

Short Review: “Godzilla” (1956) by Dr. John L. Flynn



Godzilla. (Original film: **Gojira** (1954), 98 min) (1956), Japan, Toho Film, black and white, 78 min. Director: Ishirô Honda. Writers: Ishirô Honda, Shigeru Kayama, etc.

Cast: Akira Takaranda, Momoko, Akihiko Hirata, and Takashi Shimura.

While the Japanese version, “Gojira,” is a serious commentary on the effect of nuclear testing from the first country that was A-bombed , the sight of a 400-foot high child’s toy walking through Tokyo always makes me smile. In any case, the American version, “Godzilla”--with Raymond Burr doing a voiceover on the dinosaur destruction of Tokyo and 20 minutes of series material cut out-- was memorable, though a bit derivative of American’s “The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms” (1953) in New York City. “Gojira” has a love triangle; “Godzilla” focuses on watching people flee the monster. In any case, the Gojira sequels are campy to the core. The remake of “Godzilla” (1998) has better special effects, but little else.

Copyright 2014 by John L. Flynn, Ph.D.