

Miyazaki Hayao's Epic Comic Series:
Nausicaä in the Valley of the Wind:
An Attempt at Interpretation

INAGA Shigemi

International Research Center for Japanese Studies, Kyoto, Japan

Summary

Nausicaä in the Valley of the Wind by Miyazaki Hayao, accomplished in 1994, turns upside down its motion picture version of 1984. A stern criticism of ethnic cleansing and deep suspicion of ecology characterize the comic version. This paper analyzes the structural shift between these two versions with special reference to the post-colonial situation in contemporary Japan.

Key words

MIYAZAKI HAYAO, ETHIC CLEANSING, SCIENCE FICTION, JAPANESE COMICS, JAPANESE ANIMATION MOVIE

Consecutively published for no less than 12 years, with several interruptions, *Nausicaä in the Valley of the Wind* by Miyazaki Hayao (b. 1941) came to its completion in March 1994. A huge epic comic series in 7 volumes, published integrally in 1995,¹ the story narrates, in the course of more than one thousand pages, the adventure of the heroine, who borrowed her name from Greek mythology but echoes at the same time an eccentric "Insect-Loving Princess" in a classical Japanese tale of the twelfth century, i.e., *Mushimezuru Himegimi* from the tale of *Tsutsumi-chūnagon Monogatari*.²

Chronologically situated at "the dusk of humanity after the cataclysm of the Seven-Day Nuclear War which completely devastated the industrial mega-civilization," the series opens with the depiction of a tiny valley community which survived the disaster but still suffers from the progressive air pollution caused by the viperous germs of the huge Fungi Forest in disruptive hypertrophy under ominous genetic mutations. Human conflicts and hatred among several clans in desperate search for their own survival on the

limited viable territory profanating the untouchable forest, provoke a massive migration of the huge sacred insects, named *Aum*, guardians of the forest, pre-saging total environmental disaster. As it advances, the story takes on an apocalyptic tone which defies the imagination.

No doubt marking one of the highest peaks in the history of Japanese comics, this science fiction, with its (anti-) ecological undertone is worth analysis not only for its ideological criticism of Monotheistic thinking, but also for its skill in narrative technique, partly developed from the vocabulary and style of Japanese comics for young girls.

As a problematical crystallization of the Japanese subconsciousness at the *fin de siècle* of the twentieth century, this work itself has come to play a prophetic role in the psychopathology of the post-Post-War Japanese, as it has predicted and partly influenced the so-called Aum Truth Sect's alleged involvement in the nerve gas attack which occurred on the Tokyo subway on the morning of March 20, 1995, causing twelve deaths and several thousands of casualties.

In this paper I shall analyze first some of the narrative strategies of the series so as to demonstrate some of the "*trames*" which are almost hidden in the intrigues of the whole texture of the story. This will help us to grasp, secondly, the ideological stance the author assumes, especially in differentiation from the animation picture version of the story realized in 1984.³ Finally, the last point we would like to make is to situate this story historically and sociologically in the contemporary dystopia narratives as an ethical message to be examined in terms of political sciences.

Why did the description of the catastrophe in the science fiction comics in the 70s give way to the day-after and shift its focus onto the post-catastrophe phase of human existence? And what does this shift mean? Here are the questions motivating our investigations, which do not so much aim at convincing as inducing non-Japanese readers to *Nausicaä in the Valley of the Wind* (which is probably too famous to be suitable for academic discussions in Japan).

1. SACRED ABJECTIONS

Let us first indicate three key concepts which seem to me quite helpful in understanding the fascination the story exercised on Japanese readers: namely the blood, the insect and the sacrifice.

1-1 Meaning of the Blood

The blood plays the role of a healing medium throughout the story. In the First volume, the heroine, Nausicaä, asks her master Yupa to give her a fox-squirrel he has protected from attack by an insect in the poisonous fungi forest. The forest is

called Perishing Sea, *Fukai* [腐海], because of the polluted miasma there that mortally affects respiratory organs. The tiny wild animal, impossible to domesticate, bites her finger, as she stretches her hand toward it. To Yupa's surprise, however, Nausicaä does not show any pain from the wound (she does, however, in the animation version) and as the animal licks the blood, its fear is immediately soothed and the aggressive small animal, baptized as Teto (*têtu* in French?) instantly becomes obedient to its new mistress, Nausicaä, who is the princess of the Valley community consisting of a surviving population of only 500 (vol. 1, pp. 24–25).

This small anecdote, which demonstrates one of the first signs of the supernatural ability of communication the heroine is endowed with, is later to be repeated in another episode, where Nausicaä, trying to save soldiers who have carelessly attacked and wounded a huge beetle, was in their place devoured by the insect.

By then, her clothes had been covered by the blue blood of a child-Aum beast, which was seriously injured. The troops of the invaded Dork tribes had captured and intentionally injured it in order to use it as a lure to provoke a massive anger and panic run-away among a herd of innumerable Aums.

The massive pursuit of the sacred huge insects in search of the captured youngster could easily destroy all the invading enemy Tormekian troops but it would also inevitably result in a total environmental devastation of the occupied territory, because the field once run over by the mass of huge insects would shortly be transformed into the poisonous fungi forest which will no longer be viable for human beings for at least one thousand years. So the strategy taken by the Dork clans was invincible and, at the same time suicidal and irremediable (vol. 2, pp. 39–77).

By her rescue of the young Aum, Nausicaä has prevented the herd of Aums from running away into human territory. And the blue bloodshed which literally dyed Nausicaä's clothes during the rescue manoeuvre, now saves her life, as the beetle which has just tried to devour her suddenly stops doing so as soon as it notices the Aum's blood on her clothes. At that moment, Nausicaä is convinced of the tranquilizing power of the Aum's blue blood (vol. 3, pp. 40–47). Clearly, the bloodshed is connected with the idea of catharsis, as it purifies the human-being of its crimes rather than stains it with abjections.

Here lies one of the fundamental ambivalences which makes it impossible simply to differentiate what is good from what is evil in the whole story, and which is to serve as a key to understanding Nausicaä's destructive and murderous action at the end of the story.

Let us here quickly add that Miyazaki Hayao says he was inspired by the description of Nausicaä found in *A Small Dictionary of Greek Mythology* by Bernard Evselin,⁴ where she appears as the healer of the shipwrecked and wounded Odysseus: Nausicaä did not fear the blood-covered Odysseus and took care of him, not only physically but also mentally by consoling the hero in despair with her improvised song.

1-2 Love of the Insects and Plants

Nausicaä in Miyazaki Hayao's epic comic appears also as a friend of insects, although these insects, scattering all around them the spores and seeds of the poisonous fungi, are feared by people as the worst threat to their health and survival in the Valley. There also appears a monstrous mycetozoan bio-weapon invented for the final solution by the Dork tribe scientists by artificially manipulating genetic mutations. This monster slime mold begins to over-grow and multiply out of human control, spreading over the whole viable territory. However, even this monster is not perceived by Nausicaä as an enemy to be annihilated. Nausicaä is convinced that this poor and miserable creature attacks and destroys everything around it simply because it is perplexed and frightened by its inability to understand its own reason for being in this hostile world. Nausicaä can grasp the fear and hatred of this creature as a reaction to the merciless attacks with which it is welcomed in this world (vol. 5, pp. 58–65). Once again the most ominous disaster caused by this bio-weapon, polluting the air with its deadly poisonous miasma is not characterized as the absolute evil to be exterminated, but as a most unfortunate creature to be sympathized with by the heroine, as if it were her own "child" (vol. 4, p. 136).

1-3 Sacrifice or self-denial as singular points in history

In a crucial moment of warfare in this catastrophic situation, the survival of the involved communities often depends on the decision taken by mediating individuals. Yupa, the master of the heroine, incarnates this role. When the Tormekian army invaded the Valley of the Wind, Yupa stopped the duel between Nausicaä and an escort soldier of the Tormekian Princess, Kushana. Yupa let his left arm be stabbed by Nausicaä's sword, knowing his blood-shed is indispensable for soothing Nausicaä's anger toward the invaders (vol. 1, pp. 60–64). This act allows us to predict Yupa's destiny.

Later, Yupa sacrifices his left arm in order to put down the revolt by the occupied Mani people (vol. 7, pp. 70–74), which would otherwise develop into a mutual massacre. Yupa himself had his life saved by the self-sacrifice of a Mani high-priest who, at the price of his own life, announced the realization of the old prophecy—*forbidden as heresy*—that a person cloaked in blue, who flies like a bird, loves the forest and talks with insects shall come down from the sky and appear on the golden field to lead the people to the Purified Blue Land, renewing the bond with the lost earth . . . (vol. 2, pp. 125–129).

As Yupa finally sacrifices himself to save the life of blood-stained Kushana, the vision of this dead Mani priest appears as a flash-back to the Mani people. With this psycho-dynamic transfiguration, Yupa thus renders to the Mani people his own life previously repaid by the death of their priest, thereby saving them from the infernal cycle of interminable murder and enmity.

Let us note that the image here evidently echoes Goya's famous painting *May 3, 1808* (1814, Prado), with the Jesus-like giant victim crucified at its center, and Yupa's last words to the revengeful Kushana announce her transformation: "the blood has rather purified you; the way laudable for you is the Royal road" [王道] (vol. 7, p.83), indicated by Confucius, as the right way of the reign, and not the way of Asura [阿修羅道] (vol. 7, p.77), buddhistic divinity destined to hatred and quarrel. Thus, by reactivating Japanese common knowledge, and without entering into doctrinal discussion, the author tries to reconcile three different ethical thoughts in the story which also aims at reconciling people by putting to an end the endless massacre.

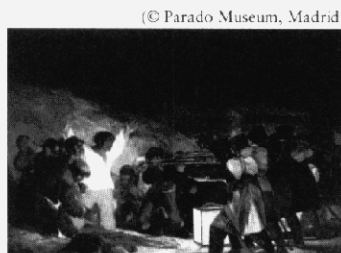


Fig. 2. Goya, *May 3, 1808*

2. FROM ANIMATION FILM TO COMIC

Those who have seen the 1984 film version of the same story must have already noticed the huge difference the comic story has shown since then. Let us retain here only three main points: i.e. the huge sacred insect, Aum, the giant divine soldier and the huge fungi forest. These three drastically change their meanings in the story.

2-1 Meaning of the *Aum*

In the movie version (which covers only 1 volume and a half of the whole story) the huge sacred insect Aum, guardian of the forest, incarnated simply the environmental order. The movie ended up with the reconciliation between nature and human life, realized by the self-sacrificing effort of the heroine who tried to be a bridge between the two. With the renewal of the pact between them, the herd of innumerable Aums retreats into the forest. But Miyazaki was not satisfied with this "ending which looks like a religious painting."⁵

In the comic version, not only Aums but all kinds of insects continue their massive suicidal march of migration, presaging the total environmental disaster, called *Daikaishō* [大海嘯]. Nausicaä is finally convinced that Aums and other insects are trying to stop the colossal monster mycetozoa slime molds; that they are not attacking this monster but they aim at rescuing this helpless and lonely mutant. She murmurs: "The insects were not attacking the mutant, but eating it," "Just as the insects eat the edible grass and giant fungus in the forest, so they were trying to eat the pain and agony the monster is enduring; that's the way insects show their love to plants," "As for Aums, they themselves are going

to serve as the seedbed for that giant mycetozoan,” not by devouring but by being devoured by this monster, Aums are trying to sooth and neutralize this “poor child” monster’s anger and fear toward other creatures (vol. 5, pp. 80-88, published in July 1987).

Here the notion of sacrifice is suddenly replaced and renewed by the idea of mutual dependence. From this point, the publication of the comic serials was to be suspended for another three years.

2-2 *Auma* : Role of the Giant Divine Soldier

The second major shift from the film version is found in the role of the unnamed Giant Divine Soldier *Kyoshin-bei* [巨神兵]. In the movie version this other bio-monster weapon represented the ultimate realization, and excavated residual, of the lost Mega-ceramic-industrial-civilization. The fire it vomits causes nuclear explosion, reminiscent of the catastrophe of Hiroshima/ Nagasaki as well as that of the science fiction of the 70s. But this giant-weapon, prematurely born in the story as well as in the conception of the movie itself, is to decay by itself without playing any indispensable role in this movie version, if not in Miyazaki Hayao’s next movie, *The Sky Castle Laputa* (1986), after Jonathan Swift, so far the best synthesis of Miyazaki’s animation film, where it is transformed into a fossilized robot serving as tomb guardian of the hidden and deserted no-man’s palace in the artificial island floating on the sky.

After a four year interval, it was only in the May 1991 issue that the giant reappears, in the Nausicaä comics. Nausicaä first tries to destroy this gigantic monster which would otherwise bring another “Seven Days of Fire” catastrophe. But her attack paradoxically contributed to deliver—prematurely—the monster from the womb artificially fabricated to prevent its awakening. Once it has awakened, nobody can control its instinct of destruction, except for Nausicaä, whom the Monster takes for his mother—clearly reflecting the Ajaze-complex—and a plot prepared already in the first volume of the story has promised her—without her knowing it—possession of the command key of this new born “child” monster (vol.6, pp. 143–165). Guided by a mysterious intuition, Nausicaä baptizes this monster *Auma*, supposedly meaning “innocence”, which is clearly a derived—if not feminine—form of the huge insect, *Aum*, thereby contributing—to her surprise—to the sudden progress of its intelligence and power of judgment (vol. 7, pp. 29–33). It would however be irrelevant to disclose here to those who haven’t yet read the story the role *Auma* is going to play at the end of the story.

Yet one remark must be necessary on *Auma*’s fundamental ambivalence. On the one hand Nausicaä behaves like the mother of *Auma* while hoping for its death as its birth is doomed to cause world disaster. On the other hand, while *Auma* hopes to protect its “mother,” the radio-activity emanating from its body affects Nausicaä and leads to the death of the fox-squirrel, Teto (vol. 5, p. 67; vol. 7, p.

31, 73, 84, 93: by its death the fox-squirrel is destined to reappear in Nausicaä's psychic vision to help the heroine from the temptation of the "Nothingness" and the challenge of the "hole of oblivion"). Evidently there is a concentric double structure: Nausicaä holding the body of a small fox-squirrel is herself held in the hands of the Gigantic Divine Soldier. The guardian of the Sacred Memory Garden of The Old World remarks: "It's strange. A person accompanied by the death-god is weeping at the death of a small animal. You, who came from the world where innumerable dead bodies remained forsaken" (vol. 7, p. 95). To this Nausicaä ripostes: "Do you measure the death of a dear friend by its physical mass?"

Here lies a paradox in political ethics: how can a person who grieves at the death of a small animal bear the charge of a weapon capable of total human holocaust? The Twentieth Century experienced this paradox without finding any solution to it. Stephen Spielberg melodramatized too easily this dilemma in his film *Schindler's List*. "Übermensch" must be the definition Nietzsche gave to such inhuman capacity, with all its inherent danger and to which Nausicaä consciously exposes herself (vol. 6, p. 34). Here the author also seems to criticize the innate inhuman aspect of the bureaucracy of the present day, which is constantly killing many equivalents of "small animals" in society while no faithful public official is supposed to sympathize with these victims of the social structure, without transgressing the codes of a public servant.⁶

2-3 Healing and/or Sterilizing: Function of the Forest

Charged with this paradox, "as heavy as the world itself" (vol. 6, p. 85; cf. vol. 7, p. 56), Nausicaä advances to the Sacred Capital, Shuwah, which seems to conceal all the enigmas of environmental disorder. The choice of the name *Shuwah* cannot be innocent, for it probably echoes *Shoah* in Hebrew, which Claude Randsman chose in 1984 as the title of his documentary film on the Nazis' extermination programme of the Jewish people (and let us add that it is not until 1995 that this documentary was publicly released in Japan).⁷

By this time it has become clear, in the story, that the fungi forest was destined to purify the polluted world. Contamination is condensed in the forest to be crystallized into harmless minerals in the span of about one thousand years. Here again the interpretation given in the movie version on this Perishing Forest is radically changed in the comic version. In the film version, Nausicaä experiences the purified world at the deepest bottom of the forest where petrified old remains of the giant fungi have already been stabilized and transformed into harmless crystals and sands (cf. vol. 1, pp. 128–131). In the comic version, in contrast, the purified air at the end of the Perishing Forest appears as lethal for those who have been accustomed to the polluted air, and the purified water drawn from the bottom of the Forest is found to be sterile and inadequate for agriculture. The promised purified world as a utopia to come in the movie version is modified

into a dystopia in the comic version, almost nine years later (vol. 7, pp. 127–132). How to interpret this modification is our next—and last—question.

3. PROPHECY

1995 must be a notorious year in post-war Japanese history. The year marking half a century after the “defeat” in the “Pacific War,” it was also the end of the miracle of Japanese economic efficiency and the myth of Japan as the model of democratized society in East Asia. The Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake on January 17, causing more than six thousand deaths and more than two hundred thousand homeless victims simply devastated the myth of Japan as an earthquake-proof high-tech country. Then the Aum Truth Sect’s alleged gas attack of the Tokyo subway on March 20, with twelve deaths and more than five thousand casualties, completely exposed the myth of security in Japanese society. The political instability and inability characterized by the lack of decision-making were revealed in the financial scandal of the “Jūsen” Housing Loan Companies, followed by an accident at the plutonium reactor in Tsuruga and the disclosure of the massive AIDS contamination among hemophilia blood patients through unheated blood products People were suddenly convinced of the structural bewilderment Japan is experiencing as a nation-system which completely lacks any crisis management strategy and is deprived of any concrete vision for the future. The once highly reputed Japanese bureaucracy now refuses to assume any initiative and retreats into its collective irresponsibility.

3-1 Paradox of Purification

Asahara Shōkō, guru of the Aum Truth Sect and allegedly responsible for the Tokyo subway gas attack is known to have been a fervent reader of *Nausicaä in the Valley of the Wind*. Asahara seems to have willingly assumed, by himself, the role of the Aum insect and the purifying forest in this disgracefully polluted world. It seems quite clear that what is regarded as the gas attack from without was one of the purifying processes of the universe from within. We know that the Aum sect buildings were equipped with the “cosmo-cleaner,” borrowed from another dystopia scientific fiction *Yamato the Space-Battleship* by Matsumoto Reiji (b. 1938) which narrates a long adventure of the battleship toward “Isandal” in search of the “cosmo-cleaner” without which no life on earth could survive the nuclear pollution caused by the extraterrestrial enemy, named Gamiras⁸

Even the put-on act of a sarin gas attack, of which the Aum Sect pretended to be the victim, would be justified so long as it proves the efficiency of the “cosmo-cleaner”; and the indiscriminatory gas attack Asahara is alleged to have ordered would be also justified so long as it contributes to, and results in,

the self-fulfillment of *harmagedon* [Armageddon], the prophesied total catastrophe of Japan by “the Final Invasion of American Imperialism,” as is also described in Ôtomo Katsuhiro’s *Akira* (esp. in part V).⁹ In short the subway gas attack was a necessary trigger to bring about the panic and the predicted “American intervention” preparing the “End of Japan.” Otherwise, the promised paradise, which is supposed to come among his believers, after the *harmagedon*, would never be realized.

Half a year after the gas attack, some poisonous foreign spiders were found near Yokkaichi, Sakai and other Japanese ports. This news provoked new panic and people tried to exterminate these Australian spiders, as they were believed to be so poisonous as to be mortal. Strong insecticide was sprayed to kill these spiders which later appeared not to be so dangerous. Miura Toshihiko (b.1959), a somewhat narcotic young Japanese novelist made an ironical remark on this incident. What difference is there between this insecticide sprayed by the ordinary Japanese and the Sarin nerve gas sprayed by the guru in obsessive persecution delusion, Miura says, for both of them tried to purify Japan from ominous enemy invaders that would otherwise devastate our homeland?

I would add that what is really hideous in this parallel is that Japan is now accusing Asahara precisely by following the same logic of purification Asahara has preached: such a dangerous person as Asahara must be eliminated—like the

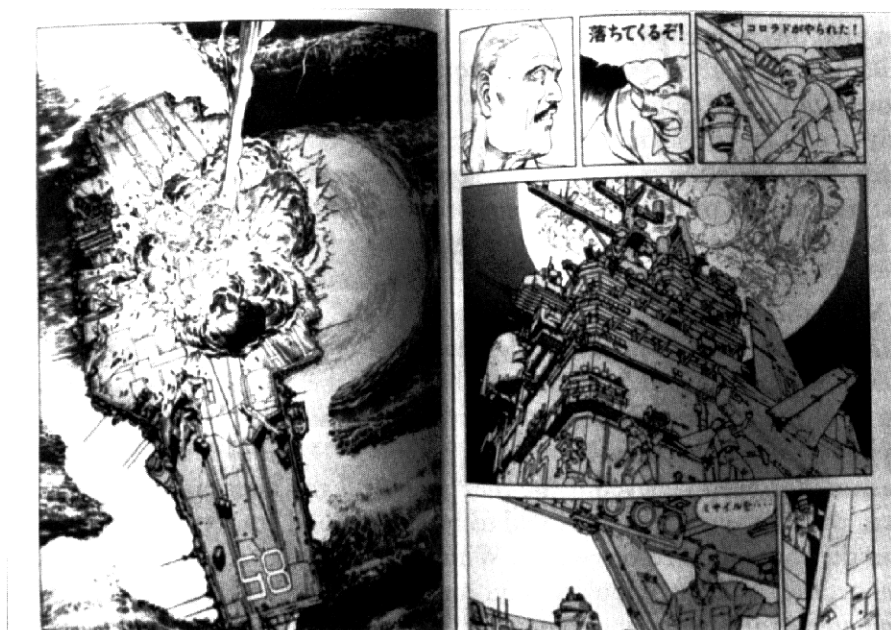


Fig. 5. Ôtomo Katsuhiro, *Akira* (Part V)

AKIRA by Ôtomo Katsuhiro
©1984 MASH-ROOM Co. Ltd./Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo

spiders—and his sect dissolved and extinguished from Japan once and for all so that a contamination-free Japan will be re-established. Thus Asahara's logic of purification remains intact and reproduced by those who attack him. Asahara's alleged "criminal act" is invaluable in so far as it revealed by its murderous exaggeration this dangerous propensity of contemporary Japanese people—and society—for self-seclusion in a perfectly sterilized greenhouse-like archipelago, free from any foreign harmful contaminations.

3-2 *Shuwah* or the Sacred Capital

This danger inherent in the logic of purification has not been fully taken into account in the animation film version of Nausicaä story. The ecological interpretation of the healing power of the forest would conceal, in it, a dangerous dichotomy between nature as the absolute good and civilization as the absolute evil. In the comic version, however, Nausicaä preaches to his child Auma, the Gigantic Divine Soldier as follows: "if you separate the world into two categories, between enemy and ally, you shall burn down the whole world and reduce it into ashes," "So, to be a distinguished person, you should learn how awful your own power can be" (vol. 6, p. 33). This reminds us of the controversy around the Smithsonian Institution concerning the atomic bomb display in 1995.

Here is the negation of the transcendental ethical judgement. No good or evil can exist *a-priori*. We can easily suppose some external conditions which prompted this re-interpretation: the end of the Cold War with the breakdown of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the ethnic conflicts and interminable civil wars which followed in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda etc. An optimistic image of ecological harmony is no longer convincing and the trauma of ethnic cleansing certainly shed a dark shadow on the story as reminiscent of the *Shoah*, namely the Nazi holocaust. It is almost prophetic if in Nausicaä's story the name of the Sacred Capital has been chosen as *Shuwah* from the beginning of the story in 1982.¹⁰

3-3 Monotheistic "God" v.s. Animistic "Forest"

Shuwah is supposed to be the hidden headquarters of the artificial intelligence, believed to be the "God," which established all the purification programme. It must be already clear to the readers that the Nausicaä's mission to the capital consists of destroying this programme. The promised "Purified Blue Land" of which Nausicaä has been believed to be the "apostle," the messenger,—and it really was in the film version—is revealed to be a falsehood conceived to deceive people in the contaminated old world. With the fulfillment of the purification programme, the surviving population on earth has been also programmed to be exterminated as abjections and to be replaced by the purified new species of human beings. Realizing this secret, Nausicaä takes the decision of destroying this "God"

at the price of “committing the crime” of extinguishing the “Light of the hope” (vol. 7 p. 208) of the future mankind as well as its germs.

Nietzsche said somewhere that “God” is the kind of fallacy without which human beings cannot survive. Here we can finally see a strong criticism of the monotheistic thinking hidden in Miyazaki’s comic story. Without explicitly showing it, Miyazaki suggests that the monotheistic notion of “God” as the saviour of human beings is nothing but a human invention which conceals a dangerous inclination toward purification and cleansing of those who would not believe in this programme. With the help of the destructive power of the Giant Divine Soldier, Nausicaä finally destroys the human-invented “God,” to realize the horrifying fact that the blood it sheds is nothing but the same blue blood of the Giant Aum, with which her clothes have been dyed, and she shall conceal this ultimate truth—of fratricide—from the people till the end of her life

By its own bloodshed and destruction, the “God” redeems itself from its woeful programme. Abjection of bloodshed thus promises the second transfiguration of Nausicaä, now “blessed” by the second blue bloodshed. The ambiguity of the forest serving simultaneously as polluted dangerous place and as purifying system thus gains its full meaning. It would probably not be entirely “politically correct” to detect in this *finale* the reflexion of an animistic thinking. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that the ambiguity of the forest as purification and abjection is deeply rooted in Japanese culture. The Giant Fungi Forest clearly echoes the image of Imperial mausolea constructed in fifth- and sixth-century Japan, called *Kofun* [古墳]. Sacred sanctuary, as well as purgatory and untouchable taboo, these mausolea are transformed into natural forest in a millennium to serve as a symbol of political power—and also its usurpation—as well as awesome wilderness, prohibiting—officially, at least, since the days of Japan’s military national-socialism period—any human entrance whatsoever.¹¹

On the ideological aspect of *Nausicaä in the Valley of the Wind*, I leave the critical judgement to each of the readers of the story. I simply suggest that the comic is probably the only medium in contemporary Japan which permits, out of the direct influence of commercial concern, the development of such long-term meditations and painstaking narrative endeavors with the investment of considerable imagination.

In waiting for the *Daikaishō*

To conclude let me add one anecdote. In the story, the rage of the forest as natural calamity was called *Dai-kaishō* [大海嘯], literally The Huge Ocean Breath (“dai” being the honorific prefix). By a curious coincidence, the candidate location for the next International World Fair in Japan, scheduled for 2005 in Aichi Prefecture, is a huge forest named *Kaishō-no-mori* [海上の森].

Ecologists are now organizing a campaign against this massive destruction of the precious *Kaishō-no-mori* forest situated in Seto city, famous for its ceramics production. Personally I believe that if it really takes place, the destruction of *Kaishō-no-mori* forest would be an ominous symptom of the *Dai-kaishō*, the uncontrollable natural calamity that the post-war Japanese economic monotheism has prepared by itself, for the purpose of its own destruction. Just as the *harmagedon* had to be prepared by the Aum Truth Sect which prophesied it, the *Dai-kaishō* is also the calamity that the Japanese seem destined to prepare by themselves. Whether or not a Nausicaä would appear in reality is, for a while, still an open question.¹²

(March 1996)

Notes

1. MIYAZAKI Hayao (b. 1941), *Kazeno Tanino Naushika*, Tokyo, Tokuma Shoten. 7 vols., 1995. The quotations and references given in the text are from this definitive version. The publication of the original serial begins in the February 1982 issue of the monthly comic magazine, *Animage*, and separately published as follows: vol. 1: Sep. 25, 1982; vol. 2: Aug. 25, 1983; vol. 3: Dec. 15, 1984; vol. 4: May 1, 1987; vol. 5: June 30, 1991; vol. 6: Dec. 20, 1993; vol. 7: Jan. 15, 1994. Before being integrally republished in 1995, the earlier volumes were partly modified by the author, but in this paper, we could not verify every detail of modification.
2. In the postface of Vol. 1 of the comic version, Miyazaki explains these two origins of the Nausicaä figure, but mentions by mistake *Konjaku Monogatari*, instead of *Tsutsumichūnagon Monogatari*, as the source of the "Insect Loving Princess."
3. The animation motion picture version of the *Kazeno Tanino Naushika* was released on March 11, 1984 at affiliated movie theaters of Tōei. The cinematographical details are as follows: 1 hour and 56 minutes. Color. Original story, adaptation and direction: MIYAZAKI Hayao. Producer: TAKAHATA Isao (b. 1935). Credit: Nibariki [Deux chevaux], Tokuma Shoten, Hakuhōdō. The video and Laser Disk are available from Tokuma Japan Communications/Tokuma Shoten. Detailed information and a chronological table of the making of *Kazeno Tanino Naushika* are found in the special issue "Miyazaki Hayao, Takahata Isao and the animations of the Studio Ghibli, *Kinema-junpō*, No. 1166, July 17, 1995.
4. Translated into Japanese as *Girisha Shinwa Shōjiten*, by KOBAYASHI Minoru, Tokyo, Shakaishisōsha. Cf. note 2.
5. Miyazaki's commentary quoted in "Miyazaki Hayao, Takahata Isao and the animations of the Studio Ghibli," *Kinema-junpō*, No. 1166, July 17, 1995, p. 118.

6. One can here recall Pierre Bourdieu's *La Misère du Monde*, Paris, Seuil, 1995. In his book, *Nausihika dokkai* (Reading Nausicaä out), Tokyo, Mado-sha, 1996, INABA Shin-ichirō (b. 1963), a young scholar in political sciences tries to analyse *Nausicaä in the Valley of the Wind* from a similar perspective, by referring to such authors—and authorities—as Hegel, Ernst Kantorovicz, Hannah Arendt, Max Holkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Karl Schmidt, Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Derrida, Robert Nozic and Christopher Stone. In this paper, we deliberately take a different stance from Inaba's argument, with which we disagree as an approach itself.
7. On the discussion around this problem, see, in Japanese, TAKAHASHI Tetsuya (b. 1956) and UKAI Satoshi (b. 1955) (ed.), "*Shoah*" no *shōgeki* (The Impact of "Shoah"), Tokyo, Mirai-sha, 1995, NISHITANI Osamu (b. 1951), *Sensō-ron* (Traité sur la guerre), Tokyo, Iwanami-shoten, 1992; *Yoru no Kodou ni fureru* (Touching the palpitations of the Night: lecture on the War), Tokyo, University of Tokyo Press, 1995.
8. MATSUMOTO Reiji (b. 1938), *Uchūsenkan Yamato* (*Cosmoship Yamato*), Tokyo, Akita Shoten, 1994. The television animation version was released first in 1974 and revised into a movie theater version in 1977, which gained unprecedented popularity, prompting the creation of the second T.V. series in 1978, while the film version successfully continued with part 2 in 1978 and the "final" part 3 in 1983. The enormous success this series enjoyed among young Japanese, is worth analysis as an outcome of the repressed Japanese subconsciousness after the defeat of World War 2 and its expression of catharsis. In this resurrection of the famous battleship, Yamato, helplessly sunk near Okinawa under American heavy attack shortly before the end of the war in 1945, we can trace the tendency of aesthetization of the masochistic self-sacrifice of tragic heroes in Japanese culture. See, SATŌ Kenji (b. 1966), *Gojira to Yamato to bokurano minshushugi* (Godzilla, Yamato and the Democracy of Our Generation), Tokyo, Bungeishunjū, 1992.
9. ŌTOMO Katsuhiro, *Akira*, in 6 vols. Tokyo, Kōdansha, 1984–1993. The story was initially published in about 120 serials from 1982 to 1990 in the *Young Magazine* and the final volume (vol. 6) was published in book form in 1993. An English translation is also available through Epic Comic, New York.
10. See Miyazaki's own testimony in an interview reproduced in Inaba Shin-ichirō, *op. cit.*, (note 6), pp. 194–197. Juan Goytisolo's *Cuaderno de Sarajevo* (1993) was translated into Japanese in 1994 by YAMAMICHI Yoshiko as *Sarajevo Note*, Tokyo, Misuzu Shobō, 1994 and became a bestseller. For Miyazaki's generation, the memory of the Spanish Civil War and the defeat of the Popular Front seem deeply embedded in mind. We don't know, however, exactly when the name Shuwah appeared in the original version of Miyazaki's comic. Either coincidental or intentional, the similarity between "Shuwah" and "Shoah", here discussed, is our own hypothesis.
11. A somewhat ideological inclination toward the healing power of the forest is typically observed in a Japanese philosopher, UMEHARA Takeshi's (b. 1925) "*Mori no shisou*" *ga jin-ri wo sukuu* (The "Idea of the Forest" as a salvation of the human beings), Tokyo, Shōgakukan, 1991. Miyazaki seems to be conscious of the danger of the fascination the forest exercises on the Japanese imagination and criticizes Umehara's animistic thinking in an interview given in Inaba Shin-ichirō's book (*op. cit.*), p. 210. Quite suggestive in this con-

text is the pioneering study of the mycetozoan—half animal half plant—slime molds made by MINAMIKATA Kumakusu (1867–1941), famous biologist and folklore scholar. As a typical representation of the interest in this eccentric naturalist shared among contemporary Japanese scholars, see NAKAZAWA Shin'ichi's (b. 1951) *Mori no barokku* (Le Baroque de la forêt), Tokyo, Serika-shobō, 1992, esp. ch. 4 and 5. It would be no coincidence that TADA Tomio's (b. 1934) *Men'eki no imiron* (Semiotics of the Immune System), Tokyo, Seidosha, 1993 became a bestseller in Japan almost at the same period.

12. This can be a dangerous analogy, just as Stefan George's (1863–1933) epic could have prophesied the coming of the "Führer" and the new "Reich." YOMOTA Inuhiko (b. 1953) also remarks on some dangerous affinities Miyazaki's Nausicaä story can share with Nazi rhetorics. See YOMOTA Inuhiko, *Manga genron* (Principia mangaus), Tokyo, Chikuma shobō, 1994, p. 290, where he develops a chronological typology and paradigmatic succession from utopia to dystopia in the post-war Japanese S.F. comic history, while exemplarily demonstrating the semantic and syntagmatic conflicts between grammar and rhetoric in the Japanese comic's elementary vocabularies and narrative styles.

* Let us add, that in this short paper, we traced, simply and in an oversimplified manner, some of the main structures revealed on the surface of the Nausicaä story. Further paths must be explored in detail for a deeper understanding of the story. As a sort of huge forest by itself, the story still conceals many treasures and intrigues not always clearly noticed by the author himself. Last but not least, my sincere thanks go to Christopher Starling, Livia Monnet, Ishikawa Eiko, Oda Atsuko and Sumié Jones who checked my draft and gave useful suggestions.

Author's notes:

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Fig. 1. Yupa's Self Sacrifice (Vol. 7, p. 89)

Fig. 3. Burial of Teto (Vol. 7, p. 94)

Fig. 4. Matsumoto Reiji, *Cosmoship Yamato*

要 約

『風の谷のナウシカ』——その初歩的読解の試み

稲 賀 繁 美

宮崎駿『風の谷のナウシカ』は、劇場上演映画として大きな成功を収めたが、作者本人は失敗作とみなしている。映画実現以前から手がけられ1995年に単行本として出版されたコミック版は、映画での物語を全否定するに等しい変更を

蒙っている。本稿ではその主要変更点を、その間に発生した社会情勢との関連で考察し、英語圏の読者を対象としてこの壮大な叙事詩の可能性の一端を解析しようとするものである（AAS 1996年ホノルル大会発表原稿）。