

Princess Mononoke Hero Journey

Bryan Duong

Visual Art: anime

Princess Mononoke

Princess Mononoke a film produce by Hayao Miyazaki has so many moral meaning that a person can form around it, in Susan Napier book "From Akira to Princess Mononoke" she says that, Princess Mononoke creates a world that appears to have some kind of historical basis but then consistently destabilizes audience expectations of how that world should be. Many can argue that the movie is trying to teach the world about how as we expanded our economy we start to destroy the environment in the process, or that there is always hoped during times of war. Miyazaki said that "We are not trying to solve [modern] global problems. There cannot be a happy ending in the fight between raging gods and humans. However, in the middle of the hatred and killings, there are things worth living for. A wonderful meeting or a beautiful thing can exist." (Shan G. 1997). But we're going to focus on the idea that this movie is trying to show people how during war there are other answer to it other than violence and that both side can coexist peacefully.

During the film the Main character Ashitaka is cursed for killing a forest god, this is consider the call to adventure for Ashitaka because after killing the boar he must venture far away in order to find a cure for his curse. Ashitaka peoples can be a good representation of how people and nature can coexist peacefully together the evidence that shows that is how the people show respect to the boar as he die even though he attacked their village, another good representation would be how Ashitaka and his pet elk Yakul shares a strong bond with each other because during the movie it shows how dedicated Yakul is to Ashitaka by staying beside him throughout the days as he was unconscious.

As Ashitaka venture in to the forest of the spirit he is given supernatural aided by the kodama, they are spirit of the trees in the forest, they help him out of the forest and to iron town. As Ashitaka heads in to the forest he would be crossing the first threshold because he is heading in to the place where the forest spirit resides. This once again can be good example of how two party of different origin can coexist peacefully with each other because as he moves through the forest the people in iron town are destroying the forest in order to expand their economy.

During his quest to find the cure to his curse he meets San a human girl raised by wolves and is consider to be part of the wolf clan, even though she is human she does not consider herself to be one the evidence was shown as she attack the people of iron town as they trek through the mountain. To Ashitaka this is considering to him the meeting with the goddess. San is the embodiment of the meaning being one with nature because even though she is human she is also a wolf in her eyes. She is also one of Miyazaki rare feminine characters because she is shown as a ruthless figure of virtually unrelenting violence instead of the conventionally female gendered aspects like sweetness and cuteness like in his other works (Susan Napier) .

Ashitaka main quest in the beginning of the movie was to find a cure to his curse but as the movie progress he starts to focus more on trying to stop the violence between human and nature because he believes that both sides can live peacefully with each other. During the movie Ashitaka stops the fight between San and Lady Eboshi and walk out of iron town peacefully even though he was shot by one of the people in iron town. Throughout the story Ashitaka would assist both side whenever they were in trouble, as the people of iron town was being attach by the samurai he went out to gather help for them and he allowed himself to get shot in order to get San back to the forest.

The idea that during times of war both side can resolve their differences and live together peacefully can be represented by Princess Mononoke but this cannot be consider the only moral meaning behind the movie. Miyazaki questions man's place in nature, but he does not offer any answers: he wants the audience to make the judgment (Shan G. 1997). However in Susan Napier book she says that in Miyazaki view the fourteenth century is a period of significant historical transition from a world that was still in close contact with both natural and supernatural forces to a world that would become increasingly oriented toward the human. As Miyazaki says, "It was in this period that people changed their value system from gods to money." Princess Mononoke is also very much Miyazaki's own world, his own "history as vision."

In the end the movie shows that the violence between both sides was a waste and the lives that were loss in the battles could have been avoided if they had see in the end that there were other answers to the problems.

Shan G. (1997). Tribute to Miyazaki's Mononoke Hime.

<http://lavender.fortunecity.com/attenborough/487/index.html>

Susan Napier(2000). From Akira To Princess Mononoke.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/17713608/NAPIER-Susan-Anime-From-Akira-to-Princess-Mononoke>