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Animals as Conflicts¹

Keywords

Godzilla, animal resistance, saviorism, military-animal industrial complex, nuclear weapons

Abstract

In this article, we utilize two absolute anti-nuclear classics of all time, the novellas *Godzilla* (1955) and *Godzilla Raids Again* (1955) by Shigeru Kayama to focus on the possibilities of thinking not only in the usual way about animals in conflicts but about animals *as* conflicts. *Godzilla* is not merely a nuclear allegory, and as such a personification, an embodiment of a conflict, but also an “allegory” of animal resistance, an embodiment of another, more underlying conflict, with all its necessarily (non-)allegorical implications. Our aim is to explore this view of *Godzilla* in the context of recent discussions in animal philosophy, namely the concept of animal resistance. This article will investigate the relationship between animal victimhood and resistance, thereby identifying a novel phenomenon: animals *as* saviors.

Živali kot konflikti

Ključne besede

Godzilla, živalski upor, odrešiteljstvo, vojaško-živalski industrijski kompleks, jedrsko orožje

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Povzetek

S pomočjo dveh absolutnih protijedrskih klasik vseh časov, novel *Godzilla* (1955) in *Godzilla Raids Again* (1955) avtorja Shigeruja Kayame, skušamo razmišljati ne le, kot je obi-

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čajno, o živalih v konflikatih, ampak se osredotočimo na možnosti, ki jih omogoča razmišljanje o živalih *kot* konflikatih. Godzilla ni le jedrska alegorija in kot taka posebitev, utelešenje konflikta, temveč tudi »alegorija« živalskega upora, utelešenje drugega, bolj temeljnega konflikta z vsemi njegovimi nujno (ne)alegoričnimi implikacijami. Naš namen je podrobneje raziskati ta vidik Godzille v kontekstu nedavnih razprav v filozofiji živali, ki se nanašajo na koncept živalskega upora in nadalje preučiti odnos med viktimizacijo in uporom živali ter tako osvetliti nov pojav: živali *kot* odrešiteljice.



*Just now, you asked about what we can do to combat
Godzilla. Unfortunately, there isn't a single thing we can do.
We can't prevent Godzilla from coming again.
—Prof. Yamane, Godzilla Raids Again²*

A Few (Anti-)Nuclear Anniversaries

Let us begin with a list of some current, past, and near-future nuclear anniversaries that are essential for a more precise contextualization of what will be the focus of our interest.

On August 6, 1945, at 8:15 a.m., the American Little Boy bomb was dropped on the center of Hiroshima, followed three days later by Fat Man in Nagasaki. As of August 6, 2025, eighty years will have passed since the first use of nuclear weapons in a war.³

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On March 1, 1954, at 6:45 a.m., a thermonuclear bomb (codename: Shrimp) was detonated on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands as part of “Operation Castle,” which turned out to be the largest and worst nuclear test in U.S. history. It was 1,000 times more powerful than the Little Boy that destroyed Hiroshima. Operation “Castle Bravo” vaporized ten million tons of sand, coral, and water, leaving

² Shigeru Kayama, *Godzilla Raids Again*, in *Godzilla and Godzilla Raids Again*, trans. Jeffrey Angles (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2023), 127.

³ “The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” National Park Service, last updated April 4, 2023, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/ooo/the-atomic-bombings-of-hiroshima-and-nagasaki.htm>.

a huge crater in the ocean floor and a 100-mile-wide fallout cloud that spewed radioactive debris onto the inhabitants of the atolls of the Marshall Islands, US military personnel, and Japanese fishermen aboard the Daigo Fukuryū Maru (Lucky Dragon No. 5). All the fishermen on board fell ill with radiation poisoning and one of them died a few months after the incident. Lucky Dragon forced the USA to reveal at least some of the secrets surrounding the nuclear tests. The incident, also referred to as the third American use of a nuclear bomb against Japan, was far worse than predicted and led to huge changes in anti-nuclear policy, eventually resulting in the 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty between the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union, which banned nuclear testing in the atmosphere, underwater, and in space.⁴ The year 2024 marks the 70th anniversary of the test of the US hydrogen bomb on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands in 1954.

Moreover, the controversy referred to by Toshihiro Higuchi as the “atomic bomb tuna” was part of the same anti-nuclear knot that further complicated relations between the US and its Asian ally. Tuna caught by Japanese fishermen after Castle Bravo were exposed to radiation from the tests and the radioactive carcasses had to be disposed of. Sales declined due to radioactive fallout⁵ and the Japanese tuna market fell into a deep crisis. Lucky Dragon and the subsequent a-bomb tuna led to the establishment of radiological standards between the US and Japan.⁶

As Joseph Masco emphasizes in *The Future of Fallout, and Other Episodes in Radioactive World-Making* (2021), this example shows how “the politics of radioactive fallout were central to the first efforts to regulate the bomb, contributing to a wide-ranging social revolution, linking issues of war and peace to those of the environment and public health in entirely new ways.”⁷

⁴ “Castle Bravo at 70: The Worst Nuclear Test in U.S. History,” National Security Archive, February 29, 2024, <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/nuclear-vault/2024-02-29/castle-bravo-70-worst-nuclear-test-us-history>.

⁵ Fallout is the term that comes from the atomic age and appeared in the English language precisely after Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Joseph Masco, *The Future of Fallout, and Other Episodes in Radioactive World-Making* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 20.

⁶ Toshihiro Higuchi, *Political Fallout: Nuclear Weapons Testing and the Making of a Global Environmental Crisis* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020).

⁷ Masco, *Future of Fallout*, 24.

On June 13, 1953, Warner Bros. released a nation-wide smash hit rampage monster film, *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, directed by Eugène Lourié, with stop motion animation by Ray Harryhausen. The Rhedosaurus, awakened from hibernation in the Arctic Circle by an atomic bomb test, set off on a journey *home* to the Hudson River, where fossils of his species were found.⁸

June 13, 2023, thus marks the 60th anniversary of this now little-known (outside select circles of genre enthusiasts) successor to *King Kong* (1933, re-released in 1952) and, we would say, *Moby Dick* (1851), with its immediate and far more famous successor being the Japanese *Gojira* (1954) or, in English “translation,” *Godzilla*. It is important to note that *Gojira*, as a portmanteau, combines the names of gorillas (*gorira* in Japanese) and whales (*kujira*).⁹

Toho Studios producer Tomoyuki Tanaka came across an article about *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* in a Japanese film magazine on his way back from Indonesia, where the authorities had canceled his planned big-budget film about an ex-soldier love story due to rising domestic tensions, and immediately realized that he could capitalize on the fears of nuclear weapons and radioactivity that had been aroused less than a decade earlier by Little Boy and Fat Man. *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* is not only an immediate predecessor to *Gojira*, tellingly tentatively entitled “The giant monster from 20,000 miles under the sea” (*Kaitai ni-man mairu kara kita dai kaijū*), but also marks the beginning of the explosion of a specific genre that emerged in the 1950s—the giant monster movie, with its subgenre of the nuclear explosion giant monster/beast movie.¹⁰ It is important to note that this genre explosion of nuclear cinema followed a period of intense and radical nuclear testing during the Cold War with its intense nuclear propaganda.¹¹

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On October 27, 1954, *Gojira* premiered in Nagoya, Japan. October 27, 2024, marks the 70th anniversary of *Godzilla*’s first official screen appearance, which was

⁸ “The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms: Release Info,” IMDb, accessed June 27, 2024, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0045546/releaseinfo/>.

⁹ Jeffrey Angles, “Translating an Icon,” in Kayama, *Godzilla and Godzilla Raids Again*, 225.

¹⁰ Angles, 193–97.

¹¹ Masco, *Future of Fallout*, 20–21.

followed just six months later by *Godzilla Raids Again* (*Gojira no Gyakushū*).¹² In July 1955, after the release of the two films, Shigeru Kayama's novellas *Gojira* and *Gojira no Gyakushū* were published in a single volume in Japan. Kayama, a prolific writer at the time, is the man Tanaka had entrusted with the script for the first two *Godzilla* films.¹³

However, the two novellas written by Kayama differ slightly from the movie. There is an interesting interplay between the films and the novellas. For although the story, characters, and plot remain the same in both, the novellas were published after the release of the two films, so the final form of the novellas was also influenced by the two films. As Jeffrey Angles points out, one of the clearest differences between the film and the novellas is the explicit anti-nuclear message of the novellas, which is still largely, if rather more implicitly, present in the film.¹⁴

Godzilla's anti-nuclear message stems from the three nuclear events already mentioned: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Castle Bravo with the subsequent "atomic bomb tuna" controversy. A clear allusion to the destruction of two Japanese cities can already be seen in the subtitles of both works: *Godzilla* is subtitled "Godzilla in Tokyo" and *Godzilla Raids Again* is subtitled "Godzilla in Osaka."

The decision to publish the novellas had a lot to do with the fact that Kayama was already aware at the time that *Godzilla* was moving away from the original political mission he had given him in the first part: to convey an anti-nuclear message to the world. For the same reason, Kayama also decided to withdraw from further involvement in *Godzilla*.¹⁵ Both novellas are thus introduced with a short foreword by the author, in which Kayama explains his purpose:

As you readers already know, the main character of this tale, Godzilla, is an enormous, imaginary kaiju—a creature that doesn't actually exist anywhere here on the planet. However, atomic and hydrogen bombs, which have taken on the form of Godzilla in this story, do exist. They are being produced and could be used for

¹² Steve Ryfle, *Japan's Favorite Mon-Star: The Unauthorized Biography of "The Big G"* (Toronto: ECW Press, 1998), 33.

¹³ Angles, "Translating an Icon," 197.

¹⁴ Angles, 200.

¹⁵ Angles, 211.

war at any moment. If that were to happen, it wouldn't just be big metropolises like Tokyo and Osaka that would be destroyed. The entire Earth would likely be laid waste. To prevent something so frightening and tragic from coming to pass, people all over the world are pouring their energy into a new movement opposing the use of atomic and hydrogen bombs. As one small member of that movement, I have tried to do my part by writing a novella—the tale you now hold in your hands.¹⁶

Despite this bold and unilateral introductory statement, Godzilla is portrayed in a considerably more complex and multifaceted manner within the novellas. First, the novellas offer a view of Godzilla as something or someone that is not entirely imaginary, or rather Godzilla complicates the distinction between real and imaginary. Secondly, as much as Godzilla is a bomb, he is also a victim of the bomb, a resilient resistant victim, and this doubleness of Godzilla amounts to the same thing: the problem of the bomb. Or, to put it another way, it is this double-sidedness that makes Godzilla's anti-nuclear message work. It points to a certain symptomatic positioning of animals, the fundamental impossibility of figurative language fully capturing the animal in an only metaphorical or allegorical way. The same impossibility that makes figurative use possible in the first place.¹⁷ This is at the same time what haunts its use.

When Oxana Timofeeva points out in her book *The History of Animals: A Philosophy* (2018) that “wherever we install a fence to mark a border, the animal will cross it—as the ‘only real outlaw’—illegally,”¹⁸ we suggest a slight reversal of this logic because the fact that we had to “install a fence to mark a border” means that the animal *has already* crossed it. Godzilla is always already on the other side because there is no other side for Godzilla than the other side.

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Godzilla is therefore not only a nuclear allegory, and as such a personification, an embodiment of a conflict, but also an “allegory” of animal resistance, an embodiment of another, more underlying conflict, with all its necessary (non-) allegorical implications. With the help of two absolute anti-nuclear classics of all time, the novellas *Godzilla* (1955) and *Godzilla Raids Again* (1955) by Shige-

¹⁶ Kayama, *Godzilla*, 3.

¹⁷ A similar double-sidedness can be found in Daphne du Maurier's *The Birds* (1952), which was the basis for Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963). The same could be said of *Moby Dick*.

¹⁸ Oxana Timofeeva, *The History of Animals: A Philosophy* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 181.

ru Kayama, we aim to explore this view of Godzilla in the context of recent discussions in animal philosophy, the concept of animal resistance, and to further examine the relationship between animal victimhood and resistance, thereby bringing to light a new phenomenon: animals *as* saviours. We will focus on the possibilities of thinking not only in the usual way about animals in conflicts but about animals *as* conflicts.

Godzilla Appears

Godzilla first appears as a strange white light at the bottom of the sea, a loud, gigantic *roar* that hits a ship, a voice, followed by a whirlpool that sucks in the burning ship, which is immersed in the same strange light from the deep. Thus ends first one ship and then another. In the spirit of the Cold War, people wonder if perhaps a new war is brewing, or if it is a Soviet submarine or a mine from World War Two, but none of this fits the description of the catastrophe. Then Godzilla appears when the fishes in the sea become scarce. The fishermen return to Odo Island without a catch and an elderly islander immediately mentions that it is Godzilla, referring to him as the monster that parents on the island used to scare naughty children with. When the fishes ran out, Godzilla was supposed to come ashore and eat people. When the fishermen caught nothing for weeks, they sent Godzilla a young girl in a boat as an offering.¹⁹

Indeed, when Godzilla first appears on land in all his physical splendor, it is on the same small fishing island of Odo, in the midst of a ritual prayer to drive him away. And it is clear that Godzilla appears not to destroy, but to feed. As the fishes in the sea had run out, Godzilla came ashore and in his search for prey, he destroyed a few buildings, unintentionally so to speak, because he has a big body after all, and accidentally killed a few more people in the process. Just as the two ships may have distracted him while he was fishing or whatever he was doing.

After this incident, a research expedition is sent to the island, led by Professor Yamane, a paleontologist who is also the first to identify Godzilla as an animal,

¹⁹ In this sense, the English translation of Gojira in Godzilla is appropriate, suggesting his god-like character. This points to a premodern understanding of the relationship between humans and animals, in which animals were closer to the gods.

a dinosaur from the Jurassic period.²⁰ He reaches this conclusion based on the discovery of a trilobite from the late Jurassic period, an animal that has already been classified taxonomically and which he finds on the island, despite being considered extinct. Godzilla has yet to be taxonomically classified, thus representing the discovery of a new species. It is also of great importance to note that a considerable quantity of radiation was identified in the trilobite and, subsequently, in Godzilla's footprint. This radiation could only have originated from the hydrogen bomb. Based on the information he has gathered, Yamane offers the following explanation:

So why did he appear on the shores of our nation so suddenly? . . . I imagine his kind probably used to live hidden away in underwater grottoes, living out their lives, keeping to themselves, and managing somehow to survive until this day . . . Recent hydrogen bomb tests must have destroyed Godzilla's habitat. Let me be clear. Damage from the H-bomb tests seems to be what drove him from the home where he had been living in relative peace up until now . . .²¹

In this section, Yamane identifies several key elements that are essential for comprehending Godzilla. To begin with, the most apparent point of contention is the fact that the scientific apparatus does not have complete insight into the existence of all living things and beings on this planet. The existence of such a large creature for millions of years without being discovered by humans is indicative of its limitations, as well as the limitations of our epistemologies and technologies. It also reminds us that “nuclear power(s) extract(s) [. . .] from the ‘ghost acres’ or ‘shadow places,’ those marginalized places.”²² Kylie Crane here borrows the term “ghost acreage”²³ coined by Georg Borgström to point “to the externalized lands (and, by extension, lives) that feed the wealthy”²⁴ and Val Plumwood's “shadow places,”²⁵ with a similar meaning, places where there

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²⁰ Kayama, *Godzilla*, 48.

²¹ Kayama, 48.

²² Kylie Crane, “On Some Absent Presences of Nuclear Extractivism: Retrofuturist Aesthetics and *Fallout 4*,” in *To the Last Drop: Affective Economies of Extraction and Sentimentality*, ed. Axelle Germanaz et al. (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2023), 190.

²³ Georg Borgström, *The Hungry Planet: The Modern World at the Edge of Famine* (New York: MacMillan, 1972).

²⁴ Crane, “Nuclear Extractivism,” 188.

²⁵ Val Plumwood, “Shadow Places and the Politics of Dwelling,” *Australian Humanities Review* 44 (March 2008), <http://australianhumanitiesreview.org/2008/03/01/shadow-plac->

seems to be no one or nothing, or just “uninhabitants,” as Crane emphasizes, following Rob Nixon and Rebecca Solnit.²⁶ This refers to the places where nuclear tests are carried out, which are of course inhabited, but those who inhabit them do not count as inhabitants for the Western imperial nuclear powers. Here we see the continuing colonial extractivist logic that lies at the heart of US nuclear policy or with Crane: “mapping the testing sites across an (imagined) background of relations of empire then emerges as an extended exercise in mapping colonialism.”²⁷ Not to mention the acquisition of the elements to make nuclear weapons.

Godzilla shows up as a “surprise factor” (like the unfortunate fishermen from Lucky Dragon No. 5 who were accidentally too close to the Castle Bravo test) where nothing and no one should disturb the existing nuclear state of affairs.

In this sense, we can frame Godzilla as fallout, “an unexpected supplement to an event, [. . .] causing a kind of long-term and unexpected damage: it is the aftermath, the reverberation, the negative side effect.”²⁸ And Godzilla, after the intrusion into her habitat, again quite literally falls out. As Masco notes, the noun fallout “derives from the verb ‘to fall out,’ which since the sixteenth century has designated a social break or conflict.”²⁹

It is important to note here that Godzilla falls out because of nuclear technology. The equation is simple: no nuclear technology, no fallout. If Western nuclear forces had not intervened in Godzilla’s home with nuclear experiments or destroyed it, Godzilla would have continued to live peacefully where he was. At this point, Godzilla is no longer a bomb, as Kayama puts it, but a victim of a bomb, or more specifically, of the military industrial complex. As Yamane goes on to explain, the nuclear tests also make Godzilla resistant to all artillery. This second aspect is particularly evident in the second novella when Godzilla reappears in a fishing context (which we will return to below), as Yamane then claims:

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es-and-the-politics-of-dwelling/.

²⁶ Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Rebecca Solnit, *Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Landscape Wars of the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

²⁷ Crane, “Nuclear Extractivism,” 188.

²⁸ Masco, *Future of Fallout*, 19.

²⁹ Masco, 19.

When Godzilla came on land in Tokyo, we learned he was extremely sensitive to light. In fact, if anything, bright lights make him burn with intense rage . . . I imagine that's the result of having been burned by hydrogen bomb tests in the past. No doubt he remembers. I imagine he's learned to react to lights in strange ways, so perhaps we can use his reaction to our advantage.³⁰

Despite Godzilla's initial portrayal as a villain, he is ultimately a victim of the bomb. His status as a victim highlights the inherent nature of victimization, as he not only suffers but also resists. He is quite literally a victim with a voice of his own; as we have already pointed out above, we do not see Godzilla at first, but we hear his loud *roar*.

Godzilla completely shifts the epistemological framework of what we understand as victimhood, which occupies a privileged place in the entire history of thinking about human-animal relations. As Dinesh Wadiwel points out, this is precisely one of the key advantages of thinking about animal resistance: its epistemological implications, which follow a Foucauldian framework in which epistemology is understood as a regime of truth that conditions the possible and shapes power relations. The conceptualization of animal resistance therefore has serious political effects and epistemological implications. As Wadiwel emphasizes, it “offers a different model for considering political agency”³¹ and at the same time transforms the concept of resistance itself.

“No Doubt He Remembers”³²

The emphasis on the victimization of animals in animal scholarship (and advocacy) is, as many scholars highlight,³³ a consequence of the particular historical position of animals and the enormous systemic and epistemic violence to which

³⁰ Kayama, *Godzilla Raids Again*, 129.

³¹ Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023), 168.

³² Kayama, *Godzilla Raids Again*, 129.

³³ See, e.g., Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital*; Carlo Salzani and Zipporah Weisberg, “Animals as Victims,” Paris Institute for Critical Thinking, June 18, 2024, <https://parisinstitute.org/animals-as-victims>; Fahim Amir, *Being and Swine: The End of Nature (As We Knew It)*, trans. Geoffrey C. Howes and Corvin Russell (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2020); Cynthia Willet, *Interspecies Ethics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

they are subjected. As Cynthia Willet points out, this “provided the central philosophical justification for social movements against animal cruelty for the past two centuries.”³⁴ This began with the most influential and seminal work in animal ethics, *Animal Liberation* (1975), by the utilitarian philosopher Peter Singer.³⁵ He, like the utilitarian Jeremy Bentham before him, emphasized the capacity of animals to suffer. Throughout this history, animals have largely been seen as passive victims that humans must liberate, with humans being their voice, “the voice of the voiceless.”³⁶ As Justin Simpson emphasizes, this persistent and widely accepted view of animals has also lurked in environmental ethics.³⁷

Zipporah Weisberg and Carlo Salzani delineate two interrelated consequences of the prevailing victimization approach. Firstly, they identify the subsequent silencing of the voices of animals distinct from our own, which they characterize as a form of epistemic violence. Secondly, they highlight the simultaneous application of colonial and ableist saviorism. However, they also emphasize that there has been a significant shift, particularly in recent years, from the suffering and capability approach to the animal voice, resistance, and agency or subjectivity approach. This shift has moved the focus from an ethical to a political view of human-animal relations. The animal resistance approach alters our understanding of power relations while presupposing an animal voice and agency.³⁸

The organic connection between victimhood and the resistance approach that we can recognize in Godzilla’s actions is to some extent also emphasized by Wadiwel, who in *Animals and Capital* focuses on the question of fish resistance. Wadiwel recognizes that the approach based on sentience and welfare is institutionally and politically ineffective and therefore replaces the question “Do fish suffer?” with “Do fish resist?” However, Wadiwel points out that this is not so much a replacement as an Althusserian symptomatic approach to reading that

³⁴ Cynthia Willet, *Interspecies Ethics*, 7.

³⁵ Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals* (New York: HarperCollins, 1975).

³⁶ Tom Regan, “Giving Voice to Animal Rights,” interview by Kymberlie Adams Matthews, *Satya*, August 2004, <http://www.satyamag.com/aug04/regan.html>.

³⁷ Justin Simpson, “A Posthumanist Social Epistemology: On the Possibility of Nonhuman Epistemic Injustice,” in “Animal (Dis)entangled or Towards ‘A New Form of Civilization,’” ed. Vesna Liponik, special issue, *Anthropos: Journal of Philosophy & Psychology* 55, no. 2 (2023): 195–214.

³⁸ Salzani and Weisberg, “Animals as Victims.”

complements the original question “Do fish suffer?”:³⁹ “what distinguishes this new reading from the old one is the fact that in the new one the second text is articulated with the lapses in the first text. Here [. . .] we find the necessity and possibility of a reading on two bearings simultaneously.”⁴⁰

In other words, as Godzilla shows, resistance and victimhood are two sides of the same coin. When we speak of victimhood, we are already speaking of resistance, but what we need in order to understand this is a different epistemological framing. To further substantiate this thesis, we will return to another important point that Professor Yamane raises in the passages quoted above and that we have already briefly touched upon: the connection between Godzilla, technology, and resistance.

Scholars who have extensively addressed the question of animal resistance note a correlation between technology and resistance.⁴¹ The modernization of animal exploitation technology is based precisely on the recognition of animal resistance and the subsequent immediate co-optation to improve production and make animal exploitation more efficient in order to prevent further disruption of “unstoppable valorization”⁴² by resistance. The key here is “the law of value” and the position of animals in relation to value.⁴³

Agnieszka Kowalczyk begins her article entitled “Mapping Non-human Resistance in the Age of Biocapital,” in which she deals with the possibilities of and obstacles to thinking animal resistance within a Marxist framework,⁴⁴ with a

³⁹ Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital*, 174.

⁴⁰ Louis Althusser, “From Capital to Marx’s Philosophy,” in *Reading Capital: The Complete Edition*, ed. Louis Althusser et al., trans. Ben Brewster and David Fernbach (London: Verso, 2015), 27.

⁴¹ See, e.g., Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital*; Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel, *The War Against Animals* (Leiden: Brill, 2015); Fahim Amir, *Being and Swine*; Jason Hribal, *Fear of the Animal Planet: The Hidden History of Animal Resistance* (Chico: AK Press, 2011); Ron Broglio, “Revolution,” in *The Edinburgh Companion to Animal Studies*, ed. Lynn Turner, Undine Sellbach, and Ron Broglio (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019): 475–87.

⁴² Marina Gržinić Mauhler, “Animal (Dis)Entanglement: Value-Form and Animal-Form,” in “Animal (Dis)entangled or Towards ‘A New Form of Civilization,’” ed. Vesna Liponik, special issue, *Anthropos: Journal of Philosophy & Psychology* 55, no. 2 (2023): 170.

⁴³ Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital*; Gržinić Mauhler, “Animal (Dis)Entanglement,” 163.

⁴⁴ Agnieszka Kowalczyk, “Mapping Non-human Resistance in the Age of Biocapital,” in *The Rise of Critical Animal Studies: From the Margins to the Centre*, ed. Nik Taylor and Richard

quote from Harry Cleaver, in which he places struggle at the center of value: “The basic commodity form of which value is the expression is the class struggle itself which [. . .] is over the imposition of that form.”⁴⁵ And this is exactly compatible with the operaist model of resistance that Wadiwel uses, following Fahim Amir and the Italian Marxists.⁴⁶ In the operaist model of resistance, “systems of production and exchange, such as capitalism, feed upon the productive capacities and creativity of the bodies that labour within these systems.”⁴⁷

In this context, Wadiwel points out that when we talk about human-animal relations, these relations are most often those between animals and fixed capital (fences, enclosures, machines, instruments etc.).⁴⁸

If animal resistance is the key to improving the technology of animal exploitation, then this fact has significant implications for the epistemological framework for thinking about human-animal relations. It challenges the traditional view that animals have always been passive victims. Instead, it suggests that the victim has always been active and resisted, albeit often unrecognized or suppressed.

As already mentioned, Godzilla does not attack everything, but either targets a potential meal and the destruction is merely a side-effect of his size, or he attacks in response to a traumatic experience. Godzilla acts as an intentional agent who barely notices humans, and if he does, he notices them as prey.⁴⁹ Godzilla thus primarily fights with fixed capital.

Jason Hribal in his seminal work *Fear of the Animal Planet: The Hidden History of Animal Resistance* presents the history of animal resistance from below. It focuses on examples of documented acts of resistance in zoos, aquariums, and circuses and shows above all that they are not contingent. When a tiger escapes from a zoo or an orca attacks a trainer, it is an important part of the strategies of circuses and zoos to show that these incidents do not pose a serious threat, that

Twine (New York: Routledge, 2014), 183–200.

⁴⁵ Harry Cleaver, “Internationalisation of Capital and Mode of Production in Agriculture,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 11, no. 13 (1976): 9.

⁴⁶ Amir, *Being and Swine*.

⁴⁷ Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital*, 176.

⁴⁸ Wadiwel, 195.

⁴⁹ Kayama, *Godzilla and Godzilla Raids Again*, 44.

they do not mean anything, that they are completely rare and unrelated cases that merely show the bestiality of certain animals. Above all, they try to show that animals that flee or attack after escaping can attack anyone, or are even bound to attack. But as the many specific examples Hribal gives in the book show, animals on the run elude random passers-by and attack specific individuals, their immediate captors, or perpetrators. As Hribal foregrounds, “the standard operating procedure is to deny agency. The key words to remember are ‘accident’, ‘wild’, and ‘instinct,’ ”⁵⁰ The second step is to improve technologies to contain and prevent such incidents from happening again. But despite fences, machines, bombs, and walls, they happen again. They happen again precisely because of fences, machines, bombs, and walls.

“Priceless Living Fossil”⁵¹

Most of the second part of *Godzilla* consists of the intense mobilization of military artillery and technology to destroy the threat of Godzilla, but all military technology is utterly powerless against Godzilla. In other words, it is an attempt to restore the balance of power that has been broken by Godzilla’s resistance. In the end, Godzilla is defeated by a deadly weapon called the Oxygen Destroyer, which the professor’s protégé, the chemist Dr. Serizawa, has secretly developed in his laboratory. But this victory over Godzilla is only temporary (a point we will return to later). To prevent his deadly invention from falling into the wrong hands, Serizawa decides to blow himself up along with Godzilla and the Oxygen Destroyer. A key part of Kayama’s anti-nuclear message was to draw attention to the ethics of science, especially in the case of the creation and use of weapons of mass destruction. And with Kayama’s own withdrawal from further involvement as a screenwriter, also to the ethics of artistic creation. If he were to keep Godzilla alive for the sake of continuing the franchise, it would mean that the bomb survives, since he designed Godzilla as a personified bomb. But Kayama also admits that he has begun to feel affection for Godzilla.⁵² Which in turn reveals Godzilla’s inner duality. But Kayama’s emphasis on the ethics of science in the novels has its anthropocentric limitations.

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⁵⁰ Hribal, *Fear of the Animal Planet*, 24.

⁵¹ Kayama, *Godzilla*, 82.

⁵² Angles, “Translating an Icon,” 207.

Professor Yamane, the voice of science in the service of the nation state and capital, is the only one who wants Godzilla alive, because as Wadiwel states “it is because animals survive [. . .] [that] value becomes possible.”⁵³ In a chapter entitled “We Mustn’t Kill,” Professor Yamane makes explicit reference to the nuclear context of Godzilla, Japan’s role in the Second World War, and the consequences of this role:

During the war, the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima blew away an enormous city in a single instant. However, the hydrogen bombs they’re now testing in the South Pacific are many hundreds of times more terrible than the atomic bombs dropped on Japan. They say it’s dangerous for people even to eat the tuna irradiated by the hydrogen bombs, but just think Godzilla was able to take all that radiation. If anything, it was because of the bomb’s influence he’s as strong as he is. When I say that’s not all that makes him so frightening, I’m not exaggerating. He’s survived for millions of years—think about that kind of vitality! [. . .] If humans could have only just a small fraction of that vitality . . . [. . .]. Fortunately, this amazing chance [. . .] has been given to Japan. We Japanese have caused a great deal of trouble to people throughout the world. Carrying out this research is our one and only chance to make reparations for all that.⁵⁴

What Yamane is proposing here is to use Godzilla, the unexpected result of military experiments, for military research. In contrast to the annihilation fantasies that most Japanese have about Godzilla, what Yamane proposes here is scientific extractivism. He wants to taxonomize, measure, and study Godzilla for the benefit of humanity, fully integrating him into the national taxonomic imaginary as a super-commodity. He wants to “put things in order as a precondition for extracting their inner value. It is the compulsion to categorize, to separate, to measure, and to name, to classify and establish equivalences.”⁵⁵ He perceives Godzilla, with Neferti X. M. Tadiar, as a “life worth expending” to feed the “good life.”⁵⁶

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⁵³ Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital*, 160.

⁵⁴ Kayama, *Godzilla*, 66.

⁵⁵ Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, trans. Steven Corcoran (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 158.

⁵⁶ Neferti X. M. Tadiar, “Global Refuse, Planetary Remainder,” in “The Body in the Field of Tensions between Biopolitics and Necropolitics: Analyzing the Future of the Prosthetic Body in the 21st Century,” ed. Marina Gržinić and Jovita Pristovšek, special issue, *Filozofski vestnik* 55, no. 2 (2023): 136, <https://doi.org/10.3986/fv.44.2.06>.

Marina Gržinić in her article “Animal (Dis)entanglement: Value-Form and Animal-Form,” following Shemon Salam’s proposal to think of the race-form as intrinsic to the value-form,⁵⁷ proposes to think of animals under capitalism as animal-forms. If animals as animal-forms are “temporalized forms meaning their value and existence are shaped by the duration of their circulation or life cycles,” it is Godzilla’s temporality that makes him, with Yamane, “a priceless living fossil.”⁵⁸

But to understand even better what Yamane is actually proposing, we need to look closely at the intertwining of the military-industrial complex (or, more precisely, the nuclear-military-industrial complex) and the animal-industrial complex.

The term military-industrial complex (MIC) dates back to the Cold War. It was popularized by US President Dwight Eisenhower, who used the term in his farewell speech in 1961. According to Eisenhower, the key characteristic of the MIC is its ubiquity. It refers to the connection between the government’s military policy, the armed forces, the companies that support the military, and the academic world and scientific knowledge.⁵⁹ The military-industrial complex and its omnipresence, which shapes a certain sensibility and normalizes war, is the main reason why militarism and war seem completely natural and inevitable.

Animal-industrial complex was coined by Barbara Noske (1989) and later revived and refined by Richard Twine (2012). Noske used this concept to highlight the role of capitalism in thinking of human-animal relations with an important emphasis on environmental concerns.⁶⁰

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Twine’s article “Revealing the ‘Animal Industrial Complex’—A Concept and Method for Critical Animal Studies?” particularly emphasizes the connection between the various complexes, the MIC and the AIC, as well as the entertain-

⁵⁷ Shemon Salam, “Limits of the Black Radical Tradition and the Value-Form” (PhD diss., City University of New York, 2019).

⁵⁸ Kayama, *Godzilla*, 82.

⁵⁹ Richard Twine, “Revealing the ‘Animal Industrial Complex’— A Concept and Method for Critical Animal Studies?,” *Journal for Critical Animal Studies* 10, no. 1 (2012): 16.

⁶⁰ Barbara Noske, *Human and Other Animals* (London: Pluto Press, 1989).

ment-industrial and prison-industrial complexes.⁶¹ The latter are also at work in the context of the two novellas. In *Godzilla Raids Again*, prisoners on the run set fire to a gas station and start a fierce fire that attracts Godzilla. Their escape fails and their liberation is short-lived, requiring a reckoning and the restoration of the disrupted order. It is a confirmation of their status, for who else could cause such chaos but criminals? Just as it is necessary to show Godzilla where he belongs: either dead or transformed into a commodity with which we can create value. In terms of the entertainment complex, one can also argue that it is the entertainment complex's co-optation of Godzilla that has kept Kayama from further involvement.

But to return to the two central complexes that are of interest to us at this point, the key is that, as David Nibert states, “by the mid-twentieth century [. . .] the MIC and the AIC became mutually reinforcing systems of domination—continuing the inextricable link between the oppression of other animals and human violence that plagued the history of the world.”⁶²

Although it is now well known that the military regularly uses animals for a variety of purposes, the least discussed part of this is the use of animals for military research. The crucial space here is a laboratory, and animals have been constitutive for the creation of this biopolitical,⁶³ or more precisely, necropolitical space since “the result of these biopolitical efforts is not more life, but a necropower, as pure destruction, suffering, etc.; we cannot speak only of biopower, as non-human animals are used in the processes of calculation to change human life at the expense of their extermination as crude objects of capitalist industry and science.”⁶⁴ Yamane's essentially necropolitical proposal could therefore be summed up as no annihilation without extraction or, with Gržinić, “let live and make die.”⁶⁵

⁶¹ Twine, “Revealing the ‘Animal Industrial Complex.’”

⁶² David Nibert, foreword to *Defining Critical Animal Studies: An Intersectional Social Justice Approach for Liberation*, ed. Anthony J. Nocella II et al. (New York: Peter Lang, 2014), x.

⁶³ Robert W. Kirk, “The Birth of the Laboratory Animal: Biopolitics, Animal Experimentation, and Animal Wellbeing,” in *Foucault and Animals*, ed. Matthew Chrulaw and Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 191–221.

⁶⁴ Gržinić Mauhler, “Animal (Dis)Entanglement,” 169.

⁶⁵ Marina Gržinić, “Capital, Repetition,” *Reartikulacija* 8 (2009): 3.

In this sense, Yamane makes no distinction between Godzilla, tuna, or cod, and the difference is only in the potential value that Godzilla represents as a genetically modified, super-powerful nuclear organism as opposed to tuna or cod. In one crucial respect, Yamane goes further than the tendency to *merely* destroy Godzilla.

It is important to note that only Yamane, and sometimes the military trying to put Godzilla down, refer to Godzilla as an animal, but only Yamane strictly never refers to Godzilla as a monster. In this sense, Godzilla is better off as a monster, or more specifically, a *kaiju*, meaning “scary beast” or “monster,” a word that gained popularity with Godzilla.⁶⁶ But if Godzilla is monstrous, he is monstrous above all because he points to the monstrosity of the conditions from which he emerges, the “monstrous biopower”⁶⁷ or the monstrosity of the military-animal industrial complex.

A-Bomb Tuna and the Threat of the Rogue Animal

It is no coincidence that both novels begin with fishes, or more specifically, with fishing. In *Godzilla Raids Again*, the image of the marginal fishing island from *Godzilla* is replaced by industrial fishing. Thus, Godzilla attacks a Marine Fisheries plane flying over the sea in search of fishes. In this part of the novella, the ship National Dragon No. 3 is an industrial allusion to Lucky Dragon No. 5. The radiation damages the engine and the plane has to make an emergency landing on a small island, where Godzilla first appears, together with a new dinosaur, Anguirus, an even more violent prehistoric creature (we shall return to this matter subsequently). Godzilla’s attack on Osaka soon follows.

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After Godzilla’s attack on Osaka Marine Fisheries (triggered by a bright explosion caused by escaped prisoners), the industry is temporarily relocated to the north due to the radioactivity of the fishes. When the ex-soldiers, who are now fishermen, celebrate an incredible catch in the north with their ex-military colleagues, they learn that their fishing boat, National Dragon No. 2, has sunk because of Godzilla. Godzilla is then picked up again by the military, this time in collaboration with the fishing industry.

⁶⁶ Angles, “Translating an Icon,” 227.

⁶⁷ Gržinić Mauhler, “Animal (Dis)Entanglement,” 169.

Both fish suffering and fish resistance in the novella remain completely invisible, we do not even get to the question “Do fish suffer?,” fishes are not even *uninhabitants*, they *are even not*, they are *food*, raw material.⁶⁸ In the context of animals, fishes show most radically what it means to talk about “unevenly distributed injury.”⁶⁹

From this “fish-eye perspective,” let us now examine some of the pitfalls of Godzilla’s resistance.

The most common representations of animal resistance are depictions of mammals or especially of carnivorous charismatic animals. The decisive factor here is either the size or the number or preferably both, as in *Them!* (1954), the first nuclear big-bug monster movie from the 1950s, which was followed by many other similar movies. The main reason for this is that they offer potential reversibility. While they turn predator into prey, they at least upset the existing balance of power.

If it is a large animal, it is usually an exceptional individual, which is also related to the modern notion of freedom as an individual possession, and often there is a (failed) human intervention (Godzilla’s nuclear resilience), a laboratory experiment gone wrong, and here we can again recall the argument above (the section “No Doubt He Remembers”) that there is thus something that is not innate to animals, something that is only possible under certain conditions and because of human intervention, where the animal becomes human-like, almost human.

Kowalczyk thus highlights the need for a different conception not only of animal resistance but also of animal agency in order to avoid what she terms “‘the male waged worker’ mode of resistance as universal and as having the inherent characteristics of struggle against exploitation. Narrowing the notion of resistance to the conscious actions performed by labourers simply legitimizes the existing system of capitalist power relations rather than undermining it.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ This invisibility of fishes, also in the context of animal advocacy and on the other hand paradoxical overfishing with fishes as “the most traded global food commodity,” are precisely the reason why Wadiwel focuses on less examined global industrialized fisheries and subsequently the question of fish resistance. Wadiwel, *Animals and Capital*, 162.

⁶⁹ Masco, *Future of Fallout*, 20.

⁷⁰ Kowalczyk, “Mapping Non-human Resistance,” 193.

Animal resistance, conceptualized as the work of an exceptional individual, as the work of an exception, is linked to another phenomenon, namely “the threat of the rogue animal”⁷¹ Wadiwel mentions in his work *The War against Animals*, in which he conceptualizes human’s general attitude towards animals as comprising a war. The threat of the rogue animal refers to “the animal that no longer fears the human; indeed may actively hunt and attack the human.”⁷² What is crucial here is intelligence, since “reason and the force of violence are tied here in the rogue animal, as they are within sovereignty.”⁷³ Yet, as Wadiwel emphasizes, intelligence comes only after animal force (or resistance) and causes that we cannot overlook their intelligence, their agency.

Neither in “the male waged worker” model of resistance nor in the carnivorous “threat of rogue animal” model can we neglect the role of gender. The gender of Godzilla is also mentioned in the afterword by translator Jeffrey Angles. Since Godzilla is not gender specific in the original Japanese, he had to make a certain decision when translating Godzilla’s gender, turning to his students who understood Godzilla’s violent actions as an angry man well. Yet he makes another point why he, even though fond of queering Godzilla, decided to stay with “he”: “After all, if we accept Kayama’s statement at the beginning of the novellas that Godzilla serves as a stand-in for nuclear weapons, and it was military men who were the main architects of America’s military arsenal.”⁷⁴ What Angles recognizes here is the fact that “high-technology is [. . .] rooted in masculine paranoia and aggression, in imperialism and the military industrial complex.”⁷⁵ If we understand Godzilla as a resistant agent, then we understand Godzilla as queer in a

⁷¹ Wadiwel, *War against Animals*, 269.

⁷² Wadiwel, 269.

⁷³ Wadiwel, 269. As Yamane points out: “As you can see, Godzilla’s a violent, terrifying creature with radioactive genes. No matter how many weapons we gather, no matter how much knowledge we collect, we can’t stop him. He just does whatever he pleases despite us.” Kayama, *Godzilla Raids Again*, 128.

⁷⁴ Angles, “Translating an Icon,” 219.

⁷⁵ John Sanbonmatsu, “Hegemony, Animal Liberation, and Gramscian Praxis,” interview by Dinesh Wadiwel, in “Animal (Dis)entangled or Towards ‘A New Form of Civilization,’” ed. Vesna Liponik, special issue, *Anthropos: Journal of Philosophy & Psychology* 55, no. 2 (2023): 260.

sense, with Karen Barad, who conceptualizes queer as “a radical questioning of identity and binaries” that radically disrupts a hetero-patriarchal nuclear order.⁷⁶

#TeamGodzilla

In his afterword, Jeffrey Angles offers another reading of Godzilla as an agent of resistance, one that he emphasizes is relevant to our contemporary condition: “To put it in extreme terms, one might see Godzilla as an angry environmentalist who engages in guerrilla-style warfare against human society, which through its inertia sits back and passively allows the destruction of the natural world.”⁷⁷

Angles here couples nuclear weapons with climate destruction as “industrially manufactured problems that [. . .] colonize the future.”⁷⁸ However, more significantly for our present inquiry, it indicates a notable shift in our conceptualization of animal resistance, wherein we observe the interconnectivity between notions of victimhood and those of saviorism, particularly in its reemergent or reversed forms. The traditional role of the human being as the liberator of the animal or the one who gives the animal a voice has been reversed. The animal is now regarded as the savior, even the savior of all humanity and nature.

Angles’s argument is essentially identical to the prevailing hypotheses regarding the motivation behind the Iberian orcas attacking ships.

In the last three years, more than 300 ships have been damaged by Iberian orcas, a species threatened with extinction. Their target is usually the rudder, and after some ramming, chewing, and stinging, the orcas render the ships inoperable or in some cases even sink them. Since orcas live in a matriarchy, the main

⁷⁶ Karen Barad, “Nature’s Queer Performativity,” *Kvinder, Køn & Forskning* 1–2 (2012): 29, <https://doi.org/10.7146/kkf.voi1-2.28067>. For more on a feminist and postcolonial critique of nuclear discourse, see, e.g., Pia Brezavšček and Katja Čičigoj, “Sublimno in mondeno atomske bombe: Prevrčanje dualističnega mišljenja pri feminističnih in postkolonialnih kritikah jedrskega kompleksa,” in “The Unbearable Lightness of the Return of the Nuclear Weapons’ Discourse,” ed. Nina Cvar, special section, *Anthropos: Journal of Philosophy & Psychology* 55, no. 1 (2023): 11–29, <https://doi.org/10.26493/2630-4082.55.11-29>. See also Angles’ “Translating an Icon” and his commentary on the role of gender (and age) politics in post-War Japan influencing the choice for Godzilla’s main characters.

⁷⁷ Angles, “Translating an Icon,” 212.

⁷⁸ Masco, *Future of Fallout*, 5.

character, Gladis Blanca, who bears the scars of the fishing nets, is one of the first to mess with ships. After the incidents began to spread, the headlines were full of orcas whose intentions were the subject of speculation, “on social media, trends like #TeamOrca portrayed them as anti-capitalist saboteurs and fueled the narrative of an ‘orca uprising,’ ”⁷⁹ a narrative that suggests the orcas are doing what we should be doing, ramming capitalists’ yachts and sailboats instead of “sit[ing] back and passively allow[ing] the destruction of the natural world.”⁸⁰ Scientists still disagree and speculate about their true intentions. One of the explanations is fishes: due to overfishing, there are fewer fishes for the orcas to eat, which could be the reason for their attacks. The other potential explanation is Gladis Blanca’s traumatic experience. Here again we see a meeting point between Godzilla and the orcas.

Let us now unpack the #TeamOrca or #TeamGodzilla argument.

The saviorist explanation is predicated on a straightforward extractive logic: first, we nearly annihilate them, and then we transfer the burden of planetary salvation to the fifteen that remain. Once again, the animals are serving as our instruments. Godzilla is utilized as a means of facilitating the completion of undesirable tasks. Once more, the “threat of the rogue animal” or “male waged worker” model of resistance emerges as a prominent theme. It is more readily conceivable that orcas or creatures akin to dinosaurs would engage in this struggle than, say, fishes.

On a more positive note, we can understand here animals as knowers and furthermore as teachers or even epistemic authorities.⁸¹ Gržinić quotes Kelsey Dayle John, who “center[s] animals in colonialism to show that settler colonial erasures specifically assault animals, but also that animals resist and show humans how to resist.”⁸²

⁷⁹ Sarat Colling, “When Orcas Speak: Listen Carefully,” Medium, November 28, 2023, <https://medium.com/@saratcolling/when-orcas-speak-listen-carefully-5c6890935ab3>.

⁸⁰ Angles, “Translating an Icon,” 212. Not coincidentally, the incidents evoke *Moby Dick*.

⁸¹ Simpson, “Posthumanist Social Epistemology.”

⁸² Kelsey Dayle John, “Animal Colonialism: Illustrating Intersections between Animal Studies and Settler Colonial Studies through Diné Horsemanship,” *Humanimalia* 10, no. 2 (2019): 42–43, <https://doi.org/10.52537/humanimalia.9501>; quoted in Gržinić Mauhler, “Animal (Dis)Entanglement.”

Similarly, Plutarch reiterates this viewpoint in his least studied text on animals, *Gryllus or Beasts are Rational*, which is regarded as one of his most peculiar and unparalleled works. Plutarch is regarded as the pioneering figure in the field of animal ethics in the Western tradition. He not only delineated the contours of the contemporary ethical discourse on animal rights but also demonstrated the necessity of conceptualizing the animal question not only as an ethical issue but also as a political or ethico-political one. *Beasts are Rational* is a dialogue between the Odysseus of Book 10 of the *Odyssey* and Gryllus. Gryllus, along with Odysseus's other men, has been transformed into a pig by Circe. He presents a compelling argument for the benefits of remaining in his current form rather than returning to human form. The entire treatise, with its witty theriophilic tendencies, can be read as Gryllus instructing, in a Socratic manner, his stoic-like companion Odysseus on how to live a life well led. In this context, animals serve as exemplars of virtue, providing guidance on how to lead a morally upright life. Animals in this case are man's teachers, *sophists*, and, to extend this Plutarchian perspective even further, a man of outstanding wisdom, eloquence, and courage, a hero of Western civilization, appears to be nothing when compared to a common sow.⁸³

Another concept may prove useful in understanding this phenomenon. When discussing the example of the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) (2023), which brought back memories of the global financial crisis of 2007–2008 and the absence of a structural analysis which would set things straight, Nina Cvar (2023) evokes Mark Fisher's concept of "reflexive impotence,"⁸⁴

which [. . .] is not so much the result of apathy and cynicism, but springs from a certain kind of reflection. This reflection is not about passively observing the situation that already exists, but rather springs from a unique understanding of the future itself, resulting in a grim realization that "things are bad." A much more important condition for the reflexive powerlessness described, however, is not the recognition of the conditions of reality, but the state of prolonged non-action.⁸⁵

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⁸³ Plutarch, *Bruta animalia ratione uti*.

⁸⁴ Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Hampshire: Zero Books, 2009), 21.

⁸⁵ Nina Cvar, "Emancipating from (Colonial) Genealogies of the Techno-social Networks or Reversing Power Relations by Turning the Predator into Prey in Jordan Peele's *Nope*," in Gržinić and Pristovšek, "Body in the Field of Tensions," 172, <https://doi.org/10.3986/fv.44.2.07>.

Godzilla Appears Again

Godzilla ends with Godzilla's seemingly successful defeat by a deadly new weapon of mass destruction, but Professor Yamane subsequently expresses doubts about Godzilla's complete annihilation:

But . . . I can't imagine that the Godzilla we saw was the last of his kind . . . What if . . . What if the hydrogen bomb tests were to continue? . . . Who knows? Maybe more of his kind might appear somewhere on earth.⁸⁶

The conclusion of *Godzilla* suggests two key points. If we accept Kayama's intention and read Godzilla as an atomic allegory, namely when Japan attempts to vanquish the bomb (Godzilla) with the bomb (the oxygen destroyer), then in the second part of the novella, we encounter not only Godzilla but also Anguirus, an even more violent prehistoric creature.⁸⁷ The subsequent confrontation between the two monsters, occurring in the second part, after the successful capitalist co-optation, also becomes the primary theme of the franchise. In this way, we can see that Kayama himself unwittingly paved the way for an apolitical approach to his political project. Conversely, the introduction of the similarly destructive Anguirus also serves to reinforce Godzilla's message of peace: bomb on bomb only means more bombs.

However, if we interpret Godzilla as an allegory of animal resistance, it suggests that, despite the relentless advancement of technology, "we can't prevent Godzilla from coming again."⁸⁸ On the contrary, "more of his kind might appear somewhere on earth." Or, in other words, if there were no boats, there would be no damaged or sunk boats.

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Indeed, Godzilla reappears in *Godzilla Raids Again*. Subsequently, the military-animal industrial complex, that is to say, the military, with the assistance

⁸⁶ Kayama, *Godzilla*, 111.

⁸⁷ Despite Yamane's assertion in *Godzilla Raids Again* that the character is a different Godzilla, the conclusion of the final installment of the Godzilla franchise, *Godzilla Minus One* (2023), which can be interpreted as a prequel to *Godzilla*, indicates that the character is, in fact, the same Godzilla. Moreover, *Godzilla Minus One* marks a return to a more politically and anti-militarily oriented version of Godzilla.

⁸⁸ Kayama, *Godzilla Raids Again*, 127.

of ex-soldiers now fish-spotting pilots, succeeds in burying Godzilla beneath an avalanche. It would be reasonable to posit, however, that this is not the end.

In *Godzilla Raids Again*, an allusion to its predecessor, *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*, is once again evident. The initial act of Godzilla's arrival in Osaka is marked by the collapse of the lighthouse situated at the entrance to the bay. The confrontation between the lighthouse and the beast is one of the scenes in the film that references Bradbury's short story "The Fog Horn."⁸⁹ Moreover, the conclusion of *Godzilla Raids Again* and the immobilization of Godzilla can be interpreted as an allusion to its predecessor. This is because *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* appears precisely upon thawing as a result of nuclear experiments in another shadow place, namely the Arctic Circle. In addition, there is a parallel to be drawn with another Cold War horror classic, *The Blob* (1958). In that film, the creeping red threat of communism from outer space is about to devour an idyllic American suburb, thereby evoking the anticommunist "red scare" times of America in the 1940s and 1950s. The red blob is an unstoppable force. As they are unable to kill it, they decide to transport it to the Arctic. Once more, we are faced with two potential outcomes: extraction or annihilation, with the former leading to the latter. However, the blob seems to indicate a third option: relocation from the center to the periphery, to the shadow place, where it can freeze and, therefore, seemingly be disabled. Given the current context of global warming and the melting ice cap, it seems reasonable to suggest that a variety of such blobs may emerge, begin to thaw, and potentially migrate.

And while at the end of *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* the beast apparently dies because of a brave nuclear scientist and his powerful weapon (the scientist does not die, of course, because he is about to marry a beautiful young paleontologist), it remains entirely unclear what happens to the virus that spread from the blood of the wounded beast and began killing the soldiers who first confronted it. Does the virus now take over as a radically different model of "agency" than "a male waged worker" or "a rogue animal"? Is this the all too familiar story?

⁸⁹ *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* was first entitled *The Monster from Beneath the Sea* but later borrowed a title and partly a story of Ray Bradbury's short story first published in 1951 and later in 1953 in the short story collection *The Golden Apples of the Sun* as "The Fog Horn."

The founding repeatability of capital⁹⁰ necessary entails the repeatability of “counter-capital”⁹¹ in whatever most unexpected form.

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⁹⁰ Gržinić, “Capital, Repetition,” 3–4.

⁹¹ Gržinić Mauhler, “Animal (Dis)Entanglement,” 154.

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