside the ever-growing jungle, the *Fukai*, have become the dominant life form. Among these giant insects, the *Ohmu*, seven-meter long invertebrates that also act as the guardians of the *Fukai*, are the most feared.

One of the remaining outposts of humanity is the Valley of the Wind, which takes its name from the strong winds that protect the place from the poisonous spores that plague humanity. The inhabitants must remain vigilant to make sure that their crops and water supplies are not contaminated. During ventures into the *Fukai*, everyone has to wear masks as the poison from this

jungle is able to rot the unprotected lungs of those who dare enter it. One such explorer is the Princess Nausicaä, our protagonist and the only remaining offspring of King Jil, the current ruler of the Valley.

One day when she is riding high above the forest on her *mehve*²⁷⁰ and exploring the *Fukai* to collect spore samples, she hears a gunshot as she prepares to return. Flying away, she sees someone exit the forest followed by an *Ohmu*, its eyes glaring red. She flies in front of it, making an effort to soothe the huge insect, and consequently, the *Ohmu*'s eyes turn blue after which it goes back into the forest. Nausicaä only then realizes that the individual exiting the forest was none other than Yupa, a traveling teacher, who was forced to fire his gun to protect a small animal. Nausicaä names the small fox-squirrel Teto and together with Yupa they return to the Valley.

As Yupa and King Jil talk about how they are not affected by the poison directly, they are nonetheless feeling its effects as it ages them at a faster rate. Oh-baba, the wise woman talks of Yupa's travels, claiming that he seeks a hero mentioned in the legends; "a person clad in blue standing in a golden field who will find the bond between humanity and the earth, and lead the people to a pure land..." which Yupa denies.

At night, Nausicaä awakes upon hearing a terrible storm. Not being able to return to sleep she goes to the roof to keep watch together with the night watch. They see a Torumekian airship being attacked by insects and watch it crash near the fields. Nausicaä goes to the field to search for survivors. She finds a girl her age and realizes that she is fatally injured. The girl, Rastel, is the princess of Pejite and asks Nausicaä to destroy the cargo. As Nausicaä tells Rastel that the cargo is indeed destroyed while watching the whole ship burn, Rastel quietly passes away.

The following day while Nausicaä is out in the fields, the Torumekian empire arrives and secures the Valley with troops in armor and tanks. She quickly returns only to find her father dead. Nausicaä placates the people after they learn

²⁷⁰ Nausicaä's glider's name is Mehve. The glider has a built-in engine, which provides an engine-assisted take-off and boosts in flight. The glider's wings also fold up.

of the king's death and stops them from attacking the Torumekians. Princess Kushana of the Torumekian Empire explains their intention to burn down the *Fukai* and once again claim the land it covers back for humanity. Kushana reveals that the cargo in the plane that had crashed was a 'proto-God Soldier' and the empire planned to revive it and utilize it to reclaim the *Fukai*. Kushana makes a decision to revive it in the Valley and takes Nausicaä and the elders as hostages. Yupa finds out that Nausicaä had been tending to a garden where she has learned that spores from the *Fukai* are not toxic when grown in clean soil with fresh water. She is unhappy as she has to leave her garden behind.

Once on the ship, the Torumekian are attacked by a single Pejite fighter; Prince Asbel, the brother of Rastel. Asbel is able to destroy the Torumekian ship but Nausicaä is horrified of this violence. Asbel seeing his dead sister in Nausicaä for a second loses his concentration and a Torumekian soldier shoots at him. Nausicaä, Mito and Kushana escape and during this escape Nausicaä removes her mask to show everyone that the air in higher altitudes is clean. They land near a lake to discuss their next course of action but Kushana tries to take command of the situation with her gun. During this, the *Ohmu* arrive, Nausicaä is not afraid and allows the *Ohmu* to touch her with their feelers, after which the *Ohmu* leave.

Nausicaä gets on her mekka and starts to explore the area. She sees Asbel who is getting attacked by insects and catches him just as the insects push him off a cliff, in consequence of which they both fall down, crashing to the forest floor. Nausicaä falls unconscious and has a dream about her past where she met an *Ohmu*'s baby and tried to protect it but her father took it away. She wakes up and realizes they are in an underground forest. Here she finds out that the trees of the *Fukai* are actually absorbing the poisons, therefore cleansing the soil and the water. She shares a meal with Asbel and falls asleep.

Back in the Valley, the people plan to rise up against the Torumekian Empire. The next morning Asbel and Nausicaä fly to the capital of Pejite, finding it in ruins after an attack of insects led by the *Ohmu*. They learn that it was the Pejiteans themselves that goaded the insects to attack their land hoping to kill all the occupying Torumekians. They plan to do the same with the Valley, in hopes

of taking command of the God Soldier for themselves in order to destroy the Fukai. After trying to flee to warn her people, Nausicaä ends up restrained.

Nausicaä wakes up on a Pejitean ship where she meets the Queen of Pejite. They dress her up like a Pejitean and take her to her mehve, but a Torumekian ship attacks. Nausicaä takes off, with the Torumekian ship on her tail. She is able to get away, meeting Mito and Yupa who are on a Valley ship. When they get close to the Valley, they see that the *Ohmu*, eyes red in anger, are charging towards the Valley. She realizes that the reason for their anger is a baby *Ohmu*, caught by a Pejitean transport using barbed hooks. Nausicaä attempts to get the Pejiteans to release it, but the Pejiteans start shooting, hitting her on the shoulder and ankle. Nausicaä goes to the baby *Ohmu* to try and stop it from going into the acid lake. Nausicaä then turns her gun onto the Pejiteans and demand that they take the baby *Ohmu* back to the horde to stop the *Ohmu* from advancing further.

Meanwhile, the people of the Valley are no match for the Torumekians and are withdrawing back to an ancient ship from before the “Seven Days of Fire”. Kushana has also returned to suppress the rebellion. However, the Torumekian soldiers run away upon seeing the insects coming. Kushana appears with an armored vehicle and behind her, a humanoid form climbs over the hill: The God Soldier. It moves towards the *Ohmu* and attacks on Kushana’s command, utilizing a light beam. The front force of the *Ohmu* is vaporized. However, it turns out the God Soldier was yet not ready to be brought into the world and starts to deteriorate. It shoots another beam, destroying another line of *Ohmu*. After this, the God Soldier crumbles and is destroyed. While the God Soldier has destroyed a hefty number of *Ohmu*, there are still thousands of them. The Valley people watch from the ship as Nausicaä appears above the acidic lake. Nausicaä and the baby *Ohmu* are standing before the *Ohmu* and blinded by their rage, the horde of *Ohmu* runs over them. Nausicaä is seen to be thrown up into the air and she falls back to the ground, disappearing amidst the horde of *Ohmu*.

Believing the princess to be dead, the people mourn her passing, but suddenly the *Ohmu* stops. In the center, the red angry eyes become a tranquil blue and this color blue expands to reach all the other *Ohmu*, bringing them peace. The

Ohmu heal the broken body of Nausicaä using their feelers and hoist her up into the sky. She awakens and stands on the glowing feelers of the *Ohmu*.

After the climax, we see life in the Valley go back to normal: Nausicaä training young fliers, Yupa and Prince Asbel exploring the *Fukai*. Inside the forest, we see a single plant sprouting in the clean sand next to Nausicaä's helmet. Oh-baba cries upon hearing account of this, saying the prophecy (of the one in blue upon a field of gold) has been fulfilled: Nausicaä was able to find the bond between mankind and the *Ohmu*.

4.4.2. Analyses

Nausicaä of the Valley of the Winds (1984) based on the manga Miyazaki started in 1982. He had completed only two of seven volumes when he adapted the manga to an animated feature. Therefore, the ending of the film and the manga changes.

The name of the story comes from its heroine: Nausicaä. She was depicted as a tragic love interest in Homer's *Odyssey*. From ancient times to the present, Homer's portrayal of Nausicaä has taken scholarly attention,²⁷¹ as well as Miyazaki's. When he first read about her in Bernard Evlin's book *Gods, Demigods & Demons: An Encyclopedia of Greek Mythology*, he deeply attracted to the character. While reading about Nausicaä he remembered a Japanese heroine from the eleventh century, she was also a princess-like Nausicaä, but her love was not towards a man instead it was towards insects. She did not cut eyebrows or paint his teeth black as the custom of her times. So, he continued to wonder about her life after the story. At some point, these two characters merged in his head as one.²⁷²

²⁷¹ Nicolas P. Gross and Nicholas P. Gross, "Nausicaa: A Feminine Threat," *The Classical World* 69, no. 5 (1976): 311, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4348437>.

²⁷² Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 283–84.

Such as her two inspirations, Nausicaä is depicted as a strong woman like San or Lady Eboshi in *Princess Mononoke* and Chihiro in *Spirited Away*. On the other hand, her story is not a coming age story, she is characterized as fearsome, a childish but a mature woman even in the beginning. Her responsibilities are harder than all the characters Miyazaki created. Her quest is to resurrect a world that is nearly destroyed by wars. The apocalyptical setting makes life harder for any kind.

This is the first world Miyazaki created on his own. Before Nausicaä, his directorial debut on the animated feature was *Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro*. However, it was an adaptation, thus he cannot change the story that much for his preferences. On the other hand, Nausicaä shows us some of the most identifiable features of Miyazaki's worldview: A radical, almost disruptive viewpoint of a future Earth and a precursor of an animistic perspective.²⁷³

In the opening, we see a dead forest (**Figure 4.9.1**) covered by something which resembles fungi, one of them explodes and spreads spores, in the air snow-like particles float. Two horseclaws²⁷⁴ and a man wearing shohki masks²⁷⁵ go along the trees. We understand that the air is poisonous both animals and humans. They come to village, which is like the trees covered by fungi (**Figure 4.9.2**). There is no one around. It is like the ending of *Spirited Away* or the images of Pripjat but with a dangerous note. The man dismounts from his horseclaw opens a door, inside of the house is no different than outside. With a close up we see three skeletons. He takes a baby doll from the ground, it falls to pieces (**Figure 4.9.3**). This is one of the stunning images of the opening scene. It means one of the skeletons was a girl. By this image, Miyazaki creates an atmosphere of apocalypse strongly. He leaves the house, looks up, we see strange and big flies in the sky which is a sign that other animals without masks live in this toxic environment. Therefore, Miyazaki shows us two different types of animals, one is wild and

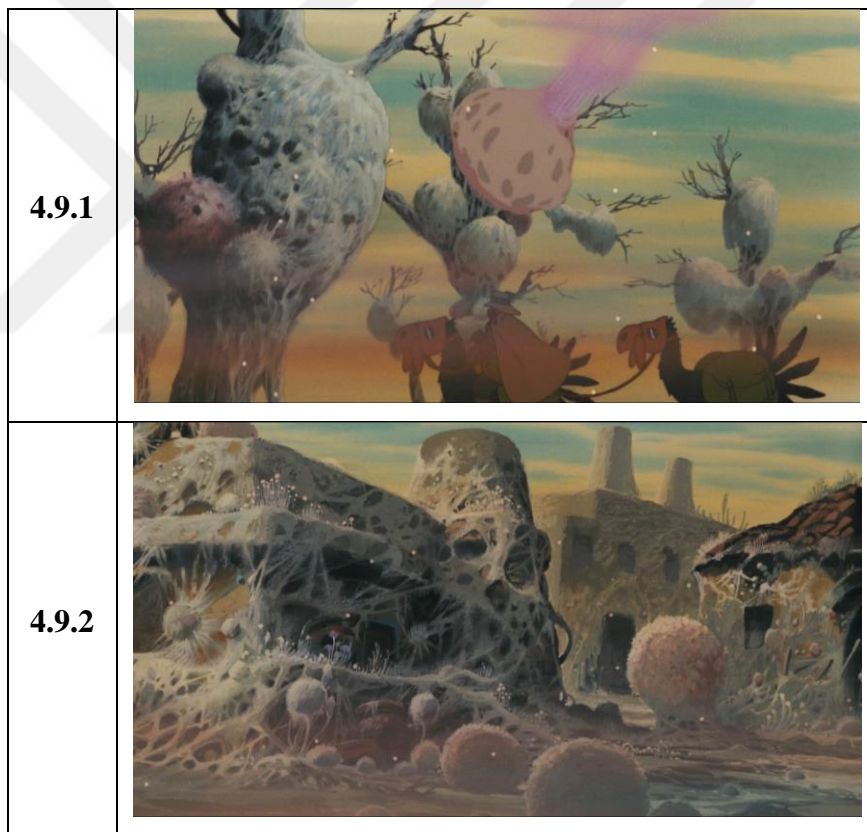
²⁷³ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

²⁷⁴ A large, two-legged flightless bird used as a mount for humans in the movie and the manga.

²⁷⁵ A mask which is designed to protect the wearer from the miasma in the *Fukai*.

living in the *Fukai*, the other is domesticated and has to use masks like humans. He says this village also be consumed in the *Fukai*, sea of decay soon. Therefore, we understand that this Fukai is expanding. The air also depicted as brown. The colors of the opening mostly white, brown and grey support the apocalyptic atmosphere. Then just like *Princess Mononoke*, a written explanation appears on the film: “1.000 years after the collapse of industrial civilization, the *Fukai*, a swamp exuding toxic vapors, covered an earth strewn with rusting ruins, threatening human survival.”²⁷⁶

Figure 4.9. The Opening Scene of *Nausicaä of Valley of the Wind*



²⁷⁶ Hayao Miyazaki, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (Studiocanal, 2005), pts. 1:48-2:00.



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (Studiocanal, 2005)

In the title sequence, we see a tapestry with mythical imagery. It starts with a girl look like an angel with a background of blue sky and half of the screen is reddish-brown with a sword and snake-like creatures (**Figure 4.10**). These colors and the contrast between them will be a fundamental coding in the film. Miyazaki himself wrote in *The Art of Nausicaä* “These are going to become myths.”²⁷⁷

Figure 4.10 Sketch of Title Sequence of *Nausicaä of Valley of the Wind*



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *The Art of Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (San Francisco: VIZ Media LLC, 2019), 129.

²⁷⁷ Hayao Miyazaki, *The Art of Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (San Francisco: VIZ Media LLC, 2019), 129.

From the mythic personification of both past and future events of this world, we understand that Nausicaä's story will become a myth. It seems like Miyazaki still has hope for humanity and thinks that Nausicaä's story will be told in later generations. Napier states that “Wordless and enigmatic, the credit sequence immediately establishes the seriousness and strangeness of the film to come, something different from anything ever seen before in animation.”²⁷⁸

In the title sequence Miyazaki cuts from the tapestry to a blue sky, with a contrast on the opening scene, we see Nausicaä riding her *mehve* (**Figure 4.11.1**). For Mehmet Korkut Öztekin, *mehve* (German: Möve meaning gull) shown in the film as the most peaceful, pure and fun form of flying.²⁷⁹ It has an environmental-friendly machine. And it will be an inseparable part of Nausicaä, which is also apparent from the tapestry, with the symbolism of wings (**Figure 4.10**). In this scene, we also see a gigantic skull, which was showed at the beginning of the title sequence. They were bringing destruction and war to the world. From the moss and greenery, we understand that it was a war of the past. Also, in **Figure 4.11.2**, we see forest of *Fukai* for the first time, its scale along with the skull shows humans are small and insignificant against nature.

Figure 4.11. Scenes from The Title Sequence of *Nausicaä of Valley of the Wind*



²⁷⁸ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

²⁷⁹ Mehmet Korkut Oztekin, *Manga - Bir Kulturel Direnis Araci* (Iletisim Yayıncılık, 2011), 104.

4.11.2



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (Studiocanal, 2005)

We see Nausicaä collecting spores, wander in the forest and then find an empty *Ohmu* shell with a childish giggle. The blue-toned colors in this scene and the calm attitude of Nausicaä make us feel peaceful. Even she is using her mask for the toxic air, nature here does not stir fear in the viewer. This peaceful feeling enters a climax with Nausicaä holding an *Ohmu* eye shell upside her like a snow globe while spores snowing. Then she hears a gunshot. She goes in haste to help. An *Ohmu* blinded by rage with its red eyes chases the person we saw in the opening. The first reaction of Nausicaä is “what an amazing *Ohmu*.”²⁸⁰ The sublime connection of Nausicaä to nature makes us understand that Nausicaä like Ashitaka and Chihiro is a mediator character in this film. Even in a dangerous situation, she looks with eyes unclouded. She tries to protect both non-human and human, bring about an agreement between the two sides of the war. She says that it is blinded by rage. Both this sentence and the red eyes of *Ohmu* makes us remember the *Tatarigami* from *Princess Mononoke*. Then, she uses flash grenades and insect charm to allay the rage of the *Ohmu*. She saves both sides without using violence. In the next scene with the small fox-squirrel Teto too, Nausicaä waits calmly and mercifully till the savage fox-squirrel calms down. Master Yupa makes an emphasis on the mysterious powers of Nausicaä.

²⁸⁰ Miyazaki, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, pt. 10:02.

Figure 4.12. Sketch of the Valley of the Wind



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *The Art of Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (San Francisco: VIZ Media LLC, 2019), 113.

Nausicaä lives in a pastoral, pacifist village (**Figure 4.12**) governed by King Jil who resembles a feudal lord. The valley is a big agricultural area. Because of the deep valley and the wind coming from the ocean, Fukai does not pollute this valley. As an example of clean technology Windmill's are dominant characters of this community, people use these for pumping the underwater and use it for agriculture. However, Miyazaki in an interview for *Mononoke* mentions agriculture as a harmful thing:

(t)he biggest reason why mountain animals decreased so much is agriculture. It's human arrogance to say that the country scenery is beautiful. A farm basically takes away the chance to grow from other plants. It's more like barren land. The productivity of wasteland is higher than that of farmland. It's the same for other creatures. It's because of the time (we live in today) is such that I have to even think such things.²⁸¹

²⁸¹ "Miyazaki on Mononoke-Hime // Interviews // Nausicaa.Net," accessed January 7, 2020, http://www.nausicaa.net/miyazaki/interviews/m_on_mh.html.

Murphy states that Japan is covered with mountains and its soil has been heavily polluted by thousands of years of farming, also populace is largely urban, thus for Miyazaki, it is not an option to rely upon old-fashioned pastoral ideas.²⁸²

On the other hand, Miyazaki shows us *Fukai* as a wilderness. Moreover, this huge toxic fungus forest created by humans. Because of the cataclysmic conflict known as Seven Days of Fire and over-industrialization, the toxins' apocalyptic consequences resulted in creating the *Fukai*. One can say that it was actually created because of the misuse of technology and humans' meaningless wars.

In the *Fukai* phosphorescent plants, fungi and huge trees like canopies grow; mutant insects and the giant *Ohmus* roam. Moreover, we see that Nausicaä making experiments about *Fukai*. We learn that it is not because of the fungi but the soil creates a toxic environment. On the other hand, later it is explained that the trees absorbing the poison from the soil and then, by crystallizing themselves purifying the environment. Because of the sand (crystal tree particles) carried with underground water, Nausicaä can grow non-toxic plants from the spores she collected. For Mumcu and Yılmaz, Miyazaki's aim to depict a forest which cleans the pollution in the toxic world of *Nausicaä* is not to show the usefulness of the *Fukai* for the people, on the contrary, he tries to demonstrate how humanity makes unfair assumptions and prejudiced.²⁸³ It is true when we think about the perspectives about *Fukai* in the film. Developed from the opening scenes, people show two different perspectives to *Fukai*. One is the Nausicaä's view, coded with blue. For Nausicaä *Fukai* is a dynamic, living thing; dangerous but respected also scientifically analyzed. With Nausicaä's empathy towards non-human, she can wander in the forest without harm. The second view is shared by especially people from Pejite and Torumekia.

²⁸² Amy Murphy, "Future Traditions of Nature," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 21, no. 1 (2009): 12.

²⁸³ Sema Mumcu and Serap Yılmaz, "Anime Landscapes as a Tool for Analyzing the Human-Environment Relationship: Hayao Miyazaki Films," *Arts* 7, no. 2 (June 2018): 9, <https://doi.org/10.3390/arts7020016>.

The valley eventually is surrounded by the violent battle of Pejite and Torumekia, but the most important battlefield will be the war against *Fukai*. Both Pejite and Torumekia are trying to seize power for their benefit and burn down the toxic forest to re-establish human dominance over nature. They cannot think about other possibilities such as peaceful alliances. Their attempt to steal *kyoshinhei*, the God Warrior bring the war to the Valley. The Princess of Pejite, Lastelle and the God Warrior is stolen by the Torumekians. After the Torumekian ship crashed near Valley because of the insects, the Torumekian army and Princess Kushana comes to Valley.

Cavallaro states that the film delivers one of Miyazaki's most extraordinary examples of the finesse of creating multilayered and clearly non-stereotypical personalities in Kushana's figure: although represented as the villain of the piece, it is also directly linked to persuading motivations and emotions that rationalize her rigid quest of vengeance. He then gives the example of her armored prosthesis.²⁸⁴ Kushana shows she lost an arm because of a mad *Ohmu*, then she adds that who becomes her husband will see even worse. Then we realize even with her white dress her legs are always armored like her prosthetic arm. This multilayered and non-stereotypical character type also comes up in Princess Mononoke as Lady Eboshi. Kushana seizes the village, in the process King Jil dies. Nausicaä goes berserk and kills four warriors. Master Yupa intervene and Nausicaä starts to cry both with regret and sorrow. One can argue that this intervention of Master Yupa resulted from his thought about Nausicaä. He knows there is something big waiting in her destiny. Even Miyazaki said that "Nausicaä is not a protagonist who defeats an opponent, but a protagonist who understands or accepts. She is someone who lives in a different dimension"²⁸⁵

While Kushana and her soldiers trying to revive the god warrior. She gives a speech to the village about how they are on the brink of extinction because of the *Fukai*, *therefore*, they shall burn away it and resurrect the earth. The shaman

²⁸⁴ Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, 50.

²⁸⁵ Cavallaro, 50.

of the village gives an important answer. We understand that countless times humans tried to burn *Fukai*. But every time herds of *Ohmu*, blinded with rage, have swarmed the earth. Therefore, humans must not touch the *Fukai*.

After Nausicaä and Kushana headed to Torumekia, we see Asbel, a warrior of Pejite, twin brother of the Princess Lastelle, attacks Torumekian airplanes. It is important to note that, Nausicaä without bias or prejudice tries to prevent more killings. Moreover, she saves Kushana from the crashing plane. Also, she removes her mask to encourage people from her village in the toxic environment. These characteristics of Nausicaä show her commitment not just non-human, human too. When their planes put down on the sea in *Fukai*, people of the Valley cannot understand the reason Nausicaä saving Kushana, even Kushana remarks that Nausicaä is a fool. It makes us remember the scenes when Ashitaka saving or helping two sides of the conflict.

Nausicaä warns Kushana not to fire her gun, that *Fukai* is not like the human world (**Figure 4.13**). We see her knowledge, but Kushana does not listen and fire her gun. In the non-human sphere, she still tries to order people. Nausicaä's question is important here: "What are you so afraid of?" For Nausicaä Kushana resembles Teto. Then *Ohmus* come. It is evident that one of the most feared things in this world is *Ohmu*. With a peaceful and calm manner Nausicaä talks with them (**Figure 4.13**).

Figure 4.13 Kushana Comes Face to Face with *Fukai*



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (Studiocanal, 2005)

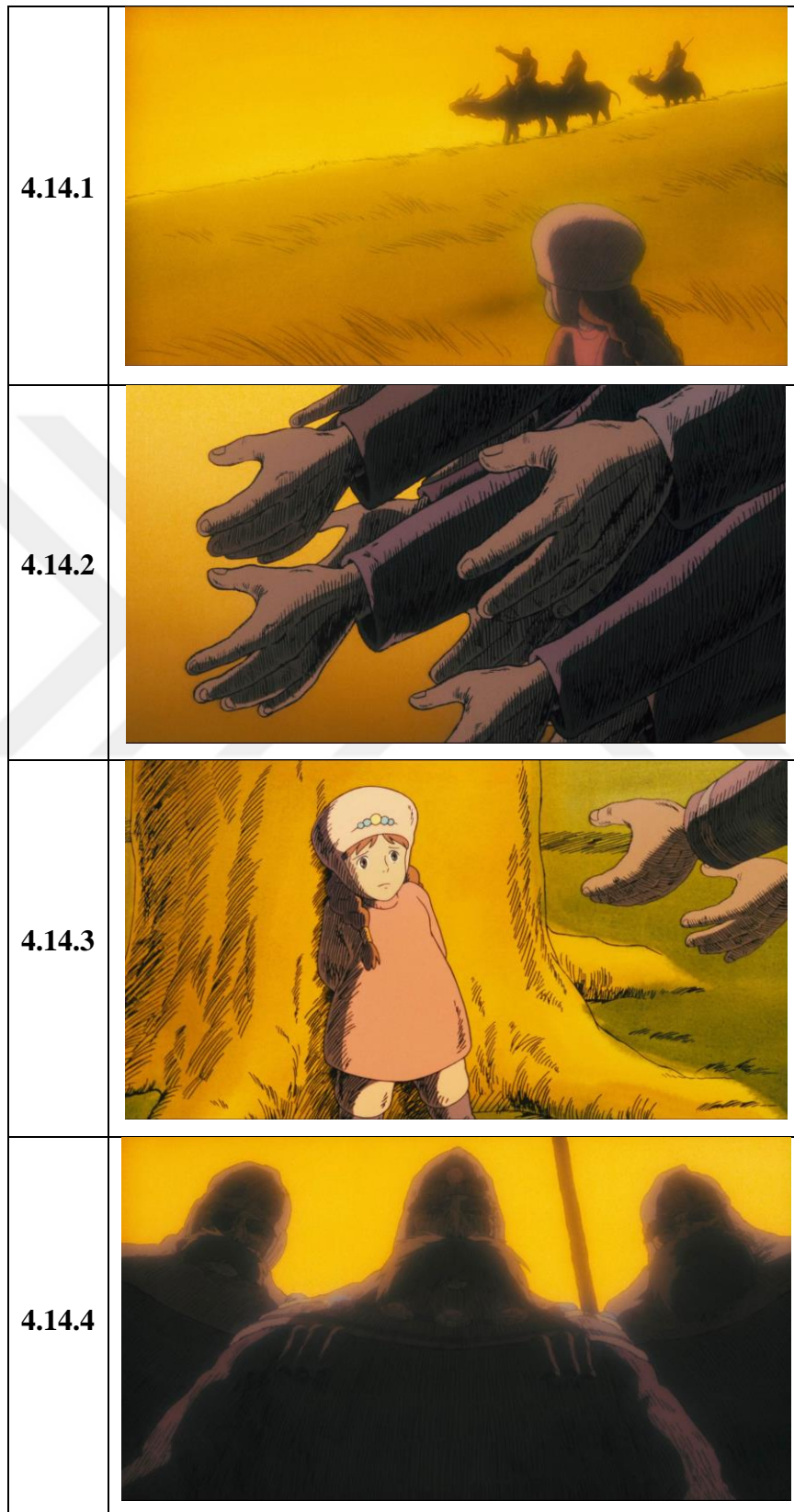
Ohmu starts to examine Nausicaä in this scene we see the beginning of a flashback sequence to Nausicaä's childhood. A golden field and a big tree under





the blue sky. Also, the song with a child's voice makes this experience stronger. But the flashback scene is interrupted. Nausicaä understands Asbel is still alive. Then, *Ohmus* leave with their eyes red, blinded by rage. Nausicaä follows them. Kushana looks at her and she tries to understand this experience. She is changed by Nausicaä's characters. Even it is little, this will change the continuation of the story.

Nausicaä after following *Ohmus*, find and saves Asbel. From the scenes where Asbel shoots at insects and they violently trip him up, we understand that they are reacting violence. When they crash, Nausicaä loses consciousness, we see the continuation of the flashback sequence.

The drawing style, colors change drastically, also the cut styles and the tempo. It starts with a golden field again (**Figure 4.14.1**), we see five or six years old Nausicaä. A voice interrupts her then we see her father. She travels with her father but does not want to go that way. Then Miyazaki cuts to people running after Nausicaä. In an eerie scene (**Figure 4.14.2**) we see lots of hands gradually dominating the frame. Nausicaä seems afraid, leans her back on the tree we saw before (**Figure 4.14.3**). It seems like a point of view (POV) shot from her father's eyes. Nausicaä seems small and vulnerable. She wants them to go back but then a baby *Ohmu* appears. Miyazaki cuts Nausicaä's POV (**Figure 4.14.4**). When her father sees the baby *Ohmu*, he says she is being used by the insects. The imagery shows us how humans are frightening and how baby *Ohmu* and Nausicaä are vulnerable. She kneels down, curves over to protect the *Ohmu* but at the same time looks like taking the shape of the *Ohmu* (**Figure 4.14.5**). Her father says that insects and humans cannot live in the same world. We see hands dominating the frame again but this time they also seem like coming towards us (**Figure 4.14.6**). This scene makes us understand the fear of child Nausicaä. When they take away the baby *Ohmu*, we see white threads, like a connection between *Ohmu* and Nausicaä. In the last scene of this sequence Nausicaä kneels down and curves over seems like an *Ohmu* again and cries.

Figure 4.14. Scenes of Flashback Sequence of *Nausicaä of Valley of the Wind*



4.14.5	
4.14.6	
4.14.7	
4.14.8	

Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (Studiocanal, 2005)

After Nausicaä gains consciences, we see canopy like trees. She finds the same sand she used in her experiments. As Hadl puts by this revelation “The landscape introduced so dramatically early in the film turns out not to be a main protagonist.”²⁸⁶ Understanding fully what is Fukai, she notices *Ohmus* and other non-human life are actually protecting it for further human destruction. The reason for their aggressiveness has its source in this. In a way, they are like the *kami* of this half-European, half-alien world. Miyazaki’s animism can be seen in this film too. He commented: “I feel that there is something inside myself that can be called animism rather than religion. In fact, Nausicaä herself in this film is governed by a sort of animism”²⁸⁷

For Napier, the color palette used in the *Fukai* turns it “strangely beautiful Otherness”. She adds that the sphere of the nonhuman, the *Fukai*, through its complex ecosystem and the many huge insect inhabitants, claims its authority over the Earth, because they are the heirs of the polluted history of mankind. It’s no wonder the *Ohmu* are staying there. Their size, strength (physical and mental) and emotional depth indicate they may very well be the rightful inheritors of this post-apocalyptic world.²⁸⁸ For Cavallaro, The *Ohmu* is an enigmatic blend of violence and compassion, hatred and calmness.²⁸⁹

Murphy situates the *Fukai* as wilderness. It reflects nature as a “transcendent Other”. And because it generates the clean air and water which is essential for all existence, its disappearance as a consequence of any further human conflict will put an end not just to nature, but also to humanity itself. Secondly, the wilderness of Nausicaä is not over-idealized in its own right; it is depicted as toxic as it is now and eternally because of human conflict and harmful growth.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶ Hadl, “Nature, Media and the Future,” 354.

²⁸⁷ Mayumi, Solomon, and Chang, “The Ecological and Consumption Themes of the Films of Hayao Miyazaki,” 3.

²⁸⁸ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

²⁸⁹ Cavallaro, *The Anime Art of Hayao Miyazaki*, 50.

²⁹⁰ Murphy, “Future Traditions of Nature,” 12.

Miyazaki's vision of nonhuman beings recovering after the pollution human-caused comes from an environmental crisis in Japan namely the Minamata disaster. As explained in Chapter 3.4, after dumping chemicals were banned in the Minamata Bay, non-human life started to come back and this affected him deeply. He also adds that in the same period he was also disturbed about where humanity was headed.²⁹¹

When we come to the ending of the film, other than Nausicaä, everybody is headed to war. Pejite people start their second phase in the war. For wiping out Tolmekians they provoke an insect attack because they have to recover the *kyoshinhei* before they revive it. And the interesting thing is, for them, it is for saving the world. Both *kyoshinhei* and *Ohmu* is just a tool in their power relations.

When Miyazaki talks about *kyoshinhei*, he says that in popular culture there are a lot of giant characters which give people power and he explains this "as a human desire for a larger existence than oneself or a desire for growth" however he adds his own commentary, for him, "the most power probably been created by technology. I think that technology is by itself neutral, innocent." He gives the example of automobile, a loyal, neutral and innocent tool of technology. He adds that it may be safe to say that machines do not have souls, but people actually give souls to them. Just as a dog would follow his master's commands as cruel the master maybe, its obedience, dedication, and self-sacrifice are the heart of a machine.²⁹² For Miyazaki, technology is not a non-natural thing, it is neutral, innocent, therefore, the people who use that technology is important. He embraces technology and nature as one. In *Nausicaä*, the Seven Days of Fire was happened because of the misuse of technology. Not because of the creation of *kyoshinhei* because they used it in a destructive way.

While Nausicaä imprisoned by the solders of Pejite, the women of Pejite help her escape by changing her clothes. It will be important that, other than her blue flying clothes we see her in a different colored dress. She hurries back to

²⁹¹ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 392.

²⁹² Miyazaki, 394.

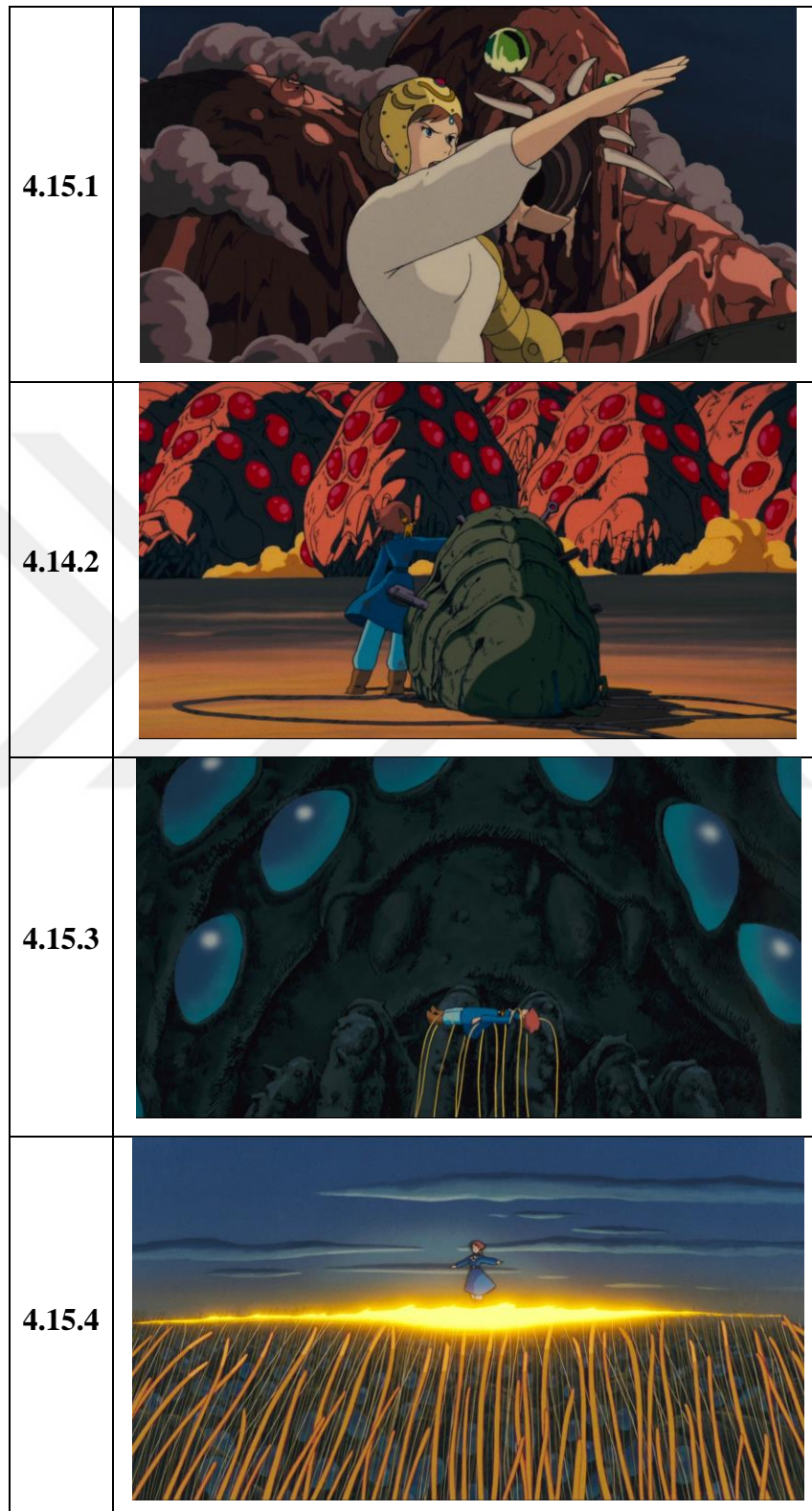
Valley and finds the soldiers of Pejite carrying a wounded baby ohm. In the meantime, whole ground simmers with *Ohmus* headed to the Valley. She saves the baby ohm, her clothes turn into blue because of the *Ohmu* blood. The mythic story of a savior with blue clothes is visually reminded to us.

Kushana brings *kyoshinhei* with its undeveloped body, as a body of thousand years old, it starts to rot but in his last breaths do as its master says (**Figure 4.15.1**). Its firepower seems like a nuclear bomb. After *kyoshinhei* rots, we see Nausicaä (**Figure 4.15.2**). The difference between the attitudes in two princesses can be read from their body language. Nausicaä touching baby *Ohmu* like she is trying to ease it, on the other side Kushana brings destruction by showing an enemy to *kyoshinhei*. *Ohmus* do not stop and Nausicaä dies, their attack to Valley continues. Then Master Yupa with the Pejite people looks at the herd of *Ohmus*. From the center, their rageful red eyes change into blue. Their golden feelers carry the dead Nausicaä (**Figure 4.15.3**). People from the Pejite, Torumekia and the Valley witness a miracle. Nausicaä comes back to life thanks to *Ohmus* (**Figure 4.15.4**). The final scene seems to suggest that they can find a third way in their relationship with non-human and *Fukai*, learn to live together in a peaceful manner and embrace nature. Nausicaä has a more hopeful ending in comparison with *Mononoke-Hime*. As Napier states when the latter problematizes an optimistic solution, Nausicaä's apocalyptic vision ends with collective redemption and hope.²⁹³ Murphy points out that when the non-human return with the baby *Ohmu* to the *Fukai* at the end of the film, their position has not been compromised. After the sacrifice of young Nausicaä, it was the people who had to change their ways.²⁹⁴ Therefore, nature remains faithful to their nature, as depicted in the film, for Miyazaki, it is the humanity who has to change, look with different perspectives not just useful or not.

²⁹³ Napier, *Anime from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle*, 260.

²⁹⁴ Murphy, "Future Traditions of Nature," 12.

Figure 4.15. The Ending of *Nausicaä of Valley of the Wind*



Source: Hayao Miyazaki, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (Studiocanal, 2005)

Nausicaä seems like a messiah in these scenes. Actually, Miyazaki did not want to finish the film with a religious tone, he says this zone is what he wants to avoid every time.²⁹⁵ However, the messiah figure of Nausicaä is not like a Christian version. She is an active participant in the events and a female. Napier points out that the underlying message in Nausicaä is also far less punishing than the conventional apocalypse version of Christianity. Even though there are wrongdoers in the film, the ultimate message of the film is not a straightforward appeal for punishment and reward.²⁹⁶ Moreover, she embraces everything, plants, humans, insects... Napier states that hers is a deep and complex love that of a thankful inhabitant of a vast, multi-faceted universe, a role that seems to be in line with Miyazaki's own worldview. Contrary to the earlier superhero character of Miyazaki, the young boy Conan, whose overwhelming masculine energy makes him an apparent leader in his far simplistic post-catastrophe setting, Nausicaä confronts ideological and ethical obstacles with ability, intellect, enthusiasm, and sincere love of life.²⁹⁷ When we think about Miyazaki's other protagonists nearly all of them share the same characteristics. Chihiro of *Spirited Away* starts her story as a spoiled child but she shows her inner and moral strength and confronts her obstacles. Ashitaka is a more similar example of Nausicaä. Not choosing sides, he is too come up against different problems from different sides. However, the most important thing is, not choosing a side and to look eyes unclouded.

The common thing in these characters is their age. Murphy states that usually, young people at the threshold of adulthood are identified with a feeling of inevitable loss. She gives an example from Sueellen Campbell who applied Lacan's theory of self to the ecological movement: We are leaving infancy only when we start to see ourselves as separate from everything else, particularly from the bodies of our mothers. This occurs as we enter the network of language, the "symbolic order" that will ascertain what we become. She continues that ecologists see an understanding of lost unity and the desire to recover it as

²⁹⁵ Miyazaki, *Starting Point, 1979-1996*, 393.

²⁹⁶ Napier, *Anime from Akira to Howl's Moving Castle*, 260.

²⁹⁷ Napier, *Miyazakiworld*, chap. 5.

fundamental to our human nature. In light of this belief, as children, we are acknowledged to be in harmony with nature. She adds that when we develop a sense of self, join the culture and the language of network, we lose that harmony. Since our society does not instruct us that we are simple inhabitants of the earth, therefore we exist apart from the natural world and reject our connection with it.²⁹⁸



²⁹⁸ Murphy, "Future Traditions of Nature," 14.

CONCLUSION

Hayao Miyazaki's nature narratives in *Mononoke-Hime*, *Spirited Away* and *Nausicaä the Valley of the Wind*, reflect a synthesis of his life, his early works, his artistic and aesthetic philosophy along with his social, ethical and political worldview.

This thesis draws mostly on ecocriticism and to some extent its approach to human-nature / technology relationships to make sense of how Miyazaki articulates the dualities of the mother earth-modern world / femininity-masculinity / humans-animals in thematic terms and how he translates these into a visual language.

Ecocriticism has different approaches. As mention in Chapter 1.2, in this thesis positions of Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism and Dark Ecology utilized. Deep Ecology is an ecological and environmental concept that embraces the inherent value of living beings regardless of their practical utility to human needs, plus a restructuring of modern human communities in accordance with these concepts. Second, ecofeminism is a movement that sees a connection between the abuse and destruction of the natural world and women's subordination and oppression. And lastly, Dark Ecology draws attention to the current ecological condition affected by global pollution and advocates that there is no wilderness because pollution caused by socio-cultural activities and practices is everywhere.

To fully analyze Miyazaki's work with ecocritical approaches, it is important to examine the influences of Japanese art forms and his background because his artistic philosophy was influenced by older Japanese art forms such as Ukiyo-e and illustrated narrative scrolls. As mentioned in Chapter 2, for him, they could express politics, economics, art, religion, the supernatural world, and even erotica. This kind of narrative and artistic complexity is evident in his films. Moreover, the Japanese concept of ephemerality, *mono no aware* which is also a feature of classical Japanese art and mostly associated with the natural world, the cycle of seasons and changes, can also be seen in his works. For example, we observe devastating disasters, the vulnerability of human civilization and its

closeness to destruction in *Princess Mononoke* and *Nausicaä* through *mono no aware* that reflects the feeling of transience. Therefore, pervading deeply local aspects of Miyazaki's work is a profoundly Japanese awareness of things, their beauty, and the sadness of their passing, rooted in the idea of *mono no aware*.

Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 2.2, manga as a continuation of Japanese arts has also influenced Miyazaki's cinematographical style. Miyazaki shows us detailed images as in the manga. Our eyes tend to move to anything that we notice rather than what the director offers or dictates. Thus, it is up to us how we view and absorb the story. Nevertheless, he puts importance on some elements, but the freedom of the viewer is still there.

His detailed imagery, characters, and plots reflect his knowledge and thoughts about nature. Most of his recurring themes deeply rooted in his early life. For example, his father's plane factory bred in Miyazaki a love of technology and flying. Technology is a natural and innocent tool for Miyazaki. Additionally, the relationship between technology and nature is not discriminative but connective. However, he depicts the use of technology in two possible ways: First, the misuse of technology arises from human greed and desire for power. For instance, *Mononoke-Hime* and *Nausicaä* demonstrate the abuse of technology. Second, a healthy relationship with technology that does not harm humans or nature such as *Nausicaä's* *mehve*.

Miyazaki also condemns wars. He witnessed both WWII and the post-war era as mentioned in Chapter 3. The terror of wars also a recurring theme in his film. *Nausicaä* shows us a war that changed the ecosystem fully. Therefore, wars are not harming only people but also nature. Moreover, one of his traumatic childhood memories of a mother with her child crying for help in war times evolves into a distinguishing feature of his characters. They are "voices of conscience" transmuting sentiments into action. Such as Ashitaka, *Nausicaä* and Chihiro. Furthermore, his relationship with his sickly but meddling and strong-willed mother also affected his character creation process. He was into both manga and Western children's books. When he started to work in Tōei animation

he learned the ABC's of animation. His detailed backgrounds, action depictions and brave characters are the products of his time in Tōei and his early works.

As explained in Chapter 3.4, in his thirties, he read Sasuke Nakao's *Saibai shokubutsu to nōkō no kigen* 栽培植物と農耕の起源, (Cultivated Plants and the Origins of Agriculture, 1966) and it had a profound effect on Miyazaki. Because the book proposed that Japanese people's roots go back to the "broadleaf evergreen forest," he reshaped his understanding of Japanese culture in the light of nature. As discussed in Chapter 4.1, there is a general belief of the Japanese to have a deep love of nature, a passion that is often expressed in their art and material culture. However, Japanese people are not actually involved in the natural world but secondary nature. This was a culturally-built conception of the non-human realm as a representation of feelings linked to the turning of the seasons and cycles of the year that are important because of their metaphorical and aesthetical meaning. Throughout traditional Japan, nature was often viewed as an untamed and undoubtedly violent power. Therefore, the Japanese perception of nature is a "secondary nature," actually an idealized version of it. Outside of this human-controlled and shaped nature, there was the wilderness and feared *kami* (spirits, gods). Yet, these violent gods altered with agricultural enlargement and became guardian deities.

Miyazaki depicts a vision of a past, and the beginning of industrialization in *Mononoke-Hime* as analyzed in Chapter 4.2. The non-human *kami* and nature sphere and human sphere are in conflict. Humans want to make use of the ancient forest to produce iron. Ashitaka as a mediator stands between the forces of nature and humans. Either side is created with complex and multilayered characters. By making the leader of the human side a female, Miyazaki breaks the constructed understanding of man being rational versus woman being emotional and associated with nature. On the contrary, it is Ashitaka who is a male character, lives in harmony with nature. Then we see San which is created as a primitive character. Miyazaki praises neither side. The important thing is seeing with eyes unclouded. The products of industrialization kill the great Shishigami and wilderness becomes a calm, peaceful and human-controlled nature.

The continuation of industrialization, consumerism, and materialism is depicted in *Spirited Away* as analyzed in Chapter 4.3. Miyazaki shows us the *kami*, spirit realm that is polluted because of the human world. Even *kami* need to go to the bathhouse to relax and purify, and as a consequence of capitalism they end up paying for the services. It seems like *kami* could not find a wilderness to live and they opened the bathhouse in a theme park abandoned due to the outcomes of the bubble economy. The main character, Chihiro starts her journey as a spoiled child and mature with hardships. Subsequently, she makes a connection with *kami* society. This relationship is a metaphor for Japanese people's roots as explained in Sasuke Nakao's book. Here, Miyazaki tries to warn us again of our excess consumerism by turning Chihiro's parents into pigs along with the chaos that No-Face creates. In this film, Chihiro also acts as a mediator. She does not want more than she needs. She shows Yubaba that her relationship with Bou is more important than material goods. The ecological issues become apparent with polluted river *kami* and Haku another river *kami* who lost his river to urban construction. Miyazaki shows the present time as a turning point.

Finally, as studied in Chapter 4.4, the future brings an apocalypse in Nausicaä. Because of over-industrialization and the misuse of technology, a toxic environment was created by human hands. Fukai, which is believed to be a toxic wilderness, actually purifies human-induced pollution. Nausicaä acts as a mediator between non-human and human. Like Ashitaka, she also does not want to see more killings on either side. The other characters are also not depicted as mere good or evil but are represented as complex beings. Moreover, it is important not to have a bias towards others and keep an open mind to different kinds of relationships. Nausicaä has to die for humanity to show other possibilities of living together with the non-human.

Both *Fukai* and the forest of *Shishigami* are good examples of wilderness. They are ruled by nature and reflect the bias of humanity against nature. *Shishigami*'s forest eventually polluted by the human on the contrary *Fukai* was born from pollution. *Spirited Away*'s Yuya, on the other hand, shows us the

cultural pollution created by humans. All depictions are coherent with Dark Ecology.

Although Miyazaki never even hints at any restructuring of modern human communities, the “intrinsic value and inherent worth” of Deep Ecology corresponds with his approach to *kami*. However, if we consider that there is no judge of right or wrong in Shinto, we cannot talk about any absolute or intrinsic value in anything.

Furthermore, the hierarchical relationships between women and man/femininity and masculinity are in line with the ecofeminism approach. The women of Tataraba in *Mononoke* and Kushana in *Nausicaä* break the preconceptions of women who are connected with nature. On the contrary, Ashitaka as a man does not symbolize rationalism but nature and balance.

Princess Mononoke, *Spirited Away* and *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* have Miyazaki's most ecological narratives. Sitting in a perfect timeline –past, present, future– these films offer new perspectives to look at nature and create new myths and histories. Myths are traditional stories that play a fundamental role in societies and motivating people. Miyazaki creates his own brand of myth of the past in *Princess Mononoke* by re-writing the Japanese history through an emphasis on outsiders, non-human and animism rather than conquests. He depicts a “hero's journey” without resorting to the usual conqueror-hero, in a world where man and nature are in a conflict because of man's own misconduct regarding technology and nature. He gives us balancing alternatives, mediator characters to see our past, not through the perspective of a patriarchal society and a history of victors over both nature and other men. Miyazaki carries these “past” myths onto the “present” in *Spirited Away* by showing the disengagement of humans with the spiritual part of the earth, namely the *kami*. And then he shapes a new myth around them: an evolution, or rather de-volution of the *kami* where these ancient spirits of nature have been affected thoroughly from human societies' cultural and environmental pollution. He shows us that we can only find a balance for both us and the non-human –e.g. the *kami*– if we reconnect with our roots in nature. He warns us about the “future” in *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* by showing us a

post-apocalyptic world where human-induced degeneration causes an apocalyptic ecological crisis. This is the absolute result of disengagement. From the *mono no aware* perspective, the apocalypse can still happen anytime, and we can't avoid it, but we can at least survive it. Even on the brink of extinction, we can still change our way of life, our relationship with nature, by seeing with eyes unclouded and showing respect to the earth and controlling our actions towards nature, which have up to now created over-industrialization, consumerism and materialism.

As Val Plumwood puts it, merely showing the dualistic nature of man/woman, nature/human does not create problematic anthropocentrism or androcentrism. The main problem is rooted in Descartes's introduction of separation of mind and body, along with the gendered dualism of mind and body. If we cannot free reason from androcentric philosophy, we cannot respect "earth others". We can say that Miyazaki does not adopt the dualistic nature created by "Enlightenment". On the contrary, by creating "fantasy spaces" with folkloric elements of animism like the *kami*, he also tries to connect us with our mythical past, which is not kneaded with "reason" of Western "humanistic" thought. This is a similar stance to that of ecological posthumanism. As Rosi Braidotti states, environmental theory underlines the connection between the designation of Man as the measure of all be it human or non-human, and the conquest of nature, thus condemning the misconducts of science and technology. Both involve epistemic and corporal abuse against the structural 'others' and have their roots in the all-encompassing concept of 'reason' as it was defined by European Enlightenment. She adds that especially in this search for new substantial forms of universality, Shiva and Mies emphasize the import of life-sustaining spirituality: a devotion to the sanctity of life, and profound respect for all living things. Hence, she holds that they are opposed to the Western conviction that rationality and secularity are essential requirements for progress through science and technology.

For Braidotti, Shiva and Mies in a broad sense, demand for the "re-enchantment of the world" or for restoring the Earth and that which has been so cruelly separated. Instead of the stressing on independence from the realm of "natural

necessity”, Shiva asks for a form of independence that exists within that realm and in balance with it.²⁹⁹

While the ecological crises become destructive, while utopias, distopias or other forms of narratives are used for introducing statements and arguments on nature, the new myths and histories Miyazaki narrate get more and more important.

Moreover, Miyazaki’s use of animation as a medium is also vital in itself. Because animation, as Hadl says, “preserves and revives animist (or post-humanist) thoughts through its technology” due to animating the inanimate. Also, by getting to the core of what is ‘live’ and using drawings to create worlds and characters which are still forms sketched on dead wood, namely paper, but giving it ‘life’, it becomes the perfect medium for narrating and expressing the characteristics of the non-human. Miyazaki uses the specialties of animation fully by inviting the viewers to identify with the non-human on an emotional basis without resorting to anthropocentrism. Therefore, with this dissertation, I aim to help encourage further research on the human-nature relationship on the emerging crises of ecology where the traditional art of animation meshes perfectly with the momentous insights of posthumanism and ecocriticism.

In this thesis, Miyazaki’s full filmography could not be analyzed because of the limitations of a master’s thesis. This might be considered as a first step for future research on the diverse works of Miyazaki. Additionally, only some of the approaches of Ecocriticism can be used in this thesis, namely Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, and Dark Ecology. Other approaches can shine a new light on animation or Miyazaki’s nature narratives.

²⁹⁹ Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, 1 edition (Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA, USA: Polity, 2013), 49.

ATTACHMENT
HAYAO MIYAZAKI'S LIST OF WORKS

Name	English Name or Synonym	Type	Episode	Year	Credit
Ookami Shounen Ken	Ken the Wolf Boy	TV Series	86	1963-1965	In-Between Animation
Gulliver no Uchuu Ryokou	Gulliver's Space Travels: Beyond the Moon	Movie	1	1965	In-Between Animation
Hustle Punch*	Hustle Punch	TV Series	26	1965-1966	Key Animation
Rainbow Sentai Robin*	Rainbow Battle Team Robin	TV Series	48	1966-1967	Key Animation (Eps. 34, 38)
Mahoutsukai Sally*	Sally the Witch	TV Series	109	1966-1968	Key Animation
Taiyou no Ouji: Horus no Daibouken	The Little Norse Prince	Movie	1	1968	Art Design, Key Animation
Nagagutsu o Haita Neko	Puss 'n Boots	Movie	1	1969	Key Animation
Soratobu Yuureisen	Flying Phantom Ship	Movie	1	1969	Key Animation
Muumin*	Moomin	TV Series	65	1969-1970	Key Animation
Himitsu no Akko-chan*	Secrets of Akko-chan	TV Series	94	1969-1970	Key Animation
Ali Baba to Yonjuppiki no Touzoku	Alibaba and the Forty Thieves	Movie	1	1971	Key Animation
Doubutsu Takarajima*	Animal Treasure Island	Movie	1	1971	Key Animation
Lupin Sansei	Lupin III	TV Series	23	1971 - 1972	Episode Direction (Eps. 7-8, 10-11, 13-23)
Sarutobi	Sarutobi	TV Series	26	1971 - 1972	Key

Ecchan	Ecchan				Animation
Yuki no Taiyou	Yuki's Sun	Pilot Episode	1	1972	Direction
Akadou Suzunosuke	Redbreast Suzunosuke	TV Series	52	1972 - 1973	Storyboard
Panda Kopanda	Panda! Go Panda!	Movie	1	1972	Layout Design, Original Plan, Script/Screenplay, Key Animation, Original Character Design*
Jungle Kurobee	Jungle Kurobee	TV Series	31	1973	Original Character Design
Panda Kopanda: Amefuri Circus no Maki	Panda! Go Panda! & the Rainy-day Circus	Movie	1	1973	Art Design, Layout Composition, Original Plan, Script/Screenplay
Samurai Giants	Star Pitcher	TV Series	46	1973-1974	Key Animation (Eps. 1)
Alps no Shoujo Heidi	Heidi: Girl of the Alps	TV Series	52	1974	Layout Composition, Setting
Flanders no Inu*	A Dog of Flanders	TV Series	52	1975	Key Animation
Haha o Tazunete Sanzenri	3000 Leagues in Search of Mother	TV Series	52	1976	Layout Composition, Setting
Araiguma Rascal	Raccoon Rascal	TV Series	52	1977	Key Animation (Eps. 4-6, 10, 12-22, 24-28)
Sougen no Ko Tenguri	Tenguri, Boy of the Plains	Movie	1	1977	Layout
Lupin Sansei: Part II*	Lupin III: Part II	TV Series	155	1977-1980	Episode Director (Eps. 145, 155), Script/Screenplay

					nplay (Eps. 145, 155), Storyboard (Eps. 145,155)
Mirai Shounen Conan	Future Boy Conan	TV Series	26	1978	Direction, Series Composition, Episode Direction (Eps. 1-26), Storyboard (Eps. 1-4, 8, 12, 15-19, 22-26)
Akage no Anne	Anne of Green Gables	TV Series	50	1979	Layout Composition (Eps. 1-15)
Alps no Shoujo Heidi (1979)	The Story of Heidi	Movie	1	1979	Layout Design
Lupin Sansei: Cagliostro no Shiro	Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro	Movie	1	1979	Direction, Script/Screenplay, Storyboard, Character Design
Kaze no Tani no Nausicaä	Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind	Movie	1	1984	Direction, Original Work (Tokuma Shoten "Monthly Animage" Serialisation "Kaze no Tani no Nausicaä" Manga), Script/Screenplay, Character Design
Mirai Shounen Conan: Tokubetsu Hen -	Future Boy Conan	Movie	1	1984	Direction, Character Design*

Kyodaiki Gigant no Fukkatsu					
Meitantei Holmes	Sherlock Hound	TV Series	26	1984 - 1985	Direction, Script (3), Storyboard (3-5, 9-10), Episode Direction (3-5, 9-10*, 11*)
Meitantei Holmes: Aoi Ruby no Maki / Kaitei no Zaihou no Maki	Sherlock Hound: The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle / Treasure Under the Sea	Movie	1	1984	Director
Meitantei Holmes: Mrs. Hudson Hitojichi Jiken no Maki / Dover Kaikyou no Daikuuchuu sen no Maki		Movie	1	1986	Director (Featuring 2 episodes from the series)
Tenkuu no Shiro Laputa	Castle in the Sky	Movie	1	1986	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay, Character Design*, Theme Song Lyrics*
Tonari no Totoro	My Neighbour Totoro	Movie	1	1988	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay, Storyboard
Majo no Takkyuubin	Kiki's Delivery Service	Movie	1	1989	Direction, Script/Screenplay, Producer

Omoide Poroporo	Omoide Poroporo	Movie	1	1991	Executive Producer
Kurenai no Buta	Porco Rosso	Movie	1	1992	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay, Storyboard*, Editing*
Nandarou*	What Is It?	TV Advertisement	1	1992	Director, Key Animation
Sora Iro no Tane	The Sky-Colored Seed	TV Advertisement	1	1992	Direction, Script/Screenplay*, Storyboard*
Heisei Tanuki Gassen Ponpoko	Pom Poko	Movie	1	1994	Planning, Executive Producer*
Mimi o Sumaseba	Whisper of the Heart	Movie	1	1995	Producer, Script/Screenplay, Storyboard, Creator*
On Your Mark	On Your Mark	Music Video	1	1995	Direction, Script/Screenplay, Dramatisation*, Original Work*
Alps no Shoujo Heidi: Alm no Yama Hen		OVA	1	1996	Layout Composition, Setting
Alps no Shoujo Heidi: Heidi to Clara Hen		OVA	1	1996	Layout Composition, Setting
Mononoke-hime	Princess Mononoke	Movie	1	1997	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay, Theme Song Lyrics*

Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi	Spirited Away	Movie	1	2001	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay, Storyboard*
Koro no Dai Sanpo	Koro's Big Day Out	Short Movie	1	2001	Direction, Script/Screenplay
Kujira Tori	The Whale Hunt	Short Movie	1	2001	Direction, Script/Screenplay, Storyboard
Mei to Koneko Bus	Mei and the Baby Cat Bus	Short Movie	1	2001	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay
Kuusou no Sora Tobu Kikai-tachi	Kuusou no Sora Tobu Kikai-tachi	Short Movie	1	2002	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay
Neko no Ongaeshi	The Cat Returns	Movie	1	2002	Planning*, Executive Producer*
Howl no Ugoku Shiro	Howl's Moving Castle	Movie	1	2004	Direction, Script/Screenplay, Executive Producer*
Ghibli ga Ippai Special Short		TV Advertisement	10	2005	Director (DVD release of a collection of commercials and TV Spots between the years 2000-2004)
Hoshi o Katta Hi	The Day I Bought a Star	Short Movie	1	2006	Direction, Script/Screenplay
Mizugumo Monmon	Water Spider Monmon	Short Movie	1	2006	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay
	House	Short	1	2006	Direction,

Yadosagashi	Hunting	Movie			Script/Screenplay, Storyboard*, Key Animation*
Ged Senki: Tales from Earthsea	Tales from Earthsea	Movie	1	2006	Original Plan*
Gake no Ue no Ponyo	Ponyo	Movie	1	2008	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay, Executive Producer*, Animation Director
Chuuzumou	Chuuzumou	Short Movie	1	2010	Planning, Script/Screenplay
Akage no Anne: Green Gables e no Michi	Anne of Green Gables: Road to Green Gables	Movie	1	2010	Layout Composition (Recap film of the first 6 episodes)
Karigurashi no Arrietty	The Secret World of Arrietty	Movie	1	2010	Planning, Script/Screenplay
Pan Dango to Tamago Hime	Mr. Dough and the Egg Princess	Short Movie	1	2010	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay
Takarasagashi	Treasure Hunting	Short Movie	1	2011	Planning, Series Composition*
Kokurikoza kara	From Up on Poppy Hill	Movie	1	2011	Planning, Script/Screenplay
Kaze Tachinu	The Wind Rises	Movie	1	2013	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay
Kemushi no Boro	Caterpillar of Rags	Short Movie	1	2018	Direction, Original Work, Script/Screenplay

					nplay
Kimitachi wa Dou Ikiru ka	How Do You Live?	Movie	1	2020 (?)	Director

Source: All the works, dates and credits gathered from anidb.net and myanimelist web site.

* Indicates that credit only found in one website.



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