

論文

“A place for noise”:

Dissonance, Protest, and Youth in Expo '70 and its Representations

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Abstract

The 1970 World Exposition in Osaka (Expo '70) has been critiqued as an ideological performance that assuaged and coopted political, social, and artistic protest movements in the 1960s through the mobilization of citizens behind economic development policies and the promotion of depoliticized consumer lifestyles. Recent research by Midori Yoshimoto and others investigating the expo as a site of multiple voices and interest groups has, however, challenged this view. This essay furthers this inquiry through an analysis of two contemporary expo-related texts: a photograph of the *raku-gaki kona* in Nicolas Bouvier's *Chronique japonaise* (1975); and the Daiei monster movie, *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā* (1970). These depict the expo as both a contested event and, relatedly, an event for young people through the figure or device of “noise.” Literally, noise appears in these texts as cacography on designated walls of the site and as low-frequency sound used as a weapon against monster attack. In that, in both cases, noise is a means to protect the expo by regulating opposition, I argue that it represents the limits on meaningful political speech that Expo '70 both itself embodied and proclaimed for post-1970 society.

“Progress and Harmony for Mankind (*Jinrui no shinpō to chōwa*)”: under this theme, the 1970 World Exposition or *Nihon Bankoku Hakurankai* (Expo '70) opened in March 1970 in the Senri Hills north of Osaka. Expo slogans tend to be eye-catching and bold — the previous 1967 world expo in Montreal chose “Man and His World” and the subsequent 1992 universal expo in Seville “The Age of Discovery”; but few have carried the promise, or the burden, of Japan's first

world's exposition.

Hosting an international event of this scale and prestige entails obvious infrastructural and organizational challenges, including constructing the site, opening on time, and getting enough visitors through the gates. The organizers of Expo '70 met these challenges and, with its 64 million attendees, the event was hailed as a great success in Japan and across the world. As well as material challenges, Expo '70 was also charged

with immense ideological duties. Partly, these were directed overseas: shaping the “national brand” on the international stage. In short, the expo was intended to showcase postwar Japan’s new role as a leader in a peaceful, international society based on achievements in science and technology.¹⁾ Yet it was the domestic market that was the largest and arguably the most significant target for expo promotions. Coming at the end of a decade of high economic growth and massive infrastructural development, the expo and its theme of “progress” articulated desires to pass over the recent wartime past and move forward into a “harmonious” future. As Yoshikuni Igarashi puts it, in his analysis of the Japan Pavilion and other festive spaces, “‘development’ in Expo ’70 appeared to be a linear progression away from painful memories of the war” — the end to the postwar, and the start of the post-postwar.²⁾ This historical transition would reach completion, the expo seemed to promise, in an affluent future society of high wages and abundant consumer products. At least for the six months that it ran, Expo ’70 thus appeared to make manifest the pot of gold at the end of Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato’s “income-doubling” rainbow. At the expo, citizens could experience their future lives in a rich, consumer society, and were thus mobilized, Shunya Yoshimi has argued, behind the national development strategies that would avowedly lead there.³⁾

In the decade leading up to Expo ’70, massive class and regional disparities continued to divide Japan.⁴⁾ At the same

time, mass protest movements, in which young student activists were particularly prominent, opened up new fractures in national politics. These especially centered on opposition to the Vietnam War and renewal of the Security Treaty between the United States and Japan (*Anpo jōyakū*, or ANPO) in 1960 and 1970. Yet, the Japan of the expo revealed little of this. Rather, just as the expo’s vision of the past excluded the Asia-Pacific War, its vision of the present occluded the inequalities and many of the tensions of contemporary society. Instead, the expo made strident claims for a nation unified around the supposedly shared economic goals to be realized in the near future. Discussing the aftermath of the massive anti-ANPO protests that occurred in 1960, when the Liberal Democrat Party (LDP) forced the ratification bill through the Diet, William Marotti argues that “the ruling party sought a new legitimacy and a means to assuage and co-opt the defeated opposition by promoting a depoliticized everyday world of high growth and consumption and a dehistoricized national image.”⁵⁾ If the Summer Olympics held in Tokyo in 1964 marked the opening of this new Japan, the 1970 Osaka Expo was its gala performance.

The role that protest — political, social, and artistic — played in Expo ’70 is contested. At the time it was held and since, critics have drawn parallels between the 1970 World Exposition and prewar or wartime mega-events organized or participated in by the Japanese state for propaganda purposes. The art critic Sawaragi Noi, for example, has argued

that the willing cooperation of many avant-garde artists, including thematic exhibition producer Okamoto Tarō, was analogous to the “mobilization (*kokka sōdō-in*)” of “war painters” for national policy purposes in the 1930s⁶⁾; and for this reason, Expo '70 has long been associated with the collapse of the avant-garde in postwar Japan.⁷⁾ Midori Yoshimoto and others, however, have argued against the view that the expo was a wholesale cooption of political and artistic opposition. Yoshimoto suggests that Expo '70 should be understood as “a cacophony of dissonant voices rather than a harmonious chorus orchestrated by one ideology”⁸⁾: these voices included public protests by individuals (e.g. the “eye-jacking incident,” in which antiwar activist Satō Hideo staged a hunger strike in one of the eye sockets of the Golden Mask of the Tower of the Sun) and groups (e.g. Expo '70 Destruction Joint-Struggle Group or *Banpaku Hakai Kyōtō-ha*); critical commentary (e.g. by the art and literary critic Haryū Ichirō); and interventions by artists involved in the expo and those who refused to take part.⁹⁾

In this paper, I develop this line of inquiry and further explore the relationship between protest and Expo '70, primarily through an analysis of two contemporary expo-related texts. The first text I analyze is a photograph taken by the Swiss writer and photographer, Nicolas Bouvier (1929–1998), found in the English translation of his travelogue, *Chronique japonaise* (1975); via this I move to a discussion of the *raku-gaki kōnā* or “Scribbling Corner” site in Expo

'70 more widely. The second text is a monster movie, *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā* (1970), the sixth film in Daiei's *Gamera tokusatsu* series. Neither of these texts fit the usual definitions of expo art, nor are they typically read within the context of political protest in the 1960s. Yet these are two examples of the myriad texts, official and otherwise, that engaged with and represented Expo '70 at the time. Crucially, for the purposes of this paper, they depict the expo as an event for children or teenagers and, secondly, as contested. In that this is accomplished through the figure or device of “noise” these texts echo Yoshimoto's designation of the expo as “a cacophony of dissonant voices.” Yet, as I argue below, analysis of *Chronique japonaise*, the *raku-gaki kōnā*, and *Gamera* suggests this cacophony of voices be read, not as a moment of riotous, polyvocal dissent, but instead in terms of the limits on meaningful political speech that Expo '70 both itself embodied and proclaimed for post-1970 society.

I primarily define “noise” as antidiscourse, a lack of meaningful spoken or written communication; but my understanding of its function rests upon Michel Serres' concept of “the third man” or the “prosopopoeia of noise,” that is, the static or interference that is excluded in order for communication between interlocutors to take place. As Serres explains, “to hold a dialogue is to suppose a third man and to seek to exclude him.” Thus the third man represents the included-as-excluded on the communication chain of producer-transmission-receiver, where producer and

receiver are locked in a struggle against “phenomena of interference that become obstacles to communication.”¹⁰⁾ The texts picked up for this paper engage with this relationship of producer and receiver/audience, in ways directly connected to Expo ’70 and to questions of the role of ideology in cultural communication more widely.

Sanctioned scribbles in Expo ’70

The relationship of Swiss writer-photographer Nicolas Bouvier to Expo ’70 was a direct one. Bouvier had first lived in Japan for one year from October 1955, after the long overland journey from Europe to India with Thierry Vernet that became the basis for his debut travel memoir, *L’Usage du monde* (1963). His second visit was from 1964 to 1966, living in Kyoto and Tokyo with Élane Bouvier, his wife, and their young children. Experiences from both these periods were incorporated into *Chronique japonaise*, the self-reflexive and fragmentary travelogue that Bouvier first published with Éditions L’Âge d’Homme in Lausanne in 1975. It was on his third and final visit to Japan, in 1970, that Bouvier visited the expo as a member of the official Swiss delegation. He illustrated and designed four books for display in the “Radiant Structure” Swiss Pavilion; these books including text and photographs of Japan from his previous trips.¹¹⁾

Most of the source material for *Chronique japonaise*, Bouvier’s most well-known publication on Japan, was produced before his 1970 trip, and no expo-related material was included in the first edition. However, a single

photograph from the expo, taken by Bouvier on a visit to the site, was included in a later version of the text, the Eland edition of the English translation entitled *The Japanese Chronicles* (2008). Selected photographs are reproduced in the original version of *Chronique japonaise*, but many more appeared in this posthumous English edition. That these illustrations and their locations in the text were chosen by editors, not the author, and in some cases were produced in periods outside the temporal boundaries of the original text, challenges conventional notions of authorial authority and could be said to compromise their status as objects of intratextual analysis. Yet Margaret Topping makes a powerful argument for *Chronique japonaise* as, from the beginning, “itself a palimpsest [...] composed of a plurality of sources and voices.” Later editorial decisions, she continues, simply “add a further layer to this palimpsest.”¹²⁾

This understanding of *Chronique japonaise* as palimpsest — a written text on which later writing has effaced earlier writing, and thus polyvocal and multi-temporal — provides a rationale for reading Bouvier’s expo photograph as an integral part of the travelogue as a whole, even though it is not connected to his travels at the time. Usefully, at the same time, the image of a palimpsest also explains the subject of the photo itself. The photograph is a full page, monochrome illustration inserted in one of the seven unconnected chapters titled “The Grey Notebook,” which were entries taken from Bouvier’s original travel

journals. The image takes in none of the expo’s iconic buildings or sites: no national or corporate pavilions, no Festival Plaza or Theme Pavilion, not even an identifiably-futuristic structural or sartorial motif. Indeed, as there is no caption on the page, nor direct reference in the accompanying text, it would probably be impossible to identify the location of the photograph as the expo were it not for a paratextual explanation in the list of illustrations: “Graffiti, Osaka World Exposition, June 1970.”¹³⁾

The photograph shows the *raku-gaki kōnā*. This was a series of curved concrete walls, mostly about two meters high and painted white, that were set aside for expo visitors to write on. This was part of attempts to keep the official pavilions and other walls free of graffiti. The *raku-gaki kōnā* was located in the centre of Expoland, the amusement zone of Expo ’70 that was just south of the central exhibition zone.¹⁴⁾ Expoland was primarily aimed at young people, from children to early twenties: it included a playground, the lost children’s centre, and the International Children’s Picture Exhibition, as well as various amusement-park rides and the multimedia Pepsi Pavilion designed by Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.) ostensibly for the so-called “Pepsi Generation.” Unlike these sites, the *raku-gaki kōnā* was not listed on the Official Souvenir Map of Expo ’70, but photographs and other visual records from the time suggest it was popular with the above age groups.

Most of this context is unclear from Bouvier’s photograph of the *raku-gaki kōnā*. Indeed, Bouvier seems more

interested in the individual act of writing, and the formal aesthetic qualities of this particular shot, than the expo as mega-event or even the semantics of what is written. His photograph shows a man in white T-shirt standing facing the wall. The man props himself against the concrete with his hands, as a friend in Cisco jeans and plaid shirt sits on his shoulders while scrawling something on a high section of the wall. The photograph is taken in close-up — the man who is standing is visible only from the waist up, and the wall takes up the entire background of the shot. For this reason, few whole phrases are visible and it is generally hard to make sense of what is written on this section of it. In the photograph, there can be seen a large number of abstract line patterns, a few dates, presumably of the days visited, a thick black arrow pointing right, and a number of cut-off or crossed-out phrases in kanji. As this description suggests, the photo exemplifies many of the features found in Bouvier’s photographic work in Japan more generally, which avoid, Topping has argued, tropes common in an exoticist tourist gaze: “the picture space is filled and compressed in such a way as to efface cultural context” — the jeans and shirt-wearing young men could be from anywhere, and it is only the kanji that gives the viewer a clue to where this was taken; “valorisation of the everyday” — though taken at Expo ’70, the photo appears simply to show two people graffitiing a wall; and, as here, “his subjects literally and symbolically exceed the boundaries of the photographic frame.” In this sense, the

raku-gaki kōnā image, like Bouvier's images more generally, avoids presenting a systematic or totalizing vision. It is hard to decipher, Topping writes, in the "realms of the 'insaisissable,' the 'ungraspable'."¹⁵⁾

In Bouvier's photograph, the phrases visible on the wall read "*chikan Ishida* (Ishida the molester)" with two lines through it; "*sekai no ...* (world...)"; and "... *kaishugi*," probably "*shakaishugi* (Socialism)" in full. Other extant photographs of the site reveal a similar diversity of messages, and suggest similar difficulties in reading them. There are personal names written over the top of other names, each one larger and bolder than the last. Statements about love are also common: "*Sumiko suki* (I love Sumiko)"; "I LOVE YOU," in English; "*Ai wa nani* (what is love?)." Promotions for restaurants sit next to expletives like "*baka aho* (idiot)" and playful criticism of the expo itself: "*zankoku haku banzai* (hurrah to the brutal exposition!)." Footage in the official Expo '70 film gives the opportunity to see writers in action: one remarkable scene shows an elementary schoolboy replacing the word "study" with "*itazura* (mischief)" in the phrase "*yoku asobi, yoku benkyō shimashō* (let's play and study hard)."¹⁶⁾

In this way, the *raku-gaki kōnā* gave visitors the opportunities to engage in dialogue with each other, as well as with the expo, its organizers, and the world outside the expo gates. Visitors could write whatever they wanted: leave a record of their visit, make fun of friends, ask questions, publicize their love for someone, promote a business, state a

political allegiance, make a social or other critique — all was allowed. Yet, because of the popularity of the *raku-gaki kōnā*, it was often difficult to find free space on which to do this. In one photo-journal of a visit to the expo available online, the writer describes their initial excitement at learning they were able to write on a public wall without anyone getting angry followed by disappointment at finding nowhere left to write.¹⁷⁾ Visual records show that the lower and middle sections of the wall tended to be filled with a mass of overlapping words, pictures, and other inscriptions, which made it impossible to read what was written — a visual "cacophony of dissonant voices."

The illegibility of messages did not, presumably, worry the organizers too much. After all, the purpose of the wall was not, primarily, open dialogue between participants at different levels of the expo, but rather the preservation of other walls and structures at the site, keeping them free of unsanctioned and illicit writing. Thus organizers supplied brushes, pens, and crayons to visitors, encouraging them to draw pictures, sign their names, or write messages and comments on the *raku-gaki kōnā* walls and floors; but they also reserved the right to whitewash the space on a regular basis, meaning that anything written would be covered over, and the walls left blank for the following day. As a result, fundamentally, the inscriptions were transient, and the process of actually reading and understanding the messages devalued. Clearly, the *raku-gaki kōnā* was not intended as an archive of

visitors’ individual responses, impressions, and engagement with Expo ’70, one reason perhaps for the scarce evidence of its contents.

In English, the *raku-gaki kōnā* was officially called the “Scribbling Corner,” and this was written next to the Japanese on the central walls of the site; yet *raku-gaki* might also be translated as “graffiti,” the word used in the list of illustrations in Bouvier’s *The Japanese Chronicles*. As an illicit act of writing, scribbling, scratching, or spraying words or pictures in a public space, graffiti is fundamentally “subversive,” Elizabeth Frood argues, “because it is applied to a surface where it technically does not belong, changing the built environment.”¹⁸⁾ Jean Baudrillard, in his influential analysis of tagging in early-1970s New York, went further, arguing that the proliferation of sprayed or scrawled names on subway carriages and walls was “a savage offensive [...] a new type of intervention in the city, no longer as a site of economic and political power, but as a space-time of the terrorist power of the media, signs and the dominant culture.” Baudrillard contended that the names chosen as tags have “no content and no message.” Rather, they function as “anti-discourse [which] resist every interpretation and connotation, no longer denoting anyone or anything. In this way, with neither connotation, nor denotation, they escape the principle of signification and, as *empty signifiers*, erupt into the sphere of the *full signs* of the city, dissolving on contact.” In short, Baudrillard saw graffiti as a potentially revolutionary act because it resisted the

excess of signification occurring in what he termed the “semiocracy,” the modern, media-saturated urban environment.¹⁹⁾

These understandings of graffiti are relevant to Expo ’70 in two main ways. First, they clarify what the *raku-gaki kōnā* was not: as a space set aside by the expo organizers, where — in the words of the visitor cited above — no-one would be angered, the act of writing there was not illicit, never mind subversive. If graffiti is defined by context as well as form, it is the context of the *raku-gaki kōnā* that denies these signs status as graffiti. Secondly, it follows that the emptiness of these signifiers — for that, I would argue, is what the *raku-gaki kōnā*’s inscriptions represent — thus conveys something other than resistance to the dominant culture, and in turn sheds light on Expo ’70’s place within the social and political struggles of 1960-70s Japan. In this reading of the *raku-gaki kōnā* as a physical space within the expo site, the function of the fragmentary, the polyvocal, or the “ungraspable” diverges from that given in Nicolas Bouvier’s photograph of two young men writing on the wall. *Messy* and *loud* though both may be, the former fails as resistance to a totalizing vision: rather, it is incorporated and accommodated *within* a totalizing structure — the expo system.²⁰⁾

Nishiyama Uzō, the Kyoto University architect involved in drafting the early master plan of Expo ’70, had envisioned the Festival Plaza, the central trunk of the expo site, as a space for face-to-face interaction, for dialogue between visitors, as active participants rather than passive

consumers.²¹⁾ Yet the *raku-gaki kōnā* reveals how Nishiyama's radical concept of the expo as a truly public space was compromised as plans developed and the site was constructed. If the expo was an ideological performance aimed at mobilizing citizens behind the vision of a depoliticized, consumer society, then there are two ways we might understand the symbolic role played by the *raku-gaki kōnā* in delimiting the place of dialogue, including dissent, in this new society. Although the *raku-gaki kōnā* was the only place within the Expo '70 site set aside for visitors to publicly and freely voice their concerns in this way, the terms of its usage and actual practices of use determined its content as noise — meaningless scribbles, doodles, cacography, messy or illegible script — rather than discourse, that is, meaningful speech from “citizens” of the Expo city. Second, the objectives of the *raku-gaki kōnā*, as well as its location in Expoland, relegated and contained visitors/citizens' voices in a space marked as amusement, kid's play or “mischief.” In that sense, spatially, dialogue was given room but on the margins; while temporally, it was sanctioned as a transition phase, to be passed through on the way to becoming an adult member of society.

Expo '70 was intended as a metonym of future society in Japan. Its pavilions and exhibitions were a window onto what this future's transportation, household appliances, clothing, buildings and interiors might look like. At the same time, it might be said that site organization, means of communication between organizers, staff, and visitors,

and the policing of behavior at the site enacted a model of future social relations. While the futurist structures, fashions, or lifestyles on display at the expo often never came to pass, scholars have argued that the emergence of a rich, consumer society able to incorporate — or find a place for — opposition was itself heralded by Expo '70. In this context, the *raku-gaki kōnā* symbolizes a process at work post-1970, whereby the participatory role of citizens in the running of government and society was severely diminished without the need to suppress dissent through force.

Weaponized noise in *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā*

Expo '70, as William O. Gardner has explored in detail, was linked in multiple ways to science fiction, as a means of thinking about and imagining the future, and as a fictional genre. Tezuka Osamu produced the Fujipan Robot Pavilion, Abe Kōbō and Teshigahara Hiroshi created a science-fiction film for the Auto Pavilion, and the Mitsubishi Future Pavilion was designed by, among others, Tsuburaya Eiji, the pioneering special effects director of *Godzilla* and *Ultraman*, who also created objects for the Tree of Life inside the Tower of the Sun. Parallel with the participation of science fiction creators in the expo itself, Expo '70 also inspired responses in science fiction works, including Tsutsui Yasutaka's satirical story “Shinya no bankokuhaku” (“The Expo at midnight,” 1970) and — my focus in this section — the monster movie *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā* (*Gamera vs. Jiger*).²²⁾

Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā was directed by Yuasa Noriaki from a screenplay by Takahashi Niisan. It was the sixth of eight Heisei-period films in Daiei's *tokusatsu* series about a giant, turtle-like creature who can breathe fire, walk on two legs, and fly. *Gamera* was released on 21 March 1970, to coincide with the beginning of the school holidays and Expo '70, which had opened the week before. The movie is set (almost) in real time, as the plot revolves around the attack on Osaka of a monster called Jaigā (Jiger below), whose threat is explicitly framed in terms of the successful opening and running of expo:

“Right as we speak, visitors from all over the world are canceling their hotel and flight reservations for the expo. We have to deal with Jiger, or there is no way we can open the expo. And if Jiger destroys the expo site itself, what will we do?”²³⁾

Osaka itself may burn, this official seems to suggest, but the expo must be protected. Gamera plays an explicit role in its defense, as does noise; but it is children who connect Gamera and noise, and thus play the central role in saving the expo.

As suggested above, in reference to Expoland's *raku-gaki kōnā*, children were a significant market for Expo '70 organizers in their attempts to draw in the public. Children were often used in poster and other campaigns, especially for the domestic market, and the expo was seized upon as a popular topic in the burgeoning postwar mass media

aimed at children.²⁴⁾ In terms of the *tokusatsu* film too, children had emerged as the target audience by the late 1960s, and the tone of these movies had considerably lightened since their beginning with *Gojira* (1954). The narrative focus of *Gamera*, in particular, had shifted by 1970 to the relationship between Gamera and children. As the child singers of the theme tune underscore with their words of encouragement (“*Ganbare Gamera*”), *Gamera* is a protector and friend of children, and in turn children help Gamera. In the three *Gamera* films released from 1968 to 1970, these child characters are not only Japanese but also foreign (i.e. white, western, USAmerican), and they all have to work together in supporting Gamera; this shift supports the series' emphasis on international, especially US-Japan cooperation.²⁵⁾ In these ways, the tie-in between Expo '70 and the *Gamera* series thus seems like a logical one.

The main characters of *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā* include elementary schoolboy Hiroshi Kitayama (Takakuwa Tsutomu), whose father is constructing a mini-submarine to be used as a children's ride in Expoland, and Tommy and Susan Williams (Kelly Varis and Katherine Murphy), whose own father Dr. Williams (Franz Gruber) is overseeing the archaeological dig for a massive stone relic called the *Akuma no Fue* (Devil's whistle). The film opens with Hiroshi, who is soon given the opportunity to tour the real expo site by Sawada Keisuke (Hayami Ryō), an expo official who is dating Hiroshi's older sister. The

narrative rationale for this is Hiroshi's father's work on the submarine, but it allows the film to explain and promote Expo '70 to audiences. Indeed, the scene plays out in the style of a promotional video, which gives the dates the expo will be open, the number of participating countries, the main pavilions (with on-screen captions), and an explanation of the themes: harmony and progress, the future city, new technology and culture, the space age, humanity and scientific discovery are all listed. This allows a transition to the ostensible message of *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā*: in order to progress, humanity needs to focus not only on outer space and the future, but also on understanding the Earth and its past.

As Sawada explains, the past is full of many mysteries, exemplified by the objects that remain from earlier human civilizations, many of which we still do not comprehend: "who made them and why?," he asks. This is where the *Akuma no Fue* is introduced. At the start of the film, the statue is in the process of being brought from its home on a South Seas island to the expo site. Once there, it will be displayed in the lowest level of the Tower of the Sun, in an underground section named "Prayer: the Forest of the Gods," in which Okamoto Tarō brought together a display of masks and statues from around the world. The statue appears to proclaim a return of the premodern, the magical, and the "*hi-kagakuteki* (non-scientific)" to the primarily future-oriented expo, bursting though this frame like the Tower of the Sun through the roof of the Festival

Plaza. That is, the "mystery of the statue (*sekizō no himitsu*)," as it is put in the film, may be said to stand for the buried or repressed past that must be acknowledged for humanity to progress properly. As Hiroshi's guide wonders at the start of the film, "If only we could fully understand these objects, maybe we would find something totally unexpected in our past (*kanzen ni yomitoru koto ga dekitara, ningen no rekishi wa motto motto omoigakenai koto ga atta kamo shiremasen*)."

The narrative thus starts with the problem of interpretation, whose lack is holding back humanity from entering the ideal future world envisioned at the expo site.

It is the disturbance of the *Akuma no Fue*, in particular the sound emitted as air travels through its shaft, that awakens Jiger from his underground lair on the island. Jiger follows the statue to Osaka, and Gamera follows Jiger, and they fight it out in the streets around Osaka Castle. This is where we first encounter sound as a weapon in the film, as Jiger projects a high-frequency ray from its forehead which vaporizes flesh and large swathes of downtown Osaka. At the end of this battle, Gamera is pierced by Jiger's tail, which injects an egg inside his lung, temporarily taking him out of action.

As is common in many *tokusatsu* monster films, discussion and negotiation between different agencies are ascribed an important role in problem-solving, and as Jiger's attack on Osaka proceeds, groups of officials (scientists, government, expo organizers) argue about how best to respond. Yet, while these adults stand

around talking, the children take direct action. After a timely accident with a transistor radio, which releases white noise and kills Jiger's baby, Hiroshi and friends realize that the monster's weakness is “low-frequency sound (*teishūha*)” or “noise (*zatsuon*).” This is the second encounter with sound as a weapon in the film: as Jiger sleeps in the hills surrounding the expo site, the Self-Defense Force (SDF) set up massive speakers to blast it with white noise, which constrains Jiger until Gamera rejuvenates. On his return, Gamera plugs his ears to protect himself from Jiger's sound ray, and then uses the sound emitted by the statue to disable Jiger before killing it with the statue. Noise is thus weaponized in the film: it is used by Jiger as an indiscriminate tool of destruction which takes out entire neighborhoods of Osaka; but at the same time, when noise is harnessed by authorities, it saves the expo from destruction.

The opportunity to film at the Expo '70 site, and utilize it as a set, gave filmmakers the opportunity not only to use emblematic structures such as the Soviet Union Pavilion and the Tower of the Sun as a backdrop to Gamera and Jiger's battles but also, one would presume, to destroy them in spectacular fashion. However, at the moment Jiger starts attacking the Soviet Pavilion, Gamera returns for his final attack. In the end, the expo buildings are left unscathed and, with the removal from the site of Jiger's body by Gamera, the expo is able to proceed as planned. A symbolic reading, in terms of the narrative and its

sociopolitical message, might suggest that significant opposition to the Expo '70 is thus disallowed. In this, I would argue against Sandra Wilson's suggestion that “the film might indicate a lingering sense of Japan's [postwar] vulnerability.”²⁶⁾ Downtown Osaka and Senri's *danchi* apartment buildings do suffer substantial damage, but from the beginning of the film, Jiger is presented primarily as a threat to the expo. In that the expo itself suffers no damage, the film offers none of the pleasure, nor the catharsis, of the first *Godzilla* film, for example.

As Susan Napier has suggested in her influential essay on postwar Japanese disaster films, *Gojira* (1954) provides a means to imaginatively overcome, or at the least rewrite, national traumas of wartime losses and nuclear attack within a secure narrative frame: “The series' reassuring subtext remains the same: even if famous monuments such as Tokyo Tower or the new Tokyo City Hall get trampled on, they can always be rebuilt.”²⁷⁾ Some scholars have questioned whether anxieties are indeed always allayed, and reassurance always offered, by the narrative conventions of the monster movie genre.²⁸⁾ Either way, it is interesting to consider the reasons for *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā*'s failure to conform to a destruction-catharsis narrative in which the expo's own “famous monuments” would have been destroyed: was it a lack of imagination on behalf of scriptwriters or a lack of funds (Daiei Film did declare bankruptcy just one year later, in 1971)? Was it a commercial decision connected to the tie-in with Expo '70? On the other hand, might it

presuppose an absence of trauma, an already-secure and unified national-cultural body, the tragedies of the past and the fractures of the present seemingly overcome? Or perhaps the fundamentally temporary nature of the expo buildings made their rebuilding unimaginable, and thus their deconstruction impossible, at least before the expo came to an end? Art and literary critic Haryū Ichirō, in his contemporary critique of Expo '70, notes how visiting the expo site felt like he was seeing “a huge set for a Western film [...] a papier-mâché city” that already “exudes the impression of ruins.”²⁹⁾ (p. 45). *Gamera* holds back from visualizing this ruin on screen — in short, it refuses to destroy the papier-mâché model of “a papier-mâché city.” Is this an attempt to assert some material permanence for the expo, diverting attention away from the very demateriality of the expo in the first place?

Whatever the reason for its climatic evasion of destruction, *Gamera* ends with the mystery of the statue solved but without any real change in the world. The expo is intact and ready to open as planned, with the past safely and neatly packaged for public consumption:

Sawada: “What shall we do with the statue?”

Williams: “Let us make a model (*mozō*) quickly”

Sawada: “Make an imitation (*imiteshon*)?”

Williams: “Sure, why not? After all, we have now solved one riddle of the

ancient world.”

The statue has thus been successfully interpreted, as hoped at the beginning of the film. Yet, without any great revelations in understandings of the past, the earth, or humanity, the original message of the film is largely jettisoned in this resolution.

From this discussion of the statue, however, the ending of *Gamera* transitions to a different but much more explicitly articulated lesson, about children, their difference from adults, and their potential role in society, given by Sawada in voiceover as the main characters watch Gamera take Jiger's body and the statue back to its South Sea island home:

“And so, the expo opened on time [...] If there's one thing we've learnt from this incident, it is that we need to ensure that children's naive instincts (*soboku no chokkan*) and pure souls (*yogorenaki tamashi*) are not lost as they enter adulthood.”

Thinking about the statue's role in the narrative, we might note that, at the start of the film, history emerged in the shape of an ancient statue and monster to threaten the expo's future-focused vision; and it emerged, not from anywhere, but from a South Pacific island, site of not-so-distant Japanese expansionism and US-Japan wartime clashes. Yet by the end, history has been made absent. At the same time, the end of the film reveals the power of spectacle: the original statue has been

stripped of its intended purpose to control Jiger, and an imitation placed into Okamoto's display in the Tower of the Sun. *Gamera's* climax thus performs, before the actual opening, the success of Expo '70 as ideology, in that ontological priority is transferred from the realities (of social-political struggles, for example) outside the expo to the image (of economic prosperity and national unity, for example) exhibited inside.

In terms of the children's role in the narrative, the effected transfer is different, but has an analogous ideological function. I suggested above that the *raku-gaki kōnā* contains graffiti's potential for subversion by locating it as amusement or child's play. Read symbolically, its terms of usage and positioning suggest that dialogue, meaningful speech, protest — *itazura* of this type — has a place in society, but a spatially marginal or temporally limited one. The end of the *Gamera* film also makes a statement about the proper place of “youthful” rebellion. At the start, the Williams children are shown questioning their father's decision to shoot at Gamera when it disturbs the archaeological dig; this disobedience towards their father, which might undermine his professional authority as team leader, is immediately halted with a few sharp words. Later, with Hiroshi, the Williams children again defy the advice of parents and officials to stay out of trouble and leave the Jiger problem to the adults. Yet, in the end, the children are proved right about Gamera, and it is their disobedience which leads to the discovery of Jiger's weakness and the

restoration of Gamera's power.

It is hard not to see this final lesson of *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigū* as some kind of intervention in the question of “youth” in Japan: the young as a social category formed in opposition to hegemonic adult culture, who were, when *Gamera* was released, protesting in and off campuses around the country; and as adolescents making the fraught transition from childhood to adulthood. The film's climax thus envisions a future society not where the young are opposed, but an incorporation of them, utilizing their voices and experiences and energies to defend the national body from avowedly external threats.

Conclusion

At the time of writing, the 2020 Summer Olympics is about six months away from opening in Tokyo. And five years after that, in 2025, a World Exposition will be held for the second time in Osaka. The main focus of the 2025 Expo is sustainability, but this is articulated in the familiar language of futurism: “Designing Future Society for Our Lives (*Inochi kagayaku miraishakai no dezain*).” The apparent parallels between Japan in the 1960s and the twenty-first century should not be overemphasized, yet it is true that event organizers, politicians, and cultural commentators have explicitly tried to draw a link between postwar mega-events and the 2020 Olympics and 2025 Expo, framing these also as “recoveries.”³⁰ Renewed interest in the 1970 Osaka World Exposition, above and beyond the 2025 Expo bid, can also be seen in recent popular culture, including

the *Nijūseiki Shōnen* (20th Century Boys, 1999–2009) manga series and films, and plans for restoration and reopening of parts of the expo site, including the Tree of Life exhibition inside Okamoto's The Tower of the Sun (March 2018), Isamu Noguchi's water fountains, and the "Space Theatre" (forthcoming, 2020). Fifty years after it first opened, it is clearly an opportune moment to reflect on, and reconsider, Expo '70.

As discussed in the introduction, critics of the expo at the time and since have argued that the event had an ideological function analogous to Japan's involvement in wartime expositions, mobilizing citizens behind national policy and especially promoting the nation overseas. For example, in the Japan pavilions at the New York World Exposition and San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939–40, explicit references to the ongoing Sino-Japanese War were expunged, and instead these presented a vision of East Asian relations with Japan at the centre through the frame of (industrial/modern) progress and (touristic/imperial) harmony.³¹⁾ However, a key difference between these wartime expo and Expo '70 was the level of state intervention regarding media and messages. In the 1930s, artists, works, and media were closely regulated by state authorities, leading to a consistent, coherent projection of the nation. But the central theme of Expo '70 aside, the messages, media and aesthetics of the Osaka Expo were far more heterogeneous than that found in wartime expo pavilions. One reason for this is the different nature of hosting an exhibition

versus producing a national pavilion for an expo elsewhere; another is the constraints upon state power in the postwar. Either way, Expo '70 may be figured as a *noisy* exposition, a "cacophony of dissonant voices" in Midori Yoshimoto's words.

This paper has attempted to think through some of the implications of noise and its relation to protest and young people in 1960s Japan through analysis of the *raku-gaki kōnā* in Nicolas Bouvier's *The Japanese Chronicles* and the expo site, and the expo-related *tokusatsu* movie *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā*. Based on this analysis, I propose an understanding of expo's heterogeneity of messages and media in terms of discursive repression, in particular of the meaningful political speech fundamental to real popular sovereignty, which protestors were demanding in the 1960s. In his analysis of art and radical politics in this period, Marotti argues that insurgent cultural producers were engaged in a struggle over "the very apportionments of speech and authority," that is, the question of who has the right to speak and say what. The answers in the texts I have analyzed above are very much in line with post-1970 shifts in politics and society: young people, according to the spatial symbolism and terms of usage of the *raku-gaki kōnā*, are allowed a voice but not speech; and in *Gamera*, the active energy of the young (their "naive instincts and pure souls") is redefined as a socially-constructive force. Invoking Jacques Rancière, Marotti writes that the countercultural politics of the 1960s aimed "to make heard a discourse where

once there was only place for noise.”³²⁾ In this task, the social movements arguably failed. Large-scale political protests by young people and others did not disappear after the expo in 1970. But, as William Andrews explains, the following two decades saw a marked decline in politics “as a constructive or relevant element in [many people’s] lives.”³³⁾ That is, within the public dialogue of post-1970 society, social movements were included *but as excluded*: “a relegation of protest,” in Marotti’s words, “from speech to noise.”³⁴⁾

Notes

- 1) Furukawa Takahisa, *Kōki, banpaku, orinpikku: Kōshitsu burando to keizai hatten* (Tokyo: Chūō shinsho, 1998); Sandra Wilson, “Exhibiting a New Japan: The Tokyo Olympics of 1964 and Expo ’70 in Osaka,” *Historical Research* 85, no. 227 (February 2012): 159–78.
- 2) Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memories: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945–1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 165.
- 3) Yoshimi Shunya, *Banpaku to sengo Nihon* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2011).
- 4) As shown in Yamada Yōji’s 1970 film *Kazoku*, whose narrative surveys the state of the nation in 1970 from Kyushu, via Osaka and its expo, to Hokkaido. See Yoshimi, *Banpaku*, 30.
- 5) William Marotti, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines: Art and Revolution in 1960s Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 3.
- 6) Sawaragi Noi, *Sensō to banpaku* (Tokyo: Bijutsu shuppan, 2005), 62.
- 7) Hyunjung Cho, “Expo ’70: The Model City of an Information Society,” *Josei University Review of Japanese Culture and Society* (special issue: *Expo ’70 and Japanese Art: Dissonant Voices*), no. 23 (December 2011): 55–71 (at 58).
- 8) Midori Yoshimoto, “Expo ’70 and Japanese Art: Dissonant Voices An Introduction and Commentary,” *Josei University Review of Japanese Culture and Society* (special issue: *Expo ’70 and Japanese Art: Dissonant Voices*), no. 23 (December 2011): 1–12 (at 1).
- 9) Thomas R. H. Havens, *Radicals and Realists in the Japanese Nonverbal Arts: The Avant-garde Rejection of Modernism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006), 211–13; Yasufumi Nakamori, “Criticism of Expo ’70 in Print: Journals *Ken*, *Bijutsu techō*, and *Dezain hihyō*,” *Josei University Review of Japanese Culture and Society* (special issue: *Expo ’70 and Japanese Art: Dissonant Voices*), no. 23 (December 2011): 132–44.
- 10) Michel Serres, *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy*, trans. Josué V. Harari and David F. Bell (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 66–67.
- 11) Nicolas Bouvier, *Œuvres* (Paris: Gallimard, 2004).
- 12) Margaret Topping, “Phototextual Journeys: Nicolas Bouvier in Asia,” *Studies in Travel Writing* (special issue: *Contemporary Travel Writing in French: Tradition, Innovation, Boundaries*) 13, no. 4 (December 2009): 317–34 (at 319–20).
- 13) Nicolas Bouvier, *The Japanese Chronicles*, trans. Anne Dickerson (London: Eland, 2008), 194.
- 14) Until 2009, Expoland continued to function as an amusement park. Today, the site is mostly taken up by the

- Expocity shopping mall, which visitors pass when walking from the monorail station to the main entrance of the Expo '70 Commemorative Park.
- 15) Topping, "Phototextual Journeys," 318-322.
 - 16) See Hirano Akiomi, ed. *Ōsaka Banpaku: 20 seiki ga yume mita 21 seiki* (Tokyo: Shogakukan Creative Visual Book, 2014), 54. Also, there are a number of photographs of the *raku-gaki kōnā* available online, at Gettyimages, Alamy, Shutterstock, Kyodo News, and *Mainichi Shinbun*. The official commemorative film of Expo '70, directed by Taniguchi Senkichi, was released in cinema chains across Japan in 1971. On the DVD release, footage of children using the *raku-gaki kōnā* can be found about one hour into the film; *Kōshiki chōhen kiroku eiga Nihon Bankokuhaku*, directed by Taniguchi Senkichi (Tokyo: Nyūsu Eiga Seisaku Renmei, 1971).
 - 17) Expo '70 Ōsaka Banpaku kinen shashinkan, available at <http://osaka-banpaku.world.coocan.jp/b/expoland.html>.
 - 18) Troy R. Lovata and Elizabeth Olton, "Introduction," in *Understanding Graffiti: Multidisciplinary Studies from Prehistory to the Present*, eds. Troy R. Lovata and Elizabeth Olton (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 11-16 (at 13).
 - 19) Jean Baudrillard, *Kool Killer or the Insurrection of Signs* (Les partisans du moindre effort, 2005), available at <http://lpdme.org/projects/jeanbaudrillard/koolkiller.pdf>
 - 20) On the expo as a spectacle functioning not as communication but system, see Angus Lockyer, "The Logic of Spectacle, c. 1970," *Art History* (special issue: *Spectacle and Display*) 30, no. 4 (September 2007): 571-89.
 - 21) Cho, "Expo '70: The Model City"; William O. Gardner, "The 1970 Osaka Expo And/As Science Fiction," *Josei University Review of Japanese Culture and Society* (special issue: *Expo '70 and Japanese Art: Dissonant Voices*), no. 23 (December 2011): 26-43; Lockyer, "The Logic of Spectacle."
 - 22) Gardner, "The 1970 Osaka Expo And/As Science Fiction," 27-28.
 - 23) *Gamera tai Daimajū Jaigā*, directed by Yuasa Noriaki (Tokyo: Daiei, 1970). This and later translations are by the author. All subsequent quotations of dialogue from the film are given without citations.
 - 24) Examples of expo-related material aimed at children can be found here: *Gakunenshi ga tsutaeta kodomo bunkashi (Shōwa 40-49 nenhen)* (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 2018).
 - 25) It is worth noting Jason Burr's analysis of more recent Gamera movies in terms of nostalgia. Children continue to play an important role in the narratives but as a conduit for adult audiences' desires to return to the time when they first watched the series. This, I would argue, directly contrasts with the use of children in *Gamera vs. Jiger* and other Showa-period films, which is future-focused and generally eschews nostalgia. See Jason Burr, *The Kaiju Film: A Critical Study of Cinema's Biggest Monsters* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2016), 173.
 - 26) Wilson, "Exhibiting a New Japan," 177.
 - 27) Susan Napier, "Panic Sites: The Japanese Imagination of Disaster from *Godzilla* to *Akira*," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 327-51 (at 334).
 - 28) Burr, *The Kaiju Film*, 12.

- 29) Haryū Ichirō, “Expo ’70 as the Ruins of Culture,” trans. Ignacio Adriasola, *Josei University Review of Japanese Culture and Society* (special issue: *Expo ’70 and Japanese Art: Dissonant Voices*), no. 23 (December 2011): 44-56 (at 45).
- 30) Robin Kietlinski, “Japan in the Olympics, the Olympics in Japan,” *Education about Asia* 21, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 35-40 (at 38-39); “Tokyo 2020 being billed as ‘Recovery Olympics’ — but not for all,” *The Mainichi*, December 14, 2019, <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20191213/p2g/00m/0fe/079000c>.
- 31) Yamamoto Sae, *Senjika no banpaku to “Nihon” no hyōshō* (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2012).
- 32) Marotti, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines*, 4.
- 33) William Andrews, *Dissenting Japan: A History of Japanese Radicalism and Counterculture from 1945 to Fukushima* (London: Hurst and Company, 2016), 161.
- 34) Marotti, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines*, 126.

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