

Representation of Anthropocentric and Ecocentric Figures in Hayao Miyazaki's Princess Mononoke

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Abstract. Literary ecocritic is a study of literary works related to environmental themes. This study is important to promote the environmental conservation issues necessary to counteract the destruction of nature, in particular the reduction of sustainable forest areas due to massive logging. In recent decades, there are many literary works that discuss environmental-related issues. Especially the works of Hayao Miyazaki who often criticize the issue. One of her famous works that raise environmental issues is the anime entitled Princess Mononoke. The issue raised in this anime is a conflict between parties who want to preserve and protect the forest with Lady Eboshi and the iron factory workers who continuously cut wood massively in the forest to use as fuel for iron processing. Using an ecocritic approach, to describe the representation of an anthropocentric character with an ecocentric character in the anime Princess Mononoke. The results showed that there were four types of ethical violations committed by Lady Eboshi in this anime. The conclusion obtained is that in overcoming conflicts arising from excessive exploitation of nature, awareness of the effects caused by the destruction of nature is needed which will harm humans themselves. Nature always responds according to human treatment of it. Lady Eboshi and Jikobou are anthropocentric figures who represent the most of humans who need nature but are less concerned about its sustainability. While Ashitaka and San are representations of ecocentric figures. San is a guardian and punisher representing nature. Meanwhile, Ashitaka is a mediator who facilitates human life and the sustainability of nature can run simultaneously, harmoniously in their respective places.

1 Introduction

Human exploitation of forests has been carried out by humans for a long time. Human needs for wood, mining products and other natural resources make forest exploitation activities inevitable. Wood is used by humans for various purposes such as residential components, furniture, industrial raw materials, and others. Therefore, from time to time logging activities in the forest continue to be carried out by humans. As a result, the total area and span of forest areas is shrinking over time.

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There are indeed conservation efforts such as forest reforestation activities carried out but these efforts are not comparable to the destruction of forests by human exploitation of forests. As a result, there are various problems that are suspected to arise due to deforestation such as floods, rising temperatures, and shrinking groundwater.

Nature provides various human needs for life. Nature can be man's best friend but a nature that breaks its balance because it is damaged by humans can be a dangerous thing. Man needs nature in meeting the needs of his life and at the same time must be the party that keeps nature in balance. Man became an important factor in the balance of nature. Man must choose to be the guardian of nature or the destroyer of nature.

Various efforts are made by humans to preserve nature. The campaign for the preservation of nature is carried out in various ways including in the discourse of literary texts and films. Literary studies that advocate or discuss issues regarding the environment are often called literary ecocritics [1].

One of the anime that raises environmental issues is the anime Princess Mononoke[2]. Princess Mononoke or *Mononoke Hime* (もののけ姫) is an animated film by Hayao Miyazaki who is the writer and director of Studio Ghibli, produced in 1997. This anime is one of the most successful animations in the history of Studio Ghibli and received many good ratings from the audience.

Princess Mononoke tells the story of the main character, namely a prince from the Ainu tribe named Prince Ashitaka. He is cursed by a wild boar god named Nago who is possessed by an evil demon. With full confidence and courage, the prince followed the directions and advice of a healer or shaman to go westward. He did this to find a cure for the curse. On his way he was accompanied by a faithful antelope, named Yakul. On the way the prince Ashitaka also meets San, a Mononoke Princess who fights against human greed against the exploitation of nature, and she is also accompanied by three loyal wolves. One of the three wolves was named Moro, the biggest wolf and was the mother of San. San and his three wolves try to maintain the balance of the forest and devote themselves to the Deer God.

Ashitaka also meets Lady Eboshi, an iron mill leader and owner who is greedy for forest exploitation for the benefit of her factory. Lady Eboshi's forest and iron factory are the setting for the dominating place in this story. While the time setting is depicted as taking place several days in different periods of time and the emotional setting is dominated by the feelings of anger of the forest dwellers, such as apes who want revenge against Lady Eboshi and other humans due to massive logging without replanting the forest.

The main conflict in this anime is how the greed of Lady Eboshi and the workers in her iron factory by cutting down trees massively and continuously, making the forest dwellers, such as apes and wild boars and San along with his three wolves become furious and have a grudge to kill humans. Therefore, the theme of this anime focuses on environmental issues that want to show about ecological damage due to human greed.

The binary opposition that stands out in this anime story is the characters in each of the opposite characters, such as in the character San who cares deeply about the environment and the character of Lady Eboshi who is more concerned about the continuity of the iron factory that can hire and support the community around the forest. In this context, we can surmise that Eboshi is an anthropocentric figure and San is an ecocentric or nonanthropocentric figure. Although there is debate about the meaning of the two terms as found in the Cocks and Simpson writings [3], but it can be generally agreed that the term anthropocentric is used when man places himself superior to nature, in other words nature is placed as a subordination of man, so that nature is only valuable if it is beneficial to man. Whereas the term ecocentric is used when man places himself as an integral part of nature, so man must act as the party that preserves nature.

Research on the Anime Princess Mononoke with a focus on its relation to the environment has been done a lot [3]–[7], but no one has yet discussed specifically the

anthropocentric and ecocentric binary opposition in this anime. Therefore, this paper aims to describe the representation of anthropocentric characters and ecocentric characters in the princess mononoke anime.

2 Methods

The term anthropocentric refers to two things, namely 1) considering human beings as the most significant entity of the universe; dan 2) interpreting or regarding the world in terms of human values and experiences.

Whereas the term anthropocentrism is used to refer to worldviews and attitudes, intrinsic values, or status and moral significance. The argument that anthropocentric attitudes, such as that human beings have power over nature, lies at the root of our environmental problems historically influential in environmental ethics. The existence of the claim that man is separated from and superior to nature is the fundamental cause of the environmental crisis. In anthropocentrism, man has a moral status or that man is much more morally significant than any other living being. A person who is nonanthropocentric about moral status, on the contrary, states that at least some non-human beings or objects, which may include animals, living organisms, ecosystems, populations, and species, have interests that must be considered in our moral decision-making [8]. Deep ecology experts criticize anthropocentrism as the belief that non-human beings are of instrumental value only [9].

The anthropocentric type corresponds to the ethical features of anthropocentrism, including: a) Man is separated from nature; b) Prioritizing human rights to nature but emphasizing human responsibility; c) Putting human feelings first at the center of his concerns; d) Policy and management of natural resources for the benefit of man; e) The main norm is profit and loss by prioritizing short-term plans.

While the ecocentric type corresponds to the ethical features of ecology which among others emphasize the following: a) Man is part of nature; b) Emphasizing the right to life of other beings, although it can be taken advantage of by humans, should not be treated arbitrarily; c) Concerned about the feelings of all beings and saddened that nature is treated arbitrarily; d) Environmental management policies for all creatures; e) Nature must be preserved and not mastered; f) The importance of protecting biodiversity; g) Respecting and maintaining the natural system; h) Prioritizing long-term goals according to the ecosystem [10].

3 Result and Discussion

Princess Mononoke is a film with an adventure and fantasy theme. Princess Mononoke takes place in the Muromachi era. At that time, there were many Onin wars (1467-1477), namely wars that occurred between samurai and villagers. Hayao Miyazaki chose this era because in that era, the natural state of the Japanese country began to change drastically. At that time, people in Japan were already able to make firearms and began to exploit nature for the smooth business of making weapons.

The setting in the film Princess Mononoke not only serves as a background, but instead plays an active role in the narrative. The setting where the film Princess Mononoke is set, it originally started in Emishi Village. At the beginning of the story, Ashitaka the last prince of the Emishi village struggles to repel the rampaging Tatarigami (Nago) in his village. But unfortunately, his hand was hit by a curse that came from Tatarigami's body. Then the setting of the place continues to the village of the Samurai who are in battle. Ashitaka then meets Jikobou in the village and is again directed to go westwards, towards the deer god forest. Then Ashitaka finally passed through the forest of the Deer God, while rescuing the warrior

Lady Eboshi. When passing by here, Ashitaka, Yakkuru, and the 2 warriors he rescued rested for a while near the deer god's pond. Then continued on the road of escorting the wounded soldiers to the Iron Village. This Deer God Forest is also the abode of San, along with his mother and wolf friend. The journey continued to the Iron Village to deliver the wounded soldier to his native village. As it turned out, Iron Village is a Village headed by Lady Eboshi. Inside there are iron factories and also cattle farms that are used to fight or obtain foodstuffs from other regions.

The film Princess Mononoke is set in the Muromachi era in Japan, around 1336 to 1573. In this film, it is dominated by a tense atmosphere setting, due to many conflicts. For example, the feud between Ashitaka and Nago, the war with the samurai army, the feud between Mononoke and Lady Eboshi, the war between the humans and the pigs, and also the riots when the Deer God lost his head.

In the anime Princess Mononoke, it is seen that nature is influenced by human activities. In the area around Iron Village, nature is damaged because the residents of Iron Village focus on increasing wealth to make it more prosperous. Unlike the natural environment that San lives in, it is still beautiful, clean, and there are even many Kodama or tree spirits that indicate that the nature is lush. Likewise, in Emishi village and Samurai Village, human life coexists with nature in a balanced manner, because the citizens and their leaders are not exploitative of nature.

Humans are also influenced by the state of nature around them. San, who has lived in the forest with Wolves since childhood, certainly takes great care of his residence so that it is not damaged by other humans.

Ashitaka, who is used to living in a village that is balanced between human life and nature, understands that the exploitative activities that Lady Eboshi is doing are wrong. Lady Eboshi's profit-oriented thinking influenced her actions to harm nature.

In this anime, Lady Eboshi is told who is not afraid of Gods nor is she afraid of curses. This means that Lady Eboshi has ignored traditional values that have been maintained for many years for generations.

The anime Princess Mononoke directs the reader's interest to be aware of how the impact of environmental damage will be if the forest is cleared. Creatures that live in the forest such as animals, plants, and also gods, can lose their homes. They will feel the sadness, hatred, and also the harm caused by the human beings who are immigrants in their place. The anime also makes its connoisseurs aware of human greed is an important point that causes imbalances in nature. The anime Princess Mononoke raises its audience's awareness about forests including balancing areas for human life that must be preserved.

The representation of the nature preservation campaign is very prominent in this anime. Hayao Miyazaki shows the issue through the character ashitaka who mediates the conflict between nature and humans. In addition, in this film the roles of animals and gods in the form of animals are positioned equally with humans because they are portrayed as living beings who have desires and are able to communicate equally with humans.

3.1 Antropocentric Figures

The character who has the most prominent anthropocentric features in the film is Lady Eboshi. Lady Eboshi is portrayed as greedy and ambitious. This can be seen from his actions that dare to do anything to be able to rule the forest. The following words of Lady Eboshi show her indifference to the preservation of the forest and the fate of its inhabitants:

エボシ：古い神がいなくなれば、ものけ達もただのケモノになろう。森に光が入り山犬ども鎮まればここは豊かな国になる。

Eboshi : Without the ancient gods, they are just beasts. With the loss of the forest and those wolves, this land will become rich.

Eboshi's ambitious nature is also seen when Eboshi shows Ashitaka the manufacture of sharp weapons that are used to conquer the forest and protect against the samurai. Eboshi's ambitions are also conveyed from other figures:

怖いや怖いや、えぼし様は国を崩しするきじゃ

Scared, scared, Eboshi-sama is going to destroy the country

On the other hand, Eboshi is a leader who is highly respected by his followers. His orders were always obeyed by his followers. Eboshi also treats the entire villagers well and is considered a leader who is able to protect his people. When some of her citizens get severe skin diseases, Lady Eboshi is the only person who takes care of and humanizes them. In addition, Lady Eboshi hired a former comfort woman, which means that the position of women and men in the village of Eboshi is equal.

長：その人はわしらを人として扱って下さったたった一人の人だ。

わしらの病を恐れずーわしの腐った肉洗い布を巻いてくれた。

Osa : He is the only one who regards us as human beings. Without fear of our illness, he who washes our rotten flesh, bandages us bandages

(Mononoke Hime, 41:01-41:15)

「エボシさまときたら、売られたむすめたちを、みんな、ひきとちまうからな。やさしい方なんだよ。」

"Lady Eboshi contracts every girl found from the place of prostitution. He's a good person ."

At the end, after seeing the consequences arising from the beheading of the Deer God, Eboshi finally regrets his actions. He wants to start all over again to build the village in a better way.

「皆初めからやり直した、ここ良い村にしよう」

"Everybody starts all over again, let's make this a good village."

Another anthropocentric figure is Jikobou. Jikobou who has broad knowledge/insight but is also greedy and selfish. He could explain that gold has a large exchange rate when there are traders who refuse to exchange their rice for Ashitaka gold. he also knew the origin of the place where the curse of the Boar god who attacked Ashitaka was from. But it turns out that he was part of the hunter who targeted the head of the deer forest god to offer to his Master, even until the last moment when he almost died because of the curse of the deer forest god he was unwilling to return it. The cunning thing he did can be seen in the following dialogue.

ジコ坊：神殺しは怖いぞ、あいつにやってもらわにや。

Jikobou: I'm afraid to kill *Kami*, I'll have to get him to do it.

In the dialogue above, Jikobou makes Eboshi kill the Deer God for him. Jikobou only cares about his self-interest and does not think at all about the consequences that will occur in the forest if the Deer God is killed.

From the two figures above, it can be seen that they have anthropocentric traits. Lady Eboshi is a figure who considers human interests above the interests of environmental stewardship, putting human feelings first; and principled seeking short-term gains only. Although it is very detrimental to the interests of forest conservation, Lady Eboshi is considered a caring figure and takes great care of her villagers.

Jikoboubou is also a figure who does not care about environmental damage and only seeks a momentary profit. However, behind his actions he only carried out orders from the Lord to behead the deer god.

ジコ坊: だが今は人間とやりあうヒマはない。森にイノシシ神が集まっておるじきに来るぞ。この際鉄など全部くれてやれ。師匠連への約束を果たしてから戦でも何でもやればよからう。

Jikobou: But now I don't have time to deal with humans. The boar god will gather in the forest and will come soon. Give me all the irons and everything at this time. You can fulfill your promise to Master and then fight or whatever.

3.2 Ecocentric Figures

The main ecocentric character in the film is San, Ashitaka.

Ashitaka is a character who strives so that forests and humans can live hand in hand.

The following dialogue is when Ashitaka persuades Eboshi to stop his showdown with San and the other forest dwellers. Ashitaka on another occasion also persuaded Moro.

エボシ: 「シシ神ごろしをやめて、侍ごろしを、やれというのか。」

アシタカ: 「ちがう。森とタタラ場、ともに生きる道は、なしのか!? エボシさま、もどきましょう。」

Eboshi: "So you mean you don't have to kill Shishigami, and just kill the samurai, I see?"

Ashitaka: "It's not! Can the forest and the iron factory live together? Eboshi let's go back!"

「モロ、森と人が、あらそわずにすむ道は、ないのか。ほんとうに、もう、とめられないのか?」

"Can't the forest and human live together in peace? Can't this be stopped?"

Princess Mononoke begins with Ashitaka accidentally being cursed by Nago, the raging wild boar god, when she is about to protect her village. Ashitaka was predicted to die from the curse. Supported by the dialogue spoken by Hii sama in the village of Emishi, as follows:

「だが、ただ死をまつか、みずからおもむこかは、きめられる。みなさい。あのいのしのからだに、くいこんでいたものだよ。ほねをくだき、はらわたをひきさきむごい苦しみを、あたえたのだ。」

Your destiny is already determined. You can't even if you work on it. See! This is inside the monster's body! He was in pain. This thing smashed his bones and tore through his intestines."

Ashitaka was advised by Hii sama to go west to find something that could cure her curse. Gradually, Ashitaka learns that the cause of Nago being cursed is due to Lady Eboshi's greedy actions that destroy Nago's habitat. On the way west, Ashitaka also meets San, a woman who is cared for and raised by wolves. San who is devoted to the Deer God, and wants to protect the dwelling and his tribe from Lady Eboshi's greed. The forest issue and Lady Eboshi's ambitions were the triggers that sparked the protracted conflict with San. Ashitaka's appearance mediates between Lady Eboshi and San's feud, because this film is also taken from the perspective of a third person, namely Ashitaka who is a person from outside the conflict, so he can see two different things with clear eyes.

Meanwhile, San is a girl raised by a wolf named Moro in the forest of the western region. He loves the forest so much that he is willing to do anything to prevent humans from destroying and cutting down trees from the forest. The nature of the first San is reckless. He will do whatever it takes to prevent humans from destroying the forest. He also didn't even think about his life at all. For him it is better to be killed by humans than to let them destroy the forest. Citations indicating its nature are as follows.

サン：死など怖いもんか。人間追い払うためなら命などいらぬ。

Are you afraid of death? You don't need life to drive people away.

サン：私達にはシシ神様がついてる。諦めないで木を植えて。モロの一族は最後まで戦うから。

San: We have the god Sisi. Don't give up and plant trees. The Moro clan will fight to the end.

Seeing human behavior that destroys nature makes San hate humans. Although she likes Ashitaka, San prefers to stay in the forest and protect him from humans who want to damage him.

サン：アシタカは好きだ。でも人間を許すことはできない。

San: I like Ashitaka. But you can't forgive people.

San's character is a strong opinion person. It is cared for by wolves since childhood, and this cultivates San's hatred for humans even into adulthood, as seen in the following dialogue,

アシタカ：「モロが、かたきをうった。もう、罰はうけている。首をさがしている。こども、あぶない。サン、力を、かしてくれ。」

サン：「いやた！おまえも、人間のみかただ。その女をつれて、さっさと引っ込め！人間なんか、大きらいだ！」

Ashitaka: "Moro has already taken revenge on him. He was looking for his head. We can't be here.

San! Help me!"

San: "No! You're on their side! Take that woman and go! Stay away I hate humans!"

Although San cares about nature, but because he grew up far from the human environment, San is seen as a moving character because of instinct, without having a long mind before doing things. For the Moro people, and the inhabitants of the forest, San is a good figure because he fights for the preservation of his residence. However, he is considered a villain figure for the residents of Iron Village because he wants to destroy Iron Village and wants to kill Lady Eboshi.

San and Ashitaka are ecocentric figures because they assume that humans are part of nature, therefore as humans, the preservation of nature must be maintained. However, in this anime, San is more depicted as a guardian and punisher who represents nature; while Ashitaka is portrayed as a mediator who mediates the interests of nature conservation and human interests over the exploitation of nature.

4 Conclusion

The depiction of the characters in this anime, both anthropocentric and ecocentric, is not depicted simply. Lady Eboshi is indeed told to be damaging to the environment, but she has the full support of her villagers because of her kindness towards them. The character of Ashitaka, although told as a conflict mediating character, but his arrival to the conflict area was because he had killed the Pig God so he had to find a cure because he got a curse from the Pig God. Likewise with the character San or Princess Mononoke. San struggles to defend the forest from Lady Eboshi's greed in exploiting the forest, but he is considered a criminal figure because he wants to destroy the iron factory and kill Lady Eboshi.

In this film, Lady Eboshi and Jikoboubou are representatives of most humans who need nature to make ends meet. San is a guardian and punisher representing nature. Meanwhile, Ashitaka is a mediator who facilitates human life and the sustainability of nature can run simultaneously, harmoniously in their respective places.

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