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Design for Stage and Screen

From Atomic Allegory to King of the Monsters:

An Exploration of Godzilla's Shifts in Identity Over the Past Six Decades

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This dissertation is submitted by the undersigned to the Institute of Art Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire in partial fulfilment for the BA (Hons) in Design for Stage and Screen. It is entirely the author's own work, except where noted, and has not been submitted for an award from this or any other educational institution.

Signed:

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Abstract

In a global post-war environment, people were looking for an outlet for their trauma while not upsetting the delicate status quo that had been achieved at the end of World War II. The war ended in 1945 when Japan became the first and last country to experience the devastation of the atomic bomb forcing them to surrender unconditionally. The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima alone killed 70000 in the initial blast and countless more in the months following the blast due to acute radiation sickness and radiation-related illnesses. In the years following the war, Japan was occupied by the US, open criticism of the bomb was unacceptable, film was considered the perfect medium for voicing the collective Japanese psyche. In 1954 the film "Gojira" was one of the first films that took on the bomb as it's subject matter. Tomoyuki Tanaka, the film's producer, said: "the theme of the film is the bomb...mankind had created the bomb, and not nature was going to take revenge on mankind." [1] *Gojira* was released at a time when monster movies were extremely abundant but it stood out amongst the other films in the genre due to the director, Ishiro Hondas, dedication to treating Gojira like a war drama, with documentary-like straightforwardness. After the films huge success producer Joseph .E. Levine acquired the rights to the film and released it to the American public after huge politically motivated changes created a whole new narrative. This dissertation explores the history of Godzilla, focusing on what the character represents and how he has been used to enhance and dismantle political opinions over the past six decades.

Key words: Character Design, Godzilla, Atomic bomb, Americanisation

[1] Ryfle, Steve. Japan's Favorite Mon-Star The Unauthorised Biography of 'The Big G", Ontario, Canada, ECW Press, 1998, pg. 20

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Introduction

"Godzilla is a warning, a warning for every one of us. When mankind falls into conflict with nature, monsters are born." - Professor Hayashida, *The Return of Godzilla* 1985.[2]

By the end of World War II, the war had claimed the lives of millions of soldiers and civilians leaving many countries major cities in ashes. Japan was one of these countries as it became the first and last country to experience the destruction of an Atomic Bomb. The bomb killed 270,000 people in Hiroshima, 150,000 in Nagasaki and threw Japan into a period of economic and social uncertainty. For seven years after their surrender, Japan was occupied by American forces that forbid the Japanese people from discussing the war or the bomb. In a global post-war environment, opinions had to be hidden as to not upset the delicate status quo that had been achieved at the end of WWII.

After the occupation ended film was the perfect medium for voicing the collective Japanese psyche and giant, radioactive monsters were the perfect allegory for the destruction of nuclear weaponry. For centuries people have been creating monsters as a means of coping with fear and when faced with the overwhelming devastation caused by the war, the giant monster genre became one of the most imitated formats since the Western. Inspired by the popularity of monster films and renewed fears surfacing due to nuclear tests by the United States and the Soviets producer Tomoyuki Tanaka pitched the idea for *Goijra* (1954) to Toho studios. *Gojira* stood out in the overly saturated giant monster genre due to director Ishiro Honda's decision to treat the film as if it was a war drama, with a documentary-like straightforwardness.

The film resonated with Japanese audiences and was met with unprecedented success. This enthusiastic response led to producer Joseph E. Levine acquiring the American rights to the film and re-released it to the public after huge politically motivated changes, creating an entirely new narrative. A mixture of bad dubbing and extensive re-shoots stripped the original film of its meaning and reduced it to a laughable B-movie. Godzilla, in Newsweek's opinion, was a "400-foot-high plucked chicken" who "cannot act his way out of a paper bag."[3] In 1982 when the original uncut Japanese version of the film debut in the united states, the critics were more kind. Howard Reich of The Chicago Tribune termed the original "an eerie metaphor for nuclear war… The movie is a parable on

[2] Hashimoto, Koji. The Return of Godzilla, Toho Studios, 1985

[3] Matthews, Melvin E.. Hostile Aliens, Hollywood and Today's News : 1950s Science Fiction Films and 9/11, Algora Publishing, 2006. Pg. 87

life and death issues, and therefore it's sledgehammer means of communication powerfully underscore the message."[4]

Through thirty-two Japanese films and four Hollywood reboots Godzilla experiences several identity shifts and by examining these shifts we can grater understand US-Japan relations over the last sixty-five years. This dissertation explores the history of Godzilla, focusing on what the character represents and how he has been used to enhance and dismantle political opinions over the past six decades.

Chapter one examines the circumstances that led to the birth of Godzilla beginning with Japan's involvement in World War II, the Manhattan projects development of the Atomic Bomb and use of this new technology on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The chapter proceeds to discuss Japanese filmmakers ambivalence towards the bomb until the Lucky Dragon incident which led to the Japanese peace movement of the 1950s and was *Gojira's* producer Tomoyuki Tanaka's inspiration to pitch the idea of Godzilla to Toho Studios. It examines the use of the monstrous body in fiction as a way to displace fear and anxiety and the boom of Giant monster films in the 1950s. It also discusses Godzilla's unique design which allowed him to stand out in the sea of other radioactive monsters that dominated the decade.

Chapter two addresses the American public's first real glimpse of the destruction caused by the bomb due to the release of the August 31st issue of the New Yorker (1946). It followed six citizens of Hiroshima as they recount the day the bomb was dropped, giving the tragedy a unique human perspective . It explores the government's attempt to sway people opinions on Nuclear science through its "Atoms for Peace" campaign which led to the creation of films like Eugène Lourié's *Beast from 20'000 Fathoms* that unlike *Gojira* celebrates the use of nuclear weaponry to destroy its monster. It continues to discuss Transworld Studios process to acquire the rights to the original *Gojira* and the many changes made by the studio to alter the narrative of the original film preventing the American public from gaining empathy for the victims of the Atomic bomb.

Chapter three further discusses the Americanisation of Godzilla. It explores mass culture theory as a response to the industrialisation and commercialisation of popular culture on a large scale. This chapter goes on to examine Godzilla's many sequels and the variety of directions the series takes charting contemporary culture and attitudes over the decades. It also addresses Godzilla's most

[4] Matthews, Melvin E., Pg. 75

recent American reboots and how Hollywood's monopoly of the film industry has made them the face of the Godzilla franchise.

Chapter One: Birth of an Atomic Monster

The Beginning of the Atomic Age

Ishiro Honda's *Gojira* was a perfectly crafted metaphor for the horror experienced by Japan during World War II. Japan formally entered the war after they initiated a pre-emptive military strike against the US naval base at Pearl Harbour in Honolulu, Hawaii. Four years later in 1954 the Manhattan Project, an American led effort to develop nuclear weaponry, performed the first successful test of an atomic bomb. The bomb created an enormous mushroom cloud 40,000 feet high and marked the beginning of a new atomic age.[5] On August of the same year, an American B-52 bomber called the Enola Gay dropped a 10,000-pound atomic bomb on Hiroshima, a city of 250,000 people going about their normal day.[6] The bomb exploded over the city in a bright flash, followed by a deafening shockwave that heated the air as it expanded. The fireball from the blast enveloped the area around ground zero and a giant mushroom cloud roiled up from the city "like an angry grey ghost."[7] Within seconds the city was destroyed and over half of its population was dead or dying from severe burns, acute radiation sickness and other radiation-related illnesses. Three days later a second atomic bomb was destroyed the city of Nagasaki killing more than 60,000 people.

Fig 1: Flash burns on steps of Sumitomo Bank Company, Hiroshima branch, photographed by U.S forces, November 20, 1945

Fig 2 :Partially incinerated child in Nagasaki, photographed by Yōsuke Yamahata, August 10, 1945

The Japanese government surrendered on August 10, 1945, four days after Hiroshima and one day after Nagasaki.[8]

Japan's Occupation

[5] Wilmshurst, Paul. Hiroshima, British Broadcasting Corporation, 2005
[6] Wilmshurst, 2005
[7] Hogan, Micheael. J. Hiroshima in History and Memory, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pg. 1
[8] Hogan, pg. 3

Japan was occupied for seven years after its surrender which threw Japan into a period of political, economic and social uncertainty. The nation that had remained unconquered for thousands of years suffered the shame of being governed by foreign soldiers and was forced to adopt a western constitution that reduced the emperor to a mere symbolic figure, abolished state Shintoism and threatened other long held traditions and beliefs. During the war, the countries film industry was booming due to the popularity of nationalist propaganda films. When the occupation began the allied powers censored these films and other media in efforts to democratise Japan, forbidding discussions of the war, the bomb and America's role in the tragedy.[9]

The occupation ended in 1952 and filmmakers were free to openly discuss these topics but many were still reluctant to take on the bomb as its subject matter. Film Scholars cite prevailing feelings of shame, repression and guilt but are unable to explain Japanese cinema's ambivalence towards the bomb.[10] By 1954 Japan was peaceful and prosperous again but renewed fears were surfacing due to new nuclear tests by the United States and the Soviets. On March 1 the US detonated a 15 Megaton H- Bomb, 750 times more explosive then the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, near Bikini Atoll. A Japanese fishing boat, called the Lucky Dragon No.5, was exposed to fallout from the nuclear testing resulting in the boats 23 crew members to be contaminated by the radiation.[11] A local newspaper reported that Kuboyama Aikichi, the crew's chief radioman who died from leukaemia caused by the exposure, said: "Please make sure I'm the last victim of the atomic bomb."[12] A wave of unprecedented public outcry followed the tragedy which led to the rise of the Japanese peace movement of the 1950s.[13]

Honda's Vision

Toho studios manifested the fears of Japanese people into monsters that could be destroyed, giving Japan a new way to reckon with the devastation of the bomb and their frustration towards how the government handled this tragedy. During the war the Japanese government placed blanket restrictions on reporting losses to the public, wishing to maintain the illusion of victory at all cost.[14] Similarly in the film relatives are given scant Information and the people are fed information only as the government see fit. After presenting his hypothesis that Godzilla's awakening was a direct result

[9] Wilmshurst, 2005
[10] Ryfle, Steve. Japan's Favorite Mon-Star The Unauthorised Biography of 'The Big G", Ontario, Canada, ECW Press, 1998, pg. 20
[11] Lapp, Ralph E. The Voyage of the Lucky Dragon, Australia, Penguin Books Ltd, 1957, pg. 37
[12] Ryfle, pg. 20
[13] Ryfle, pg. 20
[14] Bowyer, Justin. The cinema of Japan and Korea, Great Britain, Wallflower Press, 2004, pg. 65

of radioactive testing to a panel of government and military officials, Professor Yamane Is urged to not make his findings public to prevent mass hysteria. This creates division in the panel, some members believing the public need to prepare for a possible attack on Tokyo. The scene shows how Honda is questioning whether the Japanese government withheld information about America's plans to bomb Japan. The director's intimate experience of war shapes how he presents the destruction caused by Godzilla. He witnessed the bombing of Tokyo and visited Hiroshima in the period following the nuclear attack, so he was dedicated to treating the film as a war drama, with a documentary-like forwardness. His first-hand experience Is projected onto the screen through carefully designed images.[15] Godzilla is most often seen throughout the film trampling buildings and causing destruction to electrical towers and roadways, signs of modernity and an allegory of the bomb wiping out all signs of life in two of the most populous cities of Japan.[16]

Fig 3: Gojira, Directed by Ishiro Honda, 1954, Still of Godzilla destroying Tokyo

These images of destruction are juxtaposed against the Japanese military's massive show of force incapable of stopping the advance of the monster. Honda shows that for all of Japan's military might they ultimately fail in their duty to protect their citizens. Godzilla's greatest threat, the oxygen destroyer, is an invention that holds philosophical, moral and destructive values. The film demonstrates empathy towards both the scientist and intended victims, philosophising over the role of humanity within scientific discovery. Dr.Serizawa laments that his discovery could destroy all of humanity but might be the only means to defeat the monster. This scene is arguably an attempt to

[15] Bowyer, pg. 66
[16] Bowyer, pg. 66

represent the conflicting views of the scientists of the Manhattan Project. Honda places a lot of focus on technology and science, a mandatory feature of a science fiction film, however, he manages to approach it as both a spectacle and as a vehicle for philosophical and moral conceptualism.[17] The film was an extremely popular monster film but Honda's most Important contribution is the moral and ethical stance reflected within the film, reflecting a collective psyche damaged by the nuclear age.

The Universal Meaning Behind Monsters

The Atomic bomb defined post-war Japan and in turn, defined its Monsters. As Jeffrey Cohen writes "The Monster is born at this metaphoric crossroads as an embodiment of a certain cultural moment-of a time, a feeling, a place."[18] The monster incorporates fear, anxiety and dissatisfaction giving them uncanny independence. Monsters are projections that warn and reveal certain concepts to their audience, the monster appears at a time of crisis. For centuries people have invented fantasy creatures on which their fears could settle safely.[19] Because of this monsters tend to share certain characteristics, no matter where they appear they are always aggressive, gigantic, man-eating, malevolent, bizarre in shape, gruesome, powerful or gratuitously violent. As Cohen writes "The monstrous body is pure culture…A construct and a projection, the monster exists only to be read: the monster is etymologically that which reveals that which warns".[20] Nightmares are universal so they must reveal something about mankind. Without the slightest possibility of cultural diffusion, it is obvious we are dealing with almost identical ideas among disconnected people revealing a deep human thread.[21] David J Skal points out an example of this deep human thread in the similarities between the Danse Macabre and the imagery seen in post war comics. The Danse Macabre is a medieval allegorical concept of the equalising power of death. It is a literary or pictorial procession of dance of both living and dead figures, the living arranged in order of their rank and the dead leading them to the grave. The concept probably gained popularity in the late Middle Ages as a result of the obsession with death inspired by the Black Death and the devastation of the Hundred Years' War between France and England. The imagery seen in post-war comics during the 1950s was strikingly similar.[22] Most Americans found it easier not to face their anxieties directly, they found expression in media like comic books that had been growing in popularity at the end of the war. Like the woodcuts

[17] Bowyer, pg. 70
[18] Monster Theory: Reading Culture, edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, University of Minnesota Press, 1996, pg. 4
[19] Gilmore, David D. Monsters: Evil Beings, Mythical Beasts, and All Manner of Imaginary Terrors, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, pg.1
[20] Cohen, pg. 4
[21] Gilmore, pg. 2
[22] Skal, David . J . The Monster Show: a Cultural History of Horror, New York, Faber and Faber, 1993, pg. 230

of Hans Holbein the younger, these comics took advantage of easily producible line art to display images of rotting corpses that carry off the living.[23]

Fig 4: Hans Holbein the Yonger, "The Monk" from The dance of death, 1534

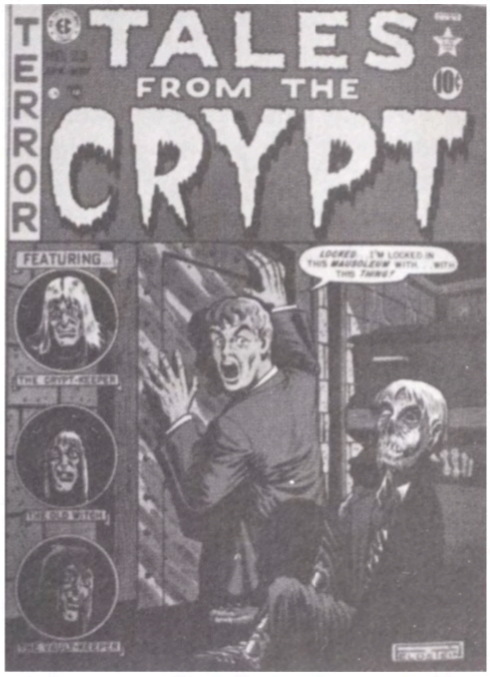

Fig 5: E.C. Comics, Tales from that Crypt, 1951

The Boom of Giant Monster Movies in the 1950s

There are no new monsters only remixes of previously established tropes, but the fears and anxieties monsters embody change depending on the context. World War II claimed the lives of 40 million soldiers and civilians and had introduced new mechanised forms of death in the atomic bomb and extermination camps.[24] This seriously challenged people's ability to cope with the real-life horror people had experienced in the mid-century. The psychological sciences researcher Bernard Rime study's patterns of social sharing after emotional experiences. His work suggests that 80-95% of emotional episodes are shared.[25] The affected individuals talk about the emotional experience recurrently to people around them throughout the following hours, days, or weeks. His studies also found that social sharing of emotion increases as the intensity of emotion Increases. When communities are affected by an emotional event, members repeatedly share emotional experiences.[26] Collective emotional events share similar responses which explain the rise in popularity

[23] Skal, pg. 230
[24] Skal, pg. 229
[25] Rimé, Bernard; Páez, Darío; Basabe, Nekane; Martínez, Francisco (2009). "Social sharing of emotion, post- traumatic growth, and emotional climate: Follow-up of Spanish citizen's response to the collective trauma of March 11th terrorist attacks in Madrid". European Journal of Social Psychology.
[26] Rimé, Bernard (2009). "Emotion Elicits the Social Sharing of Emotion: Theory and Empirical Review". Emotion Review.

of the giant monster genre during the 1950s. After the war, less Imposing monsters that were popular in the 1930s were no longer a compelling image for modern moviegoers. Dracula's quaint threat of invasion was tired when compared to the overwhelming violations the world had so recently witnessed. As scholar Timothy Beal writes " Monsters are personifications of the unheimlich. They stand for what endangers one's sense of security, stability, integrity, well-being, health and meaning,"[27] and in a post war world the threat of mass destruction was bigger than ever in the public mind, and so were its monsters. Oversized radioactive monsters were lightning rods for atomic war anxieties and It became one of the most successful and Imitated formulas since the western.[28] These monsters revealed the frightening underbelly of modernity.

Godzilla's Design

Tanaka was inspired to pitch the idea of Gojira to Toho studios due to the booming popularity of films in this genre, in particular *The beast from 20000 Fathoms* by Eugene Laurie. The story centres around a 200-foot carnivorous dinosaur, known as the Rhedhosaurs, that is awakened due to nuclear testing in the arctic circle.

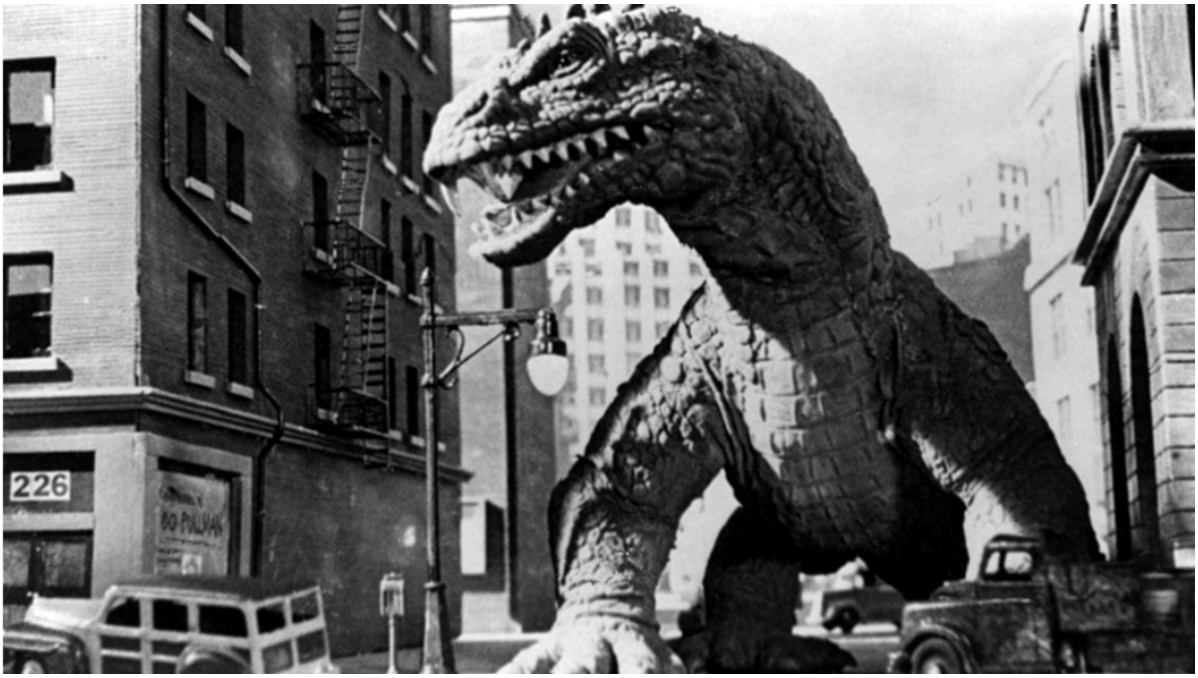

Fig 6: Beast from 20,000 Fathoms, Directed by Eugene Louvie, 1953, Stll of the Rhedorus destroying New York

[27] Asma, Stephen T.. On Monsters : An Unnatural History of Our Worst Fears, Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2009. Pg. 188
[28] Skal, pg. 248

In a light-hearted article published in 1988, palaeontologist Ken Carpenter tried to derive what sort of dinosaur Godzilla Is based on the monster's anatomy. Godzilla has traits that evolved multiple times among different groups of large carnivorous theropods, creating a strange dinosaurian mosaic. More than anything else, carpenter pointed out Godzilla's head Is key to the identity of the dinosaur. Godzilla has a short, deep skull reminiscent of a group of theropods called abelisaurids - dinosaurs such as Carnotaurus and Skorpiovenator.[29] Exactly how such a strange dinosaur survived to the modern era, and how radioactivity created such a monstrosity, are questions best left in the movie's mythology. However, the character of Godzilla was influenced by much more than a prehistoric dinosaur. Monsters must be examined within the intricate matrix of relations that generate them. Godzilla's design has shifted in both size and shape over 65 years, Gojira is a combination of the two Japanese words Gorirra, meaning gorilla, and kujira, meaning whale, conjuring up the image of a strong creature of enormous size. Eastern folklore roils with giant serpents, fire breathing dragons and hideous demons that local warriors must conform or else society will be destroyed.[30] The apocalyptic man versus monster formula is a prominent feature in Japanese folklore and was probably a much bigger inspiration on the monster then It's cinematic predecessors. Some scholars have suggested that Japan has more legendary creatures than any other medieval culture.[31]

Similar to Godzilla the dragons of Japanese lore are usually associated with water and are often considered to be water deities in the Japanese Shinto religion. Shinto grew in prominence in the medieval Period and Is a system of belief that worships Devine beings known as kami. In Shinto nature is inherently Devine. Just like the many forms of nature, kami can take many forms and can even become monsters, many of which don't look too different from Godzilla. Many of Toho's creations are like angered kami set on vengeance in the wake of the bomb. The devastation of the bomb can be interpreted as an attack not only on the people of Japan but also on nature, a divine aspect of Shinto. Ryujin is the dragon king, sea god and master of serpents In Japanese mythology. He is responsible for the tides and he represents both the perils and bounties of the sea and so was especially relevant to an ancient island nation like Japan. He is the lord of the snakes who are associated with death and thunder which links with Ryujin's role as bringer of rain and storms. We can see a direct reference to this in the scene that features the first on land appearance of Godzilla which coincides with a massive storm.

[29] Carpenter, K. (1998) A dinosaur paleontologist's view of Godzilla. In Lees, J. D. & Cerasini, M. (eds) The Official Godzilla Compendium. Random House (New York), pp. 102-106.
[30] Gilmore, pg. 3
[31] Tsutsui, William, Godzilla on my Mind: Fifty Years of the King of Monsters, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004

Fig 7: A 19th century CE illustration of Ryujin, the dragon king chasing the princess Tamatori, National Museum, Warsaw

Fig 8: Gojira, Directed by Ishiro Honda, 1954, Still of Godzilla terrorising the inhabitants of Odo Island

Ryujin has shrines across Japan especially in rural areas where fishing and rain for agriculture are so important to local communities. The inhabitants of Odo Island, the rural island where Godzilla is first spotted, refer to the monster as a god and preform ritualistic dances to try and appease the creature. Unlike the American atomic mutants, which never inspired sequels, Godzilla was the only 1950s monster to outlast the decade. Science fiction critic and historian John J. Pierce. Says that where the American monsters were merely "special effects extras,…Godzilla was an individual. More than that, he had soul… Godzilla lives on and on because he can always be reborn in whatever guise works best for the time, and be invested with whatever greater significance suits our psychological needs." Pierce concludes: "Godzilla is, and always shall be, a monster for all seasons."[32] Gojira's unprecedented success in Japan caught the attention of producer Joseph E. Levine of Transworld studios and changed the course of Godzilla's legacy.

[32] Matthews, Melvin E.. Hostile Aliens, Hollywood and Today's News : 1950s Science Fiction Films and 9/11, Algora Publishing, 2006. Pg. 88

Chapter two: America's Appropriation of Godzilla

Americans begin to learn more about the Bomb

In 1946, fear and faith in science collide, for the first time the American people began to learn more about the bomb. Generally there were no detailed, easily accessible images of the actual effects of nuclear weaponry up until 1954. Usually, the horrific destruction was shot with minimal, visual evidence of human casualties and, as Spencer R. Weart puts it, "from an Olympian distance".[33]On August 31, 1946, the latest issue of the New Yorker was released, the entire issue is a single article written by John Hearsey about the experiences of the people of Hiroshima told through the eyes of six survivors. Hearsey chose people who the American public would relate to and goes into detail describing their appearances and their lives before the blast, giving a face to the victims for the first time.

Fig 9: The front cover of the New Yorker August 31, 1946

The first person, Reverend Kiyoshi, is a beloved priest, the explosion throwing him to the ground but both he and his family are live far from the blast and survive without serious injury. A Woman living in Hiroshima, Hatsuyo Nakamura, her house is destroyed and she has to save her three young children

[33] In Godzilla's Footsteps : Japanese Pop Culture Icons on the Global Stage, edited by W. Tsutsui, and M. Ito, Palgrave Macmillan US, 2006. Pg. 121

who are trapped under the rubble. In the coming months after the explosion, she notices her hair begins to fall out and in time all four of them become ill with radiation sickness. While running to their designated safe place Nakamura comes across Father Willemstad Keinsorge, a German priest living in Hiroshima. Another Hiroshima, Dr Masakazu Fuji, is injured when his porch is ripped from his house breaking his collar bone in the process. The young doctor, Terfumi Sasaki, is working in a Red Cross hospital when the explosion rips apart the walls of the building. The final person, a young clerk named Toshiko Saskai, in the explosion she is crushed under a heavy bookcase and trapped there for hours, so that "in the first moment of the atomic age, a human being is crushed by books."[34] Six of the luckiest people in Hiroshima that day are still devastated by its events.

The issue sold out within hours, radio broadcasters did live readings of the article begin the broadcast by saying "This chronicle of human suffering and destruction is not presented In defence of an enemy, it is broadcast as a warning that what happened to the people of Hiroshima a year ago could next happen anywhere."[35] Henry L. Stimson the former secretary of war wrote a response to the article in Harper Magazine, to justify using the bomb. Nuclear weapons were becoming key to US security, Harry Truman and his advisers began to think atomic weaponry could be the best basis of diplomacy. American defence intellectual Bernard Brodie defined the essence of what came to be called nuclear deterrence. Roadie concluded that the only real value of atomic weaponry lay not in their actual deployment in war, but rather in the threat of their deployment: "Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them."[36] The American government began to shift the public focus from the destruction of nuclear weaponry to the possibilities of nuclear science. "Atoms for peace" was the title of a speech delivered by the US president Dwight D. Eisenhower to the UN general assembly in New York December 8, 1953. The United States then launched an "Atoms for peace" campaign that supplied equipment and information to schools, hospitals and research institutions. One example of a film created for this campaign is a short animation released in 1953 called *A for Atom* created by John Suthlond. The film belongs to the genre so-called "Benevolent Atom" films, an artefact from an era characterised by a strong narrative belief in science and technological progress. The potentially threatening nuclear technology is presented to the public in a humanised fashion, with elemental figures depicted as Humanoid figures such as Dr. Atom. In a key sequence, the film introduces the five "atomic giants" which man has released from within the "Atoms Heart."[37]

[34] Hearsey, John. 1946. Hiroshima. The New Yorker
[35] DeNooyer, Rushmore. The Bomb, PBS, 2015
[36] Totman, Sally-Ann. The end of the Cold War: Rogue States and their Characteristics, 2009, pg. 33-50
[37] Urbano, Carl. A is for Atom, 1953

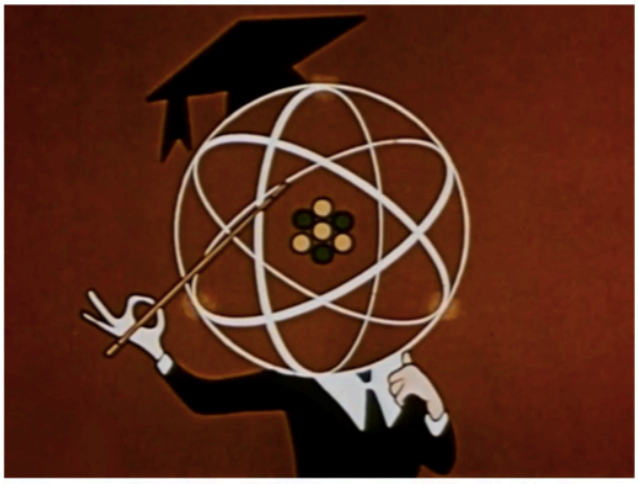

Fig 10: A is for Atom, Directed by Carl Urbano, 1953, Still of Dr. Atom

Fig 11: A is for Atom, Directed by Carl Urbano, 1953, Still of an Atomic Giant

Each of these giants are depicted as a majestic figure, towering over the earth, bringing progress and limitless growth to the world. The viewers are reassured that "all are within man's power and subject to their command," and that our future depends "on man's wisdom, on his firmness in the use of that power." The nightmarish monster of nuclear war is transmuted into a gentle giant of industrial progress.

Godzilla vs. its predecessor Beast from 20,000 Fathoms

In the same year, Eugene Lourie directed *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, a film that encapsulated Americas relationship with war and nuclear weapons during this period. The film has many similarities to its Japanese counterpart. The story focuses on a fictional prehistoric dinosaur, called the Rheadorus, who is awoken by an Atomic bomb test in the Arctic circle. Both monsters are resurrected as a result of nuclear testing but this is where the similarities end. The two films diverge both thematically, in the monsters intent and how they are eventually defeated. In *20000 Fathoms* the attack of the Rheadorus is not a random indiscriminate assault. The Rheadorus wreaks havoc on the city on New York but seems to only target the citizens who directly antagonise it. In streets full of people screaming and fleeing in terror it only attacks police officers and military officials. As Historian Yuki Tanaka points out " It is clear that this film has been produced by people who have no experience of "total war," in particular indiscriminate aerial bombing."[38]

[38] Jacobs, Robert. Filling the Hole in the Nuclear Future: Art and Popular Culture Respond to the Bomb, Lexington Books, 2010, pg.152

Fig 12: Beast from 20000 Fathoms, Directed by Eugene Louvie, 1953, Still of a newspaper featuring the destruction of the Rheadorus

Japan on the other hand was very familiar with the destruction caused by bombing. *Gojira* deliberately evokes the destruction of Tokyo by fire bombing, and by extension urban destruction, the terror of urban warfare among civilians. Any adult Japanese viewer in 1954 could vividly recall, often from personal experience, the horror of aerial bombardments that left more dead than the atomic bombings : "scorched, boiled, and baked to death," as General Curtis LeMay put it.[39] On March 10, 1945, around 100,000 people in the Tokyo metropolitan area were burned to death within hours by 237,000 firebombs by 334 B-29 bombers.[40] The scene in *Gojira* where the monster destroys Tokyo is ten times longer than the scene in which New York is attacked in *20,000 Fathoms* because Honda knew the sight of Tokyo on fire would resonate with the Japanese people. Godzilla doesn't single out his victims, like the atomic bomb he sets out to destroy the entire city and all of its inhabitants. The film includes scenes of people escaping burning buildings, injured people clinging onto life in a makeshift hospital and a woman comforting her children before they are also destroyed by the monster.

Fig 13: Gojira, Directed by Ishiro Honda, 1954, Still of a mother comforting her children before being destroyed by Godzilla

[39] W. Tsutsui, . Pg. 203
[40] Jacobs, pg.153

Gojira portrays an extremely raw and realistic view of what destruction of war looks like whereas *Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* is an American Film studios interpretation of war. The two nations contrasting viewpoints of the Atomic bomb are highlighted in the endings of the films. In *20,000 Fathoms* the monster is finally defeated by the military when it is shot in the neck with a radioactive Isotope. As Tanaka summarises "The monster embodies a contradiction between scientific knowledge and the unknown power of nuclear weapons… yet the power of radiation resolves this contradiction."[41] The story unfolds scientifically and ends with the victory of nuclear science over the monster. In *Gojira*, the scientist is convinced to use the weapon he has created to destroy the monster after many scenes showing him considering the consequences of using the weapon Unlike 20,000 Fathoms, the main theme of *Gojira* is not the victory of science over nature, rather it implies that human beings are being destroyed by the impact of science on nature.

Godzilla: King of the Monsters

The marriage of a compelling monster and an exciting narrative rooted in realism ensured *Gojira's* instant popularity and contributed to the creation of numerous spin-offs and re-makes, most notably the American release of *Godzilla: King of the Monsters*, one year after that of the original. At the time *Gojira* had only been seen by a small audience in Los Angeles but [42] the enthusiastic response led to Joeseph E. Levine with Transworld pictures buying the American rights to the film. Considering that Gojira is anti-nuclear weaponry, the American remake sought to allay the public's growing concerns over nuclear research and development.

Fig 14: Godzilla: King of the Monsters, directed by Terry O. Morse and Ishiro Honda, 1956, Still of reporter Steve Martin's first sighting of Godzilla

[41] Jacobs, pg.151

[42] Bowyer, pg. 64

The Americanisation of *Gojira* was achieved by introducing the character Steve Martin, an American reporter, and the complete redubbing of certain scenes, the bad dubbing making these scenes comical at times undermining the seriousness of the original. Numerous scenes were moved or deleted, noticeably any scenes that refer to Nagasaki. An example of this occurs when a Japanese couple is discussing how they survived Nagasaki only to face the terror of Godzilla destroying Tokyo. This scene was omitted from the remake as it left no doubt as to where the metaphor of Godzilla came from, directly comparing him to the destruction of an Atomic bomb. General remarks concerning the destructive path that scientific discovery can sometimes take are also omitted. The result is that *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* is optimistic while *Gojira* errs on the side of caution in examining the continuation of nuclear research and other military inventions. Gojira's introduction of the "Oxygen destroyer" holds philosophical, moral and destructive values.

Fig 15: Gojira, Directed by Ishiro Honda, 1954, Still of Dr. Serizawa holding his invention the Oxygen Destroyer

The emphasis placed on the invention in each of the films is different, *Godzilla: King of the monsters* being more empathetic towards military or scientific use of the weapon despite being confronted with a massive loss of life. *Gojira* on the other hand demonstrates more empathy towards the scientist and the victims, philosophising over the role of humanity within scientific discovery. The Japanese film focuses on science and technology, this is in direct opposition of the American re-creation which is more preoccupied with the superficialities of a generic monster movie. The scene featuring the scientist, Dr. Seizawa, questioning the validity of the oxygen destroyer, which is considered to be crucial in setting up the film as an allegory of nuclear war, was replaced by a less confronting and somewhat idyllic scene. The character of Naval Officer Hideto Ogata was used to pacify the fears of the scientist as well as the audience by arguing for the use of a weapon of mass

destruction as a way of ending the destruction, a reflection of American attitudes towards nuclear warfare and by extension the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The change to this scene results in a distinct narrative change for *Godzilla: King of the monsters*. Ogata views the use of the weapon as inevitable, as the only way to secure the destruction of Godzilla and the safety of the people. The American remake of the film uses Godzilla as a catalyst for war while *Gojira* emphasizes the invention of the oxygen destroyer as an impetus for war.

The use of Film for Emotional Education

The Americanised version of Godzilla was much more successful than the original and was distributed around the world, effectively censoring the message behind the film and preventing an American Audience from empathising with the victims of the bomb. Similarly to how John Hearsey's article in the New Yorker gave a face to the people affected by the bomb, *Gojira* gave a voice to the people who had been previously unable to discuss the destruction caused by nuclear weaponry. Many philosophers hold the opinion that the value in fiction lies largely in what it can contribute to the education of emotional awareness. Aristotle links the pleasure we find in watching a tragedy in both learning and to an emotional response, which suggests the value of tragedy, at least in part, is what it can contribute to our emotional education.[43] English novelist George Eliot linked the value of art can be with our effective engagement with it when she said that her aim was to arose the "nobler emotions" in her readers.[44] Leaving fiction aside one of the most important ways in which we can gain new emotional experience is through empathetic response. In feeling with another, empathically rather than sympathetically we can find ourselves feeling in ways that are new to us. In responding sympathetically to others we mirror the feelings of people whose outlook and experiences may be very different from our own. Responding empathically allows people to understand the feelings of others as if they are having them themselves. As Alex Neil summarises "empathetic engagement with others may play an important part in the education of emotion. If fiction makes available to us possibilities for empathetic as well as sympathetic emotional engagement, then, that will go a long way toward justifying the claim that the value of fiction has a good deal to do with its contribution to education of emotion."[45] Empathy drives connection, while sympathy drives disconnection. Film can be extremely powerful in this sense and demands an emotional response from us. What feelings does a horror film evoke in the viewer? In watching it, we are not terrified for ourselves, we are under no illusion that we are in danger as the danger only exists within the screen. It may be suggested that we

[43] Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures : An Anthology, edited by Jinhee Choi, et al., John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2005, pg. 249
[44] Choi, pg. 249
[45] Choi, pg. 250

feel terror for the characters in the film sympathetically, but what this misses is the extent to which our terror is based on their terror, if they didn't find it terrifying either would we. Their responses are cues for our responses, we respond as we do because we can see the situation from their point of view. Taking such things seriously depends on our being prepared to see events from their perspective-taking it on as our own which unfortunately American audiences in 1954 were not yet prepared for.

Chapter 3: Godzilla's Legacy

Mass Culture and Americanisation

In 1952 with the release of *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* Godzilla was transformed form a powerful allegory for nuclear war into a monster that fit into popular culture at the time. His message is sterilised by an American film studio to appeal to a mass market. Mass culture refers to popular which is produced by the industrial techniques of mass production and market for-profit to a mass public of consumers.[46] Mass culture theory can be understood as a response to the industrialisation and commercialisation of popular culture on a large scale which began to gather momentum in the 1920s and 1930s. Its growth means there is less room for any culture which can't make money or be mass-produced.

Both mass production industries and mass-market encouraged the spread of mass culture. It is argued that aspects of mass production such as assembly lines, a highly specialised division of Labour and output quotas stamp mass culture with the features associated with mass production industries. The standardised, formulaic and repetitive products of mass culture are the results of the manufacturing of commodities through routine, specialised, assembly lines of production. The bland, standardised formulas of mass culture are developed to sell things to a mass consuming public because they can be made to appeal to everyone. The mass audience is there to have its hopes and aspirations exploited for the sake of consumption, by surrogate fanaticise and false dreams. Mass culture is, therefore, a culture which lacks intellectual challenge and stimulation providing instead the ease of fantasy escapism, simplifying the real world and glossing over its problems. Dwight MacDonald argues " The merger has standardised the theatre expunging both the classical and the experimental...and...the movies...too have become standardised...they are better entertainment and worse art"[47]. The fears and anxieties expressed by critics of mass culture have been equally directed at the threat of Americanisation. Since it is a capitalist society, American society is often seen to embody everything wrong with mass culture. Americanisation was thus the nub of the problem for literary critic F.R Leavis because American society had the most developed mass culture thus represented the future of comparable societies: "American conditions are the conditions of modern civilisation, even if the drift has gone further on the other side of the Atlantic on this."[48] English cultural critic Richard Hoggart tried to document how the traditional and closely- knit working-class

[46] Strinati, Dominic. An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture, Taylor & Francis Group, 2004. Pg.10
[47] Strinati, Pg.17
[48] StrinatiPg.22

community was being taken over by what he called “a shiny barbarism”.[49] The shiny barbarism Hoggart feared was defined by mass culture and Americanisation. In particular, he was concerned about the manipulative and exploitive influence exercised over the working-class community, most especially over its vulnerable younger members, by the American of Hollywood film. In Japan, this sentiment against Americanisation was felt even stronger because of the occupation. Many believed that America had a material “civilisation” (bunmei) but not a “spiritual” culture (bunka) and that in the end, Japanese “spirit” would overcome American-style modernity. Several hundred thousand American troops and their families living in a network of bases and housing areas across the country introduced the Japanese to the affluence of American material culture, and the media inundated the public with a flood of American, including Hollywood movies that were uniformly upbeat and appreciative of the American way of life. “ A majority of Americans measure things by tonnage, square footage, horsepower and especially dollars,” wrote Ashida Hitoshi in the 1920’s “words like beauty, proportion, or pleasure are concepts that have little to do with them.”[50] The literary critic and essayist Hirabashi Hatsunosuke made the argument that Film has aided in the Americanisation of Japan since 1929. As a form of entertainment, films are the most likely to reach the masses. From this perspective, the control of more than half the world’s film by American capital means that the whole world is becoming Americanised. Hatsunosuke argues “As a result American motion picture capital may come to dominate the world.” He said, “American movies have a tremendous power to penetrate society... it is impossible to prevent them from influencing the lives of the Japanese people.” [51]

Godzilla’s Shift in Identity Throughout Sequels

One of the ways Hollywood has maintained its monopoly on the film industry is by purchasing each the rights of intellectual property and producing reboots and sequels of these properties. With thirty two Japanese films and four Hollywood pictures, Godzilla has had many sequels and reboots over the decades in these sequels we see the character experience a series of identity shifts. These changes play an important role in charting cross-cultural relations between the USA and Japan. Jennifer Cunico, observes that: “ the variety of directions the Godzilla series takes over its half a century track record [charts] contemporary attitudes towards the military, the media, government, corporate, culture, popular perceptions of science, environmental issues, a changing world order, terrorism and

[49] Strinati, Pg.25
[50] Rediscovering America : Japanese Perspectives on the American Century, edited by Peter Duus, and Kenji Hasegawa, University of California Press, 2011. pg 18
[51] Rediscovering America : Japanese Perspectives on the American Century, edited by Peter Duus, and Kenji Hasegawa, University of California Press, 2011. pg 103

catastrophic disaster."[52] The format of the sequel provides a way to navigate the troubled waters of Japanese and US relations and later global relations. The original *Gojira's* conclusion allowed the audience to question how many monsters like Godzilla existed leaving the door open for many sequels. Toho studios were shocked at the overwhelmingly positive response towards the film and rushed the production of its sequel *Gojira no Gyakushu* (*Godzillas Counterattack 1955*) that was released less than a year later. It followed the example of its predecessor thematically, this time reflecting the tragedy of Nagasaki and it's sociology-political aftermath, reintroducing Godzilla and another less powerful creature called Angilas. Later Godzilla sequels would depict Godzilla as a sympathetic character as Japans relationship with America became more positive and Japan was experiencing new economic growth. Godzilla took on the role of a protector of Japan who fights monsters who will also appear to embody particular cultural and political concerns. Ghidorah, a dragon with three heads, for example, can be seen to represent China who detonated their first Atomic bomb in 1964 the same year the monster first appeared on the screen. Chon Noriega observes that the films persistently conclude with the sense of the monsters imminent return, an unequivocal narrative denouement for such a "polysemous figure"[53] who must return to resolve contradictions in cross-cultural meaning. Far from the spirit of Hondas films, Roland Emmerich's version of Godzilla in 1998 is much more interested in the results of the box office. Godzilla's reputation as a strong metaphorical figure over the years became nothing more than a representation of a representation. Regardless Emmerich was trusted with a budget of $130 million (USD) to make a new Hollywood adaption of Godzilla.

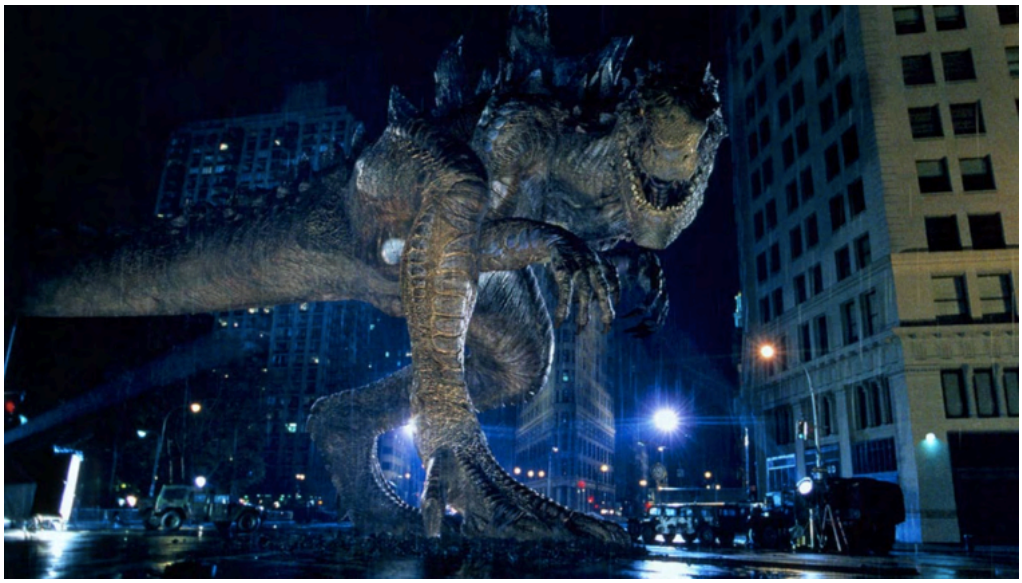

Fig 16: Godzilla, Directed by Roland Emmerich, 1998, Still of Godzilla in New York City

[52] Jess-Cooke, Carolyn. Film Sequels: Theory and Practice from Hollywood to Bollywood, Edinburgh University Press, 2009. Pg 35
[53] Jess-Cooke, Pg 38

Even though the film had a famously impressive marketing campaign and made 379 million (USD) in the box office, critics felt the film was "vacuous" and "one of the most idiotic blockbuster movies of all time,"[54] and the plans for two sequels were scrapped. Geoff King puts *Godzilla's* failure into perspective in his observation of the films mediatisation of the monster. Of Emmerich's investments In mediations, King reflects that the insertion of the act of representation within the narrative space can also function and the implicit form of disavowal.[55] It naturalises the production of spectacle, decreasing the distance between spectator-as-consumer-of-spectacle and those depicted on screen. The spectacle of commercialism is the films primary spectacle, and it is precisely this that disconnects the film from its heritage. Emmerich's Blockbuster sought to co-mingle the contextual and cultural specifics of Godzilla with aspects of other popular Hollywood Blockbusters, mainly *Jurassic Park* and *Independence day*, and operated only to display ignorance and disavowal of its legacy and its cross-cultural meaning.

Fig 17: Jurassic Park, Directed by Stephen Spielberg, 1993, Still of a close up of a T-Rex eye

Fig 18: Godzilla, Directed by Roland Emmerich, 1998, Still of a close up of Godzilla's eye

Leanne McLarty's observations on the sequel as announcing no less the "the end of originality" resulting in "the triumph of surface over depth, spectacle over meaning and history"[56] resonate through Emmerich's film, which was produced in an era in which new media technologies and digital culture were claimed to mark such an end to both originality and historically. Emmerich's film represents a model of filmmaking unique to a specific era in Hollywood History. Sensation films were prevalent very early on in cinemas history, as evidenced by Cunning's phrase, the "cinema of attractions", as well as a term for a film serial in Germany, loosely translated as "sensation-film."[57]

[54] Jess-Cooke, Pg 39
[55] Jess-Cooke, Pg 39
[56] Jess-Cooke, Pg 40
[57] Jess-Cooke, Pg 40

Hollywood's Creation of the Monsterverse

While the industry has a long history of producing sequels, the current trend of producing and maintaining franchises is relatively new in Hollywood. It wasn't until 1997 that studios came to fully realise how lucrative franchise films could be this awakening coming from the success of the Austin Powers franchise. Franchise films are appealing to studios for two main reasons: to appeal to an international audience and to provide the studio with a reliable source of income. Franchise films have a built-in awareness with audiences and "when they work, they can be a licence to print money,"[58] according to Amir Malin, managing principal of Qualia Capital, a private equity firm that invests in the media sector. Unfortunately, this means studios are less inclined to produce a wide release film based on an original idea and instead rely on well know IP because they know it will make money at the box office. Writer Lynda Obst says technological change and the rise of the international market are to blame for the proliferation of so-called "tent-poles" big-budget franchise movies that generate so much revenue they can support studios entire year of production. "Studio profits used to be generated by DVDs which financed original movies," she explains. But DVDs are slowly becoming obsolete – "obliterated by new technology," as Obst puts it- and studio profits now come increasingly from outside the US in booming multiplex markets such as China. "You can't pay for television advertising in every city in the world, so you become dependent on the pre-awareness of the movie." The best way to do this is through sequels. "The more the international audience is familiar with a title, the more they look forward to seeing it again...In Hollywood, familiarity breeds success, not contempt."[59] Brad Grey the chairman of Paramount Pictures says within the 15 to 17 films they release in a year " we look to do at least three to five franchises as part of our slate," franchise films are expensive for studios to produce, they tend to feature cast with big-name actors, expensive technical effects and the studio has to pay for the rights of the IP. And though IP is a large cost, the biggest studios have vast libraries of rights that can be exploited time and time again so "when you hit you can have a very meaningful income for years, even decades to come."[60] So it's not surprising that in 2015 it was Godzilla's turn to be indoctrinated into a franchise. Even though the 1998 version of Godzilla was a flop, Legendary Entertainment confirmed in July 2014 that they had just acquired the rights to Mothra, Rodan and Ghidorah from Toho studios and revealed concept footage at San Diego comic con with the closing title card reading "Conflict: inevitable. Let them fight."[61] In 2015 they

[58] Garrahan, M., 2020. The Rise And Rise Of The Hollywood Film Franchise. [online] Ft.com. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/192f583e-7fa7-11e4-adff-00144feabdc0#comments-anchor>.
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[60] Garrahan, M., 2020. The Rise And Rise Of The Hollywood Film Franchise. [online] Ft.com. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/192f583e-7fa7-11e4-adff-00144feabdc0#comments-anchor>.
[61] Wickman, Kase (July 26, 2014). "Holy Mothra: Gareth Edwards Reveals 'Godzilla 2' Monsters At Comic- Con". MTV. Retrieved June 24, 2016.

released *Kong: Skull Island* which sparked media speculation that Godzilla and Kong might appear in a film together. Legendary planned on creating a shared cinematic franchise centred around a secret government agency called "Monarch" and that brings together Godzilla and King Kong in an ecosystem of other giant super- species, both classical and new. This franchise was later referred to as the *Monsterverse* by Legendary.

Godzilla's first appearance in the *Monsterverse* was in 2014 in *Godzilla* directed by Gareth Edwards. *Godzilla* received generally positive reviews from critics but some criticised the film for having underdeveloped characters and a lack of thematic depth. Stephanie Zacherek of the Village Voice stated: "Godzilla is one of those generic, omnipresent blockbusters that undone by the very spectacle it strives to dazzle us with: Everything is so gargantuan, so momentous, that nothing has any weight."[62] Japanese critics have praised the film for putting more of an "effort to honour the spirit and visual style of the Japanese series" but criticised it for not saying anything substantial about nuclear weapons. Ed Godziszewski felt that the film did not provide much social commentary like previous films, stating " The 2014 film paid superficial lip service at best to the nuclear issue, but really there's nothing of substance there. Rather than offering caution about nuclear energy, the new film almost gives you the idea that nuclear weapons are actually the answer to everything."[63] Despite the critics, Edwards film earned a worldwide total of $529 million (USD) at the box office making it the 14th highest-grossing film of 2014 worldwide. In contrast to this the most recent Japanese addition to the series, *Shin Gojira* (2016) directed by Hideaki Anno, earned $78 million (USD) worldwide. While the original *Gojira* was a metaphor for the Atomic Bomb, *Shin Gojira* drew inspiration from the Fukushima Daiichi disaster and the 2011 Tohoku tsunami. Godzilla acts as a metaphorical tsunami, leaving radioactive contamination in his wake. The film is a satire of the Japanese government directly criticising them for their complex bureaucratic ways that left them unable to deal with both disasters quickly and efficiently. Even though *Shin Gojira* stays true to the history of the character and embodies the spirit of the original film it made a fraction of what it's American counterpart made at the box office and was seen by a fraction of the amount of people worldwide. Hollywood's monopoly of the global film industry has made Edwards Americanised version of Godzilla the face of the series, introducing the world to a bland standardised version of a character that once stood as a metaphor for the Atomic Bomb.

[62] Zacharek, Stephanie (May 14, 2014). "The Godzilla Particle". Village Voice. Retrieved September 3, 2016.
[63] Galvan, Patrick (January 12, 2016). "Interview: Ed Godziszewski". Toho Kingdom. Retrieved September 28, 2016.

Conclusion

Over more than half a century of films many political ideologies, social anxieties and collective and personal memories have been connected to Godzilla. Horror despite being perceived as low-grade entertainment has been provoking discussions and philosophical ideas since its inception, reflecting the fears and current culture within that era. Godzilla is a nexus of fears and associations, as William Tutsi reminds us "Godzilla in all his glory is a primordial soup of political concerns, cultural influences, cinematic inspirations, genre traditions, economic crassness, simple opportunism and sheer creativity."[64] The monster is clearly the objectification of nuclear war but he also represents much more than that. Godzilla is both the destroyer and the victim, he served as a catharsis for the Japanese people and a stark reminder of the dangerous repercussions of disturbing nature. Although *Godzilla: King of the Monsters* introduced Godzilla to a much wider audience but stripped the film of all its meaning consequently making it a critical flop. Transworld studios re-contextualised the film to erase the bomb and camouflage the destruction it caused preventing an American audience from empathising with the victims of the bomb. The tragedy is trivialised in this spin-off and introduced an American perspective to an experience that was so heavily Japanese. By analysing the changing representation of his character through thirty-six on-screen appearances, this dissertation has shown how Hollywood's appropriation of Godzilla has reduced him from a poignant expression of Japan's nuclear anxieties and grief after the events of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to a Hollow blockbuster spectacle designed to appeal to a mass audience.

The majority of the crew who worked on the original Godzilla had the first-hand experience of the war and the atomic bomb the monster was inspired by so they were dedicated to portraying his trail of destruction as realistically as possible. By giving the monster a name and a background Ishiro Honda was able to incorporate his experience of atomic devastation to elevate Godzilla from a giant radioactive dinosaur to a pop culture icon that stood out amongst a sea of other giants. From carefully crafted images of Tokyo on fire that would have been so familiar to the survivors of the 1945 Tokyo firebombing to the incorporation of aspects of the Shinto and Japanese mythology, Honda succeeded in creating a film that resonated with the Japanese public at a time of social, political and economic uncertainty. From Godzilla's very first on-screen appearance he announces himself as the embodiment of the atomic bomb, his head looming over the inhabitants of Odo Island like a mushroom cloud. As a character designer, Godzilla is a master class in allegory and

[64] Tsutsui, William, Godzilla on my Mind: Fifty Years of the King of Monsters, New York, Palgrave, 2017

representation, being able to unravel the complex matrix of conditions that led to his conception has thought me to make more informed decisions when designing myself.

As the world evolves and changes over the decades so too does Godzilla. Godzilla is universal, whether he is an allegory for nuclear weapons, a personification of the forces of nature, a protector of mankind or just simply a monster Godzilla is a constant in Japanese cinema history and in international pop culture that reminds us we can't change nature. The giant monster has been reference and parodied so many times in TV shows, films, video games etc. it would be virtually impossible for Toho studios to respond to every use of their copyrighted material. As this dissertation has shown, film studios most valuable assets are recognisable IP and there are very few franchises that are as long-lasting and recognisable as Godzilla. It was no surprise when TriStar Pictures attempted to start their series of Godzilla films beginning with Emmerich's 1998 reboot. Critical responses have shown how Emmerich's film completely missed the nuance and depth that had made the original film so successful. The most recent Hollywood reboots of Godzilla as a part of Legendary Studios *Monsterverse* pay some respect to his predecessor in terms of visual style but again neglect to properly address some of Godzilla's darker themes. Nuclear technology is discussed at the beginning of the film but the audience quickly distracted from this commentary by the Giant monster fights that fill the majority of the films run time. In my opinion, the best example of a contemporary Godzilla film is Hideaki Anno and Shinji Higuchi's *Shin Gojira*. Their version of Godzilla maintains the same dark tone of *Gojira* and continues the tradition of using the monster as a means of voicing the collective Japanese psyche. Implementing a mixture of traditional and digital effects, Toho created a monster that was both thoughtful and terrifying, staying true to the spirit of the original while elevating the character beyond the capabilities of previous films.

As Professor Hayashida said, "Godzilla is a warning"[65] and as long as humanities arrogance exists, Godzilla will survive.

[65] Hashimoto, Koji. The Return of Godzilla, Toho Studios, 1985

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