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Abstract

This project examines the film Castle in the Sky by Studio Ghibli, directed by Hayao Miyazaki and how it uses “chaotic good”, “lawless evil” and “lawful good” being ideas rework from Future Boy Conan (1978) also directed by Hayao Miyazaki through an examination of the relationships between the characters.

Keywords

castle in the sky, law, morality, future boy conan, motherhood

Disciplines

Film and Media Studies | Philosophy

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The Concepts Of Lawful And Moral In *Castle In The Sky*

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FYS 149-2: Japanese Popular Culture, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA



Thesis Statement

This paper examines how *Castle in the Sky* uses “chaotic good”, “lawless evil” and “lawful good” being ideas rework from Future Boy Conan (1978) also directed by Hayao Miyazaki, through an examination of the relationships between the characters.

Movie Plot

Sheeta is a young girl who has been orphaned and is being pursued by a group of pirates led by Captain Dola and the military led by Muska, who are after a mysterious crystal pendant she possesses. Pazu is a young boy who dreams of finding Laputa, a legendary floating castle that is said to be filled with great treasure and advanced technology. One night, Sheeta and Pazu meet by chance and decide to team up in their search for Laputa. Along the way, they encounter a variety of characters, including the pirates and the military, who are also searching for Laputa and its treasure. As Sheeta and Pazu journey to find Laputa, they face numerous challenges and dangers like waking the robot up and wreaking havoc to the castle. But they remain determined to find the floating castle and unlock its secrets. Along the way, they uncover the truth about Sheeta's mysterious crystal pendant and its connection to Laputa like how Sheeta is the descent of Laputa with the name of Lucita Toel Ul Laputa. Seeing the true beauty of Laputa, the kids successfully intervene Muska and his idea of taking over the island to conquer the world.

Interesting Facts

- *Laputa: Castle in the Sky* first released on August 2nd, 1986, is a fantasy adventure film written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki and is the first film to be produced by Studio Ghibli.
- The terms “chaotic good”, “lawless evil” and “lawful good” were popularized by the classic game of Dungeons and Dragon, where there is role playing and players advance by completing tasks together as a team. These rankings are split into two axes and those are the “moral” and the “lawful”.
- Miyazaki has said the scene where Pazu is working was inspired by his trip to Wales, where he saw the miners being controlled by the British. It also has two sides that somewhat resembles the two sides. The two sides

Analyzing Characters’ Relationships

Pazu and Sheeta ⇔ Pirates and Dola, their mother

- Pazu and Sheeta “Lawful good” ⇔ Pirates “Chaotic good”.
- For the kids, they are both well-intentioned from the start in their actions and goals. When siding with the pirates, Pazu and Sheeta does not want to pursue the idea of stealing or doing evil deeds, but rather want to shut down the intentions that Muska has.
- The pirates are a lawless group, seeking for treasure to make themselves better off while helping Pazu and Sheeta.
- Viewers first believe that Dola is a wicked character, filled with power and control the pirates like her minions. Towards the end, it is not Dola being dominant towards the pirates that made them scared but rather the respect and love the pirates have for Dola. And Dola’s relationship with Pazu and Sheeta can be said to be motherhood too.
- When Pazu and Sheeta is on the ship with the pirates, they are welcomed, giving a sense of freedom. (Raz Greenburg, 110-111).
- Express the importance of moral values and the importance of motherhood.

Pazu and Sheeta ⇔ Muska and his crew

- Pazu and Sheeta “Lawful good” ⇔ Muska “Lawless evil”.
- Main protagonist versus antagonist, but rather blurry at the start.
- The antagonist is capturing Sheeta like a prisoner for their own selfish reasons.
- Muska’s crew represents the government who is seeking for the island.
- Muska can be interpreted as a figure of the 20th century fascism because he is now only seeking for power, treasure, and position in the world. He can be compared to a spy who works behind the scenes in the Cold War or is affiliated with the Nazi party and execute his evil schemes (160).
- Pazu and Sheeta fought for the good side of the fight and seek for what is best for everyone, the peace for people both on “land”, which is the Earth, and for Laputa as well. The kids are acting selflessly, unlike Muska.

Future Boy Conan ⇔ Castle In The Sky

- A devastating war brings about a post-apocalyptic world. Conan was raised by his adopted grandfather on an isolated island after the war. A girl named Lana washes ashore, pursued by Lepka and other who seek to use her to control what’s left of the old society.
- Conan and Pazu are young boys who is brave and resourceful, and he is willing to take risks and make sacrifices to achieve his goals. Showcase the strength, determination, and bravery of youth.
- Lepka and Muska are both antagonists. Lepka and Muska are a complex and one-dimensional character, as they are both completely focused on their own ambition and is willing to do whatever it takes to achieve it
- Lana and Sheeta who find themselves on epic adventures alongside the main male protagonists, Conan and Pazu. Lana and Sheeta are strong and well-developed female characters who showcase the courage and determination of young women.

Conclusions

The concept of “chaotic good”, “lawless evil”, and “lawful good” are utilized very carefully and thoughtfully throughout *Castle in the Sky*, creating a harmonic series of events that plays out very well and emotionally impacting. These concepts derive much from earlier works and characters such as Conan from *Future Boy Conan* and it plays a major role in shaping *Castle in the Sky*. By “recycling” his own ideas, Miyazaki create a different story but keeps the core concepts at the heart of the anime.

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