TOWARDS A NEW WAY OF SEEING: FINDING REALITY IN POSTWAR JAPANESE PHOTOGRAPHY, 1945-1970

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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This study examines postwar Japanese photography and the influence of World War Two, the Allied Occupation (1945-1952), and social and economic transformations during the Era of High-Speed Growth (1955-1970) on ways in which photographers approached and depicted reality. In the late 1940s, censorship erased the reality of a devastated society and evidence of the Allied Occupation from photography magazines. Once censorship ended in 1949, photographers reacted to miserable living conditions, as well as the experience of producing wartime propaganda, by confronting reality directly. Finally, photographers responded to social transformations and resulting challenges during the Era of High-Speed Growth by shifting from an objective reporting to a subjective critique of reality. A study of photography from 1945 to 1970 not only demonstrates how socio-historical forces influence photography but also reveals key changes in Japanese society and the urban landscape as Japan transitioned from a defeated, occupied nation to an economic powerhouse.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Yakeato. Burned ruins. This was the word used to describe the once vibrant cityscape of Tokyo. The urban center had only recently been a bustling metropolis filled with shops, restaurants, schools, and flourishing communities. By the end of World War Two it was nothing but a charred and desolate landscape, filled with the starving, orphaned, and homeless. Most of the destruction occurred during the last year of the war, when the United States unleashed wave after wave of incendiary bombs on the island nation. The resulting infernos blazed intensely, and were so all-consuming that over half of the city was reduced to nothing but smoldering ruins. The people, too, suffered. The strain of putting body and soul into the long and drawn-out war, in addition to living in constant fear of enemy attacks, eventually took its toll on the Japanese, both physically and mentally. By the time Japan surrendered in late 1945, those living in the smoldering ruins of Tokyo were starving and exhausted. Reactions to the end of the war varied. Elation. Disappointment. Fear. For most, the joy at finally being free from the seemingly endless war was overshadowed by dread of the foreign forces that would soon inhabit their country under the Allied Occupation of Japan (1945-1952).

Postwar photographers captured the defeated Japanese nation, the damaged urban areas, and the Occupation by a foreign power. They continued to document society after the end of the Occupation, recording changes as Japan transitioned from political, social, and economic devastation to become a thriving economic power during the Era of High-Speed Growth (1955-1970). In looking at their postwar images, my main research question is: how did the legacy of war and the Allied Occupation shape the development of postwar Japanese photography? How did Japanese photographers, many of whom were propaganda photographers during the war, grapple with the legacy of the war, the sudden influx of foreign servicemen and women, and the devastated social conditions of early postwar society? How did the memory of war and interactions with American culture continue to influence Japanese photographers into the 1960s and beyond?

Recent scholarship places the start of postwar photography in 1950, the year that Domon Ken published his realist manifesto in the photography magazine *Camera*. It sees the realism movement of the early 1950s as an extension of photojournalism—the need to document the "reality" of postwar conditions. But by placing the start of postwar photography in 1950, scholars ignore the first five years after Japan's surrender at the end of World War Two. Further, seeing realism as an extension of photojournalism, as simply a desire to document wretched postwar social conditions, fails to take into account the impact of wartime propaganda and Occupation-era censorship on postwar photography, while also ignoring the cultural and political impact of the Allied Occupation on postwar photographers and the techniques that they embraced after Japan's surrender.

This thesis aims to fill a gap in the knowledge of postwar photography by examining photography magazines from the mid-to late-1940s. The lack of attention on the early years of the Occupation is significant because an examination of photography during this timeframe can provide better insight into the development of Domon's postwar realism movement. It can show that postwar photographic trends were not only influenced by a need to document society, but were in fact strongly linked to wartime propaganda, as well as the social, political, and cultural impact of the Occupation. Additionally, extending the timeframe to the late 1960s will show how realism developed as photographers reacted to social and economic transformations during an era of rapid economic growth. Ultimately, a consideration of the legacy of war and reactions to postwar social conditions will provide insight into how such socio-historical forces influenced photographers and the subjects they recorded, and how they chose to record them.

In examining postwar photography, this thesis first looks to photography magazines that were published in the late 1940s, sources that have received virtually no attention by scholars, in an attempt to track the developments in photography leading up to Domon's realist manifesto in 1950. Additionally, photographs and writings by noted realist photographers, such as Domon and Kimura Ihei, are re-examined in order to explain why they chose realism as a valid photographic technique after the war. Lastly, this thesis takes into account shifts in the photographic industry after the demise of Domon's realist movement in 1954. Here photographs by Nagano Shigeichi are analyzed as a case study in the development of postwar photography. Nagano was a highly prolific photographer during the 1950s and 1960s, and yet has been largely overlooked by scholars of Japanese photography. But as a photographer with a strong grounding in documentary photography, a close study of Nagano's images can reveal the subtle changes as photographers transitioned from photographing reality objectively in the early 1950s to instead embrace their own subjective experience in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s.

Censorship, Propaganda, and a New Postwar Society

In order to understand fully trends in postwar Japanese photography, it is important to consider the social, political, and economic milieu in which photographers worked. In the 1940s especially, censorship played a large role in shaping what photographers recorded, as well as how their images were presented—or, in the case of early postwar photography magazines, not presented—to the public. But strict control of the flow of information during the Occupation was nothing new to the Japanese. Indeed, censorship and self-censorship have existed in Japan's publishing industry since its inception in the early seventeenth century. Early censorship was performed by *machi-bugyō* (administrators of the town), men who were backed by the full authority of the Tokugawa government to carry out their duties. In the late eighteenth century, the government transferred the responsibility of censoring unacceptable material from *machi-bugyō* to the Publishing Association. This guild censored material within their publishing houses, beginning a legacy of self-censorship that would persist in the publishing industry until the end of Occupation-imposed censorship in 1949.

Censorship practices tightened radically during World War Two. In 1940, the military government gave control over the handling of all news, advertising, and public events to the Information and Propaganda Bureau. One year later, the government abolished freedom of the press completely with the revision of the National Mobilization Law. Propaganda worked alongside censorship to feed Japanese citizens a constant stream of lies. Wartime photographers were central figures in the production of wartime propaganda. Some, such as photojournalist Natori Yōnosuke and Kimura, actively supported and promoted propaganda. Others, however, frequently spoke out against propaganda and its effect on the public. Domon was one such photographer, criticizing the government for using magazines to spread propaganda; his outspokenness cost him his job at the International Culture Promotion Association.

Japan experienced a respite from draconian censorship controls at the end of World War Two. This freedom was short lived, however, as Japan soon entered into a new age of censorship under the Allied Occupation that would last until 1949. Concerned chiefly with anything that might tarnish the image of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), censors targeted criticism of Occupation policies, references to the recent war, and the act of censorship itself. Prostitutes were also exorcised from the media, as well as mention of food shortages and images of devastation caused by U.S. bombs.

Occupation officials prohibited the Japanese media from openly acknowledging the fact that censorship existed. Editors, moreover, were not supplied with guidelines that outlined subjects likely to be censored. Thus, as historian John Dower states, Occupation-era censorship had an "opaque quality" that left editors wondering what was and was not acceptable material to publish.[1] Such ambiguity led to self-censorship, already an established practice in Japan's publishing industry, in an effort to evade punishment for publishing taboo material.

Self-censorship existed on another level in Occupied Japan. Living in the midst of a devastated society, many publishers and editors refrained from including pictures of a ruined landscape and a suffering population as a form of denial. This worked as a defense mechanism, operating alongside Occupation-imposed censorship to erase the realities of postwar society from magazines and other publications.

While publishers were grappling with ambiguous censorship policies under the Allied Occupation, Japanese citizens labored to rebuild their lives in a defeated and occupied society. Those living in the early postwar years struggled through the so-called *kyodatsu* condition, a mental state of exhaustion and despair. Translated literally as a "state of lethargy," those in the postwar *kyodatsu* society fought to find even the most basic necessities of life. Ten people died per day in 1945, while the average height and weight of school children decreased until 1948.[2] Faced with severe housing shortages after bombing raids leveled half of the city, citizens lived in subway stations, busses, or shacks cobbled together from debris.[3] A sea of black market stalls swept across the city in order to meet the needs of the Japanese.[4] Prostitution flourished. Repatriated soldiers begged on the streets, marginalized from society. Orphaned children shined shoes or became errand runners for the *yakuza* that ran the black markets. These sights from a ravaged postwar society became the focus of photographers in the early 1950s, who were able to record and publish their photographs freely after the end of Occupation-imposed censorship.

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[1] John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, first edition (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1999), 410.

While the Japanese fought starvation, inflation, and homelessness, the Allied Occupation began a series of reforms that would have a profound impact on the future of the island nation. The "U.S. Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan," approved by U.S. President Harry Truman (1945-1953) on September 6, 1945, outlined two major objectives that would define the reform policies: to eradicate Japan's potential to participate in another war and to transform Japan into a democratic nation along American lines. Actions taken to achieve these goals of demilitarization and democratization included abolishing Shinto as a state religion, enacting the Labor Standards Act in 1947 to improve working conditions, and reforming education from a system based on the German "Gymnasium" to one that followed a U.S. model.

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[2] Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, third edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 226.

[3] US bombing raids killed 85,793 people and left over one million homeless. The United States Strategic Bombing Survey. "Effects of Incendiary Bomb Attacks on Japan—A Report on Eight Cities." Physical Damage Division (April 1947), 67. The raids also destroyed roughly 51 percent of the physical landscape. See Peter C. Chen, "Bombing of Tokyo and Other Cities: 19 Feb 1945-10 Aug 1945," World War II Database, accessed May 9, 2014, http://ww2db.com/battle_spec.php?battle_id=217.

[4] Sixty thousand black market stalls blanketed Tokyo by the beginning of 1946, most of them at or near the major train stations in the city. See Edward Seidensticker, *Tokyo Rising: The City since the Great Earthquake* (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1990).

Japan began to leave the ills of early postwar society behind from the mid-1950s. During the period from roughly 1955 to 1970, known as the Era of High-Speed Growth, Japan's economy soared. The gross national product climbed 10.1 percent by 1957,[5] and by 1968 Japan's GNP would surpass West Germany to become the second most productive nation in the world, behind only the United States.[6] During this time Japan became oriented increasingly around an American-style consumer society, and electrical goods such as televisions, washing machines, and cars became identifying marks for the middle class.

Even more than electrical goods, the salaryman was heralded as a widely recognized symbol of the middle class, as well as a new source of national identity.[7] An image emerged of the loyal Japanese worker, "happily employed, immersed in company benefits."[8] But life as a salaryman came at a cost. Long working hours and grueling commutes were the price to pay for those who desired a middle-class life.

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[5] William Chapman, *Inventing Japan: The Making of a Postwar Civilization*, first edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 120.

[6] Yumiko Iida, *Rethinking Identity in Modern Japan: Nationalism as Aesthetics*, reprint edition (London; New York: Routledge, 2013), 120.

[7] Chapman, *Inventing Japan*, 121.

[8] Ibid., 135.

Despite the economic recovery and increasing distance from the ills of wartime and Occupation-era Japan, tensions continued to rock the nation in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s. Protests erupted over renewal of the U.S.-Japan security treaty in 1960 and 1968. American culture, too, was a source of tension for many Japanese. Centers of consumer culture formed around urban areas where American personnel had been stationed during the Occupation, such as Roppongi in Tokyo, continuing the trend of seeing America as an "object of consumer desire."[9] But even as American consumer products and popular culture remained popular among some Japanese, others viewed this foreign culture from a more critical perspective. Literary critic Etō Jun, for example, sees American influences as the "essential problem of modern Japanese society" that have "radically affected every aspect of Japanese culture."[10]

Rising anxieties over a rapidly changing society during this era caused photographers to abandon objectivity and instead interject their own subjective viewpoints into their photographs. Photographers reacted to a growing American-style consumer society, increasing American cultural influences, social and political unrest, and a standardized middle-class lifestyle. They photographed salarymen, urban reconstruction, and political protests not in an impartial, stylistically realistic manner, but rather incorporated their individual views of a changing society to create unsettling, disturbing, and oftentimes highly charged emotional images. Thus, their images are significant for not only tracking a changing urban landscape in an era of rapid postwar recovery, but in also revealing how people reacted to these transformations.

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[9] Shunya Yoshimi, trans. by David Buist, "Consuming America, Producing Japan," *The Ambivalent Consumer: Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West*, first edition (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2006), 75.

[10] Iida, *Rethinking Identity in Modern Japan*, 137.

Why Photography? “Reading” Images, Methodology, and Materials

An examination of postwar Japanese photography demonstrates the importance of photographs in providing historians with invaluable sources when it comes to reconstructing the past. Peter Burke states that images “allow us, posterity, to share the non-verbal experiences or knowledge of past cultures,” and that they “bear witness to past forms of religion, knowledge, belief, delight and so on.”[11] In the case of Occupation-era Tokyo, the photographic record reveals the extent of the damage caused by bombing raids, the sprawl of crowded black market stalls, and the depravity many faced in a period of devastated living conditions. Further, photographs show the modern-day viewer Japan’s recovery in the postwar years. Streets strewn with rubble and debris give way to towering skyscrapers. Citizens trade kimonos and *monpe* (loose-fitting pants) for Western-style shirts, dresses, and trousers. Children that once crowded around *kamishibai* (picture-card shows performed in the street) run around new concrete playgrounds built in a period of rapid urban reconstruction.[12] And salarymen flood the streets on their daily commutes to and from work.

Photographs can also provide evidence of aspects of social reality that text-based documents pass over, giving insight into mentalities, every day life, and material culture.[13] For example, photographs provide a glimpse into the living conditions of war orphans and prostitutes in Occupied Japan. Furthermore, images speak as much, if not more so, about the mentalities and experiences of the photographer himself as they do about the subjects photographed. Framing, lighting, and the vantage point from which an image was taken do not merely show how the photographer recorded his subject, but also how he viewed his subject. By photographing a skyscraper from ground level, for example, a photographer can emphasize the monumentality of the structure, while close cropping of the frame creates a protected, intimate space. To give a more specific example, Moriyama Daido attempted to convey his subjective experience in the chaotic student riots in late 1960s-Tokyo by producing grainy images that were shot extremely out of focus.

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[11] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence*, first edition (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 13.

[12] Highly popular among children, the stories featured hand-drawn cards and ranged from heroic tales to comedies. See Shunsuke Tsurumi, *Cultural History Of Postwar Japan*, first edition (London; New York: New York: Routledge, 1987), 33.

[13] Ibid., 30.

But for all their value in providing a glimpse into the past, photographs are still subject to certain limitations. As American photographer Lewis Hine said, "While photographs may not lie, liars may photograph." Because photographs are subject to the biases of the photographer, it is possible for images to distort reality. Yet, this distortion can sometimes be a benefit as well—telling us something important about the mentalities, ideologies, and identities of those taking and viewing the photographs. The physical image, in other words, can tell us about the mental "image" of the self or Other.[14] We see this in the 1950's realism movement, which focused on an Occupation culture and a culture of defeat. The images reveal how the Japanese saw themselves, as in images of prostitutes, repatriated soldiers, and war orphans. Photographs of American military police in the streets, whose robust figures clothed in clean, crisp uniforms dominate the images, illustrate how the Japanese saw the American Other. And images from this time give some indication of how Japanese citizens during the Occupation viewed society at large, such as in images of vast crowds of homeless sleeping in subway stations, black markets providing much needed supplies in an era of perpetual scarcity, and urban landscapes leveled by incendiary bombs.

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[14] Ibid.

Because images have the potential to distort reality, it is important to anchor analysis of images with other sources. Personal testimonies, statistical information, and writings by photographers can help to establish a better context for evaluating photographs. Further, information about the photographer himself can aid the historian in reading images. What were his motivations? Why did he take this picture? Can information about his background tell us why he included these subjects—and excluded others?

Here we come to the question of "reading" images. Graham Clarke, the late professor of photography and visual arts at the University of Kent, stresses the need to read an image as a text in order to understand its full meaning. "[R] ather than the notion of looking," states Clarke, "which suggests a passive act of recognition, we need to insist that we *read* a photograph, not as an image but as a *text* . . . The photograph achieves meaning through what has been called a 'photographic discourse': a language of codes which involves its own grammar and syntax."[15]

What is the syntax of this photographic discourse? At its most basic level, it includes terms that signify visual elements and composition: focus, light, and line, for example, as well as angle, background, and contrast. But the syntax of photography demands that the visual reader go beyond merely identifying elements of form and composition. To rise above a passive act of looking, the active reader must understand the cultural and social histories that the photograph references and relates.[16]

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[15] Graham Clarke, *The Photograph* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 27.

This active reading of an image is achieved through what French philosopher Roland Barthes calls “denotative” and “connotative” meaning. Denotative is the literal meaning of elements in the photograph—a facial expression, a person, an object, an animal—all are literal details that appear in the image. Connotative refers to the meaning expressed by these details. It is a system of signs that helps the reader to decipher the image, a series of visual codes “which are themselves the reflection of a wider, underlying process of signification.”[17]

To give an example of reading an image, let us look at a photograph by Nagano Shigeichi (fig. 1.1).[18] At first glance, the image appears to be nothing more than an interesting study in urban architecture. Visually we see a series of buildings and a Shinkansen (bullet train) in the bottom center of the image. The natural light, minimal tonal contrast, and wide depth of field allow us to easily pick out small details: cables stretching vertically across the bottom third of the frame, a plant standing on the corner of the roof of a building, a sign for Daido Steel on the side of yet another building on the right. The Shinkansen and the buildings in the lower half of the picture create horizontal and vertical lines, while the windows in the structure in the background form a graphic pattern that adds a dynamic element to the photograph.

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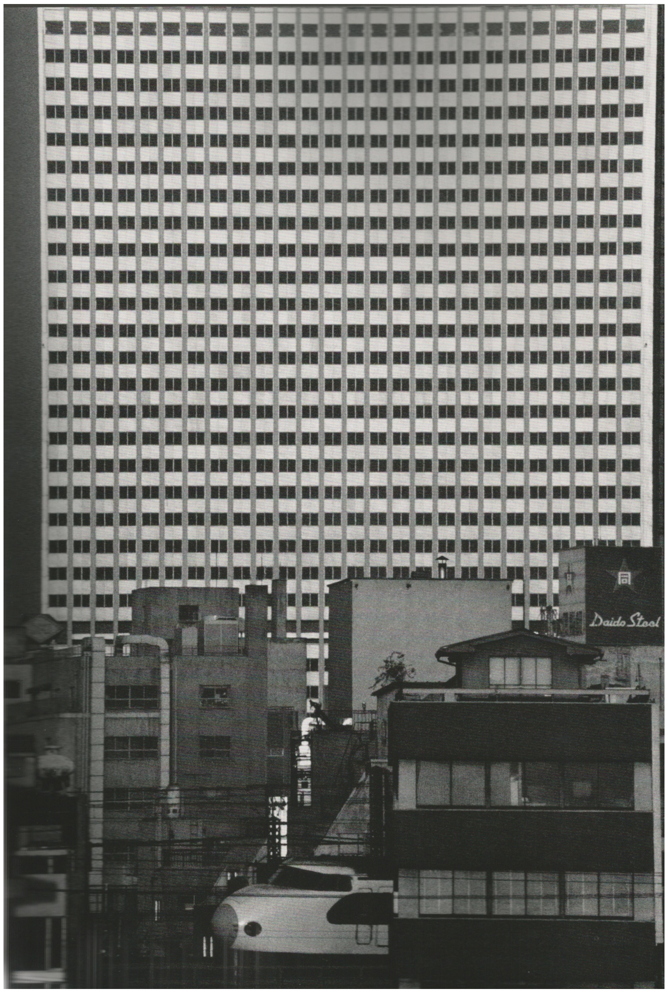
[16] Ibid., 29.

[17] Ibid., 31.

[18] Nagano Shigeichi, *Kono kuni no kioku: Nagano Shigeichi, shashin no shigoto* (*A Chronicle of Japan, Nagano Shigeichi: A Life in Photography*) (Tokyo: Nihon Shashin Kikaku, 2000), 117.

FIGURE 1.1. Nagano Shigeichi, photographer. "Tokyo Viewed from an Expressway," Tokyo, 1968 (*Kōsoku-dōro kara no Tokyo*). Photograph. From *Magajin wāku 60-nendai* (*Magazine Works 1960s*). Shohan edition. Tōkyō: life goes on & TAXI; Heibonsha, 2009.



What meaning can we construct from these details? The juxtaposition between the buildings raises questions about the significance of the structure that dominates the background. In terms of value and contrast, this building is light, uniform, and stretches across almost the entire frame. The buildings in the foreground are cast in shadows, the darker contrast giving them a grungy appearance. The different architectural elements in the smaller buildings, moreover, creates a disjointed appearance that is made even more so by the symmetry in the repeating windows of the building behind them.

Now let us take this one step further and place the image in its historical and cultural context. Nagano's image, entitled "Tokyo Viewed from an Expressway" (Tokyo, 1968) (*Kōsoku-dōro kara no Tokyo*), shows the Kasumigaseki Building in Chiyoda, Tokyo, the first modern skyscraper in Japan. Nagano took the picture in 1968, four years after Tokyo hosted the Olympic games and during a time when Japan was experiencing the rapid economic recovery in the Era of High-Speed Growth. Spatially, the relationship between the building in the background and those in the foreground is crucial. Kasumigaseki takes up two-thirds of the image, and commands an imposing, daunting presence that pervades the image. The physical configuration of the buildings signals a connotative register that indicates the importance of the government, while the pattern of the windows implies an overbearing geometry—a connotation further suggested by the way in which the windows fill over half of the image. It is clear that Nagano wants to emphasize the presence of Kasumigaseki. The photographer himself says that the building is "a symbol of iron and concrete" that is "an active slogan representing high economic growth, the restructuring of Japan, and the urban redevelopment."[19]

Two more important elements worth mentioning are the Shinkansen moving between the smaller buildings and the Daido Steel lettering. When a Shinkansen line first opened in 1964 connecting Tokyo and Osaka, the two largest urban centers in Japan, sixty trains per day transported businessmen between the two cities.[20] With a transit time of only four hours, the ease with which people could travel between the cities had a great impact on the business life of Japan. A steel manufacturing company established in the early twentieth century, Daido Steel provided high-tensile steel for the television antenna of Tokyo Tower,[21] a structure that signaled "the city's successful rise from the ashes, as well as its new 'international' outlook."[22] Thus, rather than simple details in an image of urban architecture, the Shinkansen and Daido Steel lettering reference a capital city reborn after a devastating defeat in World War Two.

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[19] Nagano, *Magajin wāku 60-nendai* (*Magazine Works 1960s*), trans. Hideko Sueoka, Shohan edition (Tōkyō: life goes on & TAXi; Heibonsha, 2009), "Nagano Shigeichi Himself" (*Jisaku wo kataru*), n.p.

[20] Roderick A. Smith, "The Japanese Shinkansen," *The Journal of Transport History* 24 (2003): 231.

The above provides an example of using a photographic discourse to read and understand a photograph. In "reading" the images by postwar Japanese photographers, I situate my analysis within a larger socio-historical framework. Photography magazines are examined within the context of various modes of censorship, such as wartime censorship, Occupation-imposed censorship, and self-censorship, as well as in relation to Occupation reform policies, including the drive for demilitarization and democratization. In looking at photography in the early 1950s, I examine photographs by realist photographers in relation to wartime propaganda, looking at how the production and distribution of propaganda images provided an impetus for photographers to pursue the "real" in postwar society. Society remains a frame of reference for reading images from the mid-1950s to 1970. Here American cultural influences continue to serve as an important point of reference, as well as other major social, political, and economic changes stemming from the Era of High-Speed Growth.

Source material for this thesis consists chiefly of photography magazines and photobooks. In his essay "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media," Ivan Vartanian calls photographs the "beast of print media" because "periodicals were the main vehicle by which photography was disseminated in Japan."[23] In the early postwar period especially, severe shortages of photography supplies made museum exhibits virtually impossible. Thus, magazines were an essential platform through which photographers could exhibit their work. The three magazines consulted for this study, accessed through the Prange Collection at the University of California, Los Angeles, include *Camera*, published by Ars Corporation; *Amateur Shashin Sōsho* (*Amateur Photography Series*), published by Kogeisha; and *Shashin Techō* (*Photography Notebook*), published by the International Photography Publishing Corporation. The first two magazines were highly influential and well-known publications with a wide readership. *Camera*, edited by Kuwabara Kineo from September 1948, popularized the 1950's realism movement. *Nippon Camera* took over production of *Amateur Shashin Sōsho* in December 1949, sustaining the magazine's popularity until the present. The third magazine, *Shashin Techō*, serves as a counterpoint to the first two magazines. It had a smaller circulation and has not yet been examined by modern scholarship. Of course, three magazines do not constitute a comprehensive survey of early postwar photography, but it is my hope that this thesis will begin to shed light on this previously unexplored timeframe.

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[21] "History," Daido Steel, accessed April 27, 2015, http://www.daido.co.jp/en/about/corporate/history.html.

[22] Roman A. Cybriwsky, *Tokyo: The Changing Profile of an Urban Giant* (Boston, MA: G K Hall, 1991), 90.

Even with the development of the Japanese photographic industry and economic recovery from the 1950s, photobooks continued to be preferred over museum exhibitions, becoming the "defining form" for photography."[24] Some of the titles for photobooks used in this study include *Dokyumento Nihon: 1935-1967* (*Documenting Japan: 1935-1967*),

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[23] Ivan Vartanian, "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media," in *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and 70s*, ed. Lesley A. Martin and Kyōko Wada, first edition (New York: Aperture, 2009), 14.

[24] Ibid., 12.

Domon Ken no Showa (*Domon Ken's Showa Era*), *Nagano Shigeichi shashinshū Tōkyō 1950-nendai* (*Nagano Shigeichi's Photo Album: 1950's Tokyo*), and *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).

The postwar realism movement began with Domon in 1950 and remained popular as a photographic genre throughout the 1960s and 70s. *How* that realism was expressed, however, changed over time. In broad terms, realism refers to an artistic style that arose in response to Romanticism.[25] It places emphasis on objective reality and seeks to depict subjects without embellishment. In photography, realism is defined as a photograph that captures "the essence of the action, the moment as it is," with "no doubt in the veracity or accuracy of the photograph."[26]

Curator Alexandra Munroe distinguishes Domon's realism movement by defining it as "objective realism."[27] Objective, as a "literal rendition" of the recorded subject, emphasizes the mechanical nature of the camera.[28] Domon and other photographers in the early 1950s emphasized the relationship between the subject and the camera, while de-emphasizing the role played by the photographer. Another way to classify objective realism is as explanatory photography. Such images take a straightforward approach to the subject, offering an objective reporting that falls short of evaluating, whether positively or negatively, aspects of society.[29]

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[25] Popular from the late eighteenth through the nineteenth century, Romanticism was an artistic and intellectual movement that stressed imagination and emotion.

[26] "Realism," New World Encyclopedia, accessed May 20, 2015, http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Realism.

[27] Alexandra Munroe, "Postwar Japanese Photography and the Pursuit of Consciousness," in *Daido Moriyama: Stray Dog*, ed. Karen Jacobson (San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; New York, 1999), 33.

[28] Andreas Feininger, *Photographic Seeing* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, 1973), 63.

From the mid-1950s, photographers entered into an era of "subjective realism."[30] In contrast to the neutral viewpoint of objective realism, subjectivity in photography is a "free rendition" in which the photographer relies on a "mental concept of the scene" rather than what is "correct" in terms of the mechanical nature of the camera.[31] Because the image relies on the subjective experience of the photographer, this means that there are numerous ways to perceive and depict reality, and no two photographers will photograph alike. While objective realism is equivalent to evaluative photography, subjective realist images are ethnically evaluative, meaning that they go beyond a simple explanation to praise or condemn the subject or aspects of society.[32]

This study of postwar realism draws from images produced by those in the forefront of this movement, including Domon Ken and Nagano Shigeichi. As the photographer who instigated the realism movement, Domon's images are critical in a study of postwar photography. Nagano began his career as a documentary photographer, but abandoned objectivity in favor of a more subjective approach to photography. Thus, an analysis of his images reveals the subtle shifts in realism that began in the mid-1950s. The subjectivity inherent in his images, moreover, highlights the various techniques photographers used, such as unconventional angles and vantage points, to offer critiques of their subjects.

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[29] Terry Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs*, fifth edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages, 2011), 64.

[30] Munroe, "Postwar Japanese Photography and the Pursuit of Consciousness," 33.

[31] Feininger, *Photographic Seeing*, 64.

[32] Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs*, 76.

Literature Review

The historiography of Japanese photography is a small but growing body of work. *The History of Japanese Photography,* edited by Anne Tucker, gives a broad overview of Japanese art photography from the mid-nineteenth century to the twenty-first century. In addition to an introduction by Tucker that focuses specifically on the development of art photography, *The History of Japanese Photography* includes essays by noted photo critics, museum curators, and art historians. In “The Origins and Development of Japanese Art Photography,” Kaneko Ryūichi looks at how culture influenced photographers, as well as the rise of art photography during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. For Kaneko, the image of the landscape was particularly important in this development.

Ideas of modernity in the 1930s, however, caused photographers to turn away from art photography. This is the subject of Takeba Joe’s essay “The Age of Modernism: From Visualization to Socialization.” Takeba examines the development of new genres in response to modernity: objectivism, subjectivism, Dadaism, and surrealism in avant-garde photography. Further, Takeba looks at how these movements were put down by the military government, who called on photographers to contribute to the war effort by producing propaganda.

In another essay by Kaneko, “Realism and Propaganda: The Photographer’s Eye Trained on Society,” the author seeks to explain the motivations for photographers, such as Kimura Ihei, in supporting and contributing to the war effort. Iizawa Kotarō’s essay “The Evolution of Postwar Photography,” picks up after the Japanese surrender at the end of World War Two. Iizawa divides the years from 1945 to 1980 into two periods. The first concerns pre-war photographers like Domon and Kimura, while the second period examines the new generation of photographers, including Moriyama Daido, Hosoe Eikoh, and Tōmatsu Shomei. Iizawa sees the development of photorealism in the early postwar period as a reaction to art photography. When turning to the new generation, the author examines the discovery of the "self" by the 1970s and 1980s.

Another important text in the historiography of Japanese photography, *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and 1970s*, edited by Lesley A. Martin and Kyōko Wada and with essays by Ivan Vartainian and Kaneko Ryūichi, discusses the myriad styles of photobooks, including design, materials, and the printing process. In his essay, "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media," Vartanian includes a descriptive overview of each photobook included in the text, as well as biographical information of the photographers. In addition to presenting the reader with well-known photobooks, such as Kawada Kijuji's *The Map* (*Chizu*) (1965) and Yutaka Takanashi's *Towards the City* (*Toshi-e*) (1974), Vartanian and Kaneko include more obscure publications such as Suntaro Tanikawa's *Picture Book* (1956).

In *Photography and Japan*, art historian Karen Fraser is concerned with what makes Japanese photography "Japanese." In seeking an answer to this question, Fraser is quick to divorce Japanese photography from nationality. Instead, she looks at three characteristics that make Japanese photography distinctive: 1) continuous engagement with the West; 2) the role played by associations and collectives; and 3) the role played by print publications, especially photobooks. Additionally, Fraser examines the intersection of photography and the social history of Japan from three perspectives: "Representation and identity," "Visions of war" and "Picturing the city."

Lastly, historian Julia Adney Thomas has written about postwar Japanese photography within the context of politics and modes of memory. In “Postwar Made Visible: Photography and Postwar Japan’s Elusive Reality,” Thomas argues that postwar photographers attempted to create reality during the Occupation by establishing political, social, and aesthetic norms.

My research will add to this scholarship by examining material culture and identities, focusing specifically on the urban environment. Tokyo serves as a frame of reference in this study because it was at the center of many of the changes taking place in photography. Further, this thesis examines the connection between wartime propaganda and postwar photographic movements, as well as the social and cultural changes that acted as an impetus for changes in photography. This includes wartime and Occupation-era censorship, the *kyodatsu* condition of early postwar society, and the influence of American culture as experienced through contact with U.S. Occupation servicemen. Lastly, research of subjective realism in the Era of High-Speed Growth will add to existing scholarship by examining how, and why, photographers created images that offered a subjective critique of society, instead of an objective reporting. Rather than analyze this timeframe through the images of Tōmatsu, Kawada, Hosoe, and others who have received much attention from scholars, this study instead turns to Nagano Shigeichi, a photographer who abandoned objective documentary reporting for subjective realism. This active, yet understudied, photographer is important because his images demonstrate how photographic techniques changed over time to incorporate subjective self-expression.

Photographic Trends in Postwar Japan: Thesis Overview

This thesis will explore how the legacy of war, the Allied Occupation, and rapid economic changes beginning in the mid-1950s shaped postwar photography. It is concerned, in other words, with Japanese postwar photography's relationship to the sweeping social and political changes that seized the nation during the Occupation and the immediate postwar era. In broad terms, this thesis investigates how historical forces and social realities influence the way individuals produce images and the subjects on which they focus. What can these images tell us about the society in which they were produced? How, for example, are people represented? What kinds of people and events do photographers record? Do photographers employ an expressionist manner meant to mimic art? Do they shoot in the straightforward style of documentary photography? Or do photographers emphasize their own subjective viewpoint? Why favor one technique over another? In seeking to provide answers to these questions, chapters two and three look first to photography magazines published in the late-1940s. Chapter four turns to the rise of realism in the early 1950s, and chapter five examines the turn from objectivity to the subjective self in the mid-1950s and 1960s.

Chapter two, "Under the Censor's Gaze: Photography during the Occupation, 1945-1949," attempts to explain the absence of World War Two, its aftermath (both physically and psychologically), and the Allied Occupation in the pages of early postwar photography magazines. This chapter examines the magazines within the context of different modes of censorship, linking this absence to Occupation-imposed censorship and self-censorship. Additionally, chapter two traces the development of Japan's publishing industry, demonstrating that censorship and self-censorship existed since the industry's beginnings in the seventeenth century. Further, this chapter provides a broad outline of Occupation-imposed censorship and the constraints it placed on media, as well as its ambiguous quality that facilitated self-censorship. Lastly, this chapter looks at self-censorship as a defense mechanism—a form of denial that erased the realities of postwar society from the photography magazines.

Chapter three, "Seeing the Cultural and Political Reality of the Allied Occupation in Early Postwar Photography Magazines," continues an analysis of the images in *Camera*, *Amachua*, and *Shashin*. Here images from the magazines are characterized in aesthetic terms, revealing that the methods employed by photographers demonstrate a transition period between pre- and postwar trends. Additionally, chapter three continues to examine the magazines within the context of the Allied Occupation, looking at their use as a vehicle for the influx of U.S. culture into postwar Japanese society. By including images of both American and Japanese culture, photography magazines ultimately created a cultural hybridity that helped to facilitate and embrace the influence of American culture.

The factors that contributed to the rise of postwar realism are explored in chapter four, "Occupied City: Photography, Objective Realism, and the Ruins of Tokyo." Wartime propaganda is examined in detail, as well as the postwar condition of urban centers such as Tokyo and the relationship between the U.S. and Japan during the Occupation. Drawing on the work of literary scholar Sharalyn Orbaugh, this chapter demonstrates that postwar photographers frequently reversed wartime propaganda ideals, such as harmony, chastity, discipline, and the idea of the body as "iron-hard and intact," espoused by the Japanese military government. Postwar realism inverted these ideals by focusing on prostitutes, repatriated soldiers, war orphans, black markets and ration lines, and *kasutori* culture ("days in the dregs"). This chapter also looks at the popularity of realism among amateur photographers, who submitted 1,000 to 1,500 images of so-called "Beggar Photography" to the monthly photo contest in *Camera* magazine judged by Domon and Kimura. Chapter four ends with an examination of the demise of objective realism in the mid-1950s, around the same time that Japan entered the Era of High-Speed Growth.

The period of rapid economic growth is the subject of chapter five, "Nagano Shigeichi and the *Dream Age* of Japan's Era of High-Speed Growth." The central focus of this chapter is in investigating why photographers began to turn from objective realism to instead photograph society subjectively. This can partly be explained by a new generation of photographers who did not produce propaganda during the war and were thus not as tied to the need to depict the "real." Instead, they drew on their emotional response to a rapidly changing society. In lieu of an objective, straightforward depiction of reality, their images offer a subjective critique of a society that was dominated by the image of a standardized, "mainstream" middle class, a growing American-style consumer society, and social and political unrest that often erupted into violent protests.

Photographing Reality in Postwar Japan

How did the legacy of war and the Allied Occupation shape the development of postwar Japanese photography? Wartime censorship and propaganda, Occupation-era censorship, the wretched social conditions of early postwar Tokyo, and the social and economic transformations during the Era of High-Speed Growth shaped postwar photography by influencing how photographers approached and represented reality. In the first half of the Occupation, different modes of censorship resulted in the absence of the reality of postwar society—ruined urban landscapes, the starving and homeless, and the U.S. military—from photography magazines. But while magazines erased the reality of a *kyodatsu* society, they also reflected the cultural and political reality of the Occupation. This reality can be seen in images that effectively "sold" American culture and promoted the reform policies of demilitarization and democratization. The reality in these images, in other words, was one that reflected the occupation of Japan by a foreign power.

Once freed of Occupation censorship controls, photographers reacted to dismal social conditions that persisted into the 1950s, as well as the experience of producing war propaganda, by confronting reality directly and by photographing it in a straightforward, objective manner. Finally, during the Era of High-Speed Growth photographers responded to tensions resulting from social and economic transformations by fusing documentary photography with individual self-expression to not only portray reality subjectively, but to offer a critique of the changes taking place. In abandoning objectivity in the face of these changes, photographers transitioned from documenting reality to, in effect, documenting themselves.

CHAPTER II

UNDER THE CENSOR'S GAZE: PHOTOGRAPHY DURING THE OCCUPATION, 1945-1949

> "Between me [in Ginza, Tokyo] and Fuji is a burned wasteland, a vast and blackened plain where a city had once stood . . . There is not much else left: the ruins of the burned-out Kabuki-za, the round, red, drum-like Nichigeki, undamaged . . . Otherwise block after block of rubble, stretching to the horizon. Wooden buildings did not survive the fire storms of the American bombers . . ."
>
> –Donald Richie, February 28, 1947[1]

The damage from World War Two was widespread and affected virtually every citizen of Japan. But glancing through postwar photography magazines published during the Allied Occupation (1945-1952), it almost appears as if World War Two, and the resulting havoc it wrought on Japan and the Japanese both physically and mentally, had never happened. Healthy youth and smiling models appear instead of starving children and exhausted mothers. Tall, intact buildings and idyllic landscapes fill page after page, rather than the charred remains of bombed cities. And rare is the sight of the foreign servicemen living in Japan under the Allied Occupation. How can we explain the absence of an event that dominated Japan for over a decade and left the Japanese population struggling through the war's devastating repercussions in the early postwar years?

This chapter seeks to answer the above question by examining photography magazines published between 1946 and 1949 within the context of multiple modes of censorship: wartime, Occupation-era, and self-censorship carried out by the Japanese. The Occupation certainly exerted great control over print material with its censorship policies, which ran from 1946 until 1949. The Japanese also drew on a legacy of self-censorship that had existed in Japan's publishing industry since its inception, policing publications in response to the ambiguity of Occupation censorship policies. At the same time, the dismal living conditions of postwar Japan caused the Japanese to invoke self-censorship of another kind, as they refrained from publishing certain subjects as a defense mechanism in an attempt to divorce themselves from the harsh realities of postwar life. Taken together, these different forms of censorship worked to erase the realities of the war, postwar devastation, and the Allied Occupation from early postwar photography magazines.

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[1] Donald Richie, *Tokyo: A View of the City* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd.), 1999, 27.

The Postwar Print Industry and Photography Magazines

In postwar Japan, photography magazines were the main source for the production and consumption of photographs, proving to be an invaluable tool for amateur and professional photographers alike. They even provided amateurs a means to make the transition into professionals. For professional photographers, they offered a way to distribute images among a broader audience. Of course, the magazines could not exist were it not for the readers who purchased the monthly subscriptions. In the postwar world especially, following a period when access to information had been limited and tightly controlled by the government, readers avidly consumed printed material. To fully understand the importance of magazines and the circulation of information in postwar Japan, the fate of magazines during World War Two will be examined briefly.

The scarcity of resources during the war steadily whittled away the number of print periodicals in circulation. Governmental intervention in the publishing industry further complicated matters. As fighting intensified with China and the Allied powers, the Japanese government put greater restrictions on the number of periodicals in circulation. Magazine circulation fell sharply; the Japan Publishers' Cultural Association, established in 1940, quickly reduced the number of magazines published from 1,940 in 1940 to 935 in 1944.[2] By 1945, the number of magazines left in publication had shrunk to only thirty-four.[3] Similarly, photography magazines were forcefully merged and pressured to limit their numbers. For example, in 1941, *Camera*, *Camera Club*, and *Shashin Salon* (*Photographic Salon*) merged to become *Shashin Bunka* (*Photographic Culture*).[4]

The publishing industry emerged from the end of the war with renewed vigor. Once the shackles of wartime censorship laws were unfettered, new titles appeared at a rapid pace, alongside old magazines that had been suspended during World War Two. The number of magazine titles in circulation in 1946 alone stood at 2,902, with 7,087 copies sold.[5] The number of titles would jump to 27,200 by 1952.[6] Photography magazines participated in the postwar explosion of print materials. Between the end of 1945 and 1949, the circulation of photography magazines ranged from 2,500 to around 35,000.[7] The lifting of governmental restrictions was not the only force spurring the postwar print industry. The Japanese public, also freed from wartime constraints that had controlled and limited their access to information, voraciously consumed the printed material that now flooded the market.

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[2] Newspapers were also affected. In order to facilitate the process of censorship, all newspapers were ordered to merge in 1942, with the intent to decrease the number to one newspaper per prefecture. See Thomas R. H. Havens, *Valley of Darkness: The Japanese People and World War Two* (New York: Norton, 1978), 64.

[3] For more on the censorship of magazines and newspapers during the war, see Gregory J. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan, 1918-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[4] At the same time, *Photo Times* and *Camera Art* became *Hōdō Shashin* (*Photojournalism*); and *Shashin Nihon* (*Photography Japan*) formed from the consolidation of *Kōgata Camera* (*Small-Sized Camera*), *Amateur Camera*, and *Kōga Gekkan* (*Camera Monthly*). See "Chronology," in *The History of Japanese Photography*, 322.

[5] Newspaper publication rose drastically as well. In 1946 the number of newspapers in print totaled 17,411, climbing to 26,620 by 1949. Historical Statistics of Japan, "Culture and Leisure," accessed October 15, 2014, http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/chouki/26.htm.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Julia Adeney Thomas, "Power Made Visible: Photography and Postwar Japan's Elusive Reality," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 67 (2008): 367.

Magazines were not only important for consumers, but also served a crucial role for those producing the images and articles. The magazines gave intellectuals and artists a common space in which they could discuss Japan's defeat, their current situation under the Occupation, and a future free of a totalitarian regime.[8] In the art world especially, print publications facilitated a discourse concerning the direction various modes of artistic expression would take in Japan's new postwar world. Magazines further provided photographers, who often lacked access to exhibition space available to other artists such as painters and filmmakers, a platform to display their work in the public sphere. Indeed, magazines were usually the only outlets available for photographers to showcase their prints, especially in the early postwar years when Japan lacked a fully developed domestic photographic industry and when the materials needed to host photography exhibitions were nearly nonexistent.

Among both artists and photographers whose work was published in magazines, there was a definite sense of the need to consciously create and define Japan's postwar art and photography. These artists were also determined to establish their distance from the art controlled by censorship and propaganda that had existed during the war. Matsumoto Shunsuke, writing in 1946, echoed the voice of fellow artists when he stated that they "cannot welcome the reappearance of the art world as it was during the prewar or wartime period," a world dominated by those who "feigned ignorance" of what the wartime government was doing.[9] Fearful of a repeat of totalitarian government rule and seeing the art world as a bastion of a free and open society, Matsumoto implored artists to remain vigilant. “It is absolutely necessary,” he wrote, “that we do not continue this tendency to look the other way.”[10]

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[8] Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The "Memory Rifts" in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London; New York: Rutledge, 2007), 39.

The thoughts of Matsumoto reflect the goals of postwar Japanese photography, as expressed by photographers. Beginning in 1950, Domon Ken, one of the most influential postwar documentary photographers, called for photographers to rely on the “absolutely unstaged” photograph, creating an image completely free from manipulation or intervention by the photographer. Perhaps partially influenced by his work as a propaganda photographer during the war, Domon felt that approaching photography in this manner would allow the voice of the subject to fully embody the image and to communicate freely with the viewer. Domon used photography magazines such as *Camera* to spread his ideas amongst amateur and professional photographers.

Merged with other magazines during the war, *Camera* became its own publication once again in January 1946. Principally aimed at amateur photographers, the magazine combined instructional and news articles, professional and amateur photographs, and advertisements for both Japanese and foreign camera products. Additionally, beginning in 1950 *Camera* sponsored a monthly amateur photography competition judged by Domon and Kimura. The contest eventually became so popular among amateur photographers that as many as 1,500 photo submissions flooded *Camera*’s offices each month.

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[9] Matsumoto Shunsuke, “A Proposal to the Artists of Japan,” trans. Meiko Sano in *From Postwar to Postmodern, Art in Japan, 1945 1989: Primary Documents*, ed. Doryun Chong, et al. (New York, NY: Duke University Press Books, 2012), 22–30. Originally published as *Zennipon bijutsuka ni hakaru*, January 1, 1946.

[10] Ibid.

Camera's content was typical of other contemporary photography magazines. To gain an overview of *Camera*, and by extension other magazines such as *Amateur Shashin Sōsho* and *Shashin Techō*, let us construct a hypothetical reader, perhaps an amateur photographer, to guide us through a typical issue.

The date is July 1946 and a group of young women graces the cover of the magazine, arranged underneath CAMERA in large block lettering. The reader's eye is drawn immediately to a young girl in the back row. Her school uniform sets her apart from the other four women, who are clothed in contemporary Western apparel. The girl in the back further stands out because her gaze alone looks to the camera's lens, connecting directly with the reader; the eyes of the other women are averted downwards or off to the side. Subdued lighting renders an overall somber tone to the final product.

After lingering on the cover, our reader opens the magazine to find a Mamiya Six advertisement[11] and the table of contents. The first group of photographs, most of them submitted by amateur photographers like our reader, follows a string of advertisements for various camera products. The prints show rural activities and traditional Japanese customs that embody the theme of "summer." The reader's eye falls upon a young woman caught in the act of tying a scarf around her head in one photograph, a fisherman by the water in another. Boats float on water shimmering under the summer sun on another page. The techniques used in capturing these images might remind the reader of the New Photography trend popular before the war. There is little emphasis on built urban space and industry, but the prints display a continuation of prewar avant-garde techniques. Extreme close-ups—an image of a face reveals only a nose and mouth—and unconventional cropping—a young boy has fallen victim to having the top of his head cut off—define these photographs.

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[11] Founded in 1940 by Mamiya Seiichi, Mamiya produced folding medium-format rangefinder cameras. The company's advertisements usually took up the first page of the magazine. Mamiya advertisements provide a small degree of insight into the incorporation of Western cultural influences. Japanese script is traditionally written vertically, but in this issue the writing in the ad is written horizontally. In other issues, Mamiya advertisements included English mixed in with Japanese, and sometimes the entire add would be printed in English. For more on the company, see http://www.mamiya-op.co.jp/company/history. Accessed November 12, 2014.

Continuing to thumb through the magazine, our reader next finds an article on the structure of photographic lenses. Because *Camera* had a large amateur photographer readership base, informational articles like this formed the backbone of the magazine. Detailed diagrams often accompanied the articles. For instance, one guide to building a darkroom provided pictures that led photographers from the first steps of gathering materials to the final stages of arranging the equipment.[12] Other articles provided visual examples that accompanied textual descriptions, such as one two-page spread of a female model making different facial expressions.[13] Not all of the essays were instructional. As our reader turns to the next page he finds updates on the American photographic industry. Scanning the American news in this July issue, our reader learns of the latest advancements in photographic technology, including Kodacolor film, Technicolor prints, instruments for rinsing prints, and tanks for developing film.

Towards the end of the magazine, our reader stumbles upon a curious block of text that made a few appearances in issues of *Camera* published in 1946. The "Japan-America Photography Conversation" (*Nichibei shashin kaiwa*) offers of a list of questions suitable to start a conversation among photographers. Because our reader, like the vast majority of Japanese at this time, could not read English, phonetic translations of the English words are provided below each sentence. After studying this page, our reader could ostensibly approach one of the many English-speaking Occupation servicemen living in Japan and ask, “What kind of objects have you taken mostly here in Japan, portrait or scenery?” Other phrases include, “Will you show me best [sic] pictures you have taken here?” and “Here is my album. These pictures are taken [sic] with my favorite camera ‘(name of camera).’”[14] While it is unlikely that many Japanese men were brave enough to approach camera-wielding Occupation personnel, conversation guides like this one, outlined by thick black boxes and neatly displayed alongside other articles, at least gave the appearance of fostering a dialogue or relationship between the Japanese and the foreign occupiers living in Japan. As will be explained below in greater detail, text such as this signaled *Camera*’s cooperation with the Allied Occupation, and also demonstrated awareness of the censors combing through each issue of the postwar photography magazines.

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[12] *Camera*, February 1948, 39.

[13] "A Model and a Bee. The Changes of Facial Expression in a Photographic Series" (*Moderu to hachi. Renzoku satsuei ni yoru hyōjyō no henka*), *Camera*, March 1947, n.p.

Finally reaching the end of the magazine, our reader comes across the monthly photography contest (*getsurei*). This particular issue contains the selection for the winner of the first contest resumed after World War Two. Contests like *Camera*’s *getsurei* were an integral part of photography magazines both before and after the war. Perhaps their greatest importance lay in providing a means by which professional photographers, who judged the competitions and critiqued the winning photographs, could communicate directly with amateurs. Additionally, the contests afforded amateurs the opportunity to have their work noticed, opening the door for the possibility of becoming professional photographers. Kuwabara Kineo, editor of *Camera* from 1948 to 1953, did just that in the 1930s, constantly submitting his images of Tokyo to numerous photography publications.

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[14] “Japan-America Photography Conversation” (*Nichibei shashin kaiwa*), *Camera*, July 1946, 39.

The articles and essays *Camera* published for amateur photographers such as our hypothetical reader tended to focus on technical and instructional aspects of photography. The images, on the other hand, displayed a wide range of subjects. In flipping through the pages of *Camera*, our reader is treated to prints of both rural scenes and bustling urban life, although images of the latter were usually scarce. The reader studies candid shots of children and learns how to carefully compose still life. And familiar Japanese elements like Buddhist temples and Noh masks appear alongside modern American influences, giving our reader a taste of the changing trends in postwar Japanese society. But ironically enough, given the desire of artists and photographers to guard against what artist Matsumoto Shunsuke called a "feigned ignorance" that had persisted throughout the war years, one element is conspicuously absent from the pages of *Camera* and from other photography magazines: mention of World War Two, its aftermath, and the Allied Occupation of Japan. Words like "war" and "Americans" (but never "Occupation" or "Occupation servicemen") do crop up sporadically in the magazines, but for the most part they crafted the impression that the war itself had never happened. What is more, the magazines give no indication that the streets of Tokyo and other cities were horribly devastated by U.S. bombing raids, filled with people struggling to survive in a landscape ravaged by war.

Occupation censorship certainly provides one answer for this absence of a reality that loomed so large in the face of virtually every Japanese citizen. Much debate in recent scholarship addresses the effects of censorship on the flow of information during the Allied Occupation of Japan. Some scholars claim that Occupation-imposed censorship was lenient and thus had little effect on material produced in the first few years after

Japan's surrender.[15] Others, such as literary critic Etō Jun, argue that censorship had a huge impact, both permanently and negatively.[16] Indeed, the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD), working under the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP), greatly curtailed the free expression of ideas, suppressing information and images not only in news sources, but also in literature, movies, and non-news periodicals. Furthermore, the ambiguous nature of censorship guidelines, penalties for printing taboo subjects, and the dominant presence of the Occupation itself resulted in the Japanese carrying out censorship of their own material. Continuing the legacy of self-censorship deeply embedded in the history of the Japanese publishing industry, the Japanese policed their own material just as strictly, if not more so, than Occupation censors.

A Brief History of Censorship in Japan's Publishing Industry

Censorship during the Occupation was nothing new to the Japanese. In fact, suppression of information in print media co-existed with publishing virtually since the industry's inception in the early seventeenth century. Concerned with maintaining its precarious control over the nation after the unification of Japan in 1603, the newly established Tokugawa government cracked down on the expression of ideas in Edo-era Japan (1603-1868). Early censorship primarily proscribed sexually explicit material, but also monitored news, unorthodox views and any information relating to the Tokugawa government.[17] The *machi-bugyō* (administrators of the town), tasked with suppressing banned information, wielded their authority under the full power of the shogun's government. House arrest, localized banishment, and exile were among the consequences for publishers, artists, and authors who produced illicit material. Sometimes the response of the government could be quite severe. In one rather extreme case, Baba Bunkō (c. 1718-1758) was sentenced to death by crucifixion for publishing manuscripts excoriating political authority.[18] Six lending libraries associated with Baba were also punished for his transgression.[19] The drastic consequences for Baba's actions underscore the severity with which the government pursued censorship.

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[15] See, for example, Thomas, in "Postwar Made Visible: Photography and Postwar Japan's Elusive Reality," and Donald Richie in "The Occupied Arts" from *The Confusion Era: Art and Culture of Japan during the Allied Occupation, 1945-1952*. ed. Mark Howard Sandler (Washington, D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution in Association with the University of Washington Press, Seattle and London), 1997.

[16] Sharalyn Orbaugh, *Japanese Fiction of the Allied Occupation: Vision, Embodiment, Identity* (Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2012), 90.

In the late eighteenth century the Tokugawa government transferred censorship responsibilities from the *machi-bugyō* to the Publishing Association. As one of the only guilds allowed to exist under the Tokugawa government, the Publishing Association was called upon to provide "institutional self-censorship" for material printed by their own publishing houses.[20] Investing the power of censorship in their own members did not diminish the effects of censorship in the slightest, however. Censors were required to place their personal seals on all published material that passed under their scrutiny, and responsibility for any breech of censorship edicts fell directly on the censors. Moreover, much like the case involving Baba Bunkō, punishments for censorship violations could, and often did, extend beyond one single censor to affect others associated with the offending publishing house as well.[21]

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[17] John Fiorillo, "FAQ: How do we interpret inscriptions and seals?" accessed October 16, 2014, http://viewingjapaneseprints.net/texts/topictexts/faq/faq_inscript_seals.html#censor_seals.

[18] Matsunosuke Nishiyama, *Edo Culture: Daily Life and Diversions in Urban Japan, 1600-1868* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 51.

[19] Peter F. Kornicki, *Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 109.

[20] Kornicki, "The Publishing Trade," in *The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints*, ed. Amy Reigle Newland (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2006), 310.

Although the government officially abolished the guild system in 1841, censorship continued to plague the print industry. More coherent censorship laws were created in the Meiji era (1868-1912) under the newly established Home Ministry. The Newspaper and Publications Regulation, requiring all newspapers to get permission from the government prior to publishing stories, followed on the heels of the first official gazette printed in 1868.[22] And while it would seem that mass media gained a victory with article 29 of the Meiji Constitution, which proclaimed freedom of the press,[23] this measure was simultaneously countered by an onslaught of regulations that curtailed freedom of speech: Press Regulations, Peace Regulations, Public Meetings Regulations, and Public Regulations.[24] During this time of increased restrictions on the production of information, editors had no choice but to become "self-disciplined," and quickly adhere to the new laws.[25] Constrained by the nascent Meiji government, they chose what to include in their publications with extreme care, much as their predecessors had done in the Edo era.

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[21] For example, preeminent *kibyōshi* (Edo-era comic book) artist and author Santō Kyōden (1761-1816) was brought before the City Magistrate in Edo for publishing *sharebon* (fashion books) in 1791 without first submitting his books for censorship. As punishment, Kyōden was placed in shackles and subjected to house arrest for 50 days. What is more, half of the assets of his publisher, Tustaya Jūzaburō, were confiscated, and his father was interrogated by authorities. For more on punishment for violating censorship edicts, see Adam L. Kern, *Manga from the Floating World: Comicbook Culture and the Kibyōshi of Edo Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 228–231.

[22] Jo Ann Garlington, *Press Censorship in Occupied Japan: Democracy Contradicted* (Thesis MS--University of Oregon, 1995), 15.

[23] Article 29 of the 1889 Meiji Constitution states, "Japanese subjects shall, within the limits of law, enjoy the liberty of speech, writing, publication, public meetings and associations."

[24] Garlington, *Press Censorship in Occupied Japan*, 16.

[25] Ibid., 17.

The Japanese government pursued censorship with an almost hysterical intensity as Japan fought first in the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and then the Pacific War (1941-1945). The road to oppressive wartime censorship began as early as 1924 with the establishment of the Publications Monitoring Department of the Home Ministry, an institution with separate sections for censorship, investigation, and general affairs. In 1936, the Information and Propaganda Department (*Jōhōbu*), upgraded to the Information Bureau (*Jōhōkyoku*) in 1940, began working on matters of censorship alongside the Publications Monitoring Department. The censorship noose again tightened around the media's neck in 1940, when the government granted the Information and Propaganda Bureau total control over all news, advertising, and public events. The real blow to the media, however, came in 1941. As the war progressed with China, and as Japan found itself on the eve of war with the United States, the government heightened censorship and media control by revising the National Mobilization Law (*Kokka Sōdōin Hō*) to abolish freedom of the press. As previously mentioned, the government put restrictions on the number of periodicals in circulation, thereby gaining even greater control over media and information disseminated to the public.[26] Photography itself was a victim of increasingly tightened limitations. Price controls were placed on photographic equipment,[27] and the government forbade civilians from photographing in urban environments.[28]

When the war ended in 1945, the media in Japan experienced absolute freedom from censorship restrictions on print media. It had not enjoyed such freedom since the beginning of the publishing trade over three hundred years earlier. On August 30, 1945, just two days before General Douglas MacArthur's arrival at Atsugi Airbase, Japan's Cabinet Board of Information removed all press controls. Initially it looked as if this freedom would last. The Allied Occupation guaranteed freedom of speech with the Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan, which stated that the "The Japanese people shall be encouraged to develop a desire for individual liberties and respect for fundamental human rights, particularly the freedoms of religion, assembly, speech and the press."[29]

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[26] For example, the Japan Publishers' Cultural Association reduced the number of magazines published from 1,940 in 1940 to 935 in 1944. Havens, *Valley of Darkness*, 64.

[27] The 7/7 Sumptuary Law, for example, prohibited the sale of cameras with a price tag of over 500 yen.

[28] Ishikawa Kōyō, as a member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department, was one of the few individuals able to take photographs freely during the war.

Suddenly finding itself with an unprecedented degree of freedom, the Japanese media had a field day, running stories regardless of whether or not they were true. The Japanese also embraced freedom of speech in a way that Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) found less than ideal. It gave voice to ideas and opinions that tarnished the authority of the new Occupation powers, and in this way fostered propaganda that countered their policies. The Domei News Agency, for example, printed an article stating, "the end of the war had come about because of the Emperor's benevolence," rather than as a result of Allied military superiority; the article further stated that the Occupation personnel now living in Japan were only guests of the Japanese Empire.[30] SCAP retaliated by demanding stricter observance of the provisional civil liberties directive issued on September 10, 1945 in which General MacArthur demanded "responsible reporting of the news."[31]

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[29] "Report of Government Section, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers" in vol. 2 of *Political Reorientation of Japan* (Grosse Pointe, MI: Scholarly Press, 1968), 423.

[30] Nishi Toshio, *Unconditional Democracy: Education and Politics in Occupied Japan, 1945-1952* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1982), 52.

[31] Mikiso Hane, *Eastern Phoenix: Japan Since 1945* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 23.

SCAP further cracked down on publishing freedom after numerous Japanese sources criticized the use of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, issuing a ten-clause press code on September 21 requiring that the "news must adhere strictly to the truth."[32] From this point forward, the censorship machine, previously concerned chiefly with news agencies, expanded its net to include other Japanese media. These included domestic magazines and motion pictures, as well as foreign books, magazines, and movies imported into Japan.

Censorship in Occupied Japan was effected in two phases. "Pre-censorship," beginning in 1945, involved reviewing materials prior to publication. SCAP began to lessen the amount of material requiring pre-censorship as violations decreased, ending the process completely by July 1948. "Post-censorship," whereby materials were subject only to post-publication reviews, constituted the second phase and lasted until October 1949. Responsibility for the censorship of magazines, books, and newspapers during the Allied Occupation fell under Press and Publications (PPB), a sub-section of the CCD. Additionally, the Civil Information and Education Section (CI&E), partially designed to disseminate democratic propaganda throughout Japanese society, used the media to instill in the Japanese democratic principles by educating them on the institutions and culture of the United States and other democratic nations.[33]

Censors were sensitive to anything that might reflect poorly on the Occupation or that might undermine its authority. Thus, frequent targets of censorship included references to the recent war, criticism of SCAP policies, and commentary supporting ultranationalist or militaristic ideology.[34] But other topics were censored as well. The widespread net of censorship removed images of prostitutes from the media, in addition to comments on food shortages and starvation. Some censors excised material with ruthless intensity, as when they removed a dog from a photograph of parading U.S. forces because it "detracted from the dignity of the troops."[35]

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[32] Nishi, *Unconditional Democracy*, 88. This same directive also banned the publishing of any information that might affect public tranquility, in addition to information on Allied troop movements in East Asia.

[33] Garlington, *Press Censorship in Occupied Japan*, 52.

Foreign journalists were subject to the same censorship laws as the Japanese. In the earliest stages of the Occupation, many foreigners found themselves restricted to the Tokyo-Yokohama area, thereby remaining under the close supervision of SCAP. General MacArthur even kept a blacklist of newspapers, including the *New York Herald*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *Chicago Sun*. Journalists who did not write favorably about SCAP were often harassed, denied access to news sources, and threatened with having their press accreditation revoked.[36] Seeing the Occupation's own American journalists and newspapers so readily penalized undoubtedly led many Japanese to adhere more willingly to SCAP censorship policies.

While the officials tasked with carrying out censorship had rules and a coherent list of taboo subjects to guide their work, similar guidelines were never made available to the Japanese media. "The key logs were a closely guarded military secret," historian Takemae Eiji states, "and prohibited categories were not shown to Japanese editors, radio announcers or other media people, who were forced to second-guess PPB inspectors."[37] In the absence of such information, the Japanese had to guess at the possible meaning of

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[34] For a more comprehensive list, see Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 411.

[35] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 419.

[36] Garlington, *Press Censorship in Occupied Japan*, 71.

[37] Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, trans. Sebastian Swann, first edition (New York: Humanities Press Intl Inc., 2002), 388.

SCAP-issued directives. For example, publishers were left to decipher the ambiguities in edicts such as the following: "Nothing shall be printed which might, directly or by inference, disturb the public tranquility."[38] Furthermore, SCAP suppressed all mention of censorship. In other words, Japanese readers were not alerted to the fact that censors had edited the material that they were reading. At least with previous censorship under the Japanese government, material that had been cut was clearly marked, signaling to the reader the act of censorship. As historian John Dower states, however, the inability to acknowledge censorship openly, coupled with the fact that publishers did not know what information was liable to become a target, left SCAP censorship with an "opaque quality" that made it difficult to know how far publishers could go with material.[39] To complicate matters, as the Occupation wore on, censorship responsibilities were increasingly given to young officers who lacked suitable knowledge about publishing, causing censorship to become "capricious and onerous."[40] Left without any clear line between acceptable and unacceptable material, the Japanese media usually refrained from publishing anything that had even the slightest chance of attracting the attention of censors.

Another factor that contributed to self-censorship was punishment or threat of punishment for violating censorship edicts. Admittedly, the consequences were sometimes quite light, as was the case with photographer Matsushige Yoshito.[41] Matsushige's photographs of the atomic bomb damage in Hiroshima appeared in a local newspaper in August 1946. Shortly afterwards, he and the reporter of the accompanying article were called into the Occupation GHQ for interrogation. Contrary to what Matsushige expected, the Americans were not angry at the appearance of the photos. Instead, the photographer received only a warning: in the future, explained the Occupation interrogators, he needed to submit his images for review prior to publication. This incident highlights the ambiguous and arbitrary nature of SCAP censorship. While the Allied Occupation kept a tight lid on news and images of the atomic bomb until 1949, Mitsushige's pictures were for some reason allowed to appear in print only one year after Japan's surrender. Together with the absence of a clearly defined list of taboo subjects, such varying responses left the Japanese constantly guessing as to what was and was not acceptable material for publication.

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[38] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 410.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Hane, *Eastern Phoenix*, 24.

[41] Matsushige Yoshito, "Five Photographs of August 6," in *Japan at War: An Oral History*, ed. Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook (New York: The New Press, 1993), 391–395.

Others were not as fortunate as Matsushige. The editor of *Nikkan Supōtsu* (*Daily Sports*) was sentenced to one year of hard labor after running a story titled "Mr. Thompson to Introduce American Nude Show to Big Theater." Publication of *Nikkan Supōtsu* was also suspended for six months and the paper was fined 75,000 yen. Even though the story was accurate, censors claimed that the content was a slight to SCAP's dignity. The editor eventually succeeded in getting the first two sentences dropped, but the paper still had to pay the steep fine.[42]

Financial repercussions such as those levied on *Nikkan Supōtsu* kept many Japanese from publishing anything that might catch the attention of SCAP censors. Furthermore, media companies risked losing a large amount of money should their publications be targeted for suppression. This prospect had the potential to exacerbate the hardships that publications already faced as a result of difficult economic times in the immediate postwar period, especially for those restarting publication after wartime suspension.

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[42] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 434.

The threat of being fined for breaking censorship policies affected film companies as well as newspapers and magazines. The controversial film *The Tragedy of Japan* (1946) caused Nichiei studio to run afoul of SCAP censorship.[43] Suppression of the film nearly pushed Nichiei into bankruptcy. Magazines and other media, highly cognizant of the prospect of such financial fallout, were careful to keep their material within the realm of what they thought was acceptable under Occupation authority.

In addition to Occupation-imposed censorship, the very presence of the Occupation itself provided an impetus for the Japanese to carry out self-censorship. As Japanese literature scholar Sharalyn Orbaugh argues, the Occupation relied on existing models of Japanese surveillance as well as on its own institutions to monitor elements of Japanese daily life. Drawing on French philosopher Michel Foucault's panoptic model to analyze power relations in Occupation-era Japan, Orbaugh argues that the Occupation was able to create a permanent sense of visibility that pervaded every aspect of Japanese society. Whether or not the Occupation had this effect, the perceived sense of the Occupation's gaze proved just as effective as the SCAP censors, if not more so, in suppressing the free flow of information in the Japanese media.[44]

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[43] Even though the film was meant to attack the ruling class that led Japan to war, it was censored because it painted the emperor in a bad light in the process. Prime Minister Yoshida first targeted the film, stating it could possibly "well provoke riots and disturbances," and then took it to SCAP so that censors might take it out of the public realm. For more see Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 427-429.

[44] The Occupation sent personnel to every prefecture in Japan, and the State Department required reports on Japan's economic, industrial, financial, social, and political conditions. Additionally, the Imperial Government of Japan was required to provide SCAP with information about and access to all communication networks. See Orbaugh, *Japanese Fiction of the Allied Occupation*, 94.

Undoubtedly, censors policed some forms of media more stringently than others. Newspapers, for example, were heavily excised, as were film and radio. And while it would seem that photography magazines survived the censorship machine relatively unscathed, they were in fact impacted just as greatly as news periodicals and other forms of media. Indeed, the ambiguous and arbitrary nature of Occupation censorship, combined with the potential for punishment and the constant gaze of the Occupation, forced the editors of *Camera* and other photography magazines to excise their own material just as rigorously as Occupation censors.

Magazines Under the Censor's Gaze

The nearly complete absence of World War Two from postwar photography magazines like *Camera* can be explained by the magazine's awareness of, and compliance with, Occupation censorship. Additionally, certain articles and images, such as news updates on American photography products, suggest that in some instances the magazines very deliberately catered to the censors.

Camera toed the censorship line almost from the very first postwar publication, as evidenced by an essay from a 1946 issue that can be read as a subliminal message to Occupation censors. The essay's key distinguishing feature is the fact that it was printed in English. This is a rather intriguing characteristic given that this was an exclusively Japanese-language publication, and made even more so by the fact that only a very small minority of Japanese people at this time could even understand English.

At first glance the essay seems to be nothing more than a simple statement about photography's role in postwar society, but it very subtly situates photography—and, by extension, *Camera* itself—at the center of the postwar socio-political landscape. The essay speaks of photography as the "pioneer" of "a movement for the construction of a new Japanese culture based on democracy." In this way, *Camera* alerts censors to the importance of the role of photography in postwar Japan.

The essay also deliberately points out the damaging effects of war, a highly strategic move in light of the Occupation's demilitarization policies. In one paragraph the essay explains how the use of photography as propaganda by Japan's wartime government stalled advancements in photographic technology. Furthermore, through repeated use of words like "democracy" and mention of the failed wartime totalitarian state that almost completely destroyed Japan, the essay lets the censors know that *Camera* wants no part of a military government and is instead in full alignment with Occupation policies. It subtly hints at this in other places as well, as when the essay indirectly links Japan's photo industry to the United States.[45] Elsewhere the essay explicitly distances *Camera* from the wartime "Fascism Express" that carried away so many of its peers. But the essay is most vocal at the end of the text, definitively stating: "With this experience [of developing amateur photography] and our importance in the photo world we hope to do our utmost for the development of a democratic culture in reborn Japan."[46] By firmly linking photography to democracy in postwar Japanese society, *Camera* assures the Occupation that the magazines and photography, to the development of which it regards itself as integral, are not only an important cultural institution and force, but also enthusiastic advocates of American ideals.

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[45] This is done by explaining that the Oriental Photo Industry produced the first sensitized materials in Japan, but only because two of their employees, Toyo Kikuchi and Ryukichi Ito, were trained in the United States.

[46] "Photography in Japan," *Camera*, April 1946, 31.

When read in such a light, the absence of World War Two and the Allied Occupation from the subsequent pages of *Camera* and other photography magazines seems less startling. The lack of ruined streets, poverty, prostitutes and repatriated soldiers is not "feigned ignorance" on the part of photography magazines regarding Japan's devastated postwar condition.[47] Nor is such absence an attempt to gloss over Japan's militaristic past, or to ignore the foreign government controlling Japan. Rather, it is testimony to the gaze of Occupation censors.

Another subliminal message to the censors is found in the precedence accorded to photography news from America. Given that Germany, even in the wake of World War Two, was still producing some of the most technologically advanced cameras at this time, it is curious to note that foreign news updates were almost exclusively from America. In the issues of *Camera* published between 1946 and 1949, only one article on foreign photography industries was not from America: an update from the Soviet Union in an April 1946 issue.[48] *Shashin Techō* did have a few sections on more general foreign news; however, a September 1949 article, titled "Movements in Foreign Cameras" (*Kokusai kamera no dōkō*), projected that a rising U.S. industry, especially in the field of imitation lenses, would soon surpass Germany's photo industry.

Other non-magazine photography publications also showed signs of attempting to appease censors. This is especially evident in *Tokyo Fall of 1945,* a small book of prints taken by Kimura Ihei and Kikuchi Shunkichi and published in early 1946. An essay at the beginning of the book immediately presents the Allied Occupation as the savior to

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[47] According to Jo Ann Garlington, the "overplaying of starvation" was strictly taboo and subject to swift censorship. See Garlington, *Press Censorship in Occupied Japan*, 56.

[48] *Camera*, April 1946, 26-28.

Tokyo's wartime ills. The text is printed in Japanese as well as in English, but the English version makes no mention of the American forces that defeated Japan. As a substitute for B-29 bombers (a term used only once in the Japanese version), the English text alludes to a "Super Fortress," "man made winged apparition," and "the Great Silvery Bird." And while the text states that these flying objects caused fear among the Japanese, no reference is made of the terrible destruction they wrought. In fact, the essay never explicitly describes the damaged city, but instead uses illness as a metaphor for both the wartime destruction and the military government. One passage states:

> The cause of the disease [in Tokyo] was deeper than expected and had laid hidden within the body for a long time. It was clear to anyone that this necessitated a big surgical operation. And then in the summer of 1945, a surgical operation of great proportion was effected in the presence of many witnesses.[49]

The "surgical operation" in the summer of 1945 could only be carried out by one entity: the arriving Allied Occupation. By providing "continuous injections and blood transfusions" and by using English road signs and jeeps to "stitch the wounds" of war, the Occupation had the ability to put Tokyo on its way to becoming a thriving metropolis once again.[50]

In addition to the text, the images in *Tokyo Fall of 1945* present America as Japan's savior in multiple ways. First, the images divorce the notion of violence and destruction from the American Occupiers. Little wartime destruction is evident in images depicting American servicemen and elements of the Occupation such as jeeps or signs in English. It other cases, photographs revealing damage are immediately followed by images of the Occupation, thereby linking the idea of rebuilding Japan with America. One of the first prints, for example, is a bird's-eye view of Tokyo that shows a completely ruined city (fig. 2.1). This photograph is followed immediately by two images filled with jeeps parked in Marunouchi (figs. 2.2 and 2.3). The intended message in this sequence of photographs is that America had arrived and was ready to rebuild Japan.

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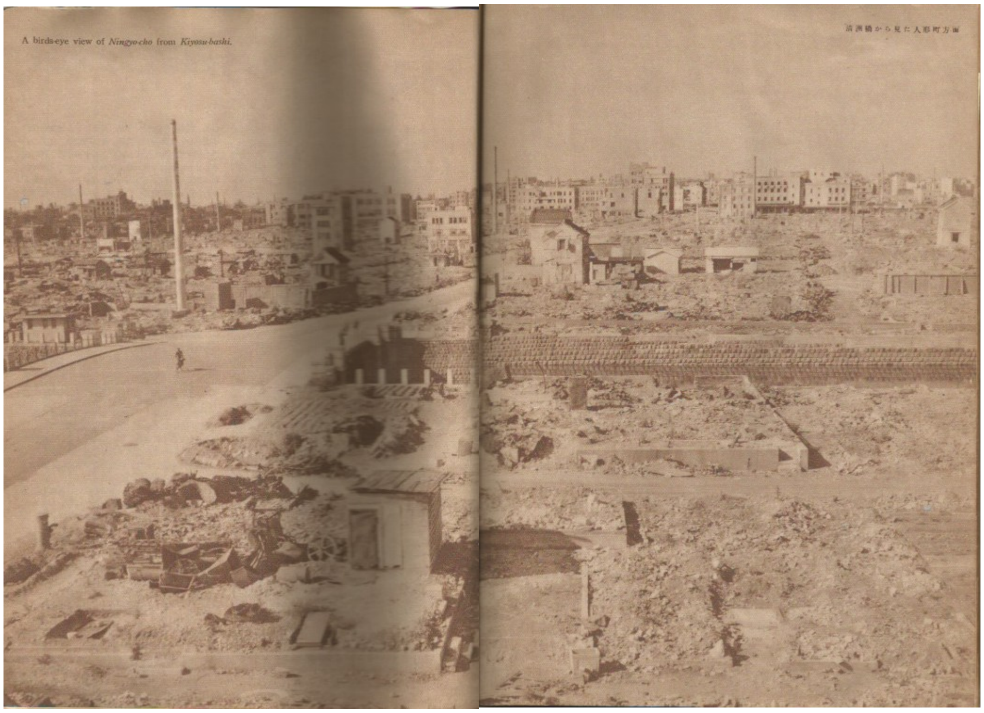
[49] Kimura Ihei and Kikuchi Shunkichi, *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*) (Tokyo: Bunka-sha, 1946), n.p.

[50] Of the first four images in the book, two are of jeeps and one is of road signs in English. The fourth is the previously mentioned image of damaged Tokyo.

FIGURE 2.1. A bird's-eye view of Ningyo-cho, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*). Tokyo: Bunka-sha, 1946.



The last photograph in the small booklet also supports the idea of America as rescuing Japan (fig. 2.4). The Diet Building, the center of Japan's government, stands tall in the background, flanked by two electric towers rising to the top of the frame. Wires are just visible in the sky, crisscrossing and intersecting with bare tree branches. Road signs in English stand prominently in the foreground, and a street clean of debris spreads out behind the signs. By situating the Diet Building in close proximity to the English road signs, and by framing the image with electrical towers and a landscape free of ruin, the photographer has very clearly linked the idea of a rebuilt Japan with the Allied Occupation.

FIGURE 2.2. A row of jeeps in Marunouchi, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*).

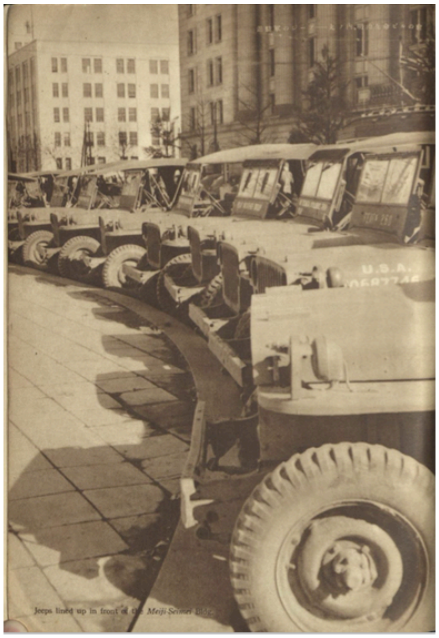

Jeeps lined up in front of the *Meiji-Seimei* Bldg.

FIGURE 2.3. Jeeps parked in Marunouchi, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*).

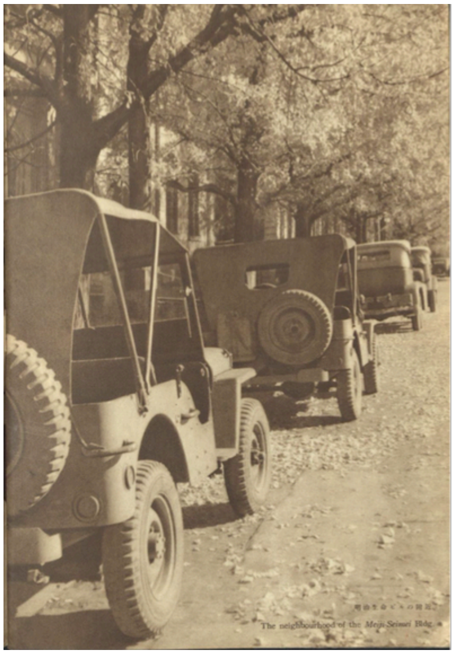
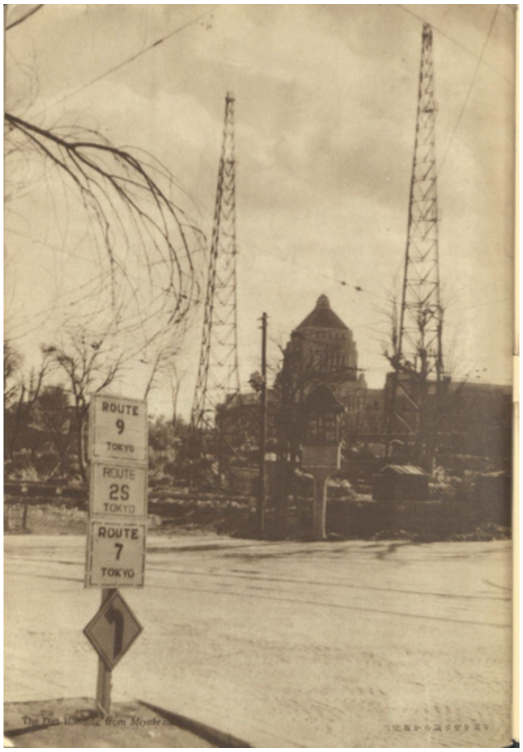

明治生命ビルの附近
The neighbourhood of the *Meiji-Seimei* Bldg.

FIGURE 2.4. The Diet Building, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*).



SCAP censorship policies exerted great control over magazines, but there was little effort in photography magazines to subvert censorship, unlike in other media. Some directors in the film industry, for example, found ways to sidestep censorship and to capture the destitute conditions of postwar Tokyo. Noted filmmaker Kurosawa Akira was particularly adept in this regard, using film to express the moral ambiguity and the breakdown of social solidarity in early postwar Tokyo. Unable to show outright the ravaged urban space of Tokyo, the director drew on metaphors to represent the misery found in the city. In *Drunken Angel* (1948), a pool of stagnant water in the middle of a Tokyo neighborhood symbolizes the squalid conditions pervading the city after the war. The same film also capitalizes on the dangerous threat of tuberculosis during the early postwar years, offering a contrast with the Occupation's promotion of democracy with the ideal of healthy, hygienic bodies for a democratic nation.[51]

The Occupation censors and the self-censorship carried out in fear of official repercussions were not the only factors responsible for suppressing information in Occupation-era photography magazines. Also at work was the desire to turn away from the years of misery that had plagued the Japanese throughout the war and that continued to afflict society in the early postwar years. In other words, self-censorship of another nature was at work in the pages of photography magazines, as the Japanese omitted references to the war and to the grim postwar conditions not only in light of the gaze of the Occupation, but also in order to provide a diversion from the postwar *kyodatsu* society.

Self-Censorship in a *Kyodatsu* Society

In the last years of World War Two, Tokyo and other large cites endured numerous bombing raids that ravaged urban centers, crippled the economy, and contributed to the scarcity of resources. As Japan transitioned into the Occupation era, the ruinous landscape and lack of material goods led to *kyodatsu*, a mental state of exhaustion and despair rooted in miserable material conditions. Lacking even the most basic of necessities and haunted by the trauma of war, armed robbery and theft became commonplace, while many turned to alcohol and drug abuse. Rampant starvation affected virtually every member of the population,[52] and those left homeless by the incendiary bombs were forced to live on the streets or in train stations.[53] Communal ties eroded as people did what they could to survive.[54] To the Japanese at the time, society seemed utterly chaotic.[55]

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[51] Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945-1970* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 48.

[52] Ten people per day died of starvation in 1945. U.S. Office of Strategic Services Research and Analysis Branch, *Wartime Distribution of Food in Japan* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Office of Strategic Services Research and Analysis Branch, 1945), 1. According to Andrew Gordon, chronic food shortages caused the average height and weight of elementary school-age children to decrease until 1948. See Andrew Gordon,

One response to the miserableness of living in a *kyodatsu* society was to find outlets of escapism. The nihilistic sense of iconoclasm found in the so-called *kasutori* culture illustrates the desire to disregard the ravaged physical landscape. Translated as "days in the dregs," *kasutori* was originally a cheap alcoholic drink made from the remains of sake. In early postwar society, the term was employed to suggest impermanence, rejection of authority, and a break from established values.[56] It was also associated with celebration of carnal pleasures and sexual indulgence. *Kasutori*, in other words, served as a hedonistic outlet during a time when pleasures of the flesh and physical comforts were slight indeed.

Although the photography magazines surveyed for this study are devoid of any type of erotica found in *kasutori*-related literature, the lack of engagement with the reality of postwar society, both in image and text, can certainly be compared to the escapism

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A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa to the Present, third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 226.

[53] In 1945, one person in ten was living in shelters. By the end of 1946, the ratio became one in twenty. Seidensticker, *Tokyo Rising*, 158-9.

[54] For example, historian William Chapman notes several "bizarre and tragic murders over trifling matters" that reflect "the moral decline of the time." To cite two instances, a man killed his brother over a stolen potato, and a young boy murdered his father over stolen food. See Chapman, *Inventing Japan*, 9.

[55] In a letter to General Douglas MacArthur, Oyama Namio states, "However, there is nothing that suggests domestic stability in the politics, economics, and culture of present-day Japan, nothing for the people to believe in. It is truly a chaotic situation. Public order is especially in disarray, morality has declined, and the general public is confused about their future." See Sodei Rinjirō, *Dear General MacArthur: Letters from the Japanese during the American Occupation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001), 222–223.

[56] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 149.

found in *kasutori* culture. It other words, self-censorship became a defense mechanism in response to a *kyodatsu* society. First used by Sigmund Freud in "The Neuron-Psychoses of Defense" (1894), a defense mechanism is "any group of mental processes that enables the mind to reach compromise solutions to conflicts that it is unable to resolve."[57] It is an unconscious process meant to lower anxiety. In the case of postwar Japan, self-censorship became a defense to alleviate the unease many faced with food shortages, homelessness, and a city overrun by Allied servicemen.

The dismal postwar conditions help to explain the absence of war and its aftermath in photography magazines such as *Camera* and *Amateur*. In addition to ignoring elements of a *kyodatsu* society, the prints published during this time construct a fantasy world to counter the reality of postwar society. One image from *Amateur*, for example, shows a peaceful neighborhood filled with wooden houses (fig. 2.5).[58] No wartime damage is visible in the photograph. The houses all seem to be in good shape and the streets are free of debris. Telephone poles stretch to the top of the frame, their cables feeding energy to the surrounding structures. Men and women, seemingly in good health, go about their daily business in the bottom of the frame. Undamaged. Orderly. Clean. The message is clear: wartime damage and postwar suffering do not exist in this neighborhood.

In *Shashin Techō*, two photographs of Ginza by Kimura Ihei show a similarly peaceful afternoon (fig. 2.6).[59] In one of the prints, a group of young women lounges underneath the shade of a lush tree. Yet another photograph from *Shashin,* taking no heed of the postwar privation, evokes the image of a healthy economy (fig. 2.7).[60] In this image, the viewer sees row upon row of cars parked neatly in the Marunouchi business district of Tokyo, a tree-lined boulevard stretching across the background. Taken together, these photographs of clean, undamaged neighborhoods, women enjoying a leisurely moment on a shady sidewalk, and shiny cars packed into a photograph of the Marunouchi business district craft the impression of Tokyo and the rest of Japan as free from suffering. Even though actual conditions diverged sharply from such representations, such an impression may have provided for the Japanese at the time an effective tonic against the hardships of a postwar society reeling from the effects of war.

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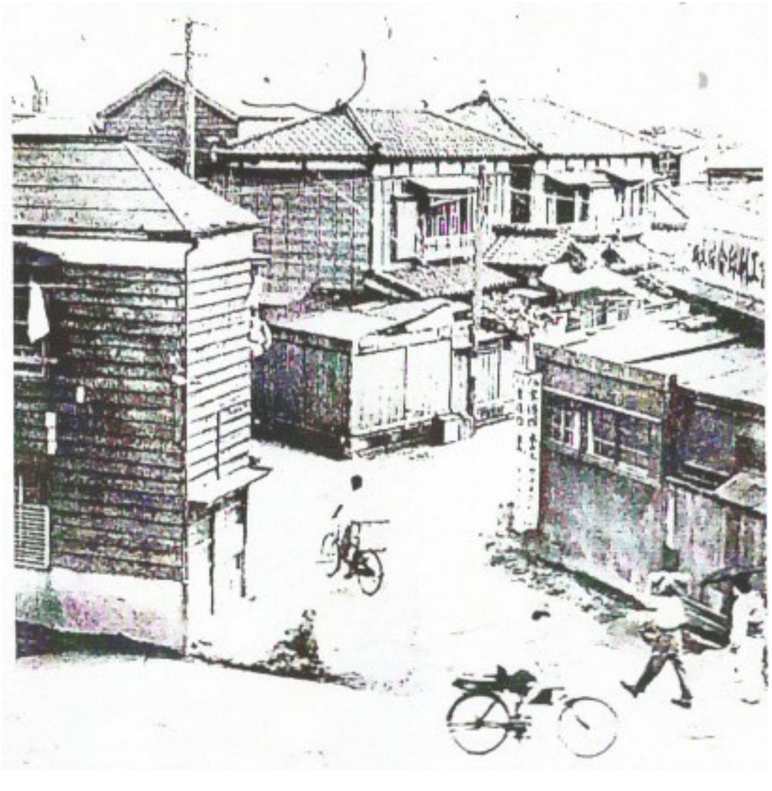
[57] "Defense Mechanism | Human Psychology," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed April 4, 2015, http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/155704/defense-mechanism.

[58] *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*, February 1949, 7.

[59] *Shashin Techō*, July 1949, 5-6.

FIGURE 2.5. A wooden neighborhood. Photograph. From *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*. Tokyo: Kogeisha. February 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



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[60] "Marunouchi Landscape" (*Marunouchi fūkei*), *Shashin Techō*, September 1949, 52.

FIGURE 2.6. Kimura Ihei, photographer. Two views of Ginza. Photograph. From *Shashin Techō.* Tokyo: International Photography Publishing Corporation. July 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.

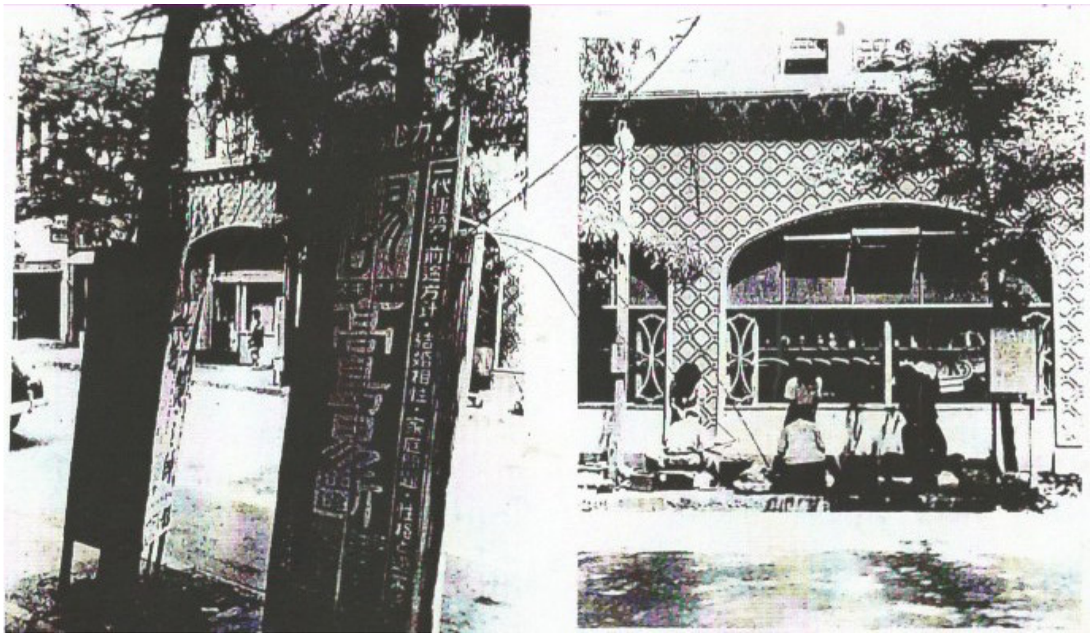
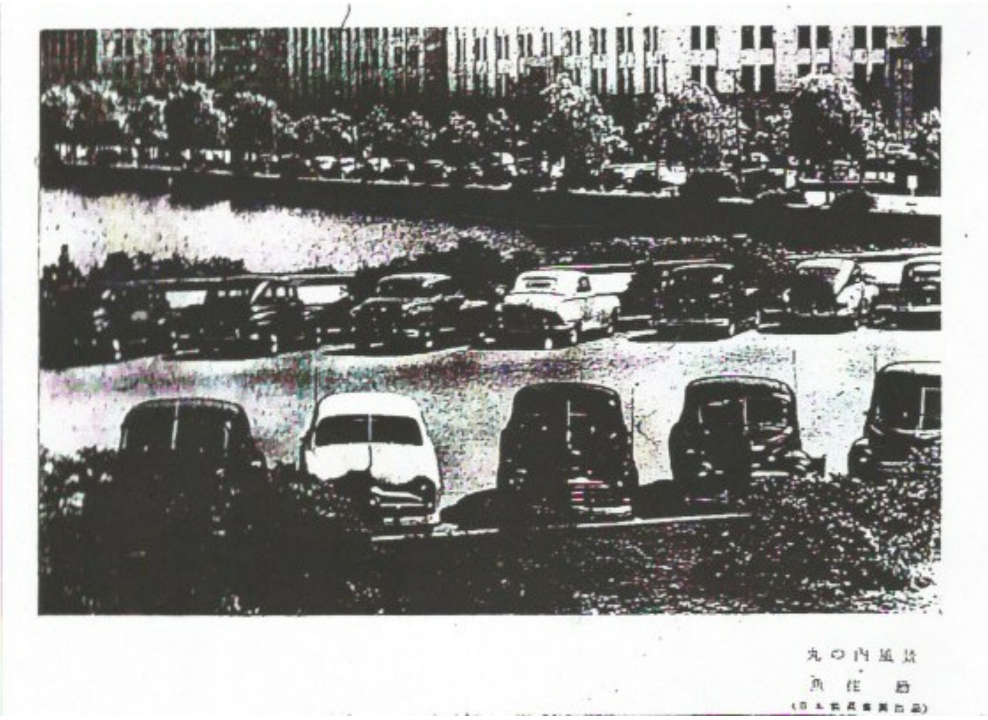


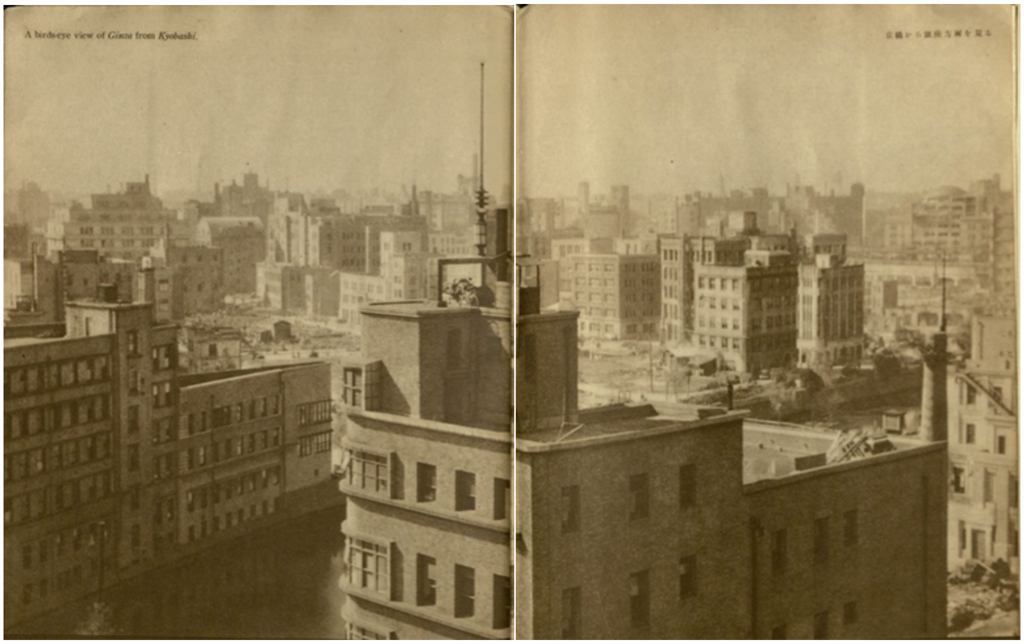
FIGURE 2.7. "Marunouchi Landscape" (*Marunouchi fūkei*). Photograph. From *Shashin Techō*, September 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



Magazines were not the only photography publications that constructed the fantasy of an untarnished landscape. The publication *Tokyo Fall of 1945* also gives a message that life in Tokyo at this time was anything but a chaotic city burdened by the insufficiency of resources. While some photographs in the book do show signs of wartime devastation, others overwhelmingly depict bustling urban life free from wartime damage and postwar shortages of material goods. One two-page spread showing the black market (labeled as merely "street stalls") reveals tables laden with wares for sale, giving the impression that material objects were plentiful. *Gimbura* ("strolling through Ginza"), an activity associated with consumption and material wealth, is even mentioned on one page. American servicemen appear repeatedly throughout the book, usually in close proximity to young Japanese children.

Tokyo Fall of 1945 ends with three telling prints. The very last image in the collection is the previously mentioned photograph of the Diet Building. Another image at the end of the collection is a shot of Ginza (fig. 2.8). A marred stretch of land is visible in the background, but the tall buildings that rise up in the foreground obstruct the space where structures once stood before being leveled by U.S. bombs. Even though there are hints of destruction in this image, the viewer ultimately sees a sprawling shopping district. It is a space that would be linked with consumerism and material wealth to anyone familiar with Tokyo at the time, and in this image it is presented to the viewer largely intact.

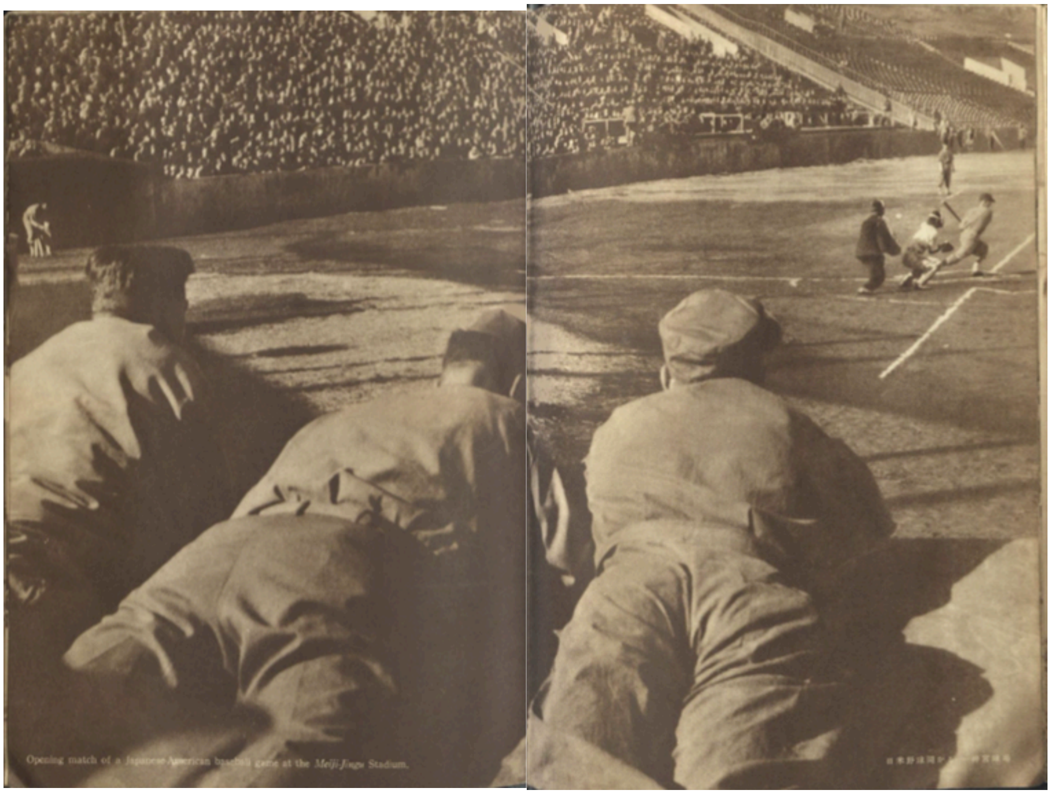
FIGURE 2.8. An aerial view of Ginza, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*).



Another image at the end of the book shows the opening match of a Japanese-American baseball game at the Meiji-jingu Stadium in Tokyo (fig. 2.9). Together with the images of Occupation servicemen and children, the scene of Japanese and Americans playing a friendly game of baseball was surely a sharp contrast to fierce rumors about the malevolent nature of American troops. Without a doubt, the overall impression of Americans presented in this book, as seen in images of servicemen engaged in friendly diversions such as baseball and watching over Japanese children, would have done much to dispel the fear any Japanese citizen might have of the arriving Occupation army.

The pages of postwar photography magazines and *Tokyo Fall of 1945*, then, present another type of self-censorship. These publications point to the desire to look the other way when it came to the physical and mental suffering brought about by the war and its aftermath. At the same they deliberately constructed a fantasy world free of suffering and full of material wealth in order to divert from the realities of the postwar *kyodatsu* society.

FIGURE 2.9. A friendly baseball game, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*).


Opening match of a Japanese-American baseball game at the *Meiji-Jingu* Stadium.

Censoring Reality in Photography Magazines

When the war ended in 1945, so did government restrictions on media and the flow of information. Once this happened, publications of magazines picked up with rapid speed. Magazines were especially important in re-establishing Japan’s photography industry. They helped to connect professional and amateur photographers, and afforded professional photographers an exhibition space for their images. For amateurs, the magazines supplied the technical know-how that gave them a solid foundation in photographic techniques. Once Japan’s economy began to recover and more people could afford to buy cameras and camera products, the amateurs readily used the skills that they had gained through photography magazines like *Camera* to help build Japan's postwar photography industry, one that would eventually lead the world in quality and innovation.

The ease of wartime limitations on print media, however, was short lived, as the Japanese soon faced various modes of censorship during the Occupation. Restrictions on information enforced by the Allied Occupation caused the complete removal of some subjects from the magazines, such as those of war damage, Occupation personnel, Japanese citizens suffering from starvation, and any image or text exhibiting the slightest hint of militarism. Additionally, the ambiguous nature of Occupation-imposed censorship forced the editors of photography magazines to draw on the publishing industry's legacy of self-censorship in order to survive. On the one hand this involved the magazines proscribing their own material, leaving out anything that they feared might incur the wrath of censors. At the same time, editors sent subliminal messages to the Occupation in an effort of self-preservation, assuring the censors with text and images that the photography magazines were on board with Occupation policies.

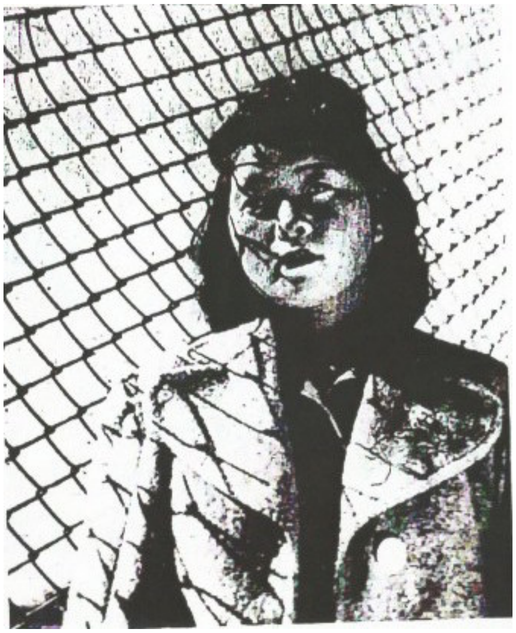
Self-censorship was also used as a way to create distance from the homelessness, starvation, lack of material goods, and grief over dead family and friends that created the postwar *kyodatsu* society. The Occupation era was, moreover, one of uncertainty, as many could only guess at the fate of Japan under the Occupation and were unsure of how long the Allied servicemen would inhabit the defeated nation. In this context, photography magazines sought to ignore the reality of miserable social conditions that plagued the Japanese on a day-to-day basis.

CHAPTER III

SEEING THE CULTURAL AND POLITICAL REALITY OF THE ALLIED OCCUPATION IN EARLY POSTWAR PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINES

The young woman is posed in front of a chain link fence (fig. 3.1).[1] Head tilted slightly back, her sultry eyes glance at something just beyond the photographer. She is robed in a light pea coat, a brass button on the left catching the light from the sun. Similar to her apparel, her hair, too, is styled in a Western fashion, the soft curls brushing against her shoulders. Shadows from the fence play across her coat, disappearing into the dark color of her blouse. The deep shadows and high tonal contrast, the pattern of the fence in the background, and the positioning of the model slightly off center within the frame all combine to create a dynamic, arresting image. The photograph pulls the viewer in to examine the soft curves of the woman's cheeks, or the details of her coat.

FIGURE 3.1. Woman standing in front of a fence. Photograph. From *Camera.* Tokyo: Ars Corporation. March 1947. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



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[1] *Camera*, March 1947, 9.

This staged scene displays an obvious concern with visual form and composition, and is representative of images found in photography magazines published between 1946 and 1949. The following chapter continues an examination of *Camera*, *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*, and *Shashin Techō* by analyzing the photographs in these magazines in aesthetic terms. It looks first at the development of Japanese photography from the early nineteenth century until the end of World War Two, then focuses on the images in the three photography magazines, arguing that they belong to a transition period between the prewar New Photography and Surrealist techniques and the realism movement championed by Domon Ken in the early 1950s. Next, this chapter offers a closer examination of the images and common subject matter, situating an analysis of the magazines within the context of the Allied Occupation. This is followed by an examination of the juxtaposition of Japanese and American culture that appears throughout the pages of the magazines.

While early postwar photography publications effectively erased the reality of World War Two, war devastation, and images of the Allied Occupiers from the pages of the magazines, they offered the reader a reality of a different nature: images reveal the cultural and political reality of the Occupation by reflecting the influence of American culture as well as the reform policies of demilitarization and democratization. Many of the photographs in *Camera*, *Amachua*, and *Shashin* portray elements of Western culture in a positive, oftentimes glamorous, way that works to stimulate a desire for American material wealth. Further, on many pages, images with an American orientation are placed side-by-side with prints containing traditional Japanese elements. This produced a cultural hybridity that helped the Japanese to adapt to foreign influences, while simultaneously facilitating the process of (re)constructing the Japanese identity in the new postwar world.

Before the Occupation: Japanese Photography, 1920 to 1945

Photographic trends established before World War Two provided the foundation for popular techniques of the early postwar period. Photographers in the early nineteenth century drew inspiration from other, non-photographic modes of artistic expression. Pictorialism, a genre of art photography that focuses on expressionist techniques and landscapes, was the trend favored by most photographers. ‘Pictorial’ photography places emphasis on “creating” an image in order to produce a final product akin to a painting, drawing, or engraving. Pictorialist photographers achieved this through a variety of means, including shooting out of focus, making use of allegorical subjects, and scratching prints in order to mimic the appearance of canvas.[2] Additionally, rather than black-and-white prints, photographs ranged from warm brown to deep blue tones. Subject matter commonly included portraits, still life, and landscapes. The ultimate objective was to transcend the mechanical nature of the camera and produce a work of art that conveyed a specific emotion.

The penchant for an expressionist viewpoint ended with the Taisho era (1912-1926) in the mid-1920s. At that time, Japanese photography entered the Modernist period, characterized by two dominant photographic movements: avant-garde New Photography and Surrealism. New Photography arose out of domestic social conditions and developments in international photography. It also resulted from a general desire to break away from the expressionism inherent in Pictorialism. As art historian Karen Fraser argues, Pictorialism eventually facilitated the desire for a more direct approach to photography, leading to the development of new styles that embraced the “truth telling” nature of the camera.[3] This turn to a more objective image occurred at the same time as the reconstruction of Tokyo after the Great Kantō Earthquake (1923), as the city was itself undergoing changes brought on by new industrial technology.[4] Many photographers found inspiration in the evolving urban industrial landscape of the 1930s, producing numerous prints of machines and other instruments of industry. For these photographers, living in a rapidly changing society focused their attention on architecture and machines. They used photography as a way to tame their urban surroundings, condensing the outward chaos into “photographic statements of form, order and clarity.”[5]

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[2] Derrick Price and Liz Wells, "Thinking about Photography: Debates, Historically and Now," in *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, ed. by Liz Wells, fourth edition (London; New York: Routledge, 2009), 14–15.

New Photography was not simply a product of Japanese photographic innovations; it was also rooted in German New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit) and the Bauhaus movement. Japan first came into contact with New Photography through photographer and art theorist Itagaki Takao (1894-1966), who learned of the movement while in Germany. Inspired by New Photography, Itagaki promoted the expression of a mechanical civilization and placed much emphasis on the documentary potential of photography. Japanese photographers also drew heavily from Bauhaus artist László

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[3] Karen M. Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, first edition (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), 18.

[4] Ibid., 19.

[5] Dower, "Ways of Seeing, Ways of Remembering: The Photography of Prewar Japan," in *A Century of Japanese Photography*, ed. John Dower, first edition (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 17.

Moholy-Nagy's 1925 book *Malerei, Fotographie, Film* (*Painting, Photography, Film*), which quickly became a point of reference for New Photography in Japan.[6]

Throughout the 1930s, photographers continued to push away from Pictorialism and to further develop New Photography. In an essay titled "Return to Photography," published in the magazine *Kōga* (Photography), photography critic Ina Nobuo wrote that the role of photography was to capture aspects of social life through the camera.[7] Promoting a complete break from art photography, Ina advocated for the concept of Real Photo,[8] described as the "expression of the beauty of the object, documentation of the era and reports on people's lives, and photographs produced through the sculptural properties of light and shadow."[9] All three of these aspects of New Photography played off of the emphasis on the mechanical nature of photography.[10]

The other dominant photographic trend in Japanese photography during the 1930s was Surrealism. Here regional differences came to the fore, as a distinct split between the Kansai and the Kantō region produced two different strains of Surrealism. Whereas Kansai photographers favored the experimental and still held onto influences from other artistic modes of production, Surrealist photographers in Kantō were drawn toward the commercial function of photography.[11] The latter's use of photography employed a more straightforward approach, similar to the objective nature of New Photography. The fascination with the mechanical and industrial was one reason why photographers in Kantō based their style of the surreal on objectivity.

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[6] Takeba Joe, "The Age of Modernism: From Visualization to Socialization" in *The History of Japanese Photography*, ed. Anne Tucker, et al. (New Haven: Museum of Fine Arts Houston, 2003), 145.

[7] Ibid., 146.

[8] Photographer Kimura Ihei, who together with Domon Ken would later become vanguard of postwar realism, embodied Ina's second element of Real Photo with his images of working-class Tokyo.

[9] Takeba, "The Age of Modernism: From Visualization to Socialization," 147.

[10] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 18.

[11] Takeba, "The Age of Modernism: From Visualization to Socialization," 148.

The Kantō region's Surrealism, centered on an objective viewpoint, formed around art critic Takiguchi Shūzo (1903-1979). Much like New Photography's attempts to create distance from art photography and Pictorialism, Takiguchi argued that Surrealist photography should be pursued through the objective nature of the camera itself—the "documentary character" of photography.[12] The pursuit of the documentary nature of photography coincided with an increased interest in photojournalism, brought over from Germany by Natori Yōnosuke and made popular by urban street photographers such as Kimura Ihei and Kuwabara Kineo.

The emphasis on documentary photography and urban landscapes brought Japanese photographers to the brink of Social Realism, but their work did not embody the true spirit of the term. For the modern reader, the idea of Social Realism might call to mind Dorothea Lange's images of 1930's tenant farmers or Jacob Riis's photographs of New York City slums. However, Japanese photographers made little attempt at actually instigating social reform with their photographs. As museum curator Takeba Joe notes, photographers largely ignored the reality of what they were photographing. Rather than attempting to engage society through their photographs, the works of early documentary photographers simply treated those of the lower classes as subjects to be photographed and nothing more.[13]

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[12] Ibid., 150.

[13] Ibid., 154.

This lack of engagement with society, however, was not to last. As Japan began what would become a long and disastrous war with China at the end of the 1930s, the government turned photojournalism into a tool of propaganda. At the same time, the increasingly militarized nature of Japan placed ideological constraints on art and photography. No longer free to pursue photography under their own individual agency, photographers were called upon by the new military government to join the rest of the nation and contribute to the war effort.[14] It would not be until the surrender of the Japanese nation in 1945 that photographers would once again be allowed to operate independently, without the strictures of a totalitarian regime. When the war ended and a flood of foreign servicemen entered Japan under the Allied Occupation, Japanese photographers initially returned to the straightforward depiction of the subject characteristic of prewar New Photography.

Characterizing the Images in Early Postwar Magazines

Much like the trends that were popular during the 1930s, images in *Camera*, *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, and *Shashin Techō* had little connection to the Pictorialism movement that had dominated the photographic industry in the early twentieth century. However, photographers submitted images of portraits, landscapes, and still life, subjects that were popular under Pictorialism. This indicates an interest with visual form characteristic of aesthetically evaluative photographs.[15] Rather than placing the subject in a social context, as was the case with the explanatory photographs of the 1950's objective realism movement, aesthetically evaluative photographs are concerned principally with issues of aesthetics. Overall, the images in the photography magazines can be divided into three broad categories: 1) those submitted by amateur and professional photographers, which demonstrate a link between pre- and postwar photographic trends; 2) staged images that accompany instructional articles; and 3) advertisements for cameras and camera-related products, such as film and developing paper.

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[14] Ibid., 157.

[15] Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs*, 82–91.

Early postwar photographers drew on the straight photographic approach characteristic of both prewar New Photography and the postwar realism movement. Rather than mimic a painting or drawing, as was characteristic of Pictorialist photography, this technique attempted to provide an accurate portrayal of the subject.[16] At the same time, the use of innovative framing techniques demonstrates a penchant for the avant-garde, indicating the legacy of Surrealist trends popular in the 1930s. A portrait of Domon Ken in *Amateur Shashin Sōsho* highlights this with its use of sharp tonal contrasts and its positioning of Domon slightly off center (fig. 3.2).[17] Further, the photographer ignores conventional framing methods by zooming in on Domon's face, situating his head too close to the top right corner of the image so that it is cut off by the top of the frame.

Images submitted by amateur and professional photographers demonstrate a connection to New Photography through the depiction of subjects in a straightforward manner. At the same time, the images ultimately indicate a break from this prewar trend. Recall that New Photography, emphasizing the mechanical nature of the camera, was in part a reaction to the artistic style of Pictorialism. Further, the rise of New Photography was influenced by rapid urbanization and the industrial technologies of the 1930s, and thus favored mechanical objects and symbols of technology.[18] For example, noted photographer Horino Masao recorded the “beauty of machinery” by constantly focusing on steel architectural elements, including bridges, towers, and tanks. In contrast, early postwar photographers lived in cities that had been annihilated by the power of U.S. bombing raids during the last year of World War Two. It was the loss of a dynamic city that ultimately pushed photographers away from New Photography. Indeed, the magazines surveyed for this project include only a handful of examples of street photography.

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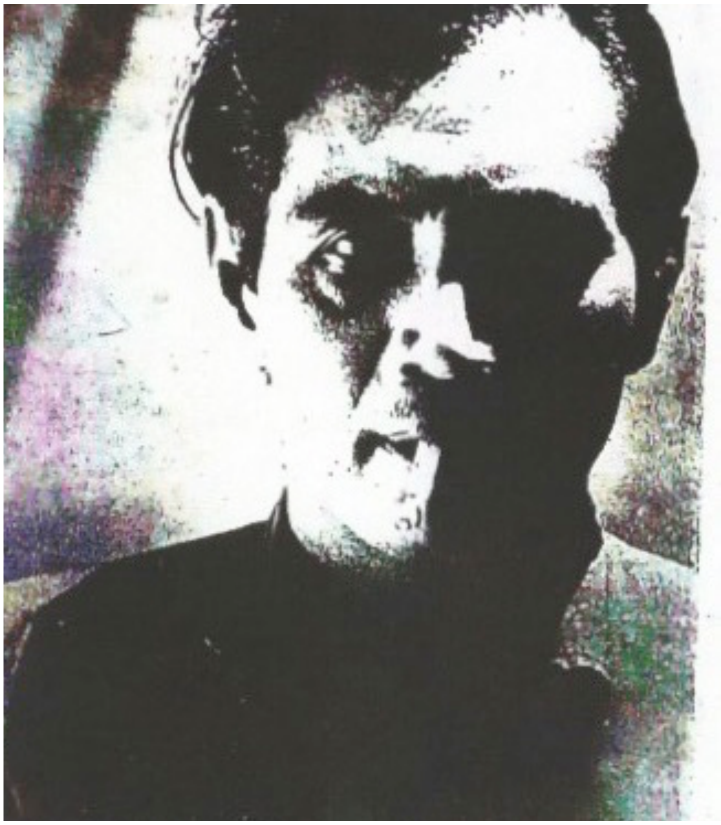
[16] Price and Wells, "Thinking about Photography: Debates, Historically and Now," 15.

[17] *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, January 1949, 6.

FIGURE 3.2. A portrait of Domon Ken. Photograph. From *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*. January 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



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[18] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 19.

As explained in the last chapter, Occupation-imposed censorship and self-censorship also hampered photographers from recording street scenes. Photographers did take pictures of devastated urban areas, but publishing them was made difficult, if not impossible, by Occupation-imposed censorship.[19] This occurred most commonly with prints of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but also with scenes of other urban areas like Tokyo.[20] Such censorship controls are one reason why the postwar realism movement, with its emphasis on capturing devastated urban areas and downtrodden citizens, did not emerge until after censorship controls had been lifted.

Despite limitations on publishing images of war damage, some editors did manage to include such prints. *Tokyo Fall of 1945*, a small booklet filled with images by Kimura Ihei and Kikuchi Shunkichi,[21] provides imagery of a city decimated by bombing raids. One of the first images in the publication is a birds-eye view of Ningyo-cho, Tokyo (fig. 2.1). The viewer sees an utterly ruined landscape. A few buildings stand here and there, but otherwise the once-vibrant city is depicted as an urban graveyard. Such images, however, are offset by the overwhelmingly positive depiction of the U.S. military forces. One example is an image of an American GI holding hands with a group of children as they walk down a path in Ueno Park (fig. 3.3). As explained in the preceding chapter, the narrative put forward in this booklet is that the U.S. had come to Japan to fix the ills of war and to help the nation on the way to recovery. Thus, rather than depict a wasted landscape made so by U.S. bombing raids, the image, when placed alongside the other prints in this publication, instead projects a message of hope and the promise of U.S. aid to a devastated nation.

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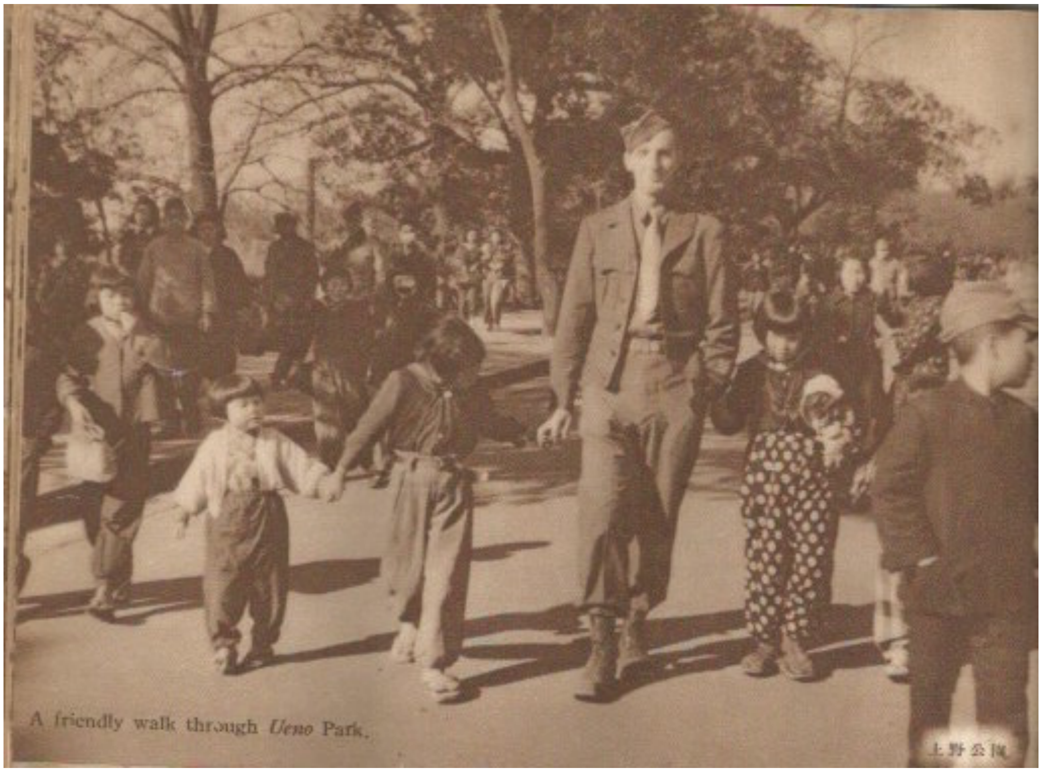
[19] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 413.

[20] Ibid., 414.

[21] Kimura and Kikuchi. *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*), n.p.

FIGURE 3.3. An American GI walking with Japanese children in Ueno Park, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*).


A friendly walk through *Ueno* Park.
上野公園

Besides images of a ruined urban landscape, *Tokyo Fall of 1945* includes numerous prints of U.S. Occupation personnel. For the most part, however, elements of the U.S. Occupation, ranging from servicemen and women to jeeps and Allied barracks, were prohibited from publication under Occupation-imposed censorship. Thus, because publishers could not print such signs of the Occupation, the net result was to create an invisible military presence.[22] Of the magazines surveyed for this project, few images give any indication of the Allied presence in Japan.

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[22] Yoshimi Shunya. "Visualizing Postwar Tokyo," accessed November 23, 2015, https://courses.edx.org/courses/UTokyoX/UTokyo001x/3T2014/courseware/c08fcbc3f8f748858e68e478f01b19f4/.

The inability to publish images of Occupation personnel is another reason why there was a decreased emphasis on street photography in magazines of the era. Occupation servicemen and women overran areas of Tokyo favored by street photographers, such as Ginza, Shinjuku, and Shibuya. Admittedly, photographers were active in these areas and recorded numerous images of the Occupation. Nevertheless, their photographs had to wait until the end of Occupation-imposed censorship to be published.

The second type of image in these early postwar magazines consists of those that accompany instructional articles. Because the intent was to demonstrate photographic techniques, such as proper use of lighting or how to focus the camera lens, these images are engineered scenes, most commonly of young women. To provide one example, a two-page spread from a 1947 issue of *Camera* shows how to capture different female facial expressions (fig. 3.4).[23] The article includes twelve photographs, each zoomed in on the face of the female model. The series of portraits show the young lady with eyes downcast and a trace of a smile across her lips in one image, looking to the left of the frame with a contemplative expression in another. All of the portraits use deep shadows and high contrast to convey emotion and create striking, dynamic images.

Another two-page spread from *Amachua*, entitled "Photographing Women Beautifully" (*Onna wo utsukushiku toru ni wa*), includes three images that show how articles utilized staged scenes to demonstrate photographic techniques (fig. 3.5).[24] The pictures do not merely capture the beauty of the models, but portray empowered, spirited women. One model poses in a strong stance with her right hand resting on her hip. Another model leans slightly back with crossed arms and a sultry gaze in one image, while in another she stands tall and poised, the expression on her slightly upturned face projecting a powerful sense of self-assurance. The stylish apparel further elevates the notion of a strong-willed woman. In the two images on the left the model wears a luxurious fur coat, while the model on the right is draped in a chic Western-style dress with two flower accents. These three images are emblematic of a prominent theme in the early postwar magazines: women, as well as men and children, wearing expensive Western clothing.

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[23] "A Model and a Bee. The Changes in Facial Expression in a Photographic Series" (*Moderu to hachi. Renzoku satsuei ni yoru hyōjyō no bunka*), *Camera*, March 1947.

[24] "Photographing Women Beautifully" (Onna wo utsukushiku toru ni wa), *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, February 1949, n.p.

FIGURE 3.4. “A Model and a Bee. The Changes of Facial Expression in a Photographic Series” (*Moderu to hachi. Renzoku satsuei ni yoru hyōjyō no henka*). From *Camera*. March 1947. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.

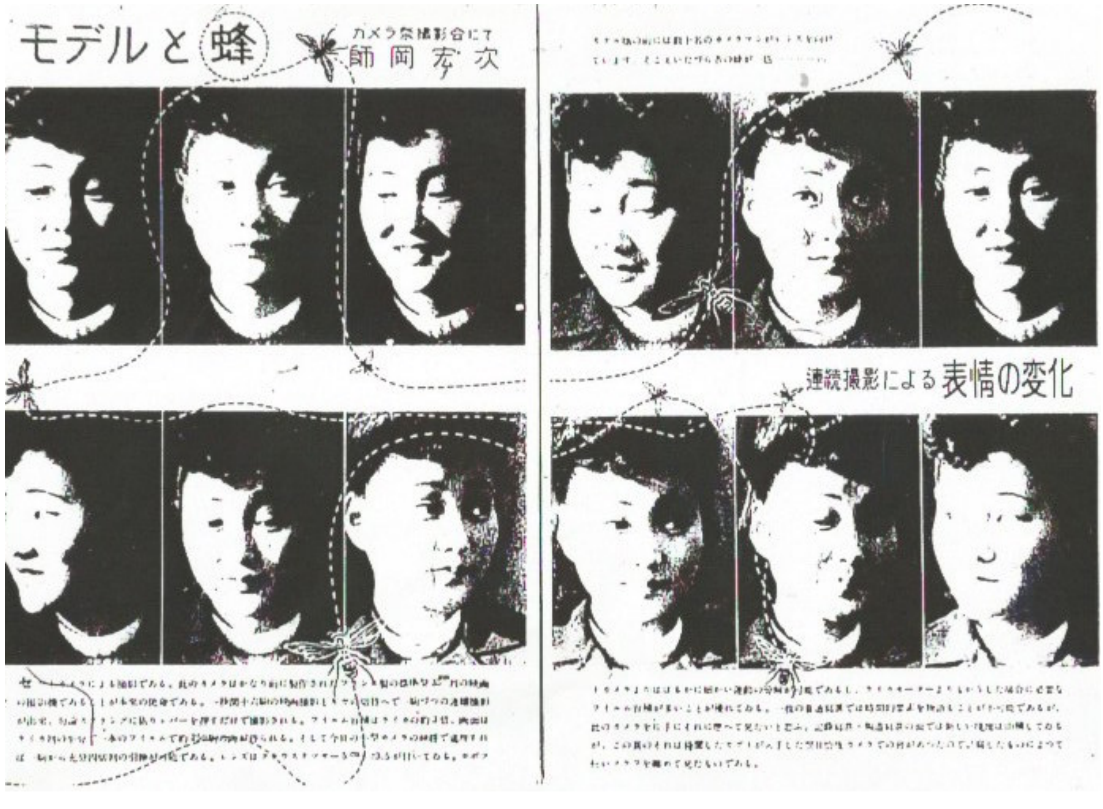
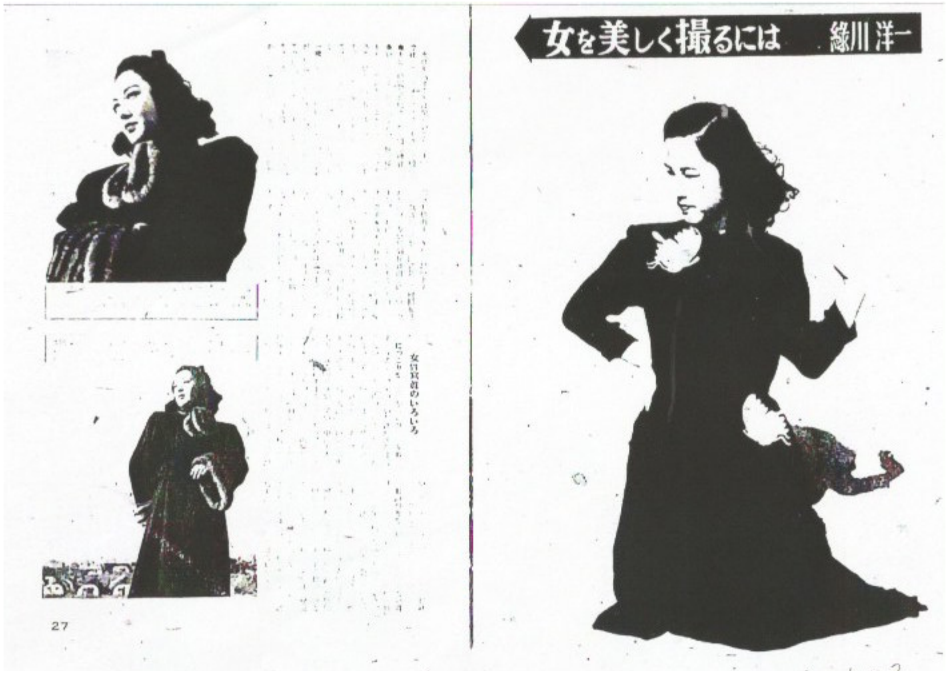

モデルと蜂
カメラ祭撮影会にて
師岡宏次
連続撮影による表情の変化

FIGURE 3.5. Women posing for the camera. Photograph. From *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*. February 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



Another instructional article from *Amachua* features a female model wearing Western attire.[25] Entitled “How to photograph models indoors” (*Shitsunai moderu no utsushikata*), the article provides a series of images and diagrams to aid the amateur in his study. One image shows the model leaning to the left of the frame and looking away from the camera lens, her hands clutching an issue of *Life* magazine against her chest. In addition to the images of the model, some photographs show the photographer at work, allowing the viewer to see how light sources are arranged in the room in order to create a good photographic environment indoors.

An overwhelming majority of the images in these magazines place a clear emphasis on material wealth and focus on a world of glamour, illustrated by a one image from *Shashin Techō* (fig. 3.6).[26] The picture shows American actress, model, and writer Myrna Dell (1924-2011) leaning back against a stage. Dark shadows in the upper portion of the image and a statue in the background frame the model, directing the viewer's eye to fall immediately on the model's face. Her stylish hairstyle is swept back behind her shoulders, and she wears an expensive evening gown, cinched tight at the waist, with the billowing skirt draped artfully across the steps of the stage. The ancient Greek or Roman sculpture, a decorative element in close proximity to the model, further bolsters the image of luxury projected by the Western woman. As will be explained below, images like the above place emphasis on material wealth, especially concerning objects that are distinctly Western in origin. Such alluring depictions of luxury helped to promote the desire of American culture, especially at a time when many Japanese citizens still suffered under the scarcity of early postwar society.

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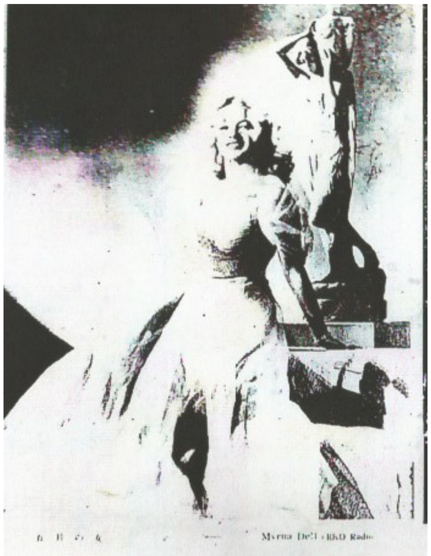
[25] “How to photograph models indoors” (*Shitsunai moderu no utsushikata*), *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, October 1949, n.p.

FIGURE 3.6. "The Woman of May—Myrna Dell (RKO Radio)" (*Gogatsu no onna*—Myrna Dell (RKO Radio)). Photograph. From *Shashin Techō.* July 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



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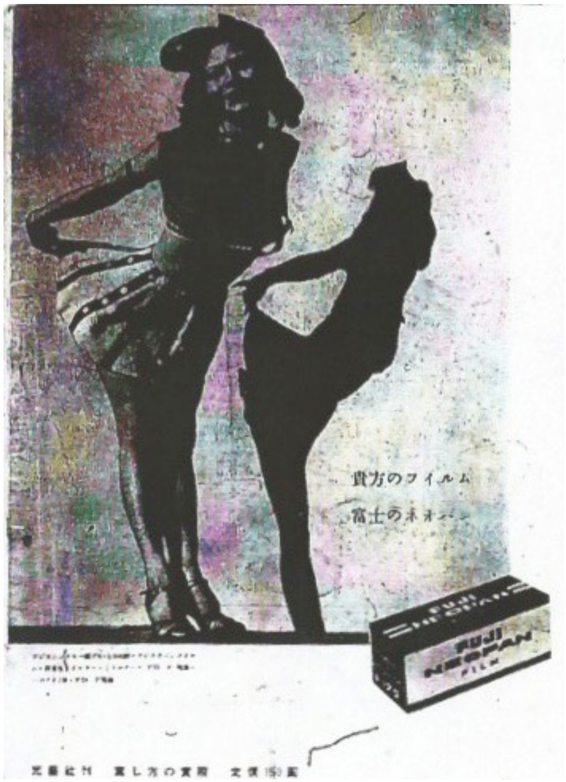
[26] "The Woman of May—Myrna Dell (RKO Radio)" (*Gogatsu no onna*—Myrna Dell (RKO Radio)), *Shashin Techō* July 1949, 4.

FIGURE 3.7. An advertisement for Fuji Neopanchromatic Film. From *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*. August 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.


貴方のフィルム
富士のネオパン
FUJI NEOPAN
FUJI NEOPAN FILM

Advertisements not only feature images of Western culture in the form of clothing, but incorporate the English language as well. This was commonly the case with Mamiya Six, whose ads generally appear within the first few pages of photography magazines. Text from one ad features the phrase "The Camera of Cameras, Mamiya – Six" emblazoned in bold lettering across the top of the page. The rest of the text is in Japanese, but is arranged horizontally instead of the traditional Japanese vertical layout. Other advertisements also included English words, such as "Focus Test Chart—Tokyo Photo laboratory—Yurakucho Tokyo."[27] In a similar manner to images of Western clothing, the inclusion of the language of the foreign Occupiers demonstrates an evident interest in American culture. Before examining the desire for American culture in more detail, however, let us look first at how the magazines operated within the reform policies of the Allied Occupation.

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[27] *Camera*, January 1947, n.p.

Demilitarization and Democratization

In his study of the political, social, and economic reforms of the Allied Occupation, political scientist and journalist Kawai Kazuo calls the years from 1945 to 1952 “Japan’s American Interlude.”[28] Kawai stresses the significance of the American influence during this time, stating, "for six years the United States has had a free hand to experiment with Japan than any other country in Asia, or indeed in the entire world.”[29] The initial objectives of the occupation, codenamed Operation *Blacklist*, were defined by three key documents: the Potsdam Declaration; the “United States Initial Post-Surrender Policy Relating to Japan”; and a directive sent to General MacArthur in August 1945 that further explained postsurrender policies.[30] To prevent Japan from engaging in another devastating war, two of the chief aims outlined in these documents were to demilitarize and democratize postwar Japanese society.

The Potsdam Declaration, issued on July 26, 1945, shows clearly the goal to demilitarize Japan. The document targeted both individuals and institutions, calling for the elimination “for all time” those who had “deceived and misled the people of Japan into embarking on world conquest,” as well as the demilitarization of the Japanese economy.[31] In order to make the disarmament and demilitarization "complete" and "permanent," Occupation servicemen destroyed large amounts of Japanese armaments. In one instance, U.S. tanks destroyed over 50 war planes at Sasebo base in northern Kyushu by dousing them with napalm jelly.[32]

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[28] Ardath W. Burks, *Japan: Profile of a Post-Industrial Power* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press Inc., 1981), 103.

[29] Kawai Kazuo, "American influence on Japanese thinking" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 278 (1951): 23.

[30] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 73.

Early postwar magazines fell in line with the Occupation's demilitarization policy in that they are almost completely devoid of images that relate to war or to the military. Throughout the late 1940s and into the early 1950s, professional photographers such as Domon, Kimura, and Hayashi Tadahiko photographed repatriated soldiers. Domon focused his camera on wounded soldiers begging on the streets. Hayashi did so as well, but also captured more hopeful scenes with his images of exuberant soldiers recently returned from overseas. None of these images, however, appear in the photography magazines.

The only time the military is referenced in the magazines is in relation to America. One image from *Amachua* shows a row of young boys under a large sign that reads "MARINES" in English.[33] The prominent lettering of the sign hanging over the children suggests the protective role that the United States military assumed as Japan underwent the process of demilitarization. But even in this image the emphasis is on the U.S. armed forces, rather than promoting Japanese military sentiments.

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[31] Ibid., 74.

[32] Ibid., 78.

[33] *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, August, 1949, 15.

One image by photographer Nakayama Iwata depicts a youthful U.S. sailor, placed alongside an image of an old, balding Japanese man by Matsugi Fujio.[34] Both men are featured in profile, so that they look across the page at one another. Matsugi uses an extreme close-up, capturing the Japanese man's head only. In contrast, Nakayama depicts his subject in full, allowing the viewer to see the sailor's uniform. It is impossible to know what the editor had in mind when placing these two images together. The two photos, however, do draw a sharp distinction between the subjects, inviting the viewer to think about the relationship between the two men. The American in his sailor's uniform is clearly defined by his identity as a member of the armed forces. The inability to see how the Japanese man is dressed, however, creates a notion of uncertainty concerning his identity. Is he dressed in the suit of a businessman, the uniform of a policeman, or the rags of a beggar? Is he a repatriated soldier still in uniform? Without being able to see his appearance in full, the viewer might imagine him with the potential to be and do anything in the new postwar society, while matters of a military nature are left in the hands of the U.S. sailor.

In the absence of martial imagery relating to Japan, the magazines as a whole promote the idea of a peaceful Japanese nation. One article on Deaf Education in *Camera*, for instance, includes numerous images of Japanese citizens working together in harmony.[35] Children crowd around a classroom, women sit at sewing machines, and a Japanese man leads a group of children in physical exercises. Taken as a whole, the message conveyed by these images in on helping those in need.

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[34] *Camera*, April 1946, 8-9.

[35] "Deaf Education with a Camera" (*Rōkyōiku wo kamera de*), *Camera*, January 1947, 28-29.

The notion of peace is also expressly evident in images of children. Rather than photos of the numerous homeless and starving war orphans that populated urban centers immediately after the war, the magazines show an abundance of healthy, happy youth. “Growing children” (*Nobi kodomo*), an image in *Shashin*, depicts a group of children crowding around the photographer, their smiles so infectious that the viewer cannot help but smile in return (fig. 3.8).[36] Another image, “Children doing various things” (*Tokaku kodomo toiu mono wa*), shows a row of children walking across a construction beam, their small hands grasping butterfly nets.[37] Here the photographer captures a moment of play, clearly distancing these children from the reality that many faced living in a society beset by the insecurities of early postwar society.

In order to promote peace and eradicate fully all elements of a militarized society, the basic ideas of demilitarization were codified and linked to democratization in a new national charter introduced by the Occupation in 1946.[38] In addition to demobilizing the army and navy, the military establishment as a whole was completely eliminated. Further, Japan officially became a pacifist nation with the “renunciation of war” provisions in the new postwar constitution’s preamble, as well as the prohibition of using war as a means of settling international disputes under article nine.

In addition to implementing demilitarization and democratization through policy, American culture was promoted as a symbol of democracy, bringing about changes in

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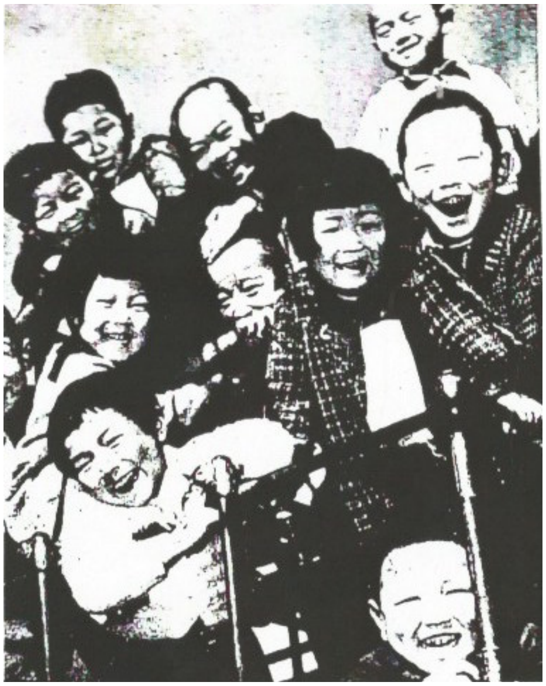
[36] “Growing Children” (*Nobi kodomo*), *Shashin Techō*, September 1949, 2.

[37] “Children doing various things” (*Tokaku kodomo toiu mono wa*), *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, January 1949, 5.

[38] Dower, Embracing Defeat, 83.

Japanese values, lifestyles, and social institutions.[39] For example, the new constitution gave women equal rights to those of men, a change that was supported by law through the civil code.[40] The Civil Information and Education Section (CI&E) spearheaded attempts at teaching and reforming the Japanese press along a democratic path, relying on the media to introduce Japan to "the institutions, culture, and accomplishments of the United States and other democracies."[41]

FIGURE 3.8. "Growing children" (*Nobi kodomo*). Photograph. From *Shashin Techō.* September 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



Established in June 1945, the CI&E grew out of the Education Branch of the Public Affairs Division and the Information Dissemination Section (IDS). Initial branches of the CI&E included Administration, Education and Religions, Press and Publications, Radio, Motion Picture, Planning and Special Projects, and Analysis and Research. Between late 1945 and early 1946, Language, Library Science, and Arts and Monuments were added to the original branches. As the Occupation progressed and the CI&E became more complex, the branches were upgraded to divisions. By 1948, the divisions were consolidated into the following: Education, Religions and Cultural Resources, Information, and Public Opinion and Sociological Research.[42]

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[39] Ibid., 73.

[40] Keiko I. McDonald, "Whatever Happened to Passive Suffering? Women on Screen," *The Confusion Era: Art and Culture of Japan During the Allied Occupation, 1945-1952*, 53.

[41] Garlington, *Press Censorship in Occupied Japan*, 52.

The mission statement of the CI&E was to create "a positive Japanese public knowledge of and belief in democracy in all walks of life—political, economic and cultural."[43] It banned thirteen themes related to prewar nationalism, including any that "portrayed favorably the subjugation or degradation of women."[44] In the words of one Occupation serviceman, the CI&E sold "democracy as though it were an advertising campaign for a new soap."[45]

Under the War Department's Civil Affairs Division, a Reorientation Branch (later a Division) sent the CI&E books, newspaper editorials, magazines, films and documentaries, plays and musical recordings.[46] The Information Division circulated roughly 350-400 magazines alone each month, including *Life*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*.[47] CI&E centers, staffed by American librarians and visited by roughly two million

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[42] Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 180.

[43] Ibid., 395.

[44] McDonald, "Whatever Happened to Passive Suffering? Women on Screen," 53.

[45] Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 395.

[46] Ibid., 395–396.

[47] Ibid.

Japanese, were established around Japan in order to facilitate the consumption of these periodicals.[48]

Film played a particularly important role in spreading democratic ideals, while also bolstering the image of American affluence. Films such as *The Grapes of Wrath* and *Tobacco Road*, for instance, were not shown because of a fear that they would damage the notion of America as a prosperous nation. In a letter to General Douglas MacArthur, Yamada Ryōnosuke spoke of the influence of American cinema, especially on Japanese youth. After being exposed to films like *His Butler's Sister* and *Madame Curie*, Yamada states, "young men and women quickly began praising American culture and gossiping about American stars."[49] But American film was not merely a source of entertainment. Yamada further states, "Viewing American movies is most effective for reeducating Japanese youth," because, he believed, a "pro-American fever" could "win out through movies."[50] Yamada was not the only one to believe that American film had the ability to spread democratic principles. In another letter to MacArthur, Okumura Kazunori states, "One also learns the meaning of liberty by viewing movies like *Boys Town* and *Going My Way*."[51]

The Occupation promoted democracy by employing the image of healthy bodies through film and other forms of media. Indeed, bodies became a battleground for social change, representing liberation, subjugation, and democratic values.[52] This last was especially important, as “the new alliance between the United States and Japan” was expressed “through images of hygienic, democratic bodies.”[53] During the Occupation, the notion of a democratic body became inextricably linked to the ideal of a strong, healthy body,[54] a motif often repeated in photography magazines throughout the late 1940s.

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[48] Ibid., 396.

[49] Sodei, *Dear General MacArthur*, 209–210.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., 214.

[52] Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory*, 48.

As explained in the previous chapter, the Japanese suffered from severe shortages of the basic necessities of life during the early years of the Occupation, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Survival became the most intense focus in the *kyodatsu* society, and many Japanese concentrated their full energies on finding enough food to prevent starvation, or even in searching for a place to live.[55] But images of the hungry and homeless are absent in early photography publications. Instead, the magazines published images of groups of smiling, energetic children, robust young boys, and neatly dressed men and women.

One image of two young boys from *Camera* highlights the emphasis on healthy bodies (fig. 3.9).[56] In “Summer Children” (*Natsu no kodomo*), one boy sits on the shoulders of another, and both the boys have their shirts off to better display their muscular physiques. The youth on top wears a joyous grin, and his arms stretch out towards the top of the frame in a jubilant gesture. Both boys appear strong, healthy, and happy. Their bare front torsos become the focal point of the image, working alongside their bright smiles and strong stances to impart the image with a lively, energetic quality.

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[53] Ibid., 13.

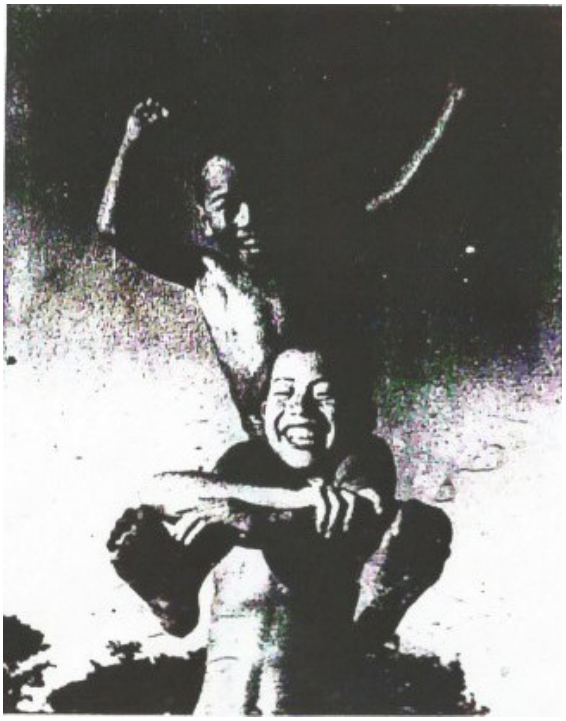
[54] As Igarashi points out, this is why DDT and other measures were used on the Japanese. Ibid., 66.

[55] Hane, *Eastern Phoenix*, 173.

[56] “Summer Children” (*Natsu no kodomo*), *Camera*, March 1947, n.p.

In addition to projecting the image of robust youth, the photo perhaps also provided a psychological lift to those suffering under early postwar conditions. It is certainly a sharp contrast to other images of youth that appeared after censorship controls had been lifted. Under the realism movement of the early 1950s, a trend explored in the next chapter, many photographers captured starving children in Tokyo's streets, such as Hayashi Tadahiko's famous image of two dirty orphan boys smoking on a sidewalk,[57] or Domon's numerous images of vagrant children shining shoes or begging for money.

FIGURE 3.9. "Summer Children" (*Natsu no kodomo*). Photograph. From *Camera.* March 1947. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



Besides photographs of vigorous youth, women are also portrayed with a healthy, clean appearance. Most are featured wearing modest dress, an obvious counterpoint to the numerous prostitutes working in the city.[58] Additionally, many images of women evoke a sense of empowerment. The arrangement of the head, shoulders, and torso combine to offer the image of poised, self-confident women, making them symbols larger than the pictures in which they appear. In this way, such images can be likened to the roles filled by women on film. After the war, "Japanese audiences saw Japanese women trying out new roles on screen," states Keiko McDonald. "Some of these roles were real and available; others were still largely untried, even purely theoretical. All ran counter to centuries of custom and tradition."[59]

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[57] Hayashi Tadahiko, "Smoking War Orphans," Ueno, Tokyo, 1946 (*kitsuen wo kuyurasu sensaikoji*), in *Kasutori jidai: renzu ga mita Shōwa nijuū-nendai Tōkyō* (*The Kasutori Era: Witnessing Tokyo during the Age of Resignation in Shōwa*) (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1987), 51.

In a similar manner to images of healthy, strong bodies, photographs largely projected the image of undamaged urban landscapes. While pictures that show urban areas are rare, when they do appear they generally depict streets clean of debris, buildings left unscathed by U.S. bombing raids, and neatly-dressed citizens going about their daily lives. In this way, healthy urban scenes work the same way as strong, energetic bodies in promoting the idea of a democratic nation, while also promoting the idea of postwar recovery and progress. Take, for example, an image from *Amachua* (fig. 3.10).[60] The image was taken just below eye level. A woman, one of many pedestrians in the street, dominates the center of the image in a white blouse and dark skirt. The photographer used a long exposure to produce a slightly blurred image, capturing a sense of motion and making it seem as if those pictured are in a hurry. A light ferroconcrete building stretches across the background of the image. There are no broken windows, no damaged façade—

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[58] By early 1946, close to 90 percent of those working for the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA) in Tokyo, an organization established by the Japanese to provide prostitution services for Occupation servicemen, were infected with venereal disease. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 130.

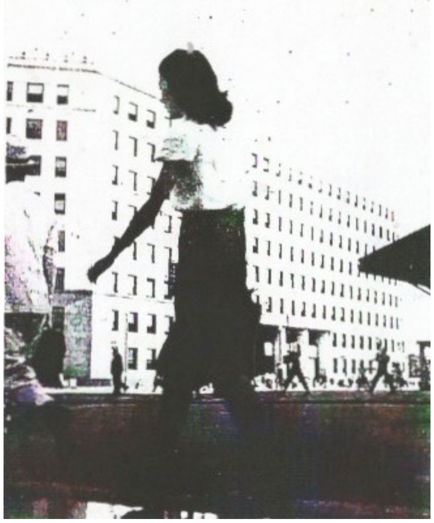
[59] McDonald, "Whatever Happened to Passive Suffering? Women on Screen," 54.

[60] *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, January 1949, 7.

indeed, no visible war damage at all. Compare this image with a photograph of the Mitsukoshi Department Store, located in Ginza, by professional photographer Nagano Shigeichi (fig. 3.11).[61] In a marked contrast to the photograph in *Amachua*, Nagano's image reveals a building badly scarred by war; blackened concrete and broken windows show the effects of incendiary bombs.

Camera, *Amachua*, and *Shashin* followed the demilitarization and democratization policies pursed by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP). Concerning the former, this was done through the absence of martial imagery and by projecting the image of a peaceful, harmonious Japanese society, while photographs of healthy bodies and numerous models well dressed in Western attire supported the ideal of democratization. Indeed, Western clothing takes a prominent place in early postwar magazines, helping to promote desire for Western material wealth and, in turn, the consumption of American culture.

FIGURE 3.10. A woman walking. Photograph. From *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*. January 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



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[61] Nagano, "Traffic Control Military Police Officer" (Ginza, Tokyo, 1946) (*Kōtsūseiri junsa*), in *Jidai no kioku 1945-1995: Nagano Shigeichi shashinshū* (*Remembering the Age from 1945-1955: Nagano Shigeichi Photo Album*) (Tōkyō: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1995), 13.

FIGURE 3.11. Nagano. “Traffic Control Military Police Officer,” Ginza, Tokyo, 1946 (*Kōtsūseiri junsa*). Photograph. From *Jidai no kioku 1945-1995: Nagano Shigeichi shashinshū* (*Remembering the Age from 1945-1955: Nagano Shigeichi Photo Album*). Tōkyō: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1995.

Consuming American Culture through Images

The Occupation did not only impact Japan politically and economically through the policies of demilitarization and democratization; it also had a profound impact on Japanese culture. In his study of letters sent to General Douglas MacArthur during the Occupation, Sodei Rinjirō states that the Japanese looked to the United States as a “wellspring of culture” and a “cure” that would help Japan in its journey of postwar recovery.[62] Cultural influences were part of what sociologist Yoshimi Shunya calls the Americanization of the “ears,” “eyes,” and the “whole way of life” for postwar Japanese. The images in early postwar photography magazines provide evidence for the Americanization of Japanese culture that began at the start of the Allied Occupation.

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[62] Sodei, *Dear General MacArthur*, 263.

Taken as a whole, the images, particularly those that display Western clothing, invoke the allure of American material wealth. To a citizenry living among the ruins of Tokyo, the images appeal to the promise of a good life that helped to facilitate the embrace and desire of American culture.

Contact with Western civilization was nothing new to the Japanese, who had been importing Western culture since Commodore Matthew Perry sailed his black ships into Uraga Harbor near present-day Tokyo in 1852. The Taisho era (1912-1926), known as Japan's Jazz Age, witnessed a particularly strong desire for Western culture, celebrated in the form of the "modern girl" (*moga*) and the "modern boy" (*mobo*). The *moga* and *mobo* gathered in Ginza, a wealthy shopping district in Tokyo, and in the Shinsaibashi district in Osaka. The *moga* was a "stylish follower of fashion"[63] who styled her hair in a fashionable bob and wore loose-fitting summer dresses.[64] *Mobo* accessorized with floppy ties and *roido* spectacles (named after American actor Harold Lloyd). Overall the chic youth were representative of an enthusiasm for the middle class lifestyle, department stores, movies, and jazz.[65] During World War Two, such material extravagance was targeted and discouraged by the military government, but the trend towards Westernization, especially along American lines, became strong once again after the war.

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[63] Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, third edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 155.

[64] Terai Namiko, *Appappa kara jiinzu pataron he: yure ugoku fashon no senmae to sengo* ("From Summer Dresses to Jeans: Shifts in Prewar and Postwar Fashion"), in *Showa no fūzoku* (*Showa Popular Culture*), vol. 13 of *Showa nihon shi* (*Showa Japanese History*) (Tokyo: Akatsuki Kyōiku Tosho, 1977), 47-48.

[65] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 157.

The American style, expensive and conveying the idea of material wealth, projected a fresh and bright image from the earliest years of the Occupation.[66] One reason that the Japanese turned to such material wealth was to displace traumatic war memories, as well as the devastating loss of the war.[67] Additionally, the wealth and healthy appearance of Occupation servicemen and women—seen in orderly barracks, in PX stores brimming with goods, and in well-fed GIs in clean, crisp uniforms—stood as a stark contrast to those suffering from poverty, homelessness, and starvation. Photographer Tōmatsu Shomei, a child during the Occupation, describes the difference in American and Japanese lifestyles in Tokyo: "The shortage of food was especially painful for rapidly growing children. However, supplies were abundant on the other side of the metal fences and barbed wire that surrounded the U.S. base. The U.S. side looked bright, like heaven, while on this side, there was hell as we struggled with starvation and poverty."[68]

Furthermore, the acceptance of American culture was facilitated by the relationship of the two countries during the Occupation. America was "full of self-confidence that the 'American Century' had arrived," while Japan suffered from a crisis of confidence and identity after their recent defeat, which caused "everything its people had been taught to believe [to be] negated."[69] In his examination of Japanese society after their defeat in the war, historian Mikiso Hane outlines the following as beliefs that had been "shattered":

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[66] *Yōfukuika*, in *Sengoshi Daijiten (Encyclopedia of Postwar Japan 1945-1990)*, ed. Sasaki Takeshi (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1991), 906.

[67] Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory*, 9.

[68] Tōmatsu Shomei, "Toward a Chaotic Sea," trans. Takaya Imamura, in *Setting Sun: Writings By Japanese Photographers*, ed. Ivan Vartanian, et al. (New York: Aperture, 2005), 30. Originally published in *Taiyo no enpitsu* (Tokyo: Mainichi Newspapers, 1975).

> Primary among these vanished concepts were the uniqueness, superiority, and invincibility of Japan; the godlike sanctity of the benevolent, holy emperor living high above the clouds; the importance of self-denial and self-sacrifice for the good of the nation; the honor of dying for the glory of Japan and of the emperor. Gone were social hierarchy and gender discrimination as a natural order of things.[70]

Sociologist Yoshimi Shunya argues that women were the main promoters of American culture in postwar Japan. They came to symbolize and promote a "bright home life," part of the democratization efforts of the CI&E.[71] While Yoshimi looks at images of women in the home as promoters of domestic values and American appliances, images of women in photography magazines modeling modern Western apparel also promote American culture. In most instances, the photographs "provided a route to encourage desire"[72] by using models that were young, slender, and beautiful, thus linking the idea of youth and beauty to notions of luxury and wealth.

One image in particular stands as clear evidence of American material wealth (fig. 3.12).[73] "From Five Angles" (*Itsutsu no kakudo kara*) shows a close-up portrait of a Japanese woman with short hair, styled in modern Western fashion, framing the soft curves of her cheeks. The piercing gaze of the model stares straight out of the page and locks directly onto the viewer. Along with the close cropping, her gaze forms an intimate connection with the viewer. Taking in the rest of her appearance, the eye travels down past slightly parted lips and past her rounded chin to stop momentarily on a string of pearls just visible beneath her blouse. The slight arc of the necklace further directs the eye downward to rest at last upon the model's hands, crossed over the lapels of her dark blazer. Her hands, too, are dripping with opulence. Fingernails coated with dark polish reflect the light, and a large stone ring decorates a finger on her right hand.

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[69] Nagayo Honma, "The Americanization of Japanese Society and Culture," in *Japan and the United States: Fifty Years of Partnership*, ed. Chihiro Hosoya and A50 Editorial Committee (Tokyo: The Japan Times), 65.

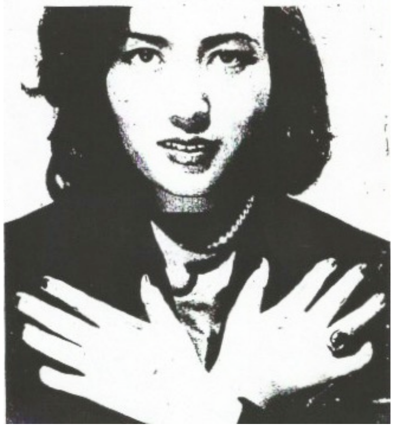
[70] Hane, *Eastern Phoenix*, 173.

[71] Yoshimi, "Visualizing Postwar Tokyo."

[72] Anandi Ramamurthy, "Spectacles and Illusions: Photography and Commodity Culture," in *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, 218.

[73] Matsushima Shin, photographer. "From Five Angles" (*Itstsu no kakudo kara*), *Camera* February 1947, n.p.

FIGURE 3.12. "From Five Angles" (*Itsutsu no kakudo kara*). Photograph. From *Camera.* February 1947. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



The fashionable American clothing and accessories, close cropping, and intense gaze of the model certainly give this image an arresting quality, but they also produce for the viewer another striking effect. The use of a close-up portrait, in addition to the model looking straight into the camera's lens, transforms the image from a simple photograph into a sort of mirror. A contemporary female viewer looking at the image might imagine the woman as herself, the viewer. She becomes the woman draped in dark blazer, accessorized with pearls and gems, and capped with an American hairstyle. The viewer, in other words, sees herself draped in modern American material wealth.

Clothing is one of the most prevalent forms of American culture that began to appear in the streets of urban areas like Tokyo. Some see the end of the war as a turning point for Japanese clothing customs, a time when they began to turn increasingly from traditional dress like kimono to modern Western apparel.[74] Schools offering instruction for sewing Western clothing, advertised through posters that blanketed the city, began to appear, and many Japanese turned old kimono into Western-style blouses and skirts.[75] One two-page spread from *Camera* highlights this.[76] The right page features a close-up of a woman sitting at a sewing machine. She leans down close to the machine, one hand clutching the fabric close to her breast, the other reaching around the foot of the sewing machine to pull the fabric through, almost giving the appearance that she is embracing the machine. Her posture is calm and composed, but her downward gaze suggests intense concentration on her work.

In the next image, a woman models modern Western-style clothing. The camera zooms in on the subject so that her body fills the frame, forcing the viewer to take in the intricate details of the clothing. The model, radiating with a smiling, exuberant expression, wears a dark jacket with white detailing, with the wavy white lines imparting the image with a sense of energy and liveliness. A double row of buttons reflects light, contrasting with the dark fabric of the jacket. Overall the image is cheerful and bright, giving the impression of a jovial woman happy to show off her Western apparel. In a similar manner to how depictions of luxury linked to Western clothing stimulated desire, the happiness of the woman in Western-style clothing in this image might cause the viewer to think that he or she, too, could find happiness through American attire.

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[74] *Senryogun rukku kara surakkusu he* ("From the Occupation Troop Look to Slacks"), in *Senryoshita no nihon* (*Japan Under the Occupation*), vol. 9 of *Showa nihon shi*, 47-48.

[75] Ibid.

[76] *Camera*, December 1946.

Throughout the magazines, men also appear repeatedly dressed in Western clothing. One issue of *Amachua* presents a portrait of a man smoking.[77] Hair slicked back, his strong facial features are matched by strong shadows that play across his face. In another image a man is pictured wearing a suit, scarf, and hunting cap.[78] His head, filling almost the whole frame, tilts slightly to the right, while his fingers grip a cigarette in his mouth. Eyes half closed, the barest hint of a smile gives him a playful expression. The man wears a suit reminiscent of a distinguished salary man, but has the youthful exuberance of a student.

The above images demonstrate the incorporation of American culture into Japanese society in the early years after the war. Further, because the photographs depict Western clothing in a positive and glamorous way, they "sell" American culture, and as such can be compared to advertising photography. Obviously, the images in these early postwar magazines are not advertisements for Western apparel. However, the way in which they depicted young men and women wearing Western clothing stimulated desire and helped to incorporate American influences in early postwar society.

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[77] *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, January 1949, 8.

[78] *Camera*, March 1948, 9.

Advertising photography combines close-ups, naturalism, and glamour "to encourage desire that" is "transmuted to the product through advertisement."[79] The photograph of the women wearing a pearl necklace and dark blazer previously mentioned, for example, uses close cropping to focus the eye on American products in the image. By linking elements of American culture to the idea of luxury or glamour, the images in photography magazines invoked the idea of material wealth and thus developed dreams and desires of American culture.[80]

Depicting subjects doing everyday activities is another technique used by advertising photography to encourage desire. One image from *Amachua* shows a small family enjoying time together in the comfortable surroundings of their home (fig. 3.13).[81] The mother sits at a piano in the background wearing a dark Western-style dress, her hands poised above the ivory keys. Her husband reclines in a plush, upholstered chair, on the right side of the image, wearing a light suit and reading a newspaper while his wife plays the piano. A young boy on the floor, dressed in a T-shirt and pants, leans back against his father's chair. By zooming in on the scene, the photographer emphasizes the intimacy of the setting, while at the same time affording the viewer a better look at the various Western objects arranged throughout the frame. The familiar setting of the inside of a home allows the viewer to easily identify with those pictured, as well as to image him or herself in a similar scene. Furthermore, considering that many Japanese were still struggling in a *kyodatsu* society when this image was published in 1949, one can imagine how the lush, comfortable setting, filled with a family carrying out daily activities, had the potential to arouse desire for those unable to afford such luxury.

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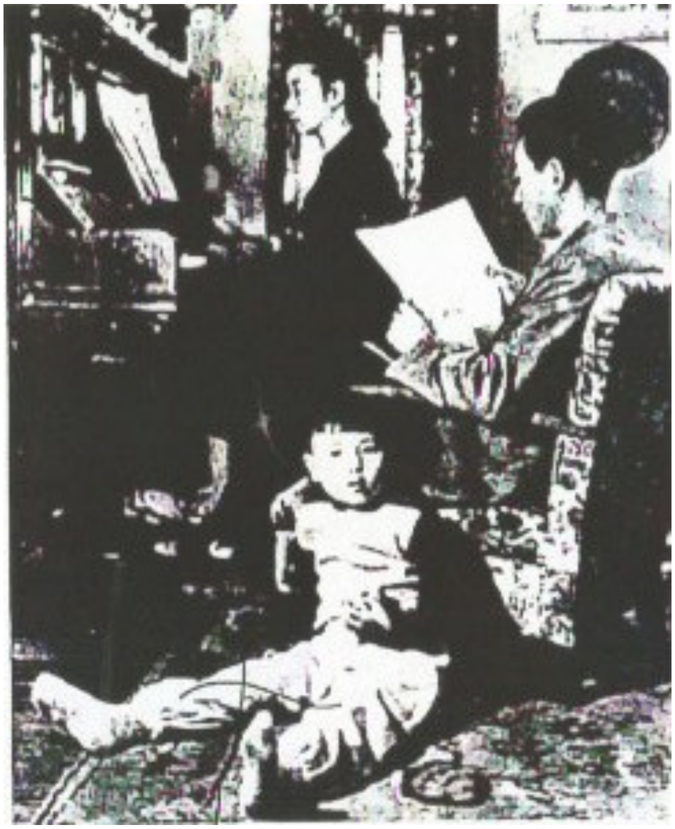
[79] Ramamurthy, Spectacles and Illusions: Photography and Commodity Culture," 218.

[80] Ibid.

[81] *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, February 1949, 11.

American influence was part of a "dynamic process" of identity formation in postwar Japanese society, partially facilitated by a sense of desire. Sociologist Yoshimi Shunya has researched this process within the context of physical urban space. More specifically, he examines how areas with a large concentration of Americans during the Occupation, such as Roppongi and Harajuku, became centers of consumer culture after the Occupation, thus turning America into objects of consumption. With their positive, glamorous portrayal of American culture, photography magazines also served as a vehicle for the infusion of American culture into postwar Japanese life.

FIGURE 3.13. Inside a Japanese home. Photograph. From *Amateur Shashin Sōsho*. February 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



Blending Japanese and Western Culture in a New Postwar Society

At the end of World War Two Japan experienced something of an identity crisis brought about by the country's defeat in the war and by the Allied Occupation that followed. Recent scholarship, however, has cautioned against drawing a distinct line between pre- and postwar Japan. Nevertheless, as Sharalyn Orbaugh argues, those living in Japan in 1945 felt that their previously familiar way of life seemed to have been turned completely upside down.[82] The destruction of their political, social, and cultural institutions—entities that continuously shape and reshape how populations define themselves—at the end of the war forced a major identity crisis upon the Japanese. The radical changes brought about by the Allied Occupation exacerbated the demise of these familiar institutions, making the process of constructing and (re)constructing identity in such "epistemologically chaotic times" an especially challenging endeavor.[83]

One can follow the struggle during the "epistemologically chaotic times" of the Occupation through literature. Science fiction author Abe Kōbō continuously drew on themes of transformation, the questioning of reality and established values, confusion, and identity. A collection of his short stories, *Beyond the Curve*, illustrates a number of these themes. "Dendrocacalia" is a story about a man named Common who keeps turning into a flower. His transformation into a plant occurs spontaneously and without his control, stripping him of agency and leaving him neither aware nor in control of his own body. In another story, "The Crime of Mr. S. Karma," Abe plays with the question of identity by featuring a protagonist who loses his business cards (*meishi*), without which he has no identity or concept of self.

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[82] Sharalyn Orbaugh, *Japanese Fiction of the Allied Occupation*, 7.

[83] Ibid., 53–58.

The last story, "Beyond the Curve," begins with a man walking home, traveling down a road that he "knew like the back of [his] hand." He continues:

> But unexpectedly, I had come to a halt. As if springs in the air were holding me back. As if recoiling from my oddly vivid impression of this hillside scene—a scene I'd never paid the slightest attention to before. Of course I had some notion of why I had stopped, but it was hard to believe: For the life of me, I couldn't visualize what lay beyond the curve—scenery that I surely knew as well as that now confronting me.[84]

In this story, Abe creates a protagonist who experiences a lapse of memory. The man knows what lies beyond the curve in the road, but is unable to picture it in his mind. He remains frozen on the hillside, unsure of how to proceed and afraid to advance further. Aware that he is losing his identity, the man experiences nausea, dizziness, and desolation. He has "mislaid" himself, unable to remember where he works. Even his own name remains elusive. Suffering from amnesia, the protagonist struggles to remember who he is and his past, which lies just "beyond the curve" of his mind. Such questioning of identity was a difficulty faced by many Japanese in the early postwar years.

The Occupation played a large role in the postwar (re)construction of Japanese identity. In addition to coming into constant contact with Occupation servicemen and American culture in cities such as Tokyo, Japanese also saw Western culture in publications such as photography magazines. Indeed, the consumption of images is particularly important, as it facilitates the process of identity formation. According to psychoanalytic theory, images provide the viewer with a means of identification. This is done through the process of assimilating "an aspect, property or attribute of that which is seen, and is transformed, wholly or partially, after the model which the other – in this instance the image – provides.[85] In the case of postwar photography magazines, the Japanese readers were presented with elements of both Western and traditional Japanese imagery. Rather than compete with one another, however, the visual representation of both cultures worked in tandem to facilitate the incorporation of American influence into a new postwar Japanese identity.

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[84] Kōbō Abe, *Beyond the Curve*, first edition (Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International; New York, 1991), 224.

While many Japanese consciously acknowledged the traditional-modern dichotomy, there was no clear dividing line between traditional and modern.[86] Indeed, it would be wrong to assume that the Japanese wholly abandoned traditional customs when faced with the influx of foreign culture during the Occupation. We have seen how the positive portrayal of Western material wealth, chiefly through clothing, facilitated the desire for American products. But traditional Japanese elements, such as *bunraku* puppet theater and Noh masks, also appear in the magazines.

It was common for images displaying distinctively Western elements to be placed alongside others showcasing Japanese traditions. The Japanese-American dichotomy is juxtaposed with two images of female models in a March 1947 issue of *Camera* (fig. 3.14).[87] On the left page, the picture shows a woman standing in the center of the image, her face framed by a fashionable Western hairstyle. A soft light falls across her face, which gazes pensively to the left of the frame. A white, decorative lace collar forms a sharp contrast to her dark dress, while also adding an air of lightness that counters the solemnity expressed by the model. The woman's white gloves, clutching something just above her right hip, match the elegance of the lace collar.

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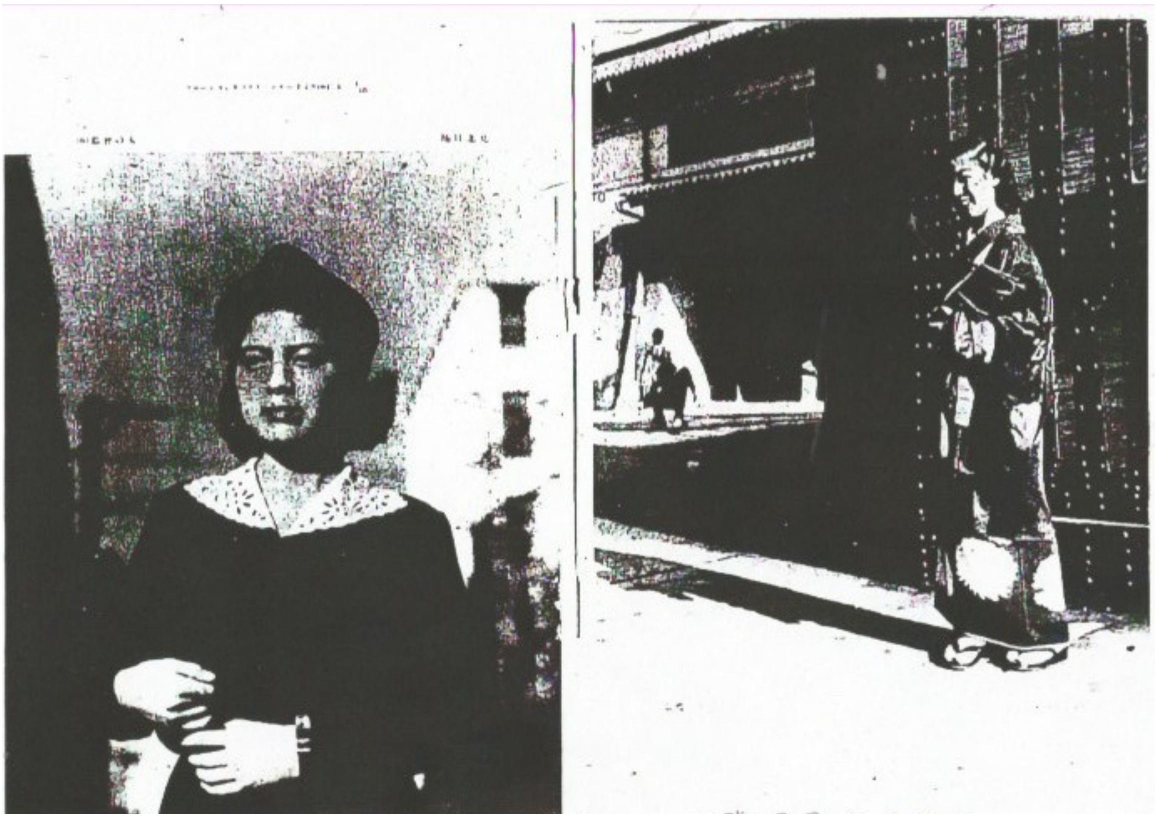
[85] Liz Wells, "On and Beyond the White Walls: Photography as Art," in *Photography: A Critical Introduction,* 294.

[86] Ronald P. Dore, *City Life in Japan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 87.

[87] *Camera*, March 1947, 7-8.

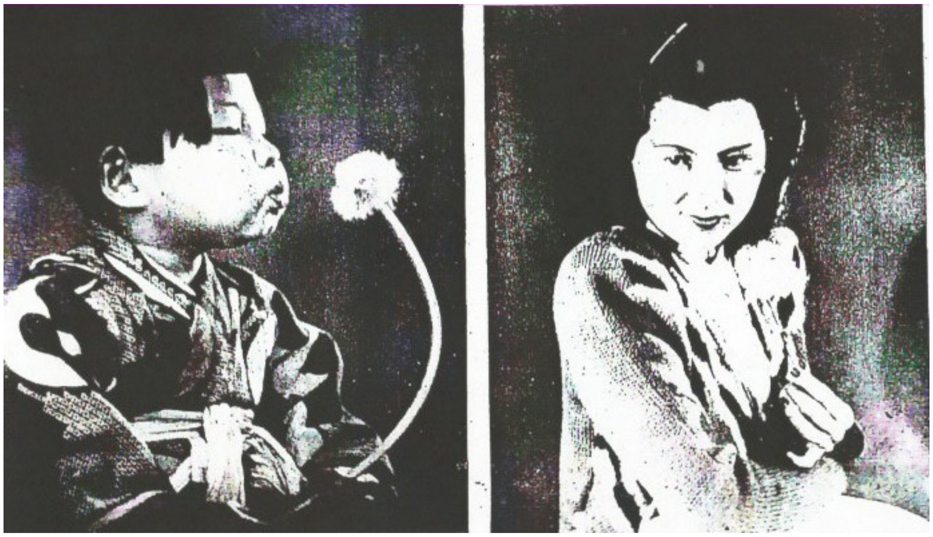
In contrast to this study in modern imagery, the photograph on the right page depicts a woman transformed by tradition. She stands in a dark, floral kimono, geta, and traditional Japanese hairstyle. While the photographer did not reveal enough of the background to disclose the location, the young woman poses in front of a gate typically found in a Buddhist temple or castle complex. By placing these images side-by-side, the editors show how the Japanese retained traditional culture in one instance while at the same time dressed in the clothing of the American Occupiers in another.

FIGURE 3.14. Two women posing in Western and Japanese clothing. Photograph. From *Camera.* March 1947. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



Juxtapositions between American material culture and traditional Japanese elements were no rare occurrence. In a photograph published in *Shashin Techō*, the viewer sees a small child who encapsulates traditional Japan (fig. 3.15). [88] Upon looking at the image, the viewer's eyes fall first on the child's face, noticing its puffed-out cheeks as the youth blows on the dandelion gripped in its hand. Following the child's pursed lips, frozen in a moment of blowing air, the viewer next observes the small, bright dandelion. The arc of the flower's stem directs the eye back to the child, inviting the viewer to examine the details of the traditional clothing, the element that most prominently sets the youth apart from the model on the next page. In stark contrast to the child's kimono, the woman wears a knit cardigan and white button-up blouse. Her lips are painted darkly with lipstick, and her short, black hair is fastened with a shiny barrette. Like the images of the woman in a kimono and dark Western dress in *Camera*, these two images reflect the cultural mixing that was occurring during the Occupation.

FIGURE 3.15. A young child and a woman in Western and Japanese clothing. Photograph. From *Shashin Techō.* July 1949. Used with permission from the Gordon W. Prange Collection. University of California, Los Angeles. Los Angeles, California.



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[88] *Shashin Techō*, September 1949, 26-27.

It is interesting to note that few images show traditional Japanese clothing or customs that are depicted in a way that conveys the idea of material wealth. While none of the images show obvious instances of poverty, as was popular subject matter under the realism movement of the early 1950s, neither do they associate traditional Japanese clothing and customs with prosperity. An image of *bunraku* theater,[89] for instance, clearly depicts traditional Japanese culture, but the stage and puppet master are austere. Another image from *Camera* shows a group of people standing outside traditional Japanese houses with thatch and tiled roofing.[90] The houses appear clean and sturdily built, but when compared to an image of tall buildings lit up at night, as appears in one issue of *Shashin*,[91] the houses pale in comparison.

While many Japanese initially looked at the wealth of American consumer culture as a promise for what Japan could become, consumerist values eventually became a source of unease for some. The loss of traditional values was especially evident in the so-called après-guerre generation, a group infamous for their loss of respect for authority, degenerate lifestyles, and "extreme egoism."[92] Eventually the focus on both Western consumer products and a traditional Japanese way of life led to what Edward Seidensticker calls the "double life." He states, "The double life is at best an expense and an inconvenience, we are told, and at worst a torment, leading to crises of identity and such things."[93] This sense of unease in response to foreign culture became especially prevalent during the Era of High-Speed Growth (1955-1970), and the impact of social, economic, and political changes during this time would influence photographers to begin photographing these changes in an increasingly critical, negative way.

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[89] Domon Ken, photographer, *Camera*, January 1947.

[90] *Camera*, September 1946, n.p.

[91] *Shashin Techō*, July 1949, 3.

[92] Chapman, *Inventing Japan*, 51.

[93] Seidensticker, *Tokyo Rising*, 90.

Towards Objective Realism

By the 1950s, Japanese cultural critics were speaking of a Japanese-American cultural hybridity. But in postwar photography magazines, this hybridity existed as early as 1946. The constant juxtaposition of traditional Japanese imagery against objects associated with America contributed to the formation of a postwar Japanese identity that incorporated elements of both cultures, while helping to assimilate the influx of this foreign influence. Such foreign influences were chiefly represented in early postwar photography magazines in the form of men, women, and children dressed in Western attire. This fixation and positive portrayal of American culture helped to facilitate the desire of American material wealth in postwar society. In this way, the images can be compared to advertisements that helped to "sell" American culture.

The Occupation as a whole had a profound impact on photography magazines. Even though the magazines do not show scenes of a devastated postwar society, images nevertheless depict the reality of the effect of American culture and Occupation political, economic, and social reforms. The absence of martial imagery speaks to the demilitarization policies of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP). Images of healthy bodies and undamaged urban landscapes, meanwhile, promoted democratic ideals. The Occupation also influenced photography magazines through censorship controls. When combined with the loss of a dynamic city as a result of U.S. bombing raids that ravaged urban centers, this led to the loss of street photography from the pages of the magazines. Instead, photographers favored portraits, rural landscapes, and still life, popular subjects under the early twentieth-century Pictorialism genre. At the same time, a straightforward photographic approach to depicting subjects established an apparent break from Pictorialism. Indeed, depicting subjects in a clear, direct manner links the images in early postwar magazines with the prewar New Photography and the postwar 1950s realism movement.

Despite the concern with visual form in photography magazines of the late 1940s, a shift began to occur as Japan transitioned into a new decade. SCAP officially ceased censorship of print media in 1949. Around the same time, photojournalist and street photographer Kuwabara Kineo became the editor of *Camera* magazine. These two factors proved to be pivotal in the development of postwar photography. Even though the magazines omitted images of wartime devastation as a way to create distance from postwar society, once censorship controls ended many Japanese photographers took the opportunity to begin to confront and make sense of their wartime past. Kuwabara proved influential in this regard, as his background in the New Photography movement as well as his work as a documentary photographer helped to set up photography magazine *Camera* as a vehicle for the postwar realism movement. But perhaps even more importantly, Kuwabara had strong connections with documentary photographer Domon Ken, the man who would almost single-handedly push Japan into the realism movement in 1950.

CHAPTER IV

OCCUPIED CITY: PHOTOGRAPHY, OBJECTIVE REALISM, AND THE RUINS OF TOKYO

Japanese photography magazines and other publications produced between 1945 and 1949 made a concentrated effort to avoid mention of World War Two, war devastation, and the Allied Occupation. In 1950, however, documentary photographer Domon Ken called on photographers to confront reality directly. His realist manifesto, published in an issue of the photography magazine *Camera*, placed emphasis on the “absolutely unstaged snapshot” as the only way to represent “societal reality.”[1] Domon’s version of realism, labeled as “objective realism” by curator Alexandra Munroe because of Domon’s emphasis on pursing the objective truth of the subject, portrayed Tokyo’s postwar reality—prostitutes, black markets and ration lines, repatriated soldiers, and *kasutori* culture (days in the dregs)—starkly and transparently.

Given that Japan surrendered in 1945 and that society was beginning to recover by 1950, why did Domon and others wait five years after Japan’s surrender to start photographing and publishing photographs of the devastated social conditions that were a direct result of the war? This chapter looks at the development of objective realism as it relates to the wartime experience of censorship and propaganda, as well as the dismal living conditions of a devastated postwar society under the Allied Occupation. First, it examines Domon’s experience as a propaganda photographer and defines his version of the realist aesthetic. Next, this chapter takes into account the role of censorship and propaganda in influencing photographers to turn to the “real” in postwar society, followed by an analysis of common motifs in postwar realism. Here again the link between objective realism and propaganda becomes important, as the photographs demonstrate an inversion of wartime propaganda ideals. This chapter concludes with an examination of realism's popularity among amateur photographers by drawing on the work of Susan Sontag's *On Photography* in order to demonstrate that amateurs turned to photography as both a defense against anxiety and as a way to exert control over the precarious living conditions in a society ravaged by war.

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[1] Domon Ken, “Photographic Realism and the Salon Picture,” trans. Ivan Vartanian, in *Setting Sun*, 22. Originally published in *Camera*, vol. 18, 1953.

The influence of Japan's experience with censorship and propaganda during the war was an important element in the development of the postwar realism movement. It had an especially strong impact on Domon, who felt that objective realism was the only way to confront and represent reality. For others, ironically, realism became a way to create distance from dismal postwar conditions. Indeed, Domon's lofty ideals for objective realism fell short in the hands of amateur photographers. Domon believed their images to be contrived and too intensely focused on so-called "beggar photography," leading the famous photographer to publicly declare an end to the realism movement in 1954.

Domon Ken and Objective Realism

Born in Sakata-cho, Yamagata Prefecture in 1909, Domon Ken moved to Tokyo in 1916 and began work as an apprentice in Ueno in 1933. In 1935 he joined Nihon Kōbō[2] as a staff photographer for *Nippon* magazine, at which time he established connections with photojournalist and propaganda photographer Natori Yōnosuke. His first job for the magazine was to photograph children, one of the major themes of his career, for the *shichi-san-go* (7-3-5) coming-of-age ceremony.[3] Domon left Nihon Kōbō in 1939 to work for the International Culture Promotion Association (*Kokusai Bunka Shinkoka*), where he would remain until 1943.[4] After the war Domon became highly active photographing in the streets of Tokyo. His experience photographing early postwar Japanese society, along with his training as a photojournalist and work for various propaganda organizations, influenced Domon in his development of a realism aesthetic that was focused intensely on uncovering reality.

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[2] Nihon Kōbō consisted of photographers and journalists, including Natori Yōnosuke, who promoted wartime propaganda in periodicals such as *Nippon* and *FRONT*. See Barak Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 75–76.

The postwar realism movement championed by Domon developed out of prewar trends in photojournalism that had been imported from Germany in the 1930s. While "realism," "documentary photography," and "photojournalism" are usually considered interchangeable terms, the Japanese postwar realism movement cannot rightly be classified as photojournalism or documentary photography.[5] Documentary photography is similar to realism in that, as an act of storytelling, it seeks to capture life. What separates it from Domon's objective realism is the former's use as a tool of social investigation. That is, documentary photographers have a calculated message that seeks to instigate social reform. In contrast, Japanese photographers operating under objective realism were not actively trying to engender social change or otherwise bring attention to the plight of the disadvantaged and suffering population. After all, virtually every member of society was suffering from the devastating effects of a long war.

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[3] This festival, a national holiday that celebrates the growth of children, is held for three- and seven-year-old girls and three- and five-year old boys every year on November 15.

[4] Philbert Ono, "Domon Ken," last modified March 1, 2008, http://photoguide.jp/txt/Domon_Ken.

[5] Thomas, "Power Made Visible: Photography and Postwar Japan's Elusive Reality," 369.

Neither was the work of Domon and others strictly photojournalism. This type of photography places emphasis on one singular moment and contributes to news media. Instead, the postwar realism movement can be more accurately classified as "explanatory photography." As explained by Terry Barrett, this type of photography:

> Deal[s] with subject matter that is specific to a particular time and place and that can be dated by visual evidence within the photograph. Formally, these photographs usually use an angle of view that places the subject in a social context; they are usually printed so that details are not lost in tones that are too dark; and they favor a contrast range that can be duplicated clearly in the inks of offset printing.[6]

Explanatory photography records the day-to-day existence of life, but it is neither an attempt to produce social change, like documentary images, nor is it produced for news media like photojournalism. In a similar manner to street photography, it capitalizes on "unmanipulated" scenes, a hallmark of Domon's realist photography.[7] In the early years after the end of the war, Domon pushed realism to the extremes of objectivity, developing his notion of an "absolutely unstaged" snapshot that was devoid of any attempt to pose or otherwise manipulate the scene .[8] Domon's idea of the "absolutely unstaged" began in 1943 when he participated in a roundtable discussion with ethnographer Yanagita Kunio. During this discussion, the famous ethnographer put forth the idea of a “snapshot” taken without any direction from the photographer.[9] Domon at first thought Yanagita’s proposition ludicrous, but the photographer’s experience with wartime propaganda eventually led him to embrace and develop the idea.

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[6] Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs*, 64.

[7] Timothy R. Gleason, "The Communicative Roles of Street and Social Landscape Photography," *SIMILE: Studies In Media & Information Literacy Education* 8 (2008): 6–7. doi:10.3138/sim.8.4.003.

[8] Naturally, not all photographers adhered to Domon's strict "absolutely unstaged" philosophy, even as they strove to be objective. For instance, while Kimura Ihee also favored the objective side of realism, he did not pursue the matter with the same relentless intensity as Domon. Additionally, it is important to realize that, despite the best efforts to remain completely objective, humans are still influenced by subconscious forces that result in a certain degree of subjectivity. In looking at these images photographed under the aegis of realism, the intent is to not evaluate how successful the photographers were in achieving objectivity, but rather to examine the forces that influenced them to pursue objectivity to its most extreme form.

In his postwar writing, Domon argued that the act of engineering a staged scene like those in propaganda images created a “falseness” in the photograph that weakened its foundations. He further held that posing subjects ultimately resulted in a “defilement” that ruined the final product. Photographing subjects candidly, in his view, was a way to avoid such defilement. Indeed, Domon believed realism to be the only legitimate photographic technique for postwar society, stating that the public wanted to see the “real” after being deceived by the wartime government.[10] Domon’s work as a propaganda photographer was critical for his embrace of realism, including the snapshot and the development of his philosophy of the “absolutely unstaged” image.

In pursuing reality, Domon strove to uncover the “truth” of the photographed subject. He described realism as “strictly a realm in which only the objective truth in the subject motif is pursued, not the subjective image or fantasy of the artist.” Domon asserted the need to establish a “direct connection between the camera and the subject,” which was achieved by “pay[ing] attention to the screaming voice of the subject and simply operat[ing] the camera exactly according to its indications.”[11] Domon relegated the photographer to a secondary role in the picture-taking process, instead emphasizing the subject and the relationship between subject and camera. According to Domon, it was only in silencing his own voice that the photographer allowed the objective truth to come through in the final product.

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[9] Edward Putzar, “The Reality of Domon Ken,” *Japan Quarterly* 41 (1994): 313.

[10] Frank Feltens, “’Realist’ Betweenness and Collective Victims: Domon Ken’s Hiroshima,” Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs. 1 (2001): 64.

[11] Iizawa Kōtarō, “The Evolution of Postwar Photography,” in *The History of Japanese Photography*, 211.

This practice of uncovering the truth by concentrating on the “screaming voice” of the subject provided a means of confronting Japan’s postwar reality, something that Domon felt was of utmost importance if Japan was truly to recover from wartime and postwar trauma. In one essay Domon used two photography exhibitions[12] in Ginza to highlight the importance of realism’s ability to confront reality in postwar society.[13] Domon was shocked when he first saw the exhibits. His astonishment came not from what was in the photos, but rather what was absent. Displayed only ten years after the end of World War Two, neither exhibition featured photographs from the war period or social conditions during the Occupation. “As I walked along the gallery walls, it was as if I were seeing a dream,” wrote Domon, “but it was no illusion.”

The “dream” created by looking at images devoid of the effects of war on society haunted Domon. The photographer was perhaps fearful that a complete disregard of Japan’s war experience opened the opportunity for the past to repeat itself. Similar to artist Matsumoto Shunsuke, who wrote that it “is absolutely necessary that we do not continue this tendency to look the other way”[14] in reference to Japan’s wartime past, Domon felt that it was necessary for postwar Japanese citizens to look at reality directly, no matter how painful that view might be.

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[12] One was an exhibition by *Shudan Foto*, and the other by *Nihon Shashin Kai* (Japanese Photography Association).

[13] Domon, “Photographic Realism and the Salon Picture,” 25–27.

[14] Matsumoto Shunsuke, “A Proposal to the Artists of Japan,” 22–30.

Domon's embrace of realism also stemmed from his belief that images ignoring reality run the risk of trapping the viewer in the past. Realism, however, had the potential to establish a direct connection to society as well as the power to propel reality in a better direction. In other words, Domon believed that if photographers could push realism to the extremes of objectivity, the aesthetic could provide a way to acknowledge and move past the dire straits of postwar Tokyo. Domon realized, of course, that photographic images do not have the power to alleviate wretched social conditions. Nevertheless, he advocated for the use of objective realism as a means of liberation, a way in which the Japanese could confront and take stock of Tokyo's postwar reality that persisted into the early 1950s. "Realism," Domon wrote, "is the raising of one's eyes to look to the future."

Not all photographers agreed with Domon's views on realism. "Subjective realism," examined in chapter five, was a counterpoint to Domon's objective approach that favored the perspective of the photographer by allowing him to interject his own emotions into the image. Some photographers placed emphasis on their individual viewpoint because they believed that a truly objective approach was impossible. While less concerned with capturing the truth of the subject in purely objective terms, subjective realist photographers focused nonetheless on the realities of postwar Tokyo. Domon felt that photographers rooted in subjectivity were far too conservative, getting lost in the safety of subjectivity and refusing to confront reality. He even went so far as to call their posed scenes "tantamount to mental masturbation."[15] Domon used his status as a famous photographer and his role as judge of *Camera* magazine's monthly competition to spread objective realism's popularity amongst amateur and professional photographers. While many photographers failed to achieve the purely objective image that Domon called for, realism still came to dominate photography in the early 1950s because of his efforts.

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[15] Domon, "Photographic Realism and the Salon Picture," 25.

Reacting to Censorship and Propaganda

What caused photographers to begin to emphasize the social conditions of postwar Tokyo around 1950, especially when the previous five years were virtually devoid of such imagery? The rise of Domon's objective realism and its spread among amateur photographers is linked to Occupation-era censorship, as well as wartime propaganda. Official Occupation-imposed censorship ended in 1949, paving the way for greater freedom of expression in media publications and among intellectuals and artists. Additionally, photographers such as Domon turned to realism in an attempt to atone for their involvement in creating wartime propaganda.[16] Furthermore, in turning to realism and focusing on a devastated society, photographers inverted many of the wartime ideals embedded in the propaganda that they had created for Japan's wartime government.

Chapter two examines the effects of Occupation-imposed censorship and self-censorship on erasing images of the war and war-related devastation from early photography magazines. When these modes of censorship ended in 1949, photographers gained greater freedom in recording and publishing images of the streets of Tokyo and other areas destroyed by the war. The State Department instigated the move to cease the suppression of information, afraid that it had "the effect of continuing the authoritarian tradition in Japan." This notion was further reinforced by the U.S. National Security

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[16] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 23.

Council's Cold War manifesto, which stated that censorship would only alienate Japan, resulting in the loss of an anti-Communist ally.[17]

Despite the end of official censorship, however, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) continued to monitor the circulation of information in everything from newspapers to film and even *kamishibai* (picture-card shows) street shows.[18] Even though SCAP still kept close tabs on published material after 1949, the focus shifted from targeting war devastation and militarism to cracking down on Communism and Soviet propaganda.[19] Self-censorship also continued to plague some editors until the end of the Occupation in 1952. As historian Takemae Eiji explains, Japan's long legacy of censorship controls, in addition to censorship under the Occupation, made self-censorship a "conditioned reflex" among editors of newspapers and magazines. Nevertheless, the termination of official Occupation-imposed censorship from 1949 gave the media greater freedom to produce previously proscribed information, resulting in the circulation of a wider range of information than had existed during the first half of the Allied Occupation.

While the end of censorship controls gave editors the opportunity to publish materials with greater freedom, the development of Domon's objective realism and its popularity among professional photographers is closely linked to their involvement in wartime propaganda. Indeed, as Andrea Germer argues, many of these photographers were directly responsible for initiating propaganda.[20] Germer places the prominent photojournalist Natori Yōnosuke in the forefront of this development, stating that he and "his team were actively reproducing and 'designing' the lies that the Japanese government and Imperial Army invented."[21] Natori became so closely linked to the Japanese government that it funded the photographer's press office in Shanghai, despite the fact that it was illegal for foreign media to accompany the Army. In order to get around this roadblock, Natori disguised his office as a private institution.[22]

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[17] Takemae Eiji, *Inside GHQ*, 391.

[18] Information relating to the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki remained strictly off-limits. Writing about his images of Hiroshima, Domon states, "For several years immediately after the war's end, the occupation authorities did not permit us to make even the least hint of the bomb. . . I [sic] was only after the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty on September 9, 1951 that photographs, drawings, poems, novels, and personal notes dealing with the atom bomb disaster saw the light of day." From more of Domon's images and writings on Hiroshima, see Domon, *Hiroshima* (Tōkyō: Kenkōsha, 1958).

[19] Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 393.

While photographers such as Natori openly embraced the creation of propaganda images, most had no choice but to offer their contribution in a society that was increasingly geared towards war. Domon, with his work for *Nippon* magazine and the International Culture Promotion Association, was no exception. In spite of his work for these organizations, Domon remained quite outspoken against the use of propaganda. He even voiced his opinions in a September 1943 issue of *Nihon Hyōron* (*Critique Japan*), writing that magazines should not be used as media for government propaganda.[23] Domon lost his job with the International Culture Promotion Association as a result of his outspokenness, and the government banned the issue of *Nihon Hyōron*.[24]

Some of Domon's most famous propaganda photographs come from a series on Red Cross nurses. One particularly poignant image embodies the wartime ideals of harmony and solidarity common in propaganda publications (fig. 4.1).[25] The photograph shows two figures, both dressed in white robes, facing away from the viewer. On the left stands a wounded soldier, hunched over in a visible effort to walk across the hospital lawn. His right arm is draped across the shoulders of the nurse, while his left hand, balled into a fist, suggests the effort exerted in trying to walk. Indeed, were it not for the Red Cross nurse supporting him, he might not be able to do so. Other images in the same series show nurses in various acts of attending to wounded soldiers.[26] The women change bandages, provide food, and even arrange flowers at the soldiers' bedsides. Taken together, these photographs stand in stark contrast to Domon's postwar images of ostracized repatriated soldiers begging on the streets of Tokyo.

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[20] Andrea Germer, "Visual Propaganda in Wartime East Asia—The Case of Natori Yōnosuke," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*. 9 (2011): 16, accessed January 16, 2015. http://japanfocus.org/.

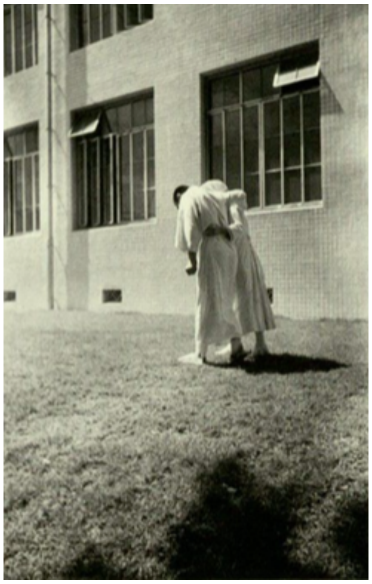
[21] Ibid., 25.

[22] Ibid., 17-18.

[23] Putzar, "The Reality of Domon Ken," 313.

[24] Ibid.

FIGURE 4.1. Domon Ken, photographer. Photograph. A Red Cross nurse and a wounded Japanese soldier. From *Natori Yōnosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"* (*Natori Yōnosuke and Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"*). Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006.



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[25] Reprinted in Shirayama Mari and Yoshio Hori, eds. *Natori Yōnosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"* (*Natori Yōnosuke and Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"*) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006), 64–67.

[26] For more images from this series, see Shirayama Mari and Yoshio Hori, eds. *Natori Yōnosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"* (*Natori Yōnosuke and Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"*) and Domon, *Domon Ken no Shōwa* (*The Showa Era of Domon Ken*) (Tokyo: Kurevisu, 2010).

Government propaganda during the war overwhelmingly depicted healthy Japanese happily contributing to the war effort like Domon's Red Cross nurses. Such imagery often contrasted sharply with first-hand accounts from citizens that describe exhausting work in factories and severe food shortages.[27] *Shashin Shūhō* (*Pictorial Weekly*), published by the Information Department of the Cabinet from 1937 to 1945, was one of the more prominent propaganda magazines that glorified the ideal soldier and citizen living and working for the war. To give one example, a two-page spread from a 1943 issue shows various ways men and women could simplify their wardrobe, thereby saving material for the war effort.[28] A caption under a woman in summer clothing points to wearing short pants and foregoing the use of socks as a way to dress more simply. Such calls to economize on dress were part of the larger "extravagance is the enemy" rhetoric espoused by the government. This was done to instill the notion of self-sacrifice as a way to provide for total war. The cover of this same issue further illustrates the Japanese government's use of propaganda: two young boys with hoes over their shoulders and dressed in military attire grin broadly. Their appearance indicates that they that they too, although too young to join the army, can still contribute to the fight at home. The bright smiles on their faces further suggest Japanese youth working joyfully on behalf of the war.

This disconnect with reality found in magazines like *Shashin Shūhō* continued in early postwar photography magazines, as censorship and self-censorship resulted in the absence of images of a destitute postwar society. Once photographers were able to record images more freely, however, they focused on the destroyed urban areas and suffering citizens. Directing their attention to social ills was in part a response to Japan's wartime fascist era.[29] The turn to realism, in other words, can be explained as an attempt by photographers to make amends for their complicity in producing propaganda.[30] Domon's use of the "absolutely unstaged" image in particular can be seen as an attempt to erase the guilt he felt for submitting engineered scenes to propaganda magazines such as *Nippon*. Rather than photograph images of kamikaze pilots posing next to their planes, or Red Cross nurses assisting wounded soldiers, Domon's postwar images capture marginalized men and women struggling to survive.

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[27] For details of a high school girl who worked in a balloon bomb factory, see Tanaka Tetsuku, "Making Balloon Bombs," in *Japan at War: An Oral History*, ed. Haruko Tara Cook and Theodore F. Cook (New York: The New Press, 1993), 187–192.

[28] *Shashin Shūhō* (*Pictorial Weekly*) July 7, 1943, n.p.

The second way that propaganda influenced objective realism concerns the subject matter favored by realist photographers. Many of the subjects popular under the genre, such as prostitutes and black markets, were an inversion of the ideals espoused by the Japanese wartime military government.[31] Such ideals included loyalty, female chastity, discipline, harmony and the concept of the body as "iron-hard and intact."[32] Propaganda photographers used soldiers, women, and children to illustrate these values, and further capitalized on images of the city as a place of industrial might capable of fueling the Japanese military machine.

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[29] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 23.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Orbaugh, *Japanese Fiction of the Allied Occupation*, 475–477.

[32] Sharalyn Orbaugh discusses the inversion of wartime ideals in early postwar literature, stating that wartime devastation and the occupation made themes of wartime propaganda hard to sustain. For example, she states that Shimao Toshio draws on the idea of "dirty blood" in order "to address the general loss of the belief in the spiritual purity of the imagined Japanese social body, and also the loss of the sense of the integrity of the family, with blood symbolizing heredity. Ibid., 474–484.

Natori Yōnosuke's *Gross-Japan* (*Dai Nippon*) depicts many of the wartime ideals perpetuated by the military government. Published in 1937, the book was intended to spread knowledge of Japanese culture and national achievements among a Nazi German audience.[33] *Gross-Japan* consists of 41 themes, including agriculture, *undōkai* (sports day), family life, medicine, and traditional arts.[34] Natori's photographs highlight traditional Japanese customs such as martial arts and the tea ceremony. At the same time, Natori included images of factories, coverts to Christianity, and people in Western attire in order to project the idea of Japan as an industrialized, advanced, and civilized nation.

Soldiers, women, children, industry, and agriculture are given a prominent place in *Gross-Japan*. Soldiers appear clean, healthy, and strong. Some images show men dressed smartly in their military uniforms. Others reveal bare chested soldiers performing group exercises. In one such image, Natori skillfully combines form and content to evoke the image of a strong, socially cohesive Japan (fig. 4.2). The photograph shows soldiers performing exercises on the roof of a building. Their ranks are set at an angle to the framing of the image, creating a striking and dynamic composition. The strong lines formed by the rows of young men and their linked arms suggests a sense of strength and solidarity that is further replicated by lines of a multi-storied ferroconcrete building in the background. People and objects arranged in orderly lines is a motif that appears frequently in Natori's pictures, instilling in the viewer the idea of military precision and an efficient, ordered nation. Farmers, for example, appear in one image wearing identical clothing and hats, gripping their hoes in subtle imitation of soldiers standing at attention with their guns.

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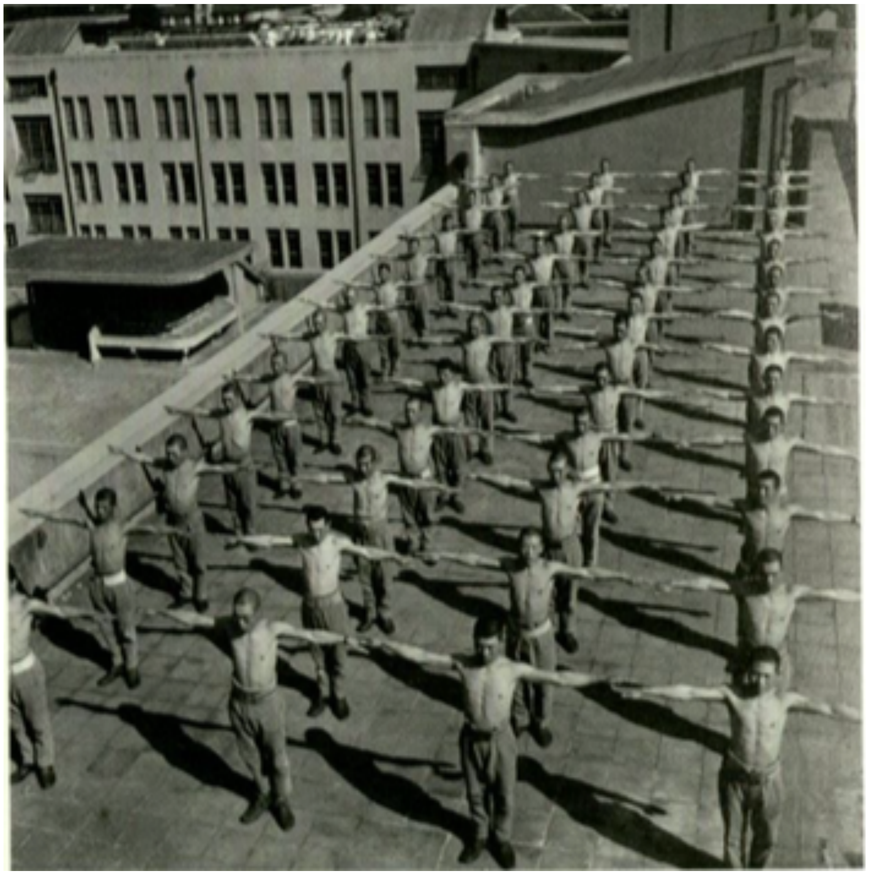
[33] "Gross-Japan (Dai Nippon) - Yōnosuke Natori," *Propagandaphotos*, accessed January 19, 2015, https://propagandaphotos.wordpress.com/2012/09/29/gross-japan-dai-nippon-younosuke-natori/.

[34] Shirayama and Yoshio, *Natori Yōnosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"* (*Natori Yōnosuke and Nippon Kōbō, "1931-1945"*), 42–46.

FIGURE 4.2. Natori Yōnosuke, photographer. Photograph. Soldiers exercising. From *Natori Yōnosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"* (*Natori Yōnosuke and Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"*).



In addition to soldiers, the pages of *Gross-Japan* are filled with children and women, whose appearance provides a sharp contrast to images of war orphans and prostitutes on the streets of Tokyo after Japan's surrender. Images of energetic children running on a field and playing tug of war during *undōkai* express youthful vitality. Other photos capture youth enjoying lunch together or studying diligently at their school desks. Women are pictured in both kimono and Western dress, invoking tradition while at the same time expressing the idea of a modern, civilized population. Whether in kimono or

Western fashion, Natori's photographs of women convey the ideal of modesty and chastity. Natori even photographed some women performing karate, demonstrating that all citizens exemplified the martial spirit of Japan.

In contrast to images of urban areas defined by smoldering ruins and scarred buildings favored by postwar realist photographers, Natori's images of the city show tall buildings and a dense, flourishing urban environment. The photographer captured smokestacks and railroads, symbols inextricably tied to the idea of an advanced, industrialized nation. It is interesting to note that Natori took many of his urban photographs from an aerial perspective, downplaying the human element while instead emphasizing the power, permanence, and modernity of the city.

The photographs of Natori and Domon, together with publications such as *Shashin Shūhō*, are emblematic of most propaganda during the war. The images aimed to showcase model Japanese citizens united in the war effort, and those who embodied ideals such as harmony, chastity, and discipline.

Common Motifs in Objective Realism

In contrast to wartime propaganda ideals, postwar realism focused on wounded and homeless repatriated soldiers. Prints of prostitutes flew in the face of wartime notions of chastity, while images of people crowding around black markets broke down the ideals of discipline, harmony, and agricultural abundance. Taken together, these images of prostitutes, war orphans, black markets, and soldiers returned from fighting overseas comprised a major part of Tokyo's postwar reality. They became the central focus of Domon's realism, creating a narrative of defeat that came to characterize both the early postwar years and the genre of objective realism itself.

In addition to the above themes found in objective realism, many photographers also focused on the American Occupation forces then living in Tokyo. Their presence, at first a shock in its own right, led to many visible changes in the city. For example, signs in English began to appear, and the Japanese wore Western clothing such as suits, blouses, and skirts with increasing frequency. War orphans and prostitutes can also be viewed within the context of the Occupation personnel. Many photographs depict young children shining the shoes of foreign servicemen, and prostitution flourished in the early postwar years. Finally, images of repatriated soldiers, wounded and begging on the streets, drew a sharp contrast to images of American GIs, whose healthy appearance was especially noticeable among a Japanese population subject to food shortages and a strict rationing system. In visualizing such elements of the Allied Occupation, postwar realist photographers evoke the image of Japan as a defeated and Occupied nation.

Because of their close proximity to Occupation servicemen, Japanese prostitutes known as *panpan* quickly became the most famous, or perhaps infamous, symbol of the American Occupation.[35] While the exact origin of the term *panpan* is unclear, one reliable explanation states that Imperial Japanese troops used *panpan* to refer to native prostitutes in Japan's South Pacific island colonies. With the arrival of Occupation forces, the term was re-appropriated to describe prostitutes who had relations with American GIs.[36] Eventually, use of the term was expanded to include women who entertained Japanese male customers. In order to distinguish prostitutes according to their clientele, the term *yōpan* ("Western *pan"*) was created for those women associated with American servicemen.[37]

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[35] Sarah Kovner writes that in today's society, most Japanese associate panpan strictly with Occupation officers. While prostitution was a frequent occurrence in occupied Japan, the legacy associating them only with the Occupation stems from pictorial, literary, and film representations of panpan. Sarah Kovner, *Occupying Power: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013).

[36] For the prostitutes themselves, panpan combined the sentiments of *jikiyake* and *awareshimi*, "desperation" and "misery." See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 132.

At the beginning of the Occupation the Japanese established the Recreation and Amusement Association (RAA) to provide prostitution services specifically for Allied servicemen. The Occupation's official stance, however, was to label houses of prostitution off limits (quite literally, as many images reveal OFF LIMITS lettering across the front of brothels). The RAA itself was exceedingly short-lived, lasting barely four months. Nevertheless, prostitution continued to flourish in occupied Tokyo. For instance, the International Palace was one of many brothels set up by the RAA. Located in Funabashi, it consisted of a barrack-type structure in which sheets were used as walls to create separate, but not very private, rooms. Hooker Alley, located just outside the Imperial Palace, was another infamous area for interaction between *panpan* and American GIs. It was so active as a site of prostitution that the moat surrounding the Imperial Palace suffered from a build-up of used condoms and had to be regularly cleaned out.[38]

While many women turned to prostitution because of the scarcity of jobs,[39] not all readily engaged in the trade. Some were even driven to suicide. Much of the misery experienced by *panpan* resulted from the nature of the work itself,[40] especially when it came to the number of men they served on a daily basis.[41] Additionally, many *panpan* faced increasing discrimination from Japanese citizens; largely due to their American clientele, they were ostracized from Japanese society, verbally threatened, and even sometimes physically attacked.[42] Nakamoto Takako's short story "The Only One" emphasizes the prejudice towards and abject misery of *panpan.*[43] At the same time, the story portrays prostitution as a last-resort profession. The protagonist, Sumiko, becomes a *panpan* after being tricked into having sex with an American serviceman by one of her friends. Another character finds prostitution her only option after being raped. The experience of these two women characters suggests that becoming a prostitute was not a choice always made by free will. Sumiko, miserable with her life as a *panpan,* eventually tries to kill herself. When the attempt at suicide proves unsuccessful, however, she finally resigns herself to her fate in the sex trade. The story ends with Sumiko envisioning herself tortured over flaming coals by a demon because of her work as a *panpan* and, even more importantly, because of her association with American Occupation forces.

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[37] *Panpan*, in *Sengoshi Daijiten (Encyclopedia of Postwar Japan 1945-1990)*, ed. Sasaki Takeshi (Tokyo: Sanseidō, 1991), 763.

[38] Robert Whiting, *Tokyo Underworld: The Fast Times and Hard Life of an American Gangster in* (New York: Vintage, 2000), 13–14.

[39] According to one source, 13,000,000 Japanese across the island nation, both male and female, were estimated to have lost their jobs after the war. In Tokyo legitimate job prospects were particularly dismal, as one example from 1947 illustrates: 5,417 women lined up seeking employment at one department store. However, with only 2,048 job openings, the number of female applicants was more than double the number of openings. See *Shūshoku nan to jūtaku nan* ("Scarcity of Employment and Scarcity of Housing," in *Senryoshita no nihon* (*Japan under the Occupation*), vol. 9 of *Showa nihon shi* (*Showa Japanese History*) (Tokyo: Akatsuki Kyōiku Tosho, 1977), 102.

As a major element of the reality of postwar Tokyo, *panpan* were popular subjects for photographers. Domon Ken aimed his camera's lens at many brothels in Hatonomachi ("Pigeon Town"), one of the most famous unlicensed quarters immediately after the war.[44] In one such image of a “Pigeon Town” brothel, the eye is immediately drawn to a prostitute featured prominently in the center of the photograph (fig. 4.3).[45] She stands framed by a doorway, one hand shoved in her pocket while the other holds the door open. Her slacks, jacket, and hairstyle point to the American influence that was already filling the pent-up demand created by the oppressive wartime ban on Western goods. With her face turned slightly to the right, she draws the viewer’s gaze across the image in the same direction. On the right side a heart-shaped window above bright white letters that read OFF LIMITS frames another prostitute. This woman, also in Western dress, has her hand on her hip in a defiant gesture. Two more women peer out of a window on the left side of the image, ready to entertain the men coming to visit the women of the night.

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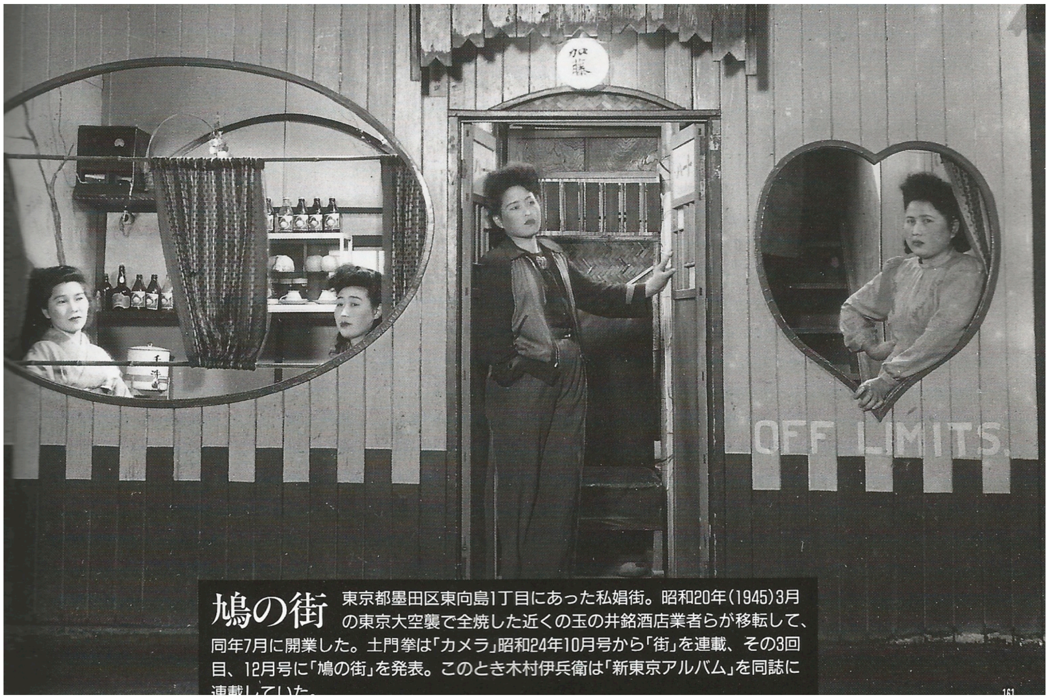
[40] By the time the RAA was disbanded, nearly 90 percent of the prostitutes tested positive for venereal disease. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 130.

[41] One estimate of women working for the RAA states that they served between fifteen and sixty Occupation personnel per day. Ibid., 129.

[42] Kovner, *Occupying Power*, 74–78.

[43] Nakamoto Takako, "The Only One," in *Ukiyo: Stories of the "Floating World" of Postwar Japan*, ed. Jay Gluck, third edition (Ashiya, Japan: Weatherhill, 1993), 158-193.

FIGURE 4.3. Domon. Photograph. A “Pigeon Town” brothel. From *Dokyumento Nihon: 1935-1967.* Tōkyō: Shōgakkan, 1995.



鳩の街 東京都墨田区東向島1丁目にあった私娼街。昭和20年(1945)3月の東京大空襲で全焼した近くの玉の井銘酒店業者らが移転して、同年7月に開業した。土門拳は「カメラ」昭和24年10月号から「街」を連載、その3回目、12月号に「鳩の街」を発表。このとき木村伊兵衛は「新東京アルバム」を同誌に連載していた。

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[44] Seidensticker, *Tokyo Rising*, 186.

[45] Domon, *Dokyumento Nihon: 1935-1967* (*Document Japan: 1935-1967*) (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1995), 56.

The prevalence of American servicemen in the streets of Tokyo constantly reinforced a sense of defeat. Occupation forces were especially visible at street intersections where they directed traffic alongside Japanese policemen. These American servicemen regularly reinforced the disparity in power between Japanese citizens and the Occupation forces. Moreover, Japanese citizens, subject to shortages of food and other material goods, were acutely aware of the conspicuous contrast they posed next to the American servicemen. Kasumoto Sama, former president of the Minolta Corporation, remembers:

> The tall, handsome and healthy GI's, wearing crisp olive uniforms with brilliant white helmets, took turns directing traffic with choreographic flair. Young Japanese women admired the style and authority of those Americans, then cast sidelong glances at underfed Japanese men like me, who waited to cross the street with bowed heads and shabby clothes, jealous of the Americans, knowing we could not compete.[46]

Domon Ken captured the imposing presence of one such military police officer directing traffic in Ginza (fig. 4.4).[47] The American stands on a striped box in an intersection. His arms, signaling traffic to stop, stretch out toward the left and right side of the frame. A shadow from his helmet obscures the upper portion of his face, but the viewer can see a whistle between his lips. The Seiko building filling the background is another reminder of defeated Japan. Because it was one of the few buildings to survive World War Two, Allied servicemen quickly claimed the Seiko Building upon arriving in Japan and turned it into the Tokyo Post Exchange, open only to Occupation personnel and their families. Places like the Tokyo PX kept Americans isolated from the depravation ordinary Japanese citizens experienced under the hardships of postwar society.

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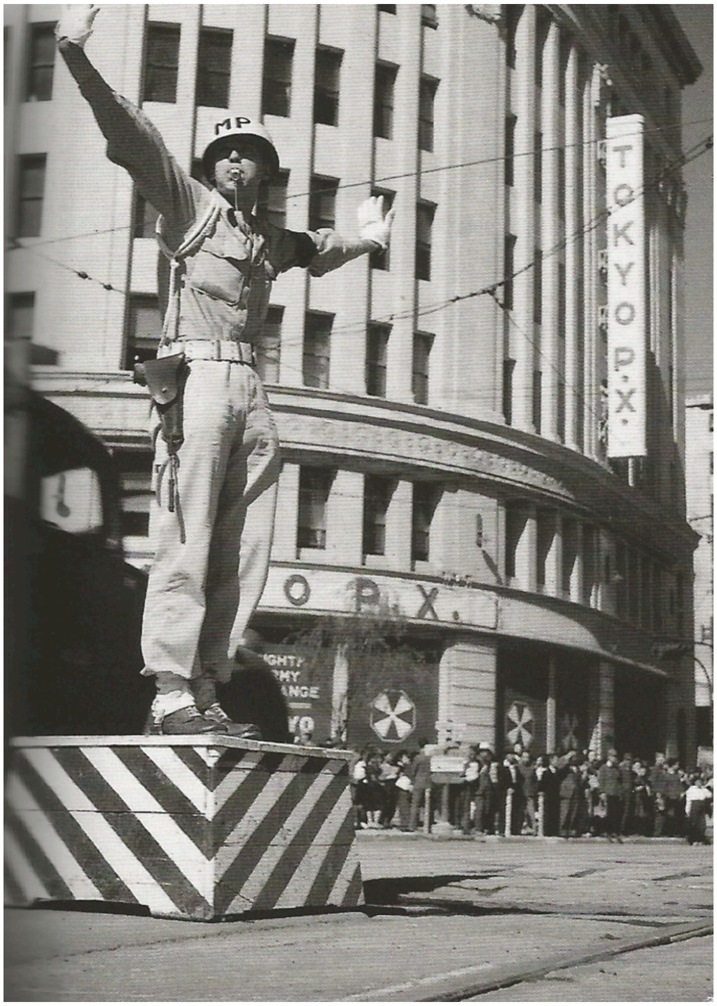
[46] Kusumoto Sama, "Japanese Enlightenment," The New York Times, March 24, 1991, accessed March 18, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/1991/03/24/magazine/personal-account-japanese-enlightenment.html.

[47] Domon, *Domon Ken no Shōwa* (*The Showa Era of Domon Ken*), 55.

FIGURE 4.4. Domon. Photograph. An American MP directing traffic. From *Domon Ken no Shōwa.* Tokyo: Kurevisu, 2010.


MP
TOKYO P.X.
O P.X.
EIGHTH ARMY EXCHANGE

Photographer Nagano Shigeichi likewise captured an American military police officer directing traffic in Ginza, this time alongside a Japanese police officer (fig. 3.11).[48] In “Traffic Control Military Police Officer” (Ginza, Tokyo, 1946) (*Kōtsūseiri junsa*), two police officers stand in front of a scarred concrete building. A legacy of the deadly bombing raids, the façade is badly damaged and glass is missing from the windows. After the eye roves over the ruined building, it falls next on the American military police officer standing with his arms raised on the left side of the picture, and then turns to the Japanese police officer a short distance to the right. It was common to have both Japanese and American police direct traffic in the street intersections. However, the Japanese policeman, rather than direct traffic *with* his American counterpart, instead shadowed the American's every move. For Japanese at the time, the fact that the Japanese police had to lag behind the American MPs directing traffic highlighted on a daily basis the culture of defeat in early postwar society.

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[48] Nagano, *Jidai no kioku 1945-1995* (*Remembering the Age from 1945-1955*), 4.

Street signs appearing in English are yet another visible indication of the foreign Occupying powers. A photograph taken by Hayashi Tadahiko early in the Occupation shows one such sign at a train station.[49] The motion of people getting on and off the train dominates the frame, but a small white sign immediately draws the eye to its location at the top of the image. Hanging behind a station attendant shouting at the crowd, the sign displays station stops written in English. Tanuma Takeyoshi's photograph of a street vendor provides another example of English signage (fig. 4.5).[50] In "Stall on a Street Corner" (Ginza, Tokyo, 1951), a street vendor sits at a tiny table on a street corner, with a small child sitting in his lap. Letters reading "No Loitering by order of the Provost Marshall" have been painted on the building behind the Japanese man. In both images the lettering is in English only, with no indication that there are similar signs rendered in the Japanese language.

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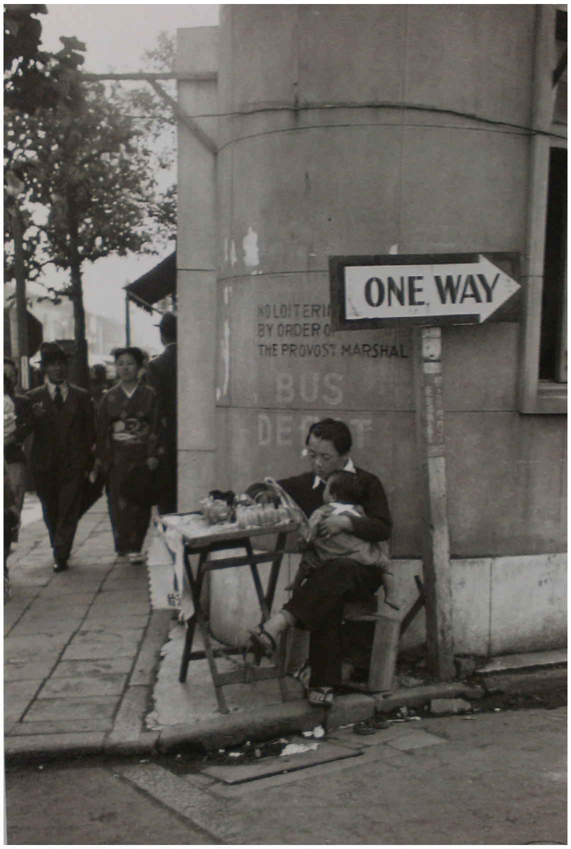
[49] Hayashi, "Destination Sign in Western Characters, Too," *Kasutori jidai* (*The Kasutori Era*), 33.

[50] Tanuma Takeyoshi, "Stall on a Street Corner," Ginza, Tokyo, 1951, in *Japan: A Self-Portrait: Photographs 1945-1964*, ed. Marc Feustel. Trans. Susan Schneider. (Paris: Flammarion et Cie, 2004), 76.

Postwar photographers were reacting to Japan's wartime past by photographing signs written in the English language. In *Tokyo Fall of 1945*, a paragraph set alongside a photograph of GIs reading a map of Ginza asks the reader to recall pre-war Tokyo when signs in English and French were scattered all about the city.[51] So prevalent were the foreign signs that Romanji and English appeared at every railway station. But during the war, the government removed all signs written in a foreign language. By photographing these English-language signage, postwar photographers capture the image of a defeated and occupied Japan while at the same time projecting back to wartime Japan when the military government eradicated foreign text from the city.

FIGURE 4.5. Tanuma Takeyoshi, photographer. "Stall on a Street Corner," Ginza, Tokyo, 1951. Photograph. From *Japan: A Self-Portrait: Photographs 1945-1964*. Edited by Marc Feustel. Translated by Susan Schneider. Paris: Flammarion et Cie, 2004.



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[51] Kimura and Kikuchi, *Tokyo Fall of 1945* (*Tokyo—sen kyū yon go nen: aki*), n.p.

In *Gross-Japan*, Natori Yōnosuke's propaganda images depict elements of industry, such as trains and smokestacks, as well as aerial views of agricultural fields to suggest a rich, bountiful nation. In contrast, objective realist photographers portrayed material want and severe food shortages by recording images of ration lines and black markets. Hayashi Tadahiko's "Long Line Receiving Rations" (Ginza, Tokyo, 1946) (*Haikyū wo ukeru nagai retsu*) shows people waiting for rations in Ginza (fig. 4.6).[52] It is interesting to note the vantage point from which Hayashi took the photograph: the famous Seiko building rises above the other low buildings in the background. One can even see the "Tokyo PX" sign in English running down the side of the façade. Japanese citizens viewing this photo around the time it was taken would have immediately been aware of the disparity between the starving people standing in line and the reference to American affluence looking down on them just a short distance away. Occupation personnel were also well aware of the huge gap between their living conditions and that of the Japanese. In writing of her experience in Japan during the Occupation, Lucy Crockett states, "On all sides beyond the well-insulated grooves of Occupation activity there extends the drab surface picture of hunger, destitution, crime and moral collapse."[53] Stores like the Tokyo PX, as well as American base housing scattered throughout Tokyo, constantly reinforced the notion of America as the Occupier and Japan as the Occupied.

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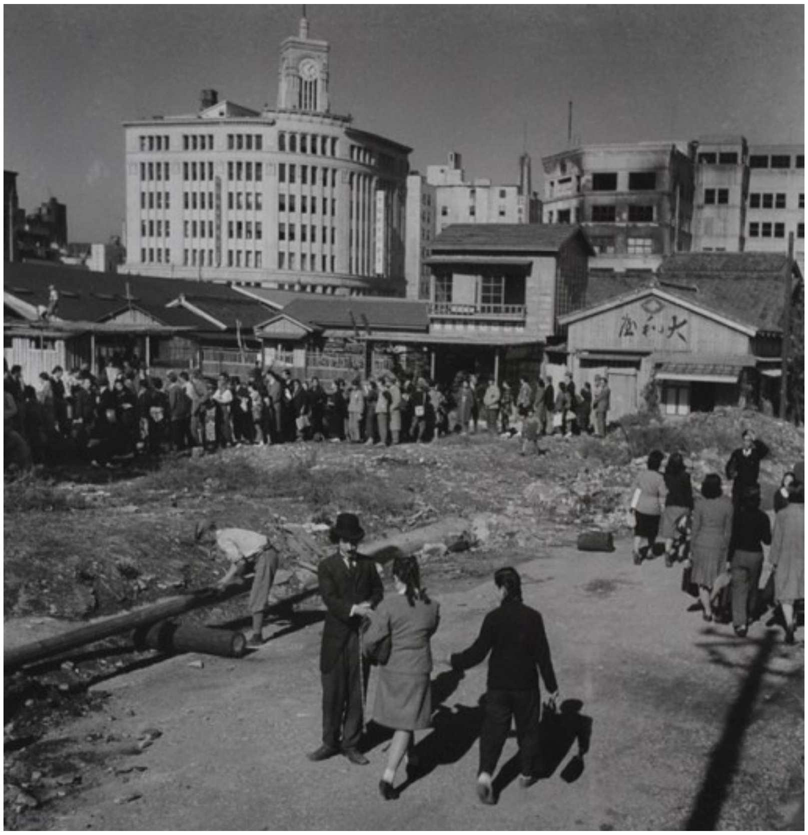
[52] Hayashi, "Lining up for rations," Ginza, Tokyo 1946 (*Haikyū wo ukeru nagai retsu*), in *Hayashi Tadahiko*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998), n.p.

[53] Lucy Herndon Crockett, *Popcorn on the Ginza: An Informal Portrait of Postwar Japan* (New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1949), 186.

Because the rationing system alone could not meet the needs of citizens in the early years after the war, black markets were necessary for survival.[54] They became so prevalent that the immediate postwar period is known as *yakeato yamiichi jidai*, or the "generation of black markets built on the ruins." Those who did not supplement their meager food rations with the black market ran the risk of starving to death. To take an oft-cited example, a district court judge died of malnutrition after deciding to live strictly on government rations without relying on black market supplies.

FIGURE 4.6. Hayashi Tadahiko, photographer. "Long Line Receiving Rations," Ginza, Tokyo, 1946 (*Haikyū wo ukeru nagai retsu*). Photograph. From *Hayashi Tadahiko*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998.



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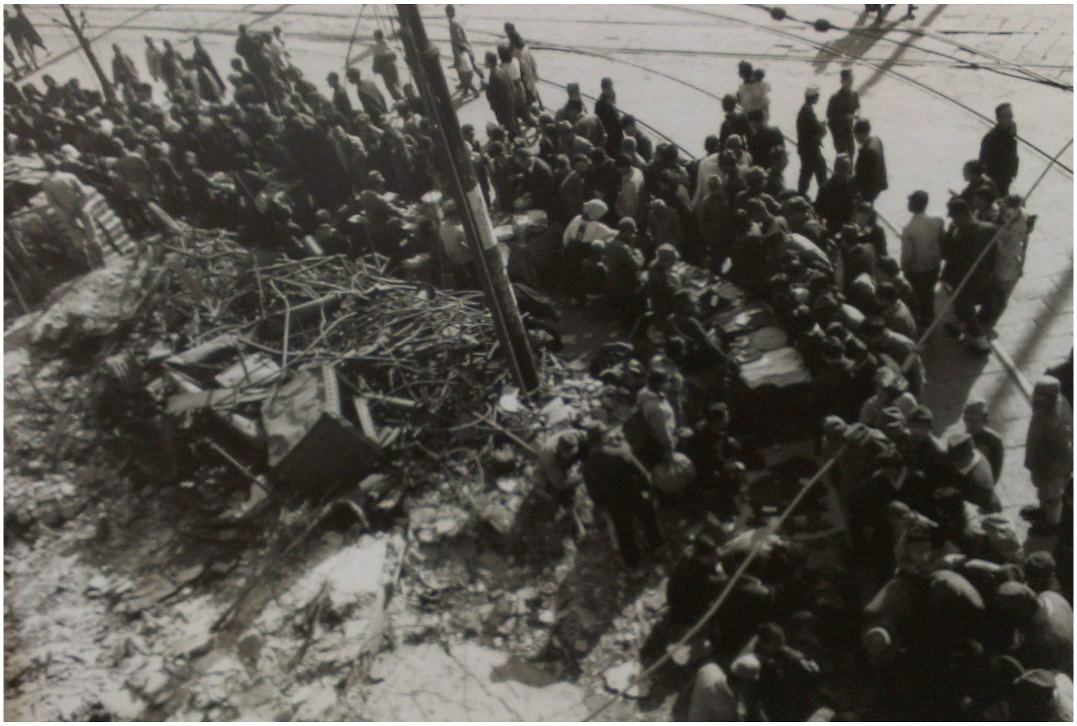
[54] Sixty thousand black market stalls blanketed Tokyo by the beginning of 1946, most of them at or near the major train stations in the city. See Seidensticker, *Tokyo Rising*. Children even worked in the black markets, as many homeless youths and war orphans became errand runners for the Yakuza crime bosses that controlled the illegal stalls. Indeed, many children's speech even started to became indistinguishable from Yakuza lingo. See Hayashi, *Kasutori jidai,* 52.

Photographers readily captured the presence of black markets in postwar Tokyo. Kimura Ihei's "A Black Market Amid the Rubble" (Shinjuku, Tokyo, 1945) captures an unsettling image of black market stalls in Shinjuku (fig. 4.7).[55] A diagonal line running from the upper left corner to the bottom right divides an image filled with people, rubble, and twisted metal. On one side of the line, people crowd around tables that have been set up along the edge of a street. The large crowd of people around the outdoor vendors attests to the vital role black markets played in providing citizens with food and other necessities, while the small mound of debris on the other side of the image reflects on the widespread destruction in the wake of numerous bombing raids on Tokyo.

FIGURE 4.7. Kimura. "A Black Market Amid the Rubble," Shinjuku, Tokyo, 1945. Photograph. From *Japan: A Self-Portrait: Photographs 1945-1964*.



Repatriated soldiers were one segment of society that was especially susceptible to the chronic lack of resources in early postwar Japan. The number of soldiers returning from overseas was so great that it increased the population of Japan eight percent between 1945 and 1948.[56] In 1947, 800,000 soldiers flooded into Tokyo alone.[57] Upon returning to Japan, these men became a new group of social outcasts. Many Japanese citizens saw the soldiers as living manifestations of a defeated Japan in the wake of surrender. Further, information about wartime atrocities in places like China and the Philippines, suppressed by censorship during the war, started to circulate among the public, causing many to look upon the repatriated soldiers with horror. The soldiers' physically damaged bodies and PTSD, moreover, pushed them into the margins of a society that viewed physical handicaps and mental illness as taboo.[58]

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[55] Kimura, "A Black Market Amid the Rubble," Shinjuku, 1945, in *Japan: A Self-Portrait,* 65.

Some photographs of soldiers returning from the war front project the air of exuberance that many of them felt upon returning home, such as Hayashi's photograph of smiling and laughing soldiers at Shinagawa Station in Tokyo.[59] In contrast, Kimura's "A Discharged Soldier Returning to His Home in Ruins" (Tokyo, 1948) tells a more painful story (fig. 4.8).[60] The photograph shows a repatriated soldier with his back to the camera, still dressed in military uniform. The young man stands by a pile of debris, presumably once his home. This image captures the reality of many soldiers and citizens returning to a devastated Tokyo after Japan's surrender. In contrast to Domon's prewar images of glorified soldiers fighting for the empire of Japan, or even those receiving treatment and help from Red Cross nurses, Domon and other objective realist photographers focus on the marginalization of repatriated soldiers. Some of Domon's photographs offer a more subtle view of destitute soldiers: a man playing an accordion, for instance, or one leaning over a cane while grasping a donation box. Others depict the wretched life of wounded soldiers after the war, such as images of soldiers with missing limbs or blind men with bandages across their eyes (fig. 4.9).[61] Photographs of physically damaged repatriated soldiers, when placed next to images of *panpan* and healthy Allied servicemen, further depict the aura of defeat that pervaded early postwar Tokyo.

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[56] Beatrice Trefalt, *Japanese Army Stragglers and Memories of the War in Japan, 1950-75*, (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 25.

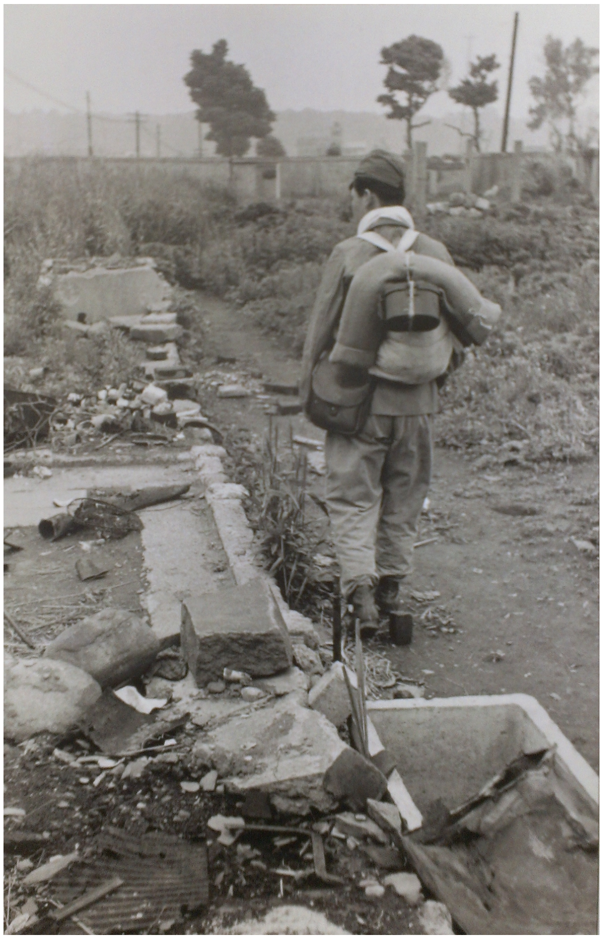
[57] Stephen Mansfield, *Tokyo A Cultural History* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 204.

[58] Ibid., 59–61.

[59] Hayashi, "Discharged Soldiers," 1946, in *Kasutori jidai,* 12.

[60] Kimura, "A Discharged Soldier Returning to His Home in Ruins," Tokyo, 1948, in *Japan: A Self-Portrait,* 67.

FIGURE 4.8. Kimura. A Discharged Soldier Returning to His Home in Ruins," Tokyo, 1948. Photograph. From *Japan: A Self-Portrait: Photographs 1945-1964*.



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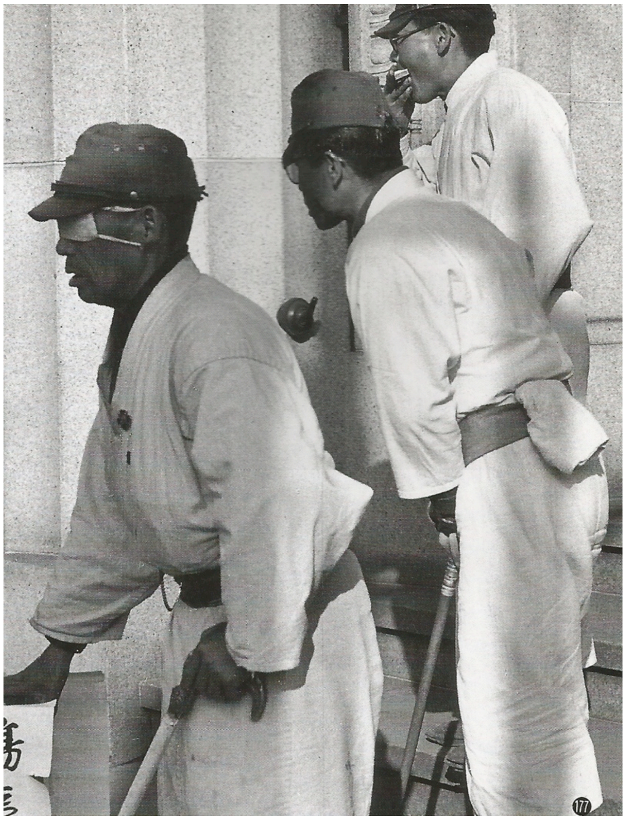
[61] Domon, *Dokyumento Nihon* (*Document Japan*), n.p.

FIGURE 4.9. Domon. Photograph. Wounded repatriated soldiers. From *Dokyumento Nihon: 1935-1967*.



In a similar manner to Domon's images, Hayashi's "Wounded Soldier Playing the Accordion" (Shinjuku, Tokyo, 1950) (*Akodion wo haku shōbyō gunjin*), an image of repatriated soldiers standing beneath an elevated train in Shinjuku, highlights the marginalization these men experienced (fig. 4.10).[62] Three wounded soldiers, all dressed in typical white clothing, are clearly the focal point of the image. Strong lines created by built urban objects compartmentalize the image. Indeed, one can even clearly see a line running lengthwise down the middle of the photograph that creates an invisible barrier between the soldiers on the left and the pedestrians on the right. Further, the train rushing overhead and the blurred feet of the walking pedestrians evokes a sense of movement that surrounds the stationary soldiers. With these two elements, the dividing lines and the blurred elements of motion, Hayashi integrates form and content to capture the isolated, marginalized experience of repatriated soldiers in postwar Tokyo. Another noticeable feature of the photograph is the angle at which it was taken. Hayashi snapped the image at just below eye level, but not in an exaggerated manner. He did not try to make the image grotesque by shooting it from street level. Neither did he want to take the humanity out of the picture by shooting from above. Rather, the viewer sees the image just as one might if he were actually standing at this spot in Shinjuku. Drawing on the conventions of photographic realism, this allows Hayashi to capture the everyday-ness of the scene.

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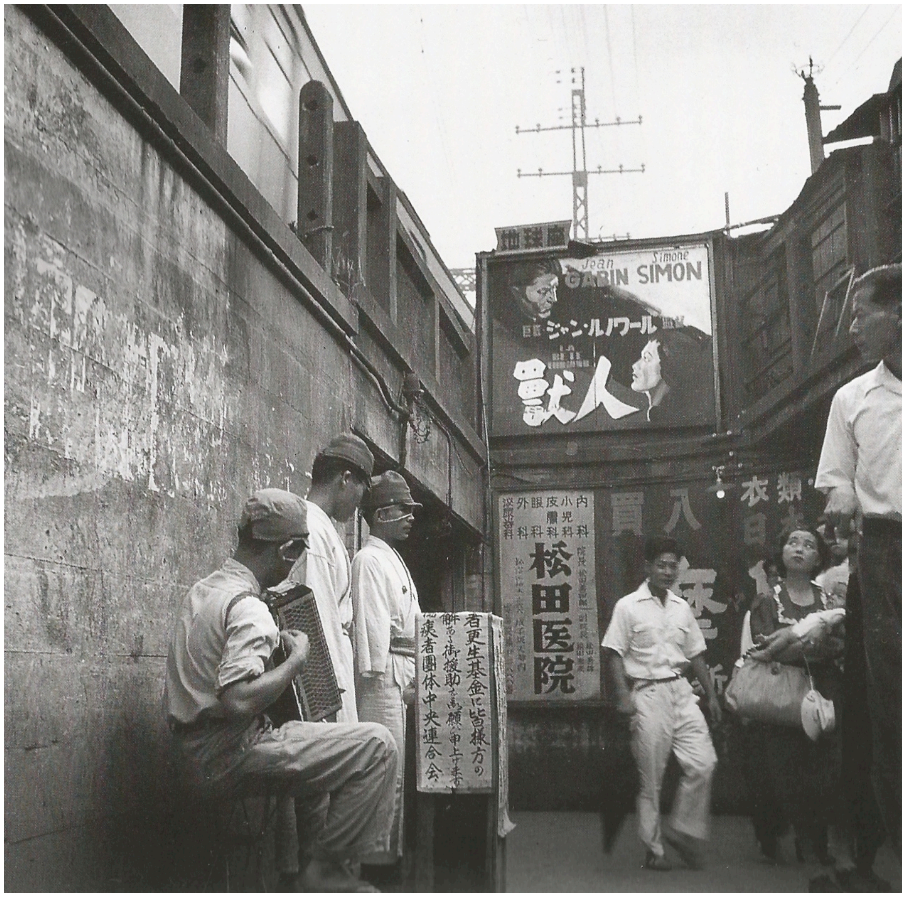
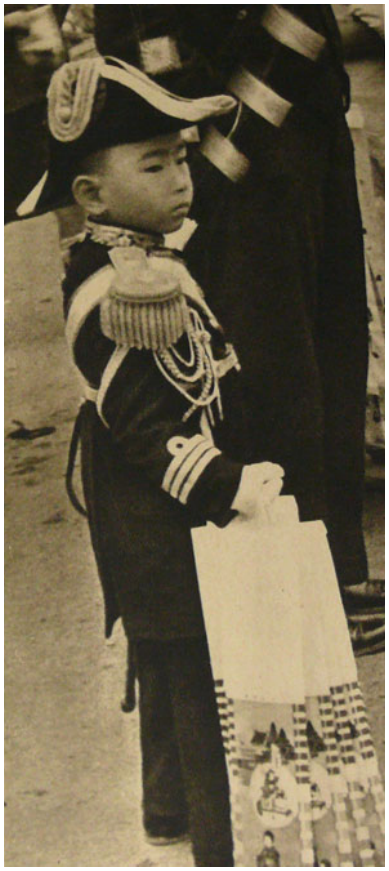
[62] Hayashi, "Wounded Soldier Playing the Accordion," Shinjuku, Tokyo, 1950, (*Akodion wo haku shōbyō gunjin*) in *Hayashi Tadahiko*, n.p.

FIGURE 4.10. Hayashi. “Wounded Soldier Playing the Accordion,” Shinjuku, Tokyo, 1950 (*Akodion wo haku shōbyō gunjin*). Photograph. From *Hayashi Tadahiko*.



Like repatriated soldiers, war orphans were another common sight on the streets of early postwar Tokyo that further exhibit an inversion of wartime propaganda. During the war, Natori photographed children studying diligently at school desks, participating in *undōkai* activities, and even one boy dressed in an admiral's uniform on the *shichi-san-go* festival day (fig. 4.11).[63] In contrast to the youth who embody diligence, strength, health, and pride in the Japanese nation and military in *Gross-Japan*, images of youth captured by objective realist photographers depict children dressed in rags and covered in filth, many obviously suffering from malnutrition.

FIGURE 4.11. Natori. Photograph. A child on a festival day. From *Natori Yōnosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"* (*Natori Yōnosuke and Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"*).



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[63] Natori, in Shirayama and Yoshio, *Natori Yōnosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931-45"* (*Natori Yōnosuke and Nippon Kōbō, "1931-1945"*), 43.

Children were some of the most vulnerable victims of the war. In 1948 there was an estimated 120,000 homeless children, including 30,000 war orphans. Many of these children were repeatedly rounded up and given lodgings, only to run away again, back to the streets. In order to survive, they earned money by shining shoes, selling food and tobacco ration tickets, and gathering cigarette butts.[64] Lucy Crockett describes the experience of Hiratsuka, one that is typical of many children during and after the war:

> During the B-29 raids in the summer of 1945 the girl's mother had given her a hundred-yen note and told her to keep it; if anything happened and she found herself left alone she was to use it to buy herself some means of support. Her father had been killed on Okinawa; the woman worked in a war plant. One day Hiratsuka was on the streetcar approaching the factory when the sirens sounded. The car stopped and everyone scattered. When she came out of the shelter she saw the factory in flames. She wandered around it for a few days, but her mother never appeared. She remembered her mother's words and bought a shoeshine kit. With this she managed to support herself around Sakuragicho Station in Yokohama, living in dim, dank underground regions there with a horde of other ragged homeless children, until some boys stole her shoeshine kit.[65]

Perhaps the most famous image of war orphans to come out of the early postwar period is Hayashi's "Smoking War Orphans" (Ueno, Tokyo, 1946) (*kitsuen wo kuyurasu sensaikoji*) (fig. 4.12).[66] The picture is of two young boys sitting on the street, both incredibly dirty and wearing scraps of clothing. The boy on the left smokes a cigarette, while the one on the right rubs his stomach. In a book on the *kasutori* era, Hayashi writes that these two youth spoke in the manner of yakuza, suggesting that they probably worked for the criminal gangs in order to survive on the streets.[67]

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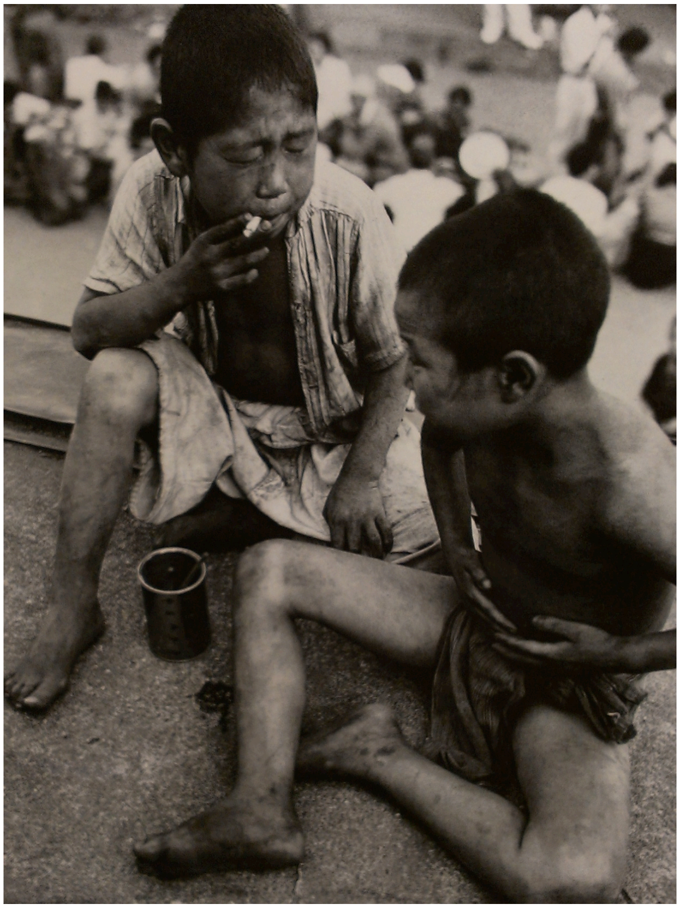
[64] *Senryoshita no nihon* (Japan under the Occupation), 101.

[65] Crockett, *Popcorn on the Ginza,* 179.

[66] Hayashi, *Kasutori jidai,* 51.

[67] Ibid., 52.

FIGURE 4.12. Hayashi. “Smoking War Orphans,” Ueno, Tokyo, 1946 (*Kitsuen wo kuyurasu sensaikoji*). Photograph. From *Kasutori jidai: renzu ga mita Shōwa nijū-nendai Tōkyō* (*The Kasutori Era: Witnessing Tokyo during the Age of Resignation in Shōwa*). Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1987.



In addition to visual media, literature also took up the subject of war orphans, as was case with Ishikawa Jun’s “The Jesus of the Ruins.” The tale begins in the Ueno black market—a place devoid of lawlessness “almost bloodthirsty in its relentlessness,” where people are likened to animals living in a “dog-eat-dog world.”[68] In one black market stall a man grills oily sardines so rancid that not even the flies will touch them. The insects instead prefer pathetic, dried-out *o-musubi* (rice balls) sold at a neighboring vendor. It is in this black market where the reader first encounters an orphan boy, vividly described by the narrator as “a sickening, foul-smelling clump—of rags and boils and pus and, no doubt, even lice.”[69] Ishikawa uses the orphan as an allegory for postwar Tokyo. The author relates this rather explicitly in the following passage:

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[68] Ishikawa Jun, “The Jesus of the Ruins,” in *The Legend of Gold and Other Stories,* trans. William Jefferson Tyler (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), 72-73.

> [The boy] arrested every eye; and in his doing so, did not the denizens of this lowly place—these vulgar and undaunted types who never flinched in the face of anything—secretly turn inward and, taking a long look at themselves and the state in which they lived, suddenly realize they were no different? Startled at the mirror image of their own ugliness, they shuddered.[70]

The orphan boy symbolizes postwar society on two levels. First his grotesque appearance, while exaggerated for literary effect, reflects the ravaged condition of a city that had been hit hard by numerous bombing runs during the war. Second, his selfish actions—at one point he devours a rice ball, and then quickly attacks the food vendor—represents postwar Japanese society. In describing the actions of this “sickening, foul-smelling clump,” Ishikawa conveys the chaos inherent in the breakdown of traditional social solidarity as people did what they could to survive.

Objective realism also covered subjects that went beyond the *panpan*, black markets, foreign servicemen and war orphans typical of Occupation culture. Numerous photographers captured elements of *kasutori jidai*, translated as “days in the dregs.” As previously mentioned in chapter two, in early postwar society the term *kasutori* evoked a sense of ephemerality and rejection of established values, in addition to celebrating carnal pleasures and sexual indulgence. In this way, *kasutori* culture, like other common themes in early postwar photography, was an inversion of the strict discipline and value of thrift fostered under the old militaristic government. Tanuma Takeyoshi’s “Dancers resting on a rooftop” (Asakusa, Tokyo, 1949) is a good photographic representation of *kasutori* culture (fig. 4.13).[71] It presents the grimy, gritty city laid out behind two young girls reading a magazine. The fabric of one of their headpieces has been caught by the wind and cuts across a graveyard featured prominently in the background. The ruffles of their short skirts poking out underneath their jackets reflect their jobs as dancers as well as the sexual fantasies inherent in *kasutori* culture. This candid moment is also a poignant juxtaposition between sensual youth and death, embodied by the graveyard behind the two girls.

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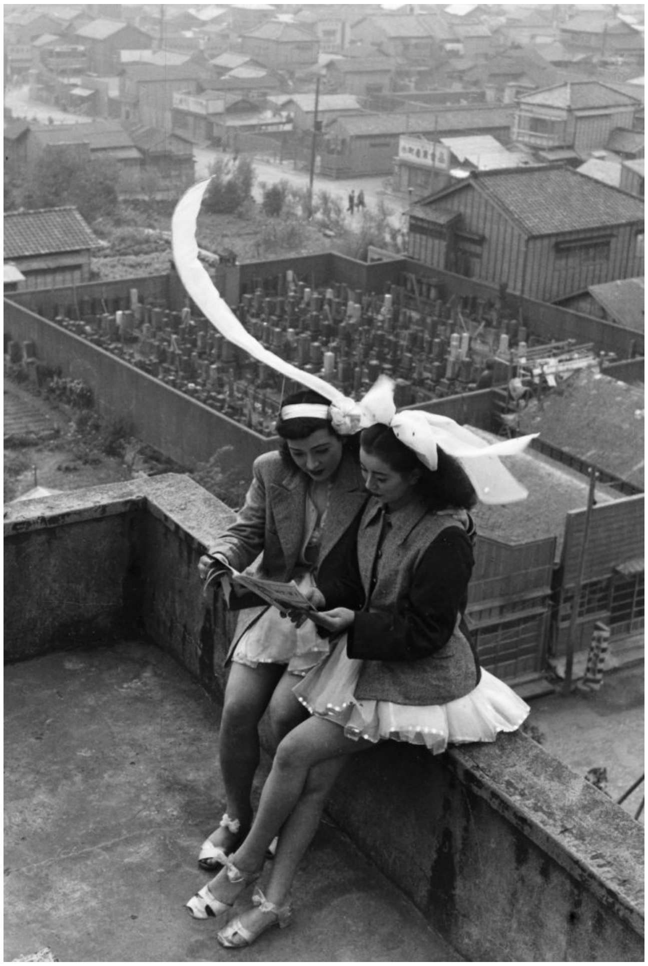
[69] Ibid., 93.

[70] Ibid., 80.

FIGURE 4.13. Tanuma. "Dancers Resting on a Rooftop," Asakusa, Tokyo, 1949. Photograph. From *Japan: A Self-Portrait: Photographs 1945-1964*.



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[71] Tanuma, "Dancers Resting on a Rooftop," Asakusa, Tokyo, 1949, in *Japan: A Self-Portrait*, 85.

Panpan, black markets, repatriated soldiers, war orphans and *kasutori* culture continued to influence objective realist photographers throughout the early postwar period, eventually consolidated under the title of "beggar photography." Domon Ken's monthly competition in photography magazine *Camera*, started in 1950, helped to increase the popularity of beggar photography and objective realism.[72] Each month amateur photographers sent 1,000 to 1,500 photographs to *Camera* magazine. Only a select few of the submissions made their way through to the final publication, printed alongside a critique of the photo by either Domon or Kimura. Generally aimed at amateur photographers, this competition fostered what photography critic Tanaka Masao called an "unbridled craze" in beggar photography.[73] Kimura later joined Domon, and together they urged amateur photographers to photograph postwar society under the realism aesthetic.

Beggar Photography, Amateurs, and the End of Domon's Realism

Why was objective realism and "beggar photography" so popular among amateur photographers? Professional photographers, working against the deceitful taint inherent in wartime propaganda images, clearly intended to use the genre as a way to confront and represent reality. While it is difficult to understand the reason behind amateurs' enthusiastic adoption of the objective realism movement, the following examination of amateur photography draws on Susan Sontag's treatise *On Photography* in an attempt to shed light on this phenomenon.

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[72] Iizawa, "The Evolution of Postwar Photography," 212.

[73] Tanaka Masao, "On Beggar Photography: The Importance of Photographing Street Urchins and Lumpen (1953)," trans. Ryan Holmberg, in *From Postwar to Postmodern*, 50-53. Originally published as *Kojiki sashinron: Furōji, runpen ōi ni torubeshi* in *Camera* 45 (1953): 73-75.

One reason why amateurs so readily bought into Domon's objective realism is because photography can be used as a "defense against anxiety."[74] Photographs, Sontag states, "help people to take possession of space in which they are insecure."[75] Many Japanese continued to suffer under *kyodatsu*, the mental state of exhaustion stemming from miserable material conditions, throughout the early 1950s. According to the *Explanation of Postwar New Terms*, the hopelessness inherent in *kyodatsu* was "the great enemy that could destroy Japan."[76] Added to this was the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, which caused the infamous reverse course of the Allied Occupation. And of course, the continued "American domination" during the Occupation itself "remained a constant in defeated Japan."[77] Under these conditions, it is no wonder that Japanese photographers would look for a means to alleviate anxiety resulting from an insecure world.

Photography not only alleviated insecurity, it also allowed photographers to gain a sense of control over their environment. As discussed in chapter three, prewar photographers used photography as a means of control by reducing the rapidly changing landscape of industrializing Tokyo to thin photographs that could be easily organized and contained. In writing on photography and control, Sontag states that "[o] ur irrepressible feeling that the photographic process is something magical has a genuine basis. . . [A photograph] is part of, an extension of that subject; and a potent means of acquiring it, of gaining control over it."[78] On the one hand, this element of control gave photographers a way to allay fears that they felt over life in an urban landscape destroyed by bombing raids and plagued by food shortages. Additionally, amateur photographers might have sought out control in the context of the Allied Occupation. Tokyo was littered with signs that read *Shinchugūn no meirei ni yoru* ("By the order of the Occupation Forces"), and many public buildings, trains, and recreational facilities were labeled "off limits" to Japanese citizens. SCAP officials lived lives of luxury in upper-class homes, sometimes with upwards of six servants, while the Japanese remained plagued by poverty and food shortages.[79] Kasumoto Sama's account of American GIs on city streets clearly indicates that the Japanese were overwhelmed by a sense of inferiority when encountering the foreign servicemen. Amateur photographers were undoubtedly under no illusion that a photograph would give them control over Occupation servicemen. Nevertheless, the act of photographing and possessing images of the foreign occupationers might have assuaged feelings of inferiority felt by men like Kasumoto.

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[74] Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, (New York: Picador, 2001), 8.

[75] Ibid., 9.

[76] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 88.

[77] Ibid., 206.

[78] Sontag, *On Photography*, 155.

Some amateurs undoubtedly found utility in pursuing the objective truth as a way to confront and come to terms with Tokyo's postwar reality. It is possible that such individuals adopted the objective realist aesthetic in response to long years in which the publishing industry was plagued by censorship and propaganda that constantly fed the Japanese lies. Domon, after all, stated that "the public was craving to see the 'real'" after being deceived by the wartime government.[80] Ironically enough, objective realism also had the potential to "make [reality] obsolete."[81] In other words, viewing reality through the lens of a camera allowed photographers to keep a certain distance from their surroundings. Especially for those who felt the ravages of postwar society most acutely, photography became an "antidote" to guard against reality, creating a buffer between them and the suffering they found on the street.

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[79] Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 207.

[80] Feltens, "'Realist' Betweenness and Collective Victims: Domon Ken's Hiroshima," 65.

[81] Sontag, *On Photography*, 179.

Despite the widespread and intense popularity of objective realism among amateur photographers, Domon became increasingly frustrated with the images that they submitted to his monthly competition in *Camera*. Even though Domon urged photographers to capture social conditions, the photographer felt that amateurs had become too fixated on images of poverty and ruin. He further believed that too many of the images were staged rather than the "absolutely unstaged" snapshot for which he advocated. For Domon, such staged scenes indicated a reliance on subjectivity, thereby preventing photographers from fully capturing the truth of the subject.

Beggar photography also faced increasing disapproval by photography critics. Watanabe Kosho denounced the movement on the basis that it focused too intensely on a small segment of society, thereby giving a false impression of postwar Japan. Critic Tanaka Masao supported beggar photography, but criticized Domon's photography for its lack of emotion.[82] Facing mounting criticism and increasingly fed up with beggar photography, Domon ultimately declared an official end to the first stage of realism only two years after the end of the Allied Occupation.[83] The famous photographer remained silent, however, on what should constitute the next stage of photography.

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[82] Feltens, "'Realist' Betweenness and Collective Victims: Domon Ken's Hiroshima," 65.

[83] Iizawa, "The Evolution of Postwar Photography," 212.

Another contributing factor to the demise of objective realism was Japan's recovering economy. Around the same time that Domon and Kimura judged the monthly competition in *Camera* magazine, a slight shift started to take place in the photographic record. Photographers still employed a realist perspective, but images of a recovering society began to appear alongside beggar photography. Hayashi Tadahiko took many photographs that mark Japan's rising economy after the start of the Korean War. In "Ginbura's Revival"[84] (Ginza, Tokyo, 1950) (*Ginbura no fukukatsu*) a couple, wearing modern Western clothing, walks straight toward the camera with a self-assured air (fig. 4.14). In this image, notably, the couple walks side-by-side with arms interlocked. During the war such close proximity would have immediately drawn negative attention from the authorities, but after observing American Occupation servicemen, Japanese men and women began interacting differently in public. Lucy Crockett asked a Japanese man about this change during her time in Tokyo:

> Crockett: "I suppose you let her walk beside you when you go out?"
> Japanese man: "Yes, yes, of course. In cities Japanese men and women walk side by side [sic], just like in America. Only sometimes I forget. And, too, if we are with older people my wife walks behind. It is more customary."[85]

Nagano Shigeichi likewise captured this subtle yet profound impact of American influence on Japanese culture. "Ginbura" (Ginza, Tokyo, 1951) shows a young couple strolling through Ginza (fig. 4.15).[86] The man wears a fashionable Western suit and bowtie, the woman a summer dress, sunglasses, and high heels. Indeed, one immediately notices that all the Japanese pictured in the image are wearing Western-style dress. The package the man is carrying suggests the rising economy, while the row of cars in the background and the jumble of electric wires crisscrossing in the upper part of the image reference Japan's postwar return to modernization. Catching the couple mid-stride and the low, almost ground-level vantage point makes the viewer feel like part of the motion, while at the same time allowing Nagano to capture the full height of the iconic Seiko building in the background. The low vantage point, the proximity of the couple to the Seiko building, and the strategic placement of the package underneath the man's arm all combine to reflect the beginning of Nagano's shift from objective to subjective realism in the 1950s.

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[84] Hayashi, "Ginbura's Revival," Ginza, 1950 in *Hayashi Tadahiko*, n.p.

[85] Sontag, *On Photography*, 167–179.

[86] Nagano, "Ginbura," Ginza, 1950 in *Nagano Shigeichi shashinshū Tōkyō 1950-nendai* (*Nagano Shigeichi Photo Album: Tokyo 1950s*) (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), n.p.

FIGURE 4.14. Hayashi. "Ginbura's Revival," Ginza, Tokyo, 1950 (*Ginbura no fukukatsu*). Photograph. From *Hayashi Tadahiko*.

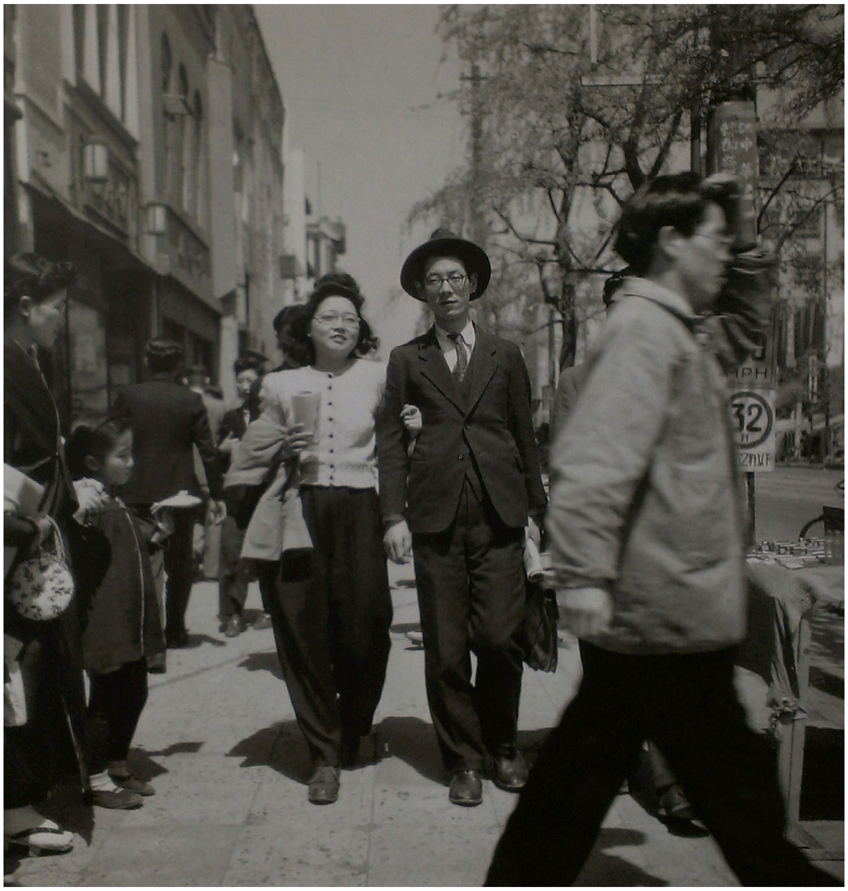
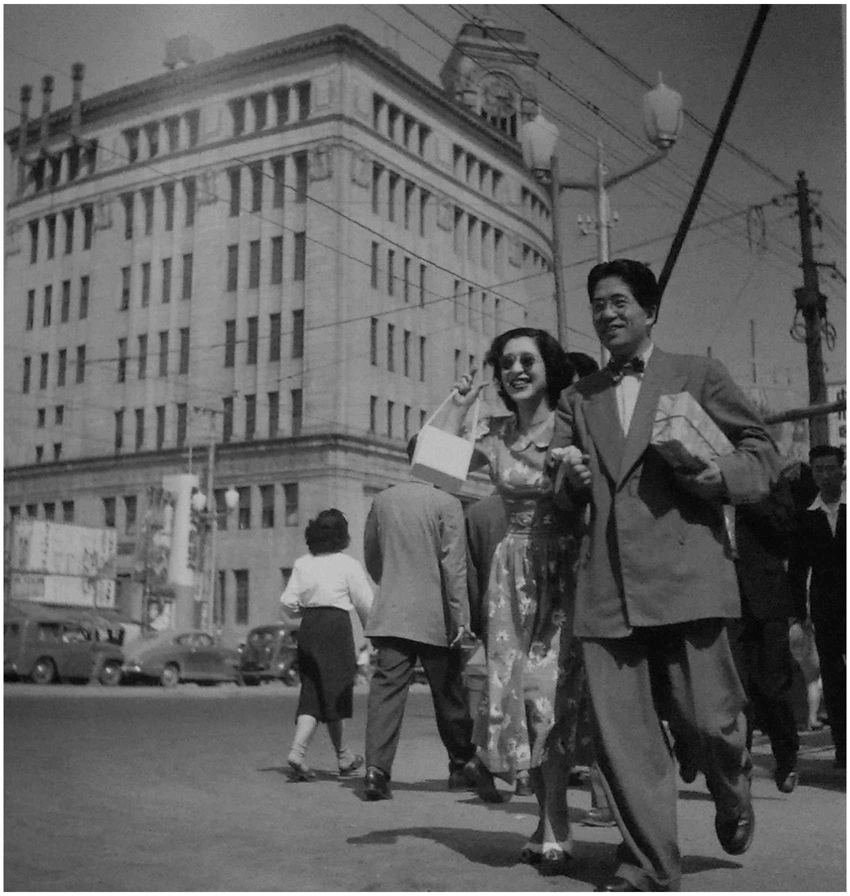


FIGURE 4.15. Nagano. “Ginbura,” Ginza, Tokyo, 1951 (*Ginbura*). Photograph. From *Nagano Shigeichi shashinshū Tōkyō 1950-nendai* (*Nagano Shigeichi Photo Album: Tokyo 1950s)*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007.



Towards Subjective Realism

The objective realist movement was relatively short-lived, but it played an important role in the development of postwar Japanese photography. Upon emerging from an era dominated by censorship and propaganda, photographers and those consuming the photographs were eager to pursue the objective truth. The devastated condition of Japan after the war was another important element in the development of objective realism, as the genre became a way by which many could confront reality and make order out of a chaotic society. As Japan began to recover from the war, however, the wretched conditions that characterized the early postwar years began to have much less of an influence on photography.

Another contributing factor to the demise of objective realism was the rise of amateur photography from the 1950s. The proliferation of images of *panpan*, repatriated soldiers, war orphans, and other subjects of beggar photography frustrated photographers like Domon. Disgusted with what he thought were engineered scenes, and facing mounting criticism from other photographers and photo critics, Domon declared an end to objective realism in 1954.

Around the same time that Domon professed an end to realism, a new generation of photographers entered Japan's photography industry. This included Tōmatsu Shomei, Moriyama Daido, Hosoe Eikoh, and Nagano Shigeichi. Trained under noted photojournalists such as Natori, Domon, and Kimura, these new photographers had a solid grounding in documentary photographic techniques. At the same time, they began to reject the documentary aesthetic. Moriyama, for one, called photojournalistic realism "fanatical" and wanted to create a new kind of photographic expression.

Despite their strong sentiments against the validity of documentary photography, this new generation of photographers was still concerned with the pursuit of the real. Their images, characterized by curator Alexandra Munroe as "subjective realism," record the day-to-day life in postwar Japan, but rather than depict their subjects in a straightforward manner, the photographers drew on their subjective experiences to evaluate and condemn certain aspects of society.[87] The next chapter will look at some of the social, political, and economic circumstances that influenced the turn from the objective to subjective, focusing specifically on Nagano Shigeichi.

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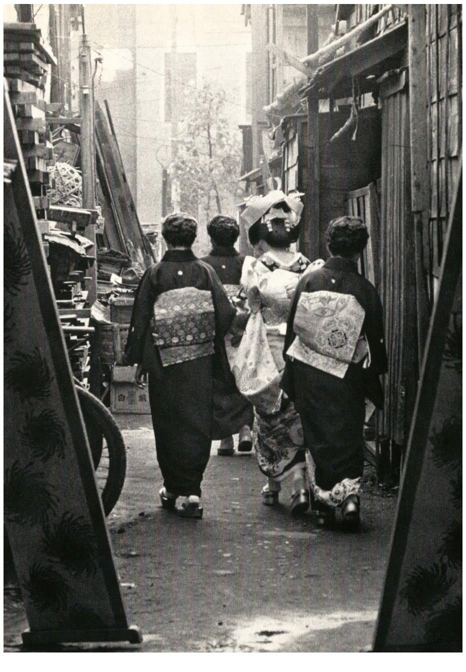
[87] Munroe, "Postwar Japanese Photography and the Pursuit of Consciousness," in *Daido Moriyama*, 33.

CHAPTER V

NAGANO SHIGEICHI AND THE *DREAM AGE* OF JAPAN'S ERA OF HIGH-SPEED GROWTH

A bride in traditional wedding dress flanked by three women in dark kimono walks down a narrow alley in Tsukuda, Tokyo, in 1957 (fig. 5.1). The elegance of their dress contrasts sharply with the wooden buildings and items stacked haphazardly on either side of the alley. Two banners in the foreground frame the image, the erect forms falling under intense shadows that exude a sense of oppressiveness. In contrast to the dark foreground, an open space in the background is awash with bright light. The viewer's eye can just make out a small tree and the faint line of wires crisscrossing above the street. The women walk away from the enclosed, claustrophobic space in the foreground towards the light and the open area visible just beyond the alley.

FIGURE 5.1. Nagano. "A back alley of a housing street burned by war damage," Tsukuda, Tokyo, 1957 (*Sensai de yakenakatta rojiura no jūtakugai*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*). Tōkyō: Asahi Sonorama, 1978



"A back alley of a housing street burned by war damage" (*Sensai de yakenakatta rojiura no jūtakugai*) is the first image in Nagano Shigeichi's photobook *Dream Age.* Situating the photograph within the context of Japan's postwar history, one could say that the women represent the gauntlet through which Japan moved, from war and postwar devastation to the "dream age" of the 1960s. The country is walking, in other words, towards a brighter life defined by material wealth, the image of the salaryman, and Japan's return to political sovereignty following the end of the Allied Occupation.

This image was taken at a time when many Japanese photographers were abandoning the objective realism championed by Domon Ken in favor of expressing their own personal viewpoints. After Domon declared an end to the objective realist movement in 1954, Japanese photography entered an age defined by what museum curator Alexandra Munroe calls "subjective realism." Munroe distinguishes objective from subjective realism by stating that in the latter, "the subject's psychological presence adds layers of visual meaning, beyond raw description, to the image."[1] Photographers achieve this by using, among other techniques, unconventional cropping methods, shooting out of focus, and high tonal contrast. Other methods are more nuanced. Nagano, for example, uses high and low vantage points as opposed to shooting from eye level, or zooms in on his subjects so that they fill the frame and create suffocating scenes that offer no relief for the viewer's gaze.

Many scholars of postwar Japanese photography link this shift toward subjectivity to the Anpo protests against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1960. Photography critic Iizawa Kōtarō states that the "crisis delivered an electrifying stimulus to Japanese photographers" who then "began to explore new documentary styles that examined and indicted social contradictions through photography."[2] Art historian Karen Fraser speaks of a "cultural dissonance" created by Japan's complex relationship with the United States that led many photographers to experiment with new ways of documenting reality in an effort to capture the tensions expressed by Japanese citizens.[3]

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[1] Munroe, "Postwar Japanese Photography and the Pursuit of Consciousness," 33.

While the radical student protests of the 1960s certainly exerted a great influence on the development of postwar photography, they were not the sole impetus in the move from objectivity to subjectivity. The increasing subjectivity in photography can be traced to other social and economic transformations in the Era of High-Speed Growth (1955-1970). This includes Japan's return to independence following the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951, economic recovery under Prime Minister Ikdeda Hayato's (1960-1964) "income doubling plan," the centering of society around the salaryman life, and the rise of an American-syle consumerism in an age of increasing material wealth. Many photographers, including Nagano, Tōmatsu Shomei, and Kawada Kijuki, abandoned the objectivity favored by early postwar photographers and instead turned to subjectivity in order to express their growing anxieties during this transformative period. Indeed, despite the unprecedented economic growth and postwar recovery, Nagano's *Dream Age* suggests a sense of precariousness and unease stemming from Japan's rapidly changing society.

This chapter offers a close study of *Dream Age* in order to provide insight into the some of the social developments that spurred postwar photographers to abandon objectivity and enter the age of subjective realism. First, this chapter will touch on

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[2] Iizawa, "The Evolution of Postwar Photography," 214.

[3] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*,138.

Nagano's background and his career as a professional photographer, along with a brief sketch of other developments in photography in the late 1950s. Second, a few of the major social, political, and economic changes in Japanese society during the Era of High-Speed Growth will be explored in detail. Next, this chapter will offer an analysis of *Dream Age*, situating readings of the images within the context of these postwar developments. This chapter will end by looking briefly at the Provoke era of the late 1960s, the apex of the trend towards subjectivity.

Nagano has received minimal attention in histories of postwar Japanese photography. Iizawa, for example, offers only a cursory glance Nagano's work, despite calling him "the most productive photographer" in the late 1950s and 1960s.[4] In her book *Photography and Japan*, Fraser fails to mention Nagano at all, instead focusing on more well-known photographers such as Tōmatsu and Moriyama Daido. But Nagano's images provide a crucial link between the objectivity favored in the early 1950s and the photographers who advocated for subjectivity from the late 1950s. An analysis of his images can provide greater insight in the move toward subjective realism, as well as some of the anxieties in the "dream age" of the Era of High-Speed Growth that led photographers to incorporate their self-expression into their photographs.

Nagano and the Era of Subjectivity

Nagano's early photographic career gave him a strong foundation in documentary photography. Born in Oita City, Kyushu in 1926, Nagano began work at a trading company after graduating from Keio University in 1947 with a degree in economics. After a chance meeting with photographer Natori Yōnosuke, however, Nagano left the company to join the ranks of photojournalists at Natori's newly-launched pictorial

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[4] Iizawa, "The Evolution of Postwar Photography," 214.

Shūkan Sun News, a general-interest publication modeled after America's *Life* magazine.[5] While working at *Shūkan Sun News*, Nagano developed relationships with and learned under noted photojournalists, such as Natori, Miki Jun, and Kimura Ihei.

In 1950 Nagano began working for the photography department of the Iwanami Photo Library, where he continued to photograph under the guidance of Natori. Nagano further mastered the editing and shooting skills of photojournalism while working at Iwanami publishing, and it was during this time that his images began to reflect contemporary social issues.[6] Nagano left Iwanami in 1955 to become a freelance photographer, submitting photographic series, many focused on Tokyo, to photography magazines. Photographs from some of these series, such as *Wadai no Foto Rupo* ("Japan Shades Series") that appeared in *Asahi Camera* in 1960, and *Tokyo Essay* that ran in *Camera Mainichi* in 1961, are included in his photobook *Dream Age*.

From 1967 to 1970, Nagano worked as a photographic director of *Asahi* journal. His primary responsibility was editing graphic pages for the publication, but he also appointed younger photographers such as Moriyama and Masahisa Fukase, establishing connections with photographers who would come to prominence in the late 1960s.[7]

While working as a freelance photographer, Nagano continued to keep social issues at the forefront of his photography, and many of his images focus on the social transformation and resulting challenges brought about by a rapidly changing postwar society. Further, his work during this time marks a turning point in his photographic aesthetic. His early images under *Shūkan Sun News* and Iwanami Photo Library followed the objectivity favored by realist photographers such as Domon, Kimura, and Natori. Recall that objective realism, in an attempt to capture the "reality" of the subject, placed emphasis on the relationship between the subject and camera, while downplaying the role that the photographer played in the photographic process. Once the image incorporated the self-expression of the photographer, as evidenced by Nagano's images from the mid-1950s, it ceased to be objective realism.

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[5] Natori established *Shūkan Sun News* with the hopes that it would become a Japanese *Life* magazine. The general-interest pictorial publication had a print run from November 1947 to March 1949. See "Major Photography Magazines," in *The History of Japanese Photography*, 382.

[6] Iizawa, "The Evolution of Postwar Photography," 214.

[7] Nagano, *Magajin wāku 60-nendai* (*Magazine Works 1960s*), *Purofaiiru* ("Biography"), n.p.

Techniques used in objective realism include shooting from eye level, aligning the subject on an even plane so that the frame is not tilted at an angle, using minimal contrast so that tones are neither too light nor too dark, and maintaining a distance from the subject such that the subject is neither close-up nor taken from an extreme distance. Finally, as explained in the previous chapter, objective realism produced "explanatory" photographs that depicted daily life, but stopped short of incorporating the photographer's own self-expression.

Many of Nagano's images in the opening pages of his photobook *Nagano Shigeichi shashinshū Tōkyō 1950-nendai (Nagano Shigeichi Photo Album Tokyo 1950s*) highlight his use of objective realism. Take, for instance, a series of photographs depicting women in the streets of Tokyo. Nagano took these images from eye level, and depicts the women clearly and distinctly. One image, "Shopping, Local Outside Market" (Tokyo, 1949) (*Kaimono Anchi bagaishijō*), shows a line of women extending out the doorway of a shop, perhaps waiting for rations (fig. 5.2).[8] Natural light fills the image, providing an even tonal contrast that allows the viewer to pick out details in the woven shopping baskets and the lanterns hanging in the doorway. None of the women look directly at the camera, but instead go about their shopping as if they are not aware of the photographer's presence, suggesting that Nagano captured a moment of daily life without constructing a staged scene. Further, the distance Nagano maintained between himself and his subjects follows standard realist techniques. The women neither fill the frame, which would evoke a sense intimacy with the subjects, nor are they so far removed from the photographer as to appear distant. Instead, Nagano follows conventional objective realist framing methods by choosing to shoot from a distance that would make the viewer feel as if he were standing outside the storefront along with the women.

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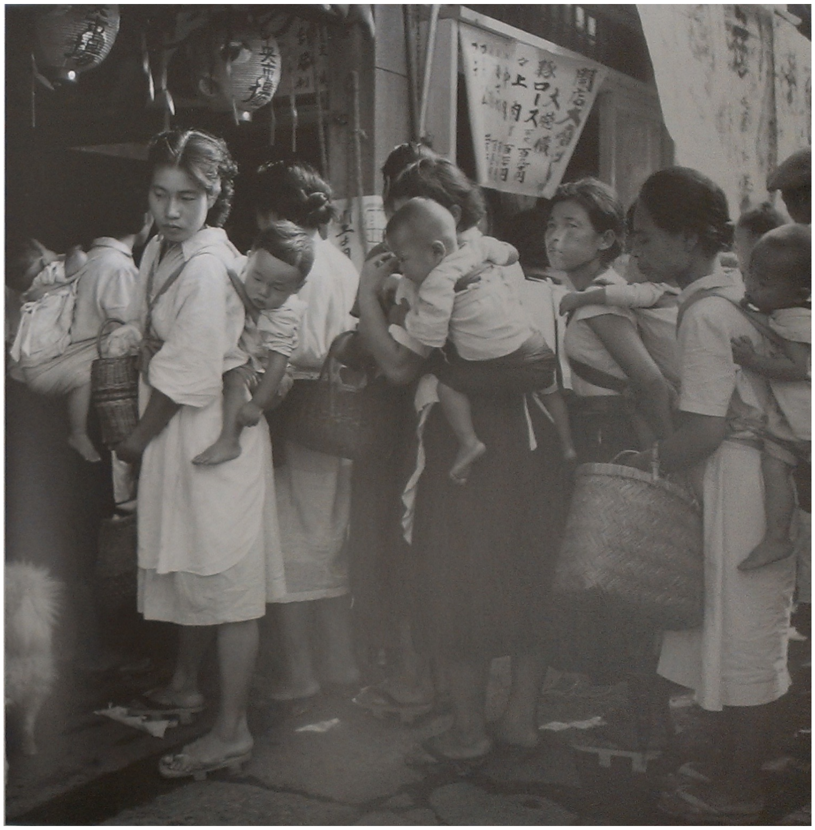
[8] The rationing system, begun during World War Two, lasted until 1950. Some rationing practices continued until 1968, such as the coupon system for meals in restaurants. See Seidensticker, *Tokyo Rising*, 159.

FIGURE 5.2. Nagano. "Shopping, Outside Local Market," Tokyo, 1949 (*Kaimono Anchi bagaishijō*). Photograph. From *Nagano Shigeichi shashinshū Tōkyō 1950-nendai* (*Nagano Shigeichi Photo Album: Tokyo 1950s)*.



In contrast with the above, Nagano combined his individual expression with the photojournalistic tradition while working as a freelance photographer, transforming his images from objective to subjective realism. Rather than the explanatory photographs of Domon's objective realism that strove to record the subject in a straightforward manner, the subjective realist images can be categorized as "ethnically evaluative." These images are often politically engaged and go beyond attempts at explanation to make judgments about the subject, or to praise or condemn aspects of society.[9]

In his writing, Nagano explains the intersection of documentary photography and the need to include the subjective experience of the photographer, stating, "A documentary photographer always wavers between the methodology of recording subjects and the excessive self-expression. The photographer's stance is determined by placing his *valued judgment* on how his/her expression can be felt or understood by the general public" (emphasis added).[10] This passage highlights that Nagano was not merely concerned with offering an objective portrayal of society, but sought to convey his own individual expression in his images. His use of the term "valued judgment," moreover, indicates Nagano's desire to not only record images of daily life, but to offer his own interpretation of reality.

Nagano allowed his personal expression to show in "Commuter Train" (Tokyo, 1960) (*Tsūkin densha*), an image of salarymen crammed into a subway car on the Chūō Line in Tokyo (fig. 5.3).[11] The close-up depiction of the subject, along with the crowding of the frame, are visually striking and clearly demonstrate Nagano's turn from objectivity. A man's face featured prominently in the center of the image draws the viewer's attention to the bottom of the frame. Here Nagano chose rather unconventional framing methods, as he crops the image just below the man's nose. By zooming in on the salaryman Nagano was able to capture his deeply lined face that, combined with the man's closed eyes, conveys a sense of exhaustion. The fatigue evident in the salaryman is further replicated in the face of a sleeping woman in the background. The woman leans her face against a support pole in the middle of the subway car that dominates the left side of the frame. The close-up perspective, in addition to the odd angle and tight cropping of the frame, allow Nagano to combine form and function in order to illustrate the grinding commute and fatigue of the salaryman experience.

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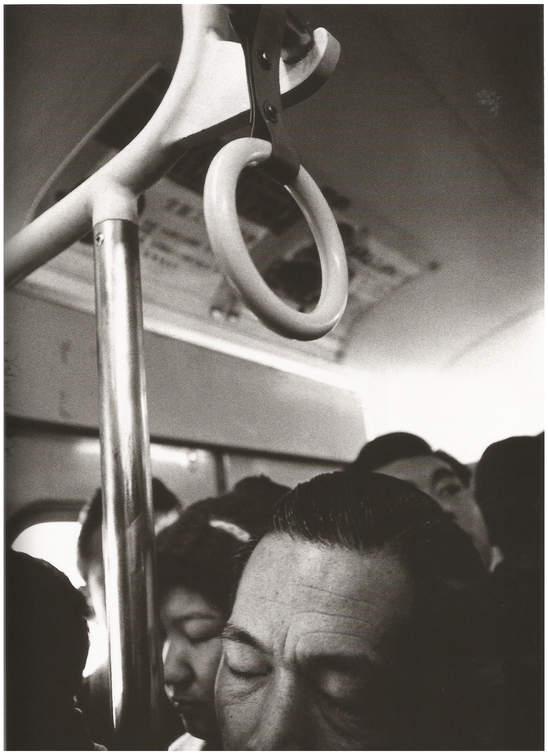
[9] Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs*, 76–82.

[10] Nagano, *Magajin wāku 60-nendai* (*Magazine Works 1960s*), "Nagano Shigeichi Himself" (*Jisaku wo kataru*), n.p.

[11] Nagano, *Kono kuni no kioku* (*A Chronicle of Japan*) (Tokyo: Nihon Shashin Kikaku, 2000), 75.

FIGURE 5.3. Nagano. "Commuter Train," Tokyo, 1960 (*Tsūkin densha*). Photograph. From *Kono kuni no kioku: Nagano Shigeichi, shashin no shigoto* (*A chronicle of Japan, Nagano Shigeichi: A Life in Photography*). Tokyo: Nihon Shashin Kikaku, 2000.



Nagano’s turn to subjectivity from the mid-1950s coincided with that of photographers of the “Image Generation” who sought a more personal approach to photography.[12] Rather than removing the photographer from the photographic process, as was the goal under objective realism, those of the Image Generation advocated for a “spirit of individualism” that would give the photographer greater agency in recording and interpreting his subjects.[13] A term used by Iizawa in his essay “The Evolution of Postwar Photography,” the Image Generation refers to a new cohort of photographers that grew up during World War Two, experienced Japan’s defeat, and lived through the drastic shift from a military government to a democratic nation during the Allied Occupation.[14] As children during the war, this generation of photographers was too young to fight on the frontlines or contribute to the war effort by other means, such as producing propaganda. Thus, while they knew what it was like to suffer the horrors of war, they lacked the experience of other professional photographers such as Domon and Kimura, who facilitated the government’s distortion of reality in their work as propaganda photographers. It seems that without this experience of producing propaganda the photographers of the Image Generation were less concerned with finding the objective truth as Domon and others had been. This perhaps provides one explanation why they abandoned objectivity in favor of subjectivity. Less focused with portraying reality objectively, in other words, these photographers effectively interpreted reality by revealing their personal expression in their images.

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[12] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 25.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Such photographers include Narahara Ikkō, Imai Hisae, Hosoe Eikoh, and Tōmatsu Shomei. See Iizawa, “The Evolution of Postwar Photography,” 214-217.

Nagano and others in the Image Generation actively strove to break away from photojournalism and endeavored to create a new form of expression in photography.[15] The photographers were deeply influenced by contemporary society and relied on subjectivity in order to express their reactions to transformations in Japan during the Era of High-Speed Growth.[16] A small group of these photographers, including Tōmatsu, Kawada, Narahara Ikkō, and Hosoe Eikoh, formed a photography collective called VIVO in 1959. The collective disbanded in 1961, but their desire to express themselves as individuals left an imprint on Japan's photography industry that was to have a lasting impact, eventually culminating in the Provoke movement of the late 1960s.[17]

Even though photographers began placing an increasing reliance on subjectivity and reacting strongly against photojournalism, they never completely broke away from realism and the desire to document society. In an essay in *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and '70s*, Ivan Vartanian states that everything was a document for the VIVO photographers.[18] Hosoe created a "subjective document" with his 1968 photobook *Kamaitachi*, for example, while Kawada's *Chizu* (*The Map*), published in 1965, was a "symbolic document" and Tōmatsu's 1965 *Nihon* (*Japan*) can be viewed as a "personal document."[19] These three examples illustrate that many photographers shared Nagano's sentiment that photographs should include elements of both documentary photography and self-expression.

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[15] Ibid., 217.

[16] Ibid., 220.

[17] Mitsuda, Yuri, "Trauma and Deliverance: Portraits of Avant-Garde Artists in Japan, 1955-1970," in *Tokyo 1955-1970: A New Avant-Garde*, ed. Doryun Chong (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2012), 172.

[18] Ivan Vartanian and Ryūichi Kaneko, "Ikkō Narahara, *Europe: Where Time Has Stopped*, *Japanesque*," in *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and 70s*, 126.

[19] Ibid.

Tōmatsu's photographs are emblematic of the turn from objectivity even while continuing to draw from documentary roots. Beginning in the late 1950s, he developed his own form of documentary photography characterized by long shots, deep shadows, and darkness—techniques that allowed him to convey his subjectivity. The dark shadows, explains Tōmatsu, obscure important elements in the image, but at the same time force the viewer to take a more focused look and longer study of the photograph.[20] Tōmatsu's photographic aesthetic was influenced by the same factors as Nagano's: Americanization and the progression of mass society. But whereas Nagano explored his subjectivity in the streets of Tokyo, Tōmatsu mainly worked around military bases.

In his essay "The New Problem of Visual Language: 'The Visual Image,'" (*Shikaku gengo no atarashii mondai: 'Eizō'*) published in a May 1960 issue of *Photo Art*, photographer Shigemori Kōen comments on the subjective portrayal of reality:

> In documenting the contemporary scene, these photographers have a pronounced tendency to deviate to some extent from objective reporting, and to assert their individuality by means of visual expression. They intend to impose their interpretations of reality on the viewer, whether or not these interpretations occasion discomfort or resistance. In other words, their work puts forth idiosyncratic versions of reality shaped by their own bold unilateral judgments, reversing the self-negating tendencies of photographers who record reality from a so-called objective standpoint and, in a manner of speaking, serving to exercise the artists' prerogative [as artists].[21]

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[20] Shomei Tōmatsu, *Shomei Tōmatsu* (Paris: Phaidon, 2001), n.p.

[21] Shigemori, Kōen The New Problem of Visual Language: 'The Visual Image'" (*Shikaku gengo no atarashii mondai: 'Eizō'*), trans. Colin Smith, in *From Postwar to Postmodern, Art in Japan, 1945 1989*, 147. Originally published in *Photo Art* 12 (1960): 162-65.

For Shigemori and others, interjecting personal expression into photographs was important because "images themselves don't convey thought," but rather possess a linguistic function that has the power to stimulate the viewer to "arrive at great thoughts."[22] In other words, in order for the photograph to make sense and convey meaning, Shigemori believed, it must reflect the thoughts of the photographer.[23] This required stepping away from the straightforward depiction of the subject required of objective realism, and instead called upon photographers to employ such techniques as high-angle shots and close-ups.[24] By doing so, photographers could combine visual images and thought to create a "language" of images. "We live in increasingly complicated times, and the facts and phenomena that surround us grow increasingly murky accordingly," states Shigemori. "In order to elucidate them through images, we need a new language of images more than ever." Thus, subjective realism went beyond merely replicating reality, allowing postwar photographers to interpret and make sense of reality through images.

What was the reality these photographers faced? In the previous chapter I explained how objective realist photographers recorded prostitutes, repatriated soldiers, war orphans and other elements of a defeated, demoralized *kyodatsu* society. In contrast, Nagano and photographers of the Image Generation focused on sights that became emblematic of the Era of High-Speed Growth. Salarymen standing on street corners and riding in crowded subway trains, shoppers swarming around window displays in Shibuya, and children peeking over the balconies of *danchi* (multi-story apartment buildings) populate the photographs of subjective realist photographers. They captured moments of leisure, as seen in photographs of citizens enjoying baseball games or amusements on the roofs of department stores, as well as moments of tension that rocked the nation when droves of protestors flooded the streets in outrage against renewal of the U.S.-Japan security treaty. While the subject matter varied widely, what connects these images is their negative portrayal—sometimes obvious, other times indicated through subtle nuances—of the changes taking place. The difficulties that this group of photographers faced during the Era of High-Speed Growth, explained in detail below, produced a sense of unease that found expression through photographers' subjective viewpoints. By utilizing subjective realism, Nagano and those of the Image Generation offer a critique of the society in which they lived.

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., 149.

[24] Ibid., 149–150.

Economic and Social Transformations During the Era of High-Speed Growth

In an interview with Torihara Manabu that appears in *Magajin wāku 60-nendai* (*Magazine Work 1960s*), published in 2009, Nagano states that his "Tokyo Essay" series "captured the images of Tokyo as a symbol of the age that was changing with the high economic growth."[25] During this time, Japan experienced not only incredible economic recovery, but many social transformations as well. Some of these transformations were a continuation of pre-war trends, such as the rise of the salaryman profession and the middle class. Others were rooted in the postwar relationship between America and Japan. The U.S.-Japan security treaty, for example, incited political tensions and protests that swept across Tokyo in the early 1960s. Still other changes involved the continuous reconstruction of the city, especially road construction and the freeway system built in preparation for the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games. It should be noted that these changes certainly did not apply to every individual all across Japan, nor did they impact everyone equally. Nevertheless, the economic and social transformations highlighted below became central to Nagano's photographic consciousness, and would have a deep impact on the development of subjectivity for him and many photographers of the Image Generation.

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[25] Nagano, "Nagano Shigeichi Himself" (*Jisaku wo kataru*), n.p.

Assessed in U.S. dollars, in 1951 the Japanese gross domestic product (GNP) stood at $14.2 billion, compared to $328.4 billion in the United States.[26] In 1955, the Economic Planning Agency created a plan for "Economic Independence" that aimed for a five percent growth in the GNP in five years. Japan far exceeded this goal with a 9.1 percent increase,[27] reaching $39.1 billion by 1960. Over the next two decades Japan's GNP continued to soar, rising to $203.1 billion in 1970, and $1,040.1 billion in 1980.[28]

A full explanation for Japan's rapid economic recovery is beyond the scope of this paper. Two important factors, however, are worth mentioning: Japan's continued relationship with America after the end of the Allied Occupation, and the growth of Japan's electronics industry. Because Japan's new constitution prevented the formation of a military force, the government turned to the United States for defense in the dangerously divided world of the Cold War era.[29] This need for greater military security eventually led Japan to sign the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security with the

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[26] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 244.

[27] Chapman, *Inventing Japan*, 120.

[28] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 244.

[29] Edwin O. Reischauer and Sir George Sansom, *Japan Past and Present*, third edition (Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1974), 231.

United States (*Nippon-koku to Amerika-gasshūkoku to no Aida no Sōgo Kyōryoku oyobi Anzen Hoshō Jōyaku,* or Anpo for short), following the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty (*San-Furansisuko kōwa-Jōyaku*) on September 8, 1951.

Japanese leadership welcomed the continued American military presence brought about by the Anpo treaty. As historian Andrew Gordon explains, by relying on America for security, along with the limitations imposed on Japan's own armed forces by article nine of the constitution, Japan did not need to devote large sums of money to maintain their own military.[30] According to one estimate, if Japan had spent money to sustain armed forces at the same level of other industrialized nations, such as West Germany, its economy would have been thirty percent smaller by 1974.[31]

Technological developments also fueled Japan's rising economy, contributing to 22.4 percent of the economic growth between 1953 and 1971.[32] Many electrical goods, such as radios, electric rice cookers, and sewing machines, were highly desired objects by ordinary Japanese citizens in a growing consumer society.[33] In a play on the "three sacred treasures" (*Sanshu no Jingi*) of mirror, sword, and jewel in Japanese mythology, the television became one of the three desired objects of the 1950s, along with the refrigerator and the washing machine.[34] The television in particular became an intensely desired object by many. For example, an average urban family paid eighty-five thousand yen, nearly three months' rent, for a TV in 1957.[35]

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[30] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 246.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Simon Partner, *Assembled in Japan: Electrical Goods and the Making of the Japanese Consumer* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 108.

[33] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 247.

[34] While many of these electrical appliances were made in Japan by the 1960s, advertisements in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s connected the use of electrical appliances to a modern, American way of life. In a 1954 advertisement for a Sanyo washing machine, for instance, the company lauded its product as the "agitator type, the most popular in America and Europe." For more, see Yoshimi, "Consuming America, Producing Japan," 75-79.

Nagano captured the popularity of television in many of his photographs. Some of the pictures were taken inside broadcasting studios, while others show groups of people watching television in the street. "People Watching a Professional Wrestling Match on the Soba Restaurant's Television" (Gotanda, Tokyo, 1957) (*Sobaya no terebi de puroresu no shiai wo miteiru hitotachi*) was taken at night in what could be any shopping street in Tokyo (fig. 5.4). Numerous lights flare like little electric orbs, the halos quickly receding into dark surroundings. The image is quite grainy and enough out of focus to fool the viewer into thinking his own eyes are blurry, and not the image itself. A row of men anchors the viewer's gaze in the center of the photograph, all pictured in profile and looking intently at something not pictured in this image. The viewer's eye follows each of the faces until he reaches a storefront window on the right side of the frame. But what are the men looking at? It is impossible to know, and only the caption lets the viewer know that the men are glued to a television set broadcasting a professional wrestling match.[36] The signage in the picture, overexposed to allow enough light in for the rest of the image, mimic the bright appearance of TV screens, reflecting the rapidly rising popularity of television.

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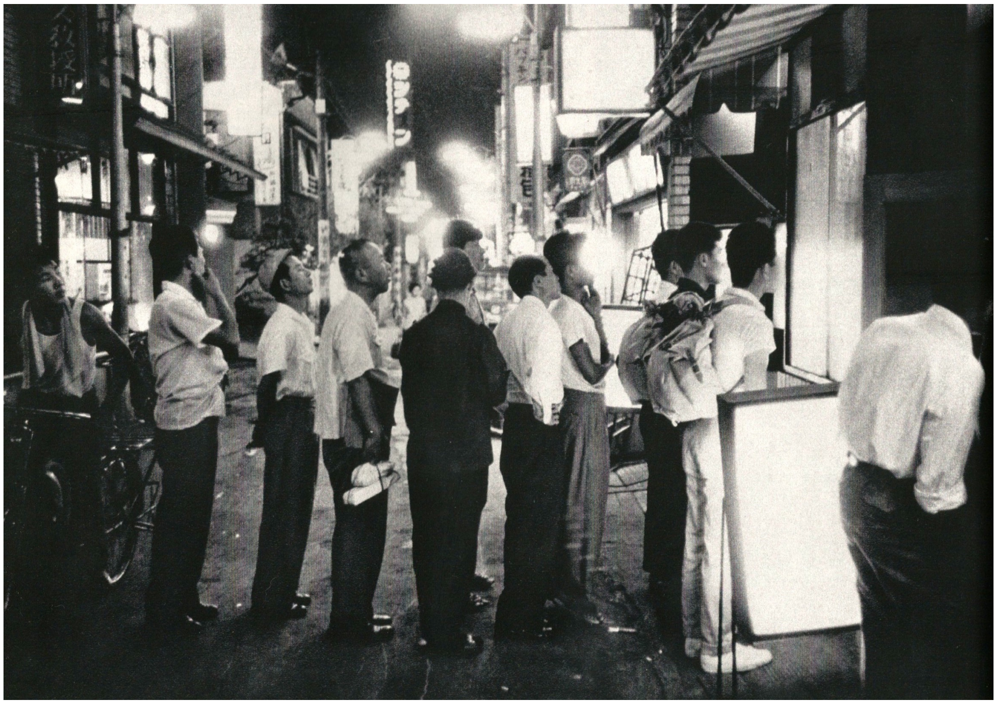
[35] Ibid.

[36] Professional wrestling became immensely popular in the postwar period. One of the foremost national heroes of Japan in the wake of World War Two was a Korean-Japanese wrestler known as Rikidōzan. His victories over numerous Western opponents were in many ways a psychological anecdote for a defeated nation. Rikidōzan's popularity also inadvertently stimulated the nascent television industry in Japan. Everyone, it seemed, wanted to watch the famed wrestler win against challenger after challenger in the wrestling ring.

FIGURE 5.4. Nagano. "People Watching a Professional Wrestling Match on the Soba Restaurant's Television," Gotanda, Tokyo, 1957 (*Sobaya no terebi de puroresu no shiai wo miteiru hitotachi*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).



The fascination with television is but one example of how more and more Japanese turned to an American-style consumerist lifestyle during the Era of High-Speed Growth. For a population that long suffered under a military government, followed immediately by dismal postwar conditions, the image of American prosperity during the Occupation stimulated "the fantasies and dreams" of Japanese citizens.[37] America, in effect, became both a dream and a vision, and many began to equate Americanism with "modern life."[38] As Japan transitioned from the Occupation to a new postwar society,

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[37] Anne Allison, *Millennial Monsters Japanese Toys and the Global Imagination*, Asia: Local Studies / Global Themes (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 42.

[38] Shunya Yoshimi, trans. by David Buist, "Consuming America, Producing Japan," *The Ambivalent Consumer: Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West*, first edition (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2006), 65, 72.

"the quest for American material wealth lay at the heart of the aspirations of Japanese businessmen, politicians, and ordinary people."[39]

The desire for American material wealth was not limited to household electrical goods, but included popular culture as well. Urban spaces where American personnel were stationed during the Occupation, such as Roppongi, Harajuku, and Ginza, became centers of consumer culture after the American forces left, continuing the trend of viewing America as an "object of consumer desire."[40] American consumer products and popular culture circulated widely, including everything from comic books and cartoons, to music, film, and fast-food restaurants, as well as pop culture icons such as Elvis, Marilyn Monroe, and James Dean.[41] Various "tribes" (*zoku*) began to form around American fashion and music from the late 1950s. The *rokabiri* (rockabilly) *zoku* is one such tribe, taking inspiration from American rock and roll musician Bill Haley.[42]

As the economy rose during the 1960s and as Japan became increasingly oriented around a new consumer society, the Japanese began to turn to economic terms to define themselves. One result of this was that many began to equate business and the salaryman life with the national identity.[43] By 1970, seventy-five percent of household heads identified as salarymen.[44] In a way, this continued prewar trends when salarymen became

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[39] Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 45.

[40] Yoshimi Shunya, "Consuming America, Producing Japan," 75.

[41] Roy Starrs, *Modernism and Japanese Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 193.

[42] For more on the *rokabiri zoku*, see Michael Furmanovsky, "'Rokabiri,' Student Radicalism, and the Japanization of American Pop Culture, 1955-1960," Kokusai bunka kenkyū 12 (2008), accessed March 12, 2014, http://repo.lib.ryukoku.ac.jp/jspui/bitstream/10519/2561/1/KJ00005242445.pdf.

[43] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 251.

[44] Anne Allison, *Precarious Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2013), 22–23.

"icons of modern Tokyo" during the Meiji government's pursuit of consumer capitalism.[45] But it was not merely the nation that became all the more defined in economic terms; salarymen based their security and identity on membership in their company as well.[46] The salaryman's identity became so linked with his company,[47] in fact, that many oriented themselves in the economic order not based on their own occupational skills, but through their corporation.[48]

Many Japanese looked to the salaryman life as a promise of financial security and access to material wealth. As Japan became oriented around a new consumerist lifestyle, the salaryman became inextricably linked to the image of the "new middle class." In 1965, just over fifty-six percent of Japanese identified as part of the middle class; by 1975 the number would rise as high as seventy-seven percent. Eventually, the salaryman lifestyle and the middle class became part of a trend towards a standardized way of life that grew along with the economy.[49] Some of the shared experiences of those in the middle class or "mainstream" society included growing up in a nuclear family, living in an urban society, and greater access to higher education.[50] The image of the salaryman was standardized as well, becoming a prominent symbol in the public conscious through mass media, popular stories, and "how to" books.[51]

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[45] Alisa Freedman, *Tokyo in Transit: Japanese Culture on the Rails and Road* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 31.

[46] Ezra F. Vogel, *Japan's New Middle Class: The Salary Man and His Family in a Tokyo Suburb* (University of California Press, 1971), 264.

[47] As Chapman argues, the company became the most powerful "socializing institution" for "rootless postwar Japanese," giving them a sense of belonging in the new postwar society. See Chapman, *Inventing Japan*, 129.

[48] Vogel, *Japan's New Middle Class*, 264.

[49] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 251.

[50] Ibid.

While the degree of shared experience certainly increased from the 1950s through the 1970s, this mainstream, middle-class lifestyle did not apply to everyone. The degree of standardization was perpetuated by a mass media that projected the image of an educated, middle-class urban family as typical of all Japanese people.[52] Groups that existed outside of the standardized ideal included Burakumin, a group of social outcasts with a long history of discrimination, as well as Korean and Chinese minorities. And although women were finding new roles in the workplace, a strong division of labor still existed between men and women. Some employers even required women to quit their jobs upon marriage.[53] Differences also separated salarymen who worked for larger companies and those in smaller and medium-sized workplaces. In the 1960s, the latter had significantly less job security and received fifty to sixty percent of the salary received by those at larger companies.[54]

A short story that appeared in a September 1964 issue of America's *Life* magazine highlights how some Japanese perceived and reacted to an increasingly standardized, middle-class lifestyle.[55] "The Talisman—A Short Story," by Yamakawa Masao, relates a conversation between two friends in which one tells the other of a recent, disturbing experience he had after drinking with his co-workers at the end of the workday. The trouble began when the narrator was making his way home:

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[51] Journalist Patrick Smith, for instance, describes one such "how to" book: "[The book] explains each tiny aspect of the sarariiman's life. Young sarariimen carry this type of briefcase; the middle ranks, this type; and those over fifty, this type. Middle-ranking sarariimen must cope with unreasonable superiors, selfish subordinates, large mortgages and cheating wives. Here are the sarariiman's six variations on the smile…" See Patrick Smith, *Japan: A Reinterpretation*, first Vintage Books edition (New York: Vintage, 1998), 110.

[52] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 262.

[53] Ibid., 257.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Masao Yamakawa, trans. Edward Seidensticker, "The Talisman-A Short Story," *Life*, September 11, 1964, 94-97.

> There was a man in front of me. I had the feeling that I was looking at myself from behind. He had on the same felt hat, and he had the same package in his left hand. You could tell by his walk that he had been drinking too. It was a foggy night, and I wondered if I might be seeing my own shadow.

The narrator's confusion deepens when the stranger enters the narrator's apartment. To his astonishment, the narrator's wife welcomes the stranger home, completely oblivious to the fact that the stranger is not her husband. The stranger sits down in the narrator's chair and proceeds to read the newspaper while his wife chatters away about the narrator's sister, Kumiko, in the kitchen. The narrator stands outside the door, baffled by this turn of events and not knowing what to do. Finally, he enters the apartment, to the surprise of the stranger and his wife. After a moment of tense confusion, the trio realizes the mistake. The stranger and the narrator, both salarymen, live in the same apartment building, the narrator in E-305, while the stranger lives in D-305. The stranger did not think anything amiss while the wife discussed Kumiko, because he has a cousin by the same name. The narrator and the stranger even share the same name: Kurose Jirō. This case of mistaken identity, in other words, centers on the problem of standardization.

The experience alarms the narrator. He states, "To mistake a person or a room—that made no difference. It happened all the time. What bothered me was that Kurose had mistaken our life for his own. . . I knew of course that all the apartments were the same. But I asked myself: had our very ways of life become standardized?" After this experience, the narrator becomes consumed with the issue of standardized lifestyles. So similar does he see everyone in society, with identical surroundings and routines, identical emotions and outlets for them, that he "could not even identify myself among them all."

A central element in "The Talisman" that contributes to the image of standardization is the *danchi* in which the narrator lives. The Japan Housing Corporation (JHC) built these multi-story apartment buildings in an effort to alleviate the acute need for housing after U.S. bombing raids left over half of Tokyo homeless.[56] The *danchi* that were meant to solve the housing shortages, however, severed traditional community networks, leading to a growing sense of alienation among their inhabitants.[57] Further, as Wesley Sasaki-Uemura states, *danchi* posed difficulties in creating an identity in mass society,[58] as highlighted by the narrator's experience in "The Talisman." Far from serving as an ideal solution to housing problems, *danchi* became symbolic of the ills of a growing urban, mass society.[59]

Besides housing, other social ills of the Era of High-Speed Growth included inadequate welfare programs, underfinanced education, and poor roads and other infrastructure.[60] In 1964, for example, the year that Tokyo hosted the Olympics, only about one third of the population in Tokyo enjoyed the use of sewers.[61] The rest of the city depended on *kumitoriya*, carts tasked with collecting night soil. *Kumitoriya* were still in use even twenty years after the Olympics, serving twenty-five percent of the population in the eastern wards of Tokyo who lacked access to sewers.[62]

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[56] In an initial effort to solve housing needs, armaments factories were converted into the production of prefabricated houses after the war. Nevertheless, by May 1952, the number of houses in Tokyo covered only 76 percent of the minimum requirements. See Dore, *City Life in Japan*, 43.

[57] For a full explanation of the development of *danchi* and their effect on postwar society, see Ann Waswo, *Housing in Postwar Japan - A Social History* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[58] Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, "Postwar Society and Culture," in *A Companion to Japanese History*, (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 321.

[59] Sasaki-Uemura, "Postwar Society and Culture," 321.

[60] Reischauer and Sansom, *Japan Past and Present*, 297.

Transportation received special attention as Tokyo prepared to host the Olympic games. Streets were widened and straightened, resulting in so-called "Olympic thoroughfares," as well as the construction of Tokyo's first expressways. But traffic congestion and poor urban infrastructure continued to pose huge difficulties, and many complained that too little attention was given to the actual needs of citizens while the government focused on cleaning up the city for the anticipated Olympic crowds.[63]

Nagano captured many instances of urban reconstruction. But rather than depict streets and freeways meant to lessen congested transportation networks, Nagano photographed citizens trying to cope with obstacles posed by road construction, as seen in "Kuramae," (Tokyo, 1961) an image of a pedestrian attempting to navigate a narrow path between a concrete building on his right and a severe drop-off to his left (fig. 5.5). Nagano intentionally highlighted undesirable elements in his photographs of road construction. In one series of photographs of highways constructed for the Olympics using reclaimed land, the photographer explained that he "focused on the negative part of that situation."[64]

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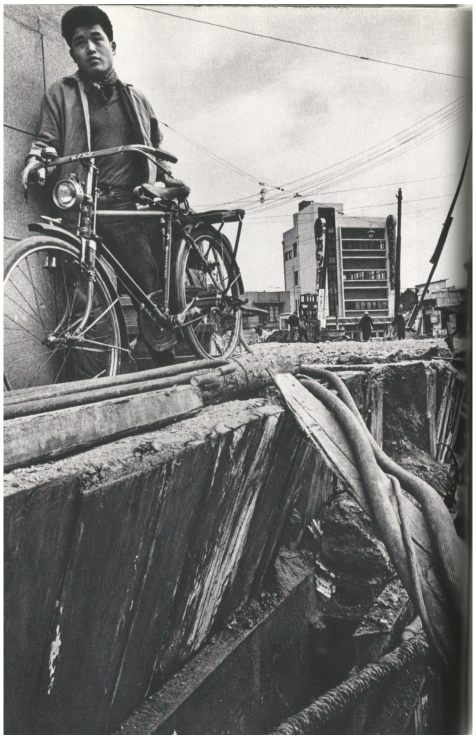
[61] Seidensticker, *Tokyo Rising*, 234.

[62] Ibid.

[63] For example, a water channel was dug to clean up the water quality of the Sumida River, which gave off an incredibly foul odor due to sewage and other wastes. See Cybriwsky, *Tokyo*, 92.

[64] Nagano, "Nagano Shigeichi Himself" (*Jisaku wo kataru*), n.p.

FIGURE 5.5. Nagano. “Kuramae,” Tokyo, 1961. Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan’s Dream Age*).



Nagano’s images of road construction highlight the frustrations felts by pedestrians who tried to cope with a changing urban landscape. The rising economy and resulting social changes of the Era of High-Speed Growth also drew sharp criticism from many. Yoshimoto Takaaki, a philosopher on the left side of the political spectrum, spoke of a Japanese population that was beset with a “continually increasing burden of a sensibility gripped with an amorphous sense of boredom, enjoying a bloated material life and a relatively improved standard of living, but an absolute impoverishment.”[65] Nagano echoes the sentiments expressed by Yoshimoto in an essay in *Dream Age*, stating that he constantly felt “harassed by the uneasy feeling that something of irreplaceable value” was lost in the face of economic prosperity, although the photographer never elaborates on what this was.[66] Critics on the right also took a negative view of rising material wealth, stating that the newfound affluence "threatened to undermine what they described as traditional Japanese values of endurance and sacrifice to a larger collective."[67]

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[65] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 266.

Teenagers were especially susceptible to the "amorphous sense of boredom" articulated by Yoshimoto. A *Life* article from 1964 describes *raritteru*, teens who took sleeping pills in order to "drowse through life, withdrawing into nothingness."[68] These youth often hung out in popular entertainment districts such as Shinjuku and Asakusa, sitting "motionless and expressionless" in jazz coffee shops. Taken from the verb *rariru* (to become intoxicated), the *raritteru* phenomenon posed a serious enough threat that the Ministry of Health and Welfare (now the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare) prohibited the sale of sleeping pills to minors.[69] And the *rokabiri zoku* mentioned earlier, part of the 1958 *rokabiri bumu* (rockabilly boom) popular among thousands of teenagers, caused tense conflict in Japanese society, eventually targeted as a source of juvenile delinquency by police and local authorities.[70]

The salaryman, too, faced difficulties even in the midst of the incredible growth of Japan's GNP and a new source of identity with the corporation. For the salaryman, the ideal of the corporate life promised an orderly, stable existence that was founded on lifetime employment in a large firm or corporation.[71] In turn, the loyal salaryman working for such a company was supposedly happy with his job, rich with company benefits, and at ease with the knowledge that he was secure for life. Yet this image was largely a myth.[72] In reality, only about thirty percent of working men had lifetime employment positions in medium- or large-sized corporations.[73] What is more, the corporate life was anything but ideal. Hours were long, often requiring excessive overtime, and grueling commutes kept men away from their wives and children.[74]

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[66] Nagano, *Dorīmu eiji (Japan's Dream Age)* (Tōkyō: Asahi Sonorama, 1978), "The 'Golden Age' of the 1960s" (*'Ōgōn' no 60-nendai*), n.p.

[67] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 266.

[68] "The Young in Revolt," *Life*, September 11, 1964, 90.

[69] *Suiminyoku asobi ryūkō* ("The Trend of Playing with Sleeping Medication"), *Showa Mainichi*, November 12, 1961, accessed April 26, 2015, http://showa.mainichi.jp/news/1961/11/post-3005.html.

[70] Furmanovsky, "'Rokabiri,' Student Radicalism, and the Japanization of American Pop Culture, 1955-1960," 52-54.

Finally, despite its positive impact on the Japanese economy, not everyone was in favor of the continued American military presence. Because the U.S.-Japan security treaty had a minimum term of ten years, a debate of its ratification was in full swing in the Diet by 1960. Public criticism mounted as debates wore on, with many of the opposing organizations consolidated under the People's Council to Stop the Revised Security Treaty (*Anpo Jōyaku Kaitei Soshi Kokumin Kaigi*).[75] Overall about 16 million people gathered for the anti-treaty protests in 1959 and 1960, some of which erupted into violent public demonstrations.[76] Many photographers were on hand to witness this outbreak of violence, including Nagano. *Dream Age* features two photos of the protest, each an extreme close-up of a single student framed by policemen. In the first image, "Student Protesting Against Anpo," (Nagatachō, Tokyo, 1960) (*Anpo hantai no demo wo*

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[71] Vogel, *Japan's New Middle Class*, 33.

[72] Chapman, *Inventing Japan*, 135.

[73] Allison, *Precarious Japan*, 23.

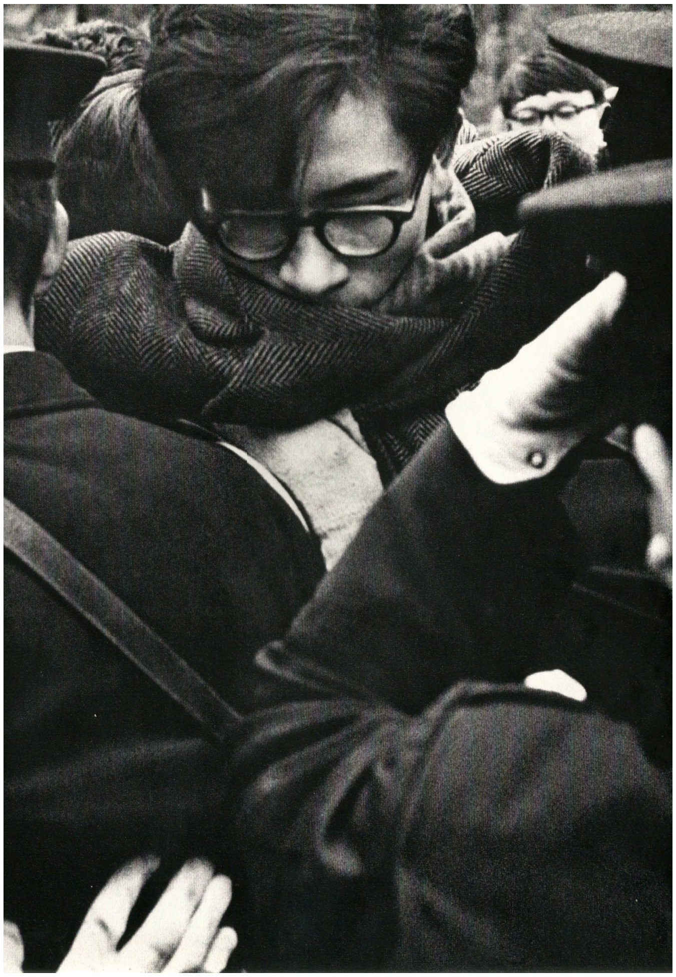
[74] Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 23.

[75] Justin Jesty, "Tokyo 1960: Days of Rage and Grief: Hamaya Hiroshi's Photos of the Anti-Security Treaty Protests," accessed March 16, 2015, http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/tokyo_1960/index.html.

[76] Ibid.

suru gakusei), a student faces the camera and pushes against policemen (fig. 5.6). The student looks down, his face a study of determination, while the press of bodies pushes his blazer up so that it covers the lower portion of his face. Nagano, who did not support the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and believed the Socialist Party of Japan (SPJ) to be "ideologically terrible and unrealistic," states that he viewed the tensions in the "bitter" riots through his "deeply venomous eyes." In the above photograph, the close cropping, combined with the tight press of bodies, accentuates the chaos of the situation, and allows the viewer to empathize with the struggling student.

FIGURE 5.6. Nagano. "Student Protesting Against Anpo," Nagatachō, Tokyo, 1960 (*Anpo hantai no demo wo suru gakusei*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).



Despite the rapid economic recovery and urban reconstruction, Japan was still plagued by a number of social ills. The grinding existence of the salaryman life, disruptive nature of urban reconstruction, tense political protests, and American-style consumerism had a profound impact on photographers in the Era of High-Speed Growth who began to draw on their own subjectivity in expressing their anxieties about these transformations. This is especially evident in Nagano's photobook *Dream Age*.

The *Dream Age* of the Era of High-Speed Growth

Dream Age, published in 1978 by Asahi Sonorama, is comprised of images taken between 1957 and 1970, dates that roughly coincide with the Era of High-Speed Growth. Concerned with the human condition, Nagano was interested in capturing the daily lives of people. Taken as a whole, *Dream Age* is ultimately an ongoing story of the Japanese amidst the social and economic changes taking place during this transformative age.

Nagano frames his introductory essay with this rapid economic growth, stating that the 1960s were a golden age of wealth and material culture. He further stresses that he "consciously and actively strove to be a witness to the various phenomena in a transforming Japan" by drawing on his skills as a documentary photographer.[77] However, he quickly points out that the images convey his individual experience (*hitotsu kojin no taiken*), a statement that highlights his preference for a subjective portrayal of reality. Even so, the photographer concludes his essay by stating that he believes his images capture the state of the Japanese during this "dream age." By fusing documentary photography with his own individual expression, Nagano is representative of a generation of photographers who felt that subjectivity was important in depicting reality.

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[77] Nagano, "The 'Golden Age' of the 1960s" (*'Ōgōn' no 60-nendai*), n.p.

The images in *Dream Age* build a narrative of the rapid social and economic changes taking place in Japan as a result of the economic explosion. As Nagano himself states in *Dream Age*:

> There was a period when Japan, economically impoverished by the war, gradually began to move forward in the direction of high economic growth. The office worker was both the advant garde [sic] and the central figure of that growth. People had been organized into the system and the term 'group society' had become popular.[78]

Nagano's images in *Dream Age* include men commuting to work, mothers attending to children, and massive crowds in popular entertainment districts such as Shibuya. At the same time, Nagano's photographs reflect his wariness of the rapid change and ever-growing fixation on material wealth. Nagano photographed exhausted salary men barely able to stand up in subway cars, children playing in concrete playgrounds or underneath towering concrete bridges, and pedestrians attempting to navigate streets under construction. Moments of leisure are even laced with a sense of unease: one image shows a dangerously crowded public pool, while another depicts young boys lounging on a beach, smoke belching out of ship smokestacks in the background.

Far from viewing the doubled income and rich consumption lifestyle as positives for Japan, Nagano expressly relates that he has an aversion to the changes taking place during what he calls Japan's "golden decade" of the 1960s. Looking back on this time, Nagano states that it is hard to put a value on whether this was really a good era, or a seemingly bad dream. In this regard, the title *Dream Age* becomes ambiguous. Were the 1960s really a time to reap the benefits of a consumer society, or did the prioritization of material wealth destroy traditional values? For Nagano, the latter certainly seems to be the case.

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[78] Ibid.

Nagano's subjective portrayal of 1960's Japan is further evident in the layout of *Dream Age* as a whole. The book is arranged chronologically and gives a clear sense of postwar recovery and the country's astounding economic growth. The first image is filled with promise for a brighter future. The women dressed in kimono described above move through a dark, crowded alley towards an open space awash with light. But this image is immediately countered with photographs of a crowded neighborhood, naked children playing in drainage water from a nearby factory, and a child bound by thick ropes in a muddy street. These first few images are followed by evidence of political tension expressed by two prints of student protests against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Apart from the first photograph, the opening pages of *Dream Age* are dark, murky, and chaotic. The nude children and bound youth suggest vulnerability, while the photographs of the Anpo protests point to a society in turmoil. Rather than suggesting a "dream age" of economic prosperity, the first sequence of images cause the viewer to question whether this was really Japan's golden era.

While the images of crowded neighborhoods and social unrest soon give way to organized housing projects and a society reaping the benefits from a doubled income and material wealth, sentiments of an unsettling nature never really leave Nagano's photographs. Take, for example, "Chronic Road Construction on Tokyo Roads in the Era of Motorization," (Minowa, Tokyo, 1961) (*Motarizeishon no jidai ni sonaete Tokyojū no dorō de kinseiteki ni dorō kojō ga okonawareta*) an image of a group of people walking across a road under construction (fig. 5.7). The viewer's attention goes immediately to an elderly woman in the middle of the photograph, framed by two young girls on the left and a group of pedestrians in the background. The old woman looks directly at the camera, indicating her awareness of Nagano's presence. Her heavy shawl, clasped tightly around her neck, and the dark, woolen coats of the two women indicate cold winter weather. The clear portrayal of the pedestrians and minimal tonal contrast illustrate Nagano's documentary background, but he uses an unusual vantage point to incorporate his subjective self-expression. The camera is on ground level, aimed directly at the pedestrians' feet. The viewer's eye travels over bits of upturned pavement, between *geta* and rubber rain boots and the old woman's cane, before finally spotting a row of cars in the background. The people dwarf the vehicles, and the angle at which Nagano took this image makes it appear as if the three women in the foreground could easily crush the cars underfoot. The problem illustrated here, highlighted by the low vantage point that readily captures the pedestrians' feet walking across upturned pavement, is the disruptive nature of the road construction and the frustrated pedestrians attempting to navigate the ravaged streets.

The ills of construction and a changing urban landscape were but some of the costs of the experience of rapid economic growth. I previously mentioned that for many Japanese, housing remained the number one priority throughout the first few decades of the postwar era.[79] In "The First *Danchi* Built in the Metropolitan Area," (Ōkubo, Tokyo, 1961) (*Tonai de saisho ni taterareta danchi*) Nagano employed a number of photographic techniques in order to convey his negative view of the massive housing projects (fig. 5.8). First, Nagano positioned himself at about a 30 to 45 degree angle from the exterior of the building. Such an extreme angle creates an abstract image filled with diagonal and vertical lines that cut across the frame, making it hard for the viewer to identify the image as one of a *danchi*. Second, Nagano took the image from street level, forcing the viewer to look up at the *danchi* balconies from below. These small concrete balconies with metal bars extend about one foot out from the *danchi* walls, casting harsh shadows that add to the overall abstract quality. Lastly, Nagano zoomed into the subject to such an extent that the *danchi* façade fills the entire frame, leaving no negative space around the apartment building. This creates a suffocating, claustrophobic sensation as the viewer's eye struggles to make sense of the subject and find relief from the railings, support struts, and bars extending from the building. Indeed, the image is so crowded that the viewer almost misses the only human subject: an old man lounging on his balcony. The man's face peeks out from between the bars of his balcony, looking down on Nagano below.

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[79] Dore, *City Life in Japan*, 50–51.

FIGURE 5.7. Nagano. "Chronic Road Construction on Tokyo Roads in the Era of Motorization," Minowa, Tokyo, 1961 (*Motarizeishon no jidai ni sonaete Tokyojū no dorō de kinseiteki ni dorō kojō ga okonawareta*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).

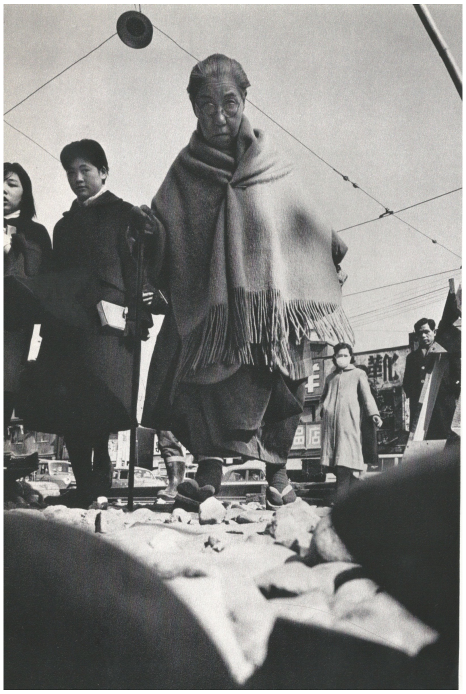
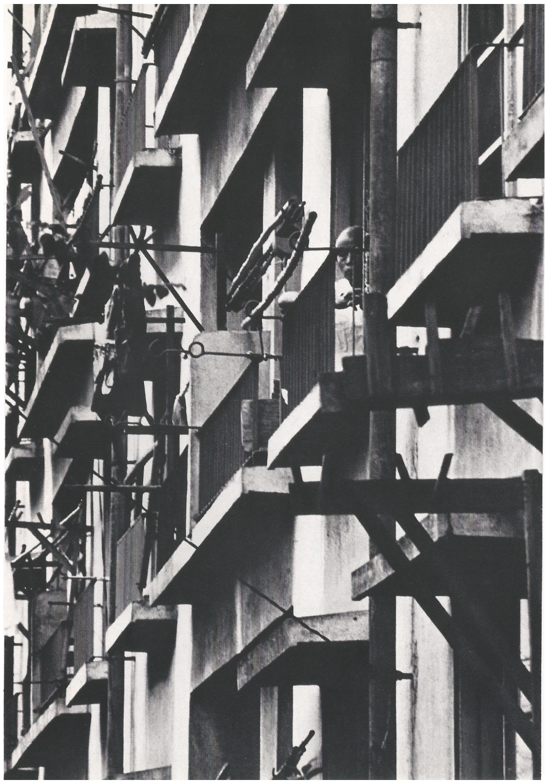
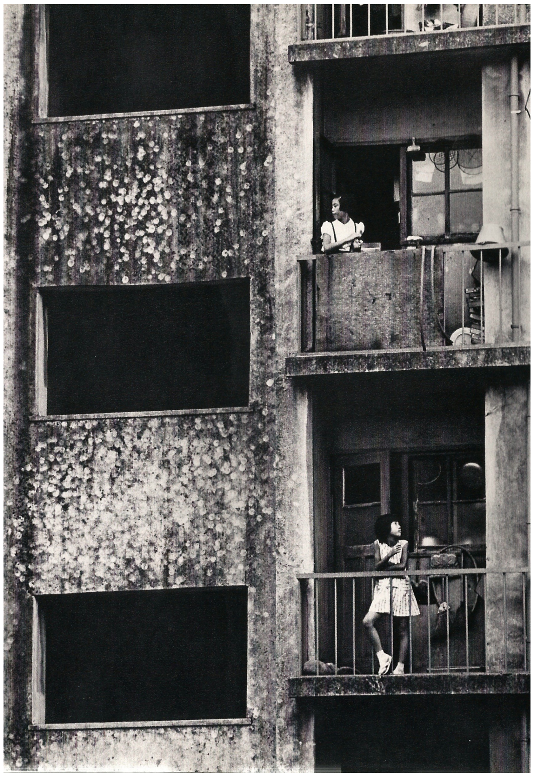


FIGURE 5.8. Nagano. “The First *Danchi* Built in the Metropolitan Area,” Ōkubo, Tokyo, 1961 (*Tonai de saisho ni taterareta danchi*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan’s Dream Age*).



“Ōkubo *Danchi*,” (Ōkubo, Tokyo, 1961) (*Ōkubo no danchi*) shows a less crowded and chaotic scene, but still projects an aura of uneasiness (fig. 5.9). In a similar manner to the previous image, Nagano fills the frame with the exterior façade of the *danchi*. Dark, ominous windows form a column on the left, their foreboding frames separated by concrete pockmarked to such an extent that it almost appears as if the building is situated in the middle of a warzone. In the right side of the frame two balconies are stacked one on top of the other. A young girl stands on each balcony, leaning on the railing and looking away from the camera. Here Nagano emphasizes the sense of alienation that *danchi* created among its residents, especially when it came to denying children a common place to play and socialize. Nagano’s images before the construction of *danchi* show children playing games in the alleys between houses. Once their families were shut up in *danchi*, however, they lacked a common space to play.[80]

FIGURE 5.9. Nagano. "Ōkubo Danchi," Ōkubo, Tokyo, 1961 (*Ōkubo no danchi*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).



Despite this, the expanding city was not completely devoid of play space for children. While his images from the early 1950s show rambunctious children playing in alleyways or crowded around *kamishibai* picture shows, the photographer's prints of children at play in *Dream Age* capture them in concrete playgrounds or playing underneath concrete bridges. Nagano himself states that he was "very shocked that the children's play space was within a concrete-made" area, and his images depict these places in a particularly disturbing manner.[81] "Amusement Park Children's Meeting Hall,"

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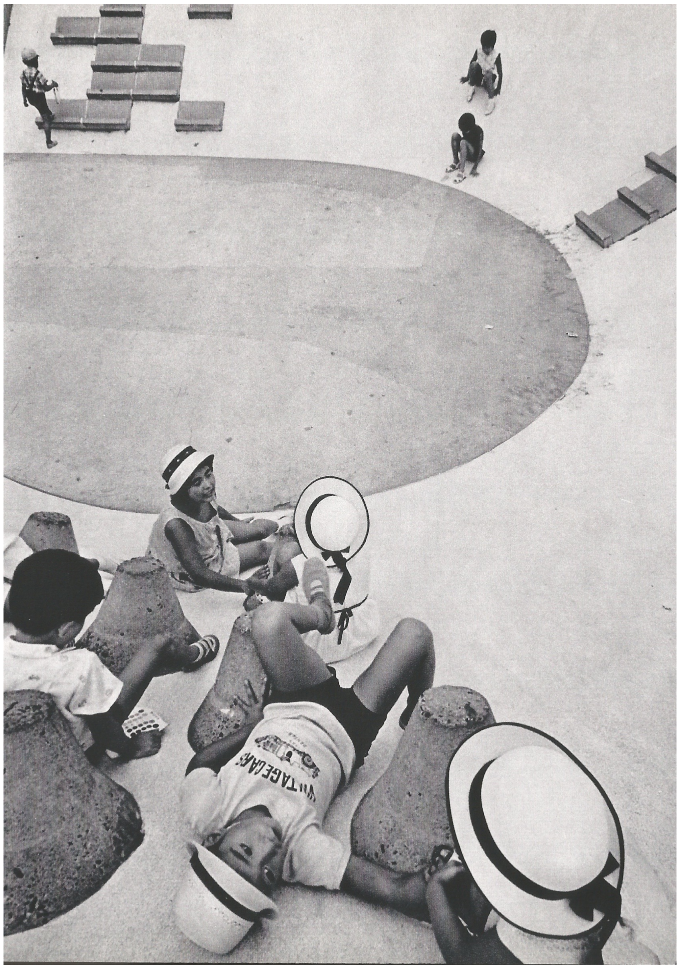
[80] Tsurumi, *Cultural History Of Postwar Japan*, 120.

[81] Nagano, "Nagano Shigeichi Himself" (*Jisaku wo kataru*), n.p.

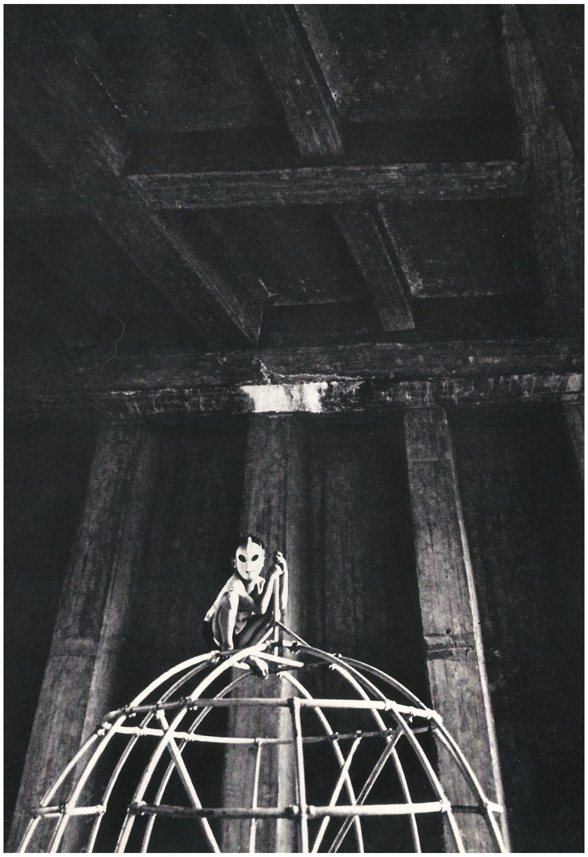
(Shibuya, Tokyo, 1964) (*Jidō kaikan no yūenchi*) shows a group of children gathered in a sea of concrete (fig. 5.10). With no playground equipment in sight, the children lie listlessly on the ground or sit propped up against concrete cones. After taking in the children nearest the camera, the eye pauses briefly on a vast empty space dominating the middle of the image before finally coming to rest on another group of youth sitting on the clearing's edge. The clearing in the middle is clearly meant for play, but in this image it is completely devoid of energetic children. Instead, its empty presence dominates the middle of the frame.

FIGURE 5.10. Nagano. "Amusement Park Children's Meeting Hall," Shibuya, Tokyo, 1964 (*Jidō kaikan no yūenchi*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).



Playground equipment appears in the next image, but this sight possesses an unnerving quality as well (fig. 5.11). “Children’s Park underneath the Akebono Bridge,” (Ichinotani, Tokyo, 1966) (*Akebonobayashi shita no jidō yūen*) shows a young child perched atop a jungle gym, its face adorned with an Ultraman[82] mask that gives the youth an inhuman appearance. The underside of Akebono Bridge, a massive concrete structure, dominates the background of the image. The concrete walls and underside of the bridge are dark and oppressive, and when combined with the metal jungle gym and robot mask, create an otherworldly effect.

FIGURE 5.11. Nagano. “Children’s Park underneath the Akebono Bridge,” Ichinotani, Tokyo, 1966 (*Akebonobayashi shita no jidō yūen*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan’s Dream Age*).



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[82] Ultraman was a 1960s television series in which a police force, the Science Special Search Party, defended Earth from invading aliens and monsters.

Nagano continues to represent society in a critical manner with his images of salarymen that capture the grinding existence of corporate life. One of his more famous images, "Salarymen leaving work," (Marunouchi, Tokyo, 1959) (*Taisha suru sarariimantachi*) shows a group of salarymen and female secretaries standing on a street corner in the Marunouchi business district of Tokyo (fig. 5.12). Nagano took the image in the early evening, and the taxing hours of a long day at the office are etched into the lines of the men's and women's faces. In a similar manner to his other images, Nagano experiments with unconventional framing to capture the exhausting nature of a salary man's life. Nagano squeezed the men and women into the bottom of the image, only revealing each person from the shoulders up. The rest of the frame is dominated by a foreboding office building. The dark stone wall bears down on the group of people below, almost appearing as if the building is pressing them out of the frame. Other images in *Dream Age* exhibit the demanding nature of the salary man life as well. Nagano includes blurry images of salarymen packed like sardines in subway cars, for example, or staring longingly out of office windows.

In addition to salarymen, *danchi*, and road construction, Nagano expresses discomfort in the growing prioritization of material wealth during the Era of High-Speed Growth. "In Front of the Odakyu Department Store" (Shinjuku, Tokyo, 1968) (*Odakyu depaato mae*) highlights this (fig. 5.13). A dense crowd of people swarms around the corner of a brick wall, while a display case containing three mannequins hangs suspended on the side of the building. The mass of people roots the viewer's gaze in the bottom of the image, making it difficult for the viewer to withdraw his eye from the crowd. The display case in the upper left corner offers some relief from the suffocating sea of people underneath, but the models' stiff, plastic poses contribute to the unsettling sentiment expressed in the image. Nagano uses tight, close cropping to emphasize the crowd. It fills the frame, giving the impression of an endless expanse of people. Furthermore, many of their heads are turned away from the camera, and it is hard to distinguish between the faces that are visible. The emphasis on an anonymous, massive crowd, and its close proximity to a display of consumer culture looming overhead, make it obvious that Nagano is criticizing the fixation on consumer society and material wealth.

FIGURE 5.12. Nagano. "Salarymen leaving work," Marunouchi, Tokyo, 1959 (*Taisha suru sarariimantachi*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).

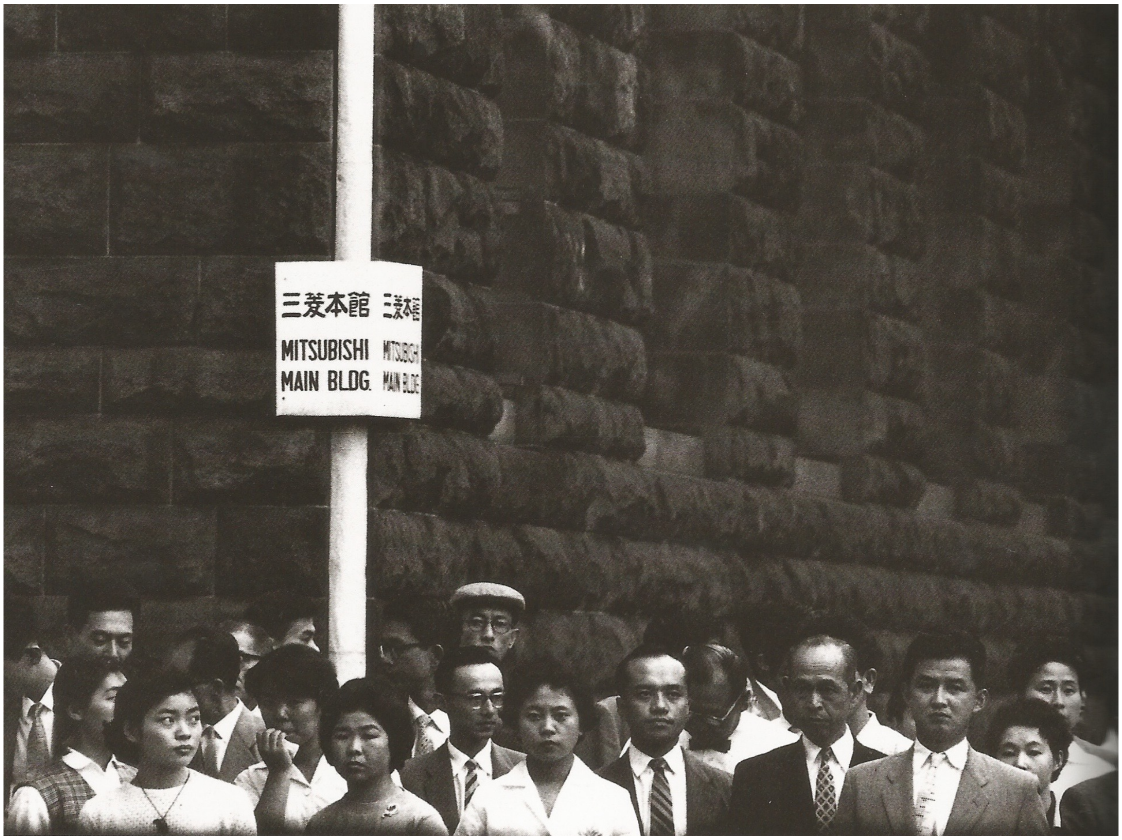
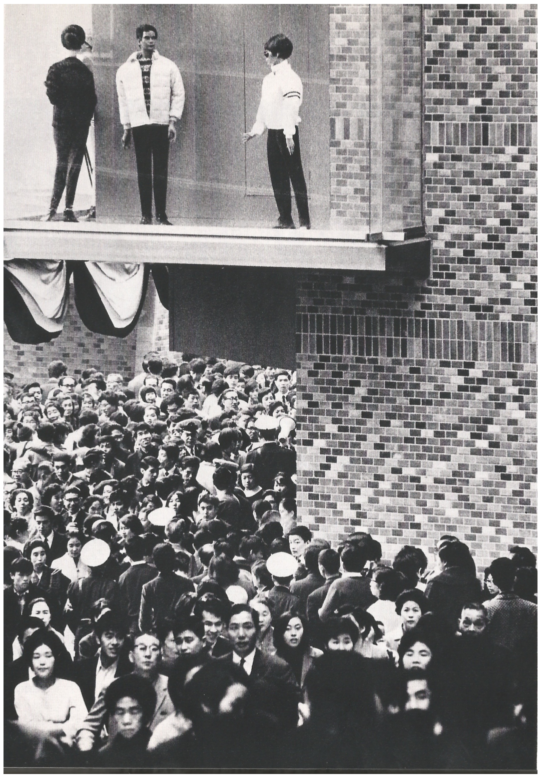

三菱本館
MITSUBISHI
MAIN BLDG.

FIGURE 5.13. Nagano. “In front of the Odakyu Department Store,” Shinjuku, Tokyo, 1968) (*Odakyu depaato mae*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan’s Dream Age*).



“Car Show,” (Harumi, Tokyo, 1961) (*Jidōsha shō*) is yet another image that represents Nagano’s concern about the increasing consumerist values in Japanese society (fig. 5.14). Nagano took this image at the All Japan Motor Show (*Zennihon Jisōsha shō*) in October 1960. In writing about the photograph, Nagano expresses his contempt for the desire of these objects, stating that he had “been wondering how many young talents were thus dead and dying for the purpose of these loans on the cars.”[83] In his image of the car mirror, the oval shape of the mirror takes up the whole frame and reflects the car show. The most striking feature of this image is what is reflected in the mirror. The viewer sees neither Nagano nor his camera. Instead, the mirror’s surface is filled with a sprawling showroom crammed with a mass of people. In a similar manner to the anonymity inherent in the mass of people outside the Odakyu Department Store, the crowd here is blurred to such a degree that the eye cannot make out individual forms. Indeed, the only distinctly recognizable object is a shiny car parked on a pedestal in the middle of the frame. While the viewer can only guess at Nagano's thoughts while capturing this image, one cannot help but interpret the photograph as a sharp criticism of consumer culture. What has Japan become during the golden age of the Era of High-Speed Growth? When looking in the mirror, the reflection shows not the individual face of a Japanese citizen, but a frantic crowd massing around consumer products.

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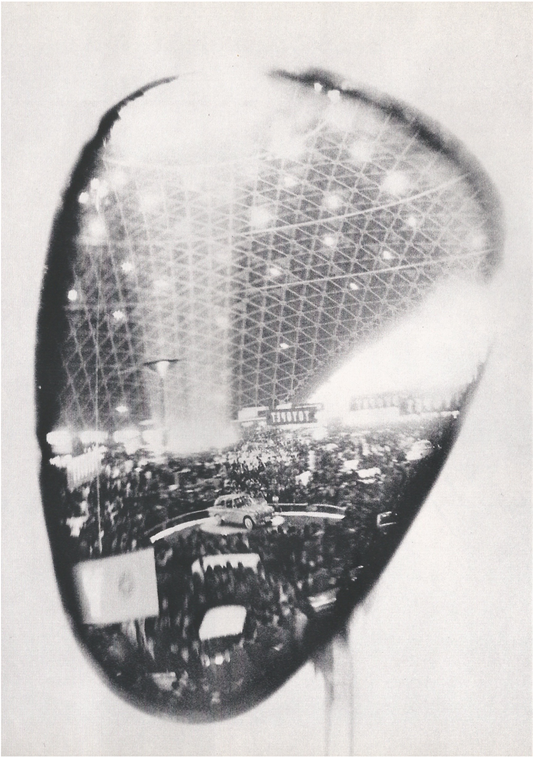
[83] Nagano, “Nagano Shigeichi Himself” (*Jisaku wo kataru*), n.p.

FIGURE 5.14. Nagano. "Car Show," Harumi, Tokyo, 1961 (*Jidōsha shō*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan's Dream Age*).



This cynical view of consumer culture is one of the major themes of *Dream Age*. The photobook as a whole demonstrates well the numerous social changes taking place in Japan as a result of the Era of High-Speed Growth. Uneasy with these transformations, however, Nagano draws on a subjective realist approach to express his anxieties, leaving the viewer to wonder whether this was really Japan’s golden era.

To Provoke and Back

The desire to showcase the photographer’s individual expression continued to dominate photographic trends throughout the late 1960s and into the early 1970s as photographers looked for new ways to express their misgivings over rapid postwar recovery, American consumerist values, and political tension concerning the U.S.-Japan security treaty.[84] In 1968, a small group of photographers and photo critics banded together to establish the photography journal *Provoke* (*Purovōku*). Members included photo critics Taki Koji and Okada Takahiko, and photographers Nakahira Takuma, Moriyama Daido, and Yutaka Takanashi. The magazine had a print run of only three issues (November 1, 1968, March 10, 1969, and August 10, 1969), but it nevertheless had a profound impact on Japan’s photographic industry.

Nagano’s photographic aesthetic never strayed too far from his documentary roots; however, Provoke photographers began to reject photographic realism entirely and to push their work to the edges of avant-garde. They strove to create “pure” photographs by “fundamentally altering how their photographs were taken.”[85] Their use of unconventional techniques, such as high contrast and shooting extremely out of focus, broke away from the explanatory images of objective realism and ethnically evaluative photos of subjective realism. Their experimentation with modes of representation and emphasis on "creating" images, rather than strictly "recording" the subject, place their images in the "theoretical" category of photography.[86]

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[84] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 25.

[85] Vartanian, "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media," 17.

Provoke went beyond what VIVO was able to accomplish in challenging established photographic aesthetics such as realism and documentary photography.[87] Moriyama was one of the more outspoken critics of photojournalism. In his essay "The Decision to Shoot," the photographer calls photojournalistic realism "fanatical" and expresses the need to create a new kind of photographic expression.[88] In order to make a lasting image, Moriyama states, the photographer needs to impart "the living pulse of the human being behind the camera."[89] In other words, Moriyama believed that the photographer needed to be part of the image, thereby rejecting the realist view that the photographer does nothing more than push the shutter button.

But for all their outspokenness against realism, the members of Provoke never fully escaped the desire to portray reality. This is highlighted by the Provoke manifesto, printed in the first issue of the magazine:

> Today, when words have lost their material base—in other words, their reality—and seem suspended midair, a photographer's eye can capture fragments of reality that cannot be expressed in language as it is. He can submit those images as documents to be considered alongside language and ideology. This is why, brash as it may seem, *Provoke* has the subtitle 'provocative documents for the pursuit of ideas.[90]

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[86] Barrett, *Criticizing Photographs*, 91–95.

[87] Mitsuda Yuri, "Trauma and Deliverance: Portraits of Avant-Garde Aritsts in Japan, 1955-1970," 173.

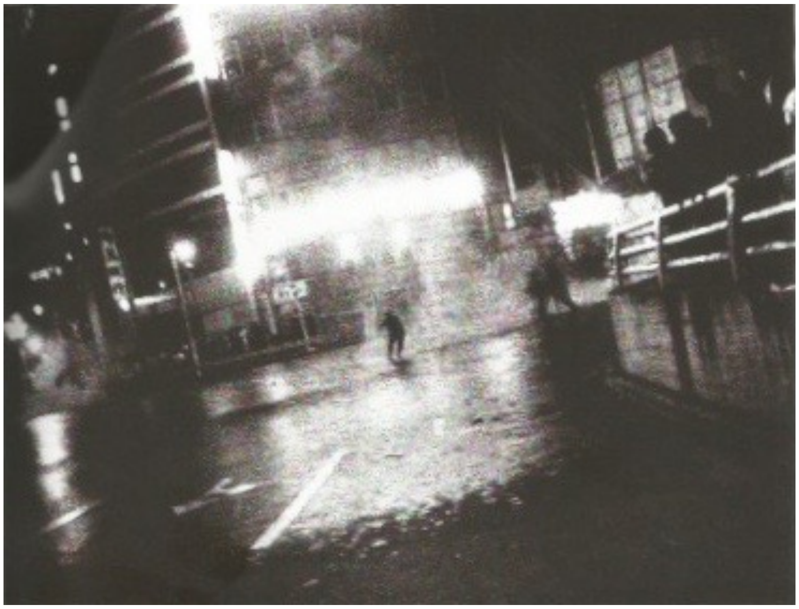
[88] Moriyama, "The Decision to Shoot," 35.

[89] Ibid., 36.

[90] Printed in Marc Feustel, "Tokyo," in *The World Atlas of Street Photography*, ed. Jodie Gaudet, et al. (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 347.

The "*are*, *bure*, *boke*" (grainy, blurry, and out-of-focus) style developed by Nakahira and Moriyama, a style that expertly captures the social anxieties in the late 1960s and 1970s,[91] demonstrates Provoke photographers' attempts at capturing "fragments of reality." Moriyama's "10.21," a reference to International Anti-War Day, is emblematic of this grainy aesthetic (fig. 5.15). The image depicts students against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty confronting riot police in Shinjuku. The slanted perspective, sharp contrasts, and a blurry focus make it hard for the viewer to identify objects in the image, but a lone, silhouetted figure stands out in the middle of the frame. The overall abstract quality is meant to imitate the experience of rioting in the streets at night.[92] Even though the photograph is far removed from Domon Ken's straightforward objective realism, Moriyama's attempt to capture the experience of the anti-treaty riots is still rooted in the pursuit of reality.

FIGURE 5.15. Moriyama Daido, photographer. "10.21." Photograph. From *Daido Moriyama*. 55 (Series). London; New York: Phaidon, 2001.



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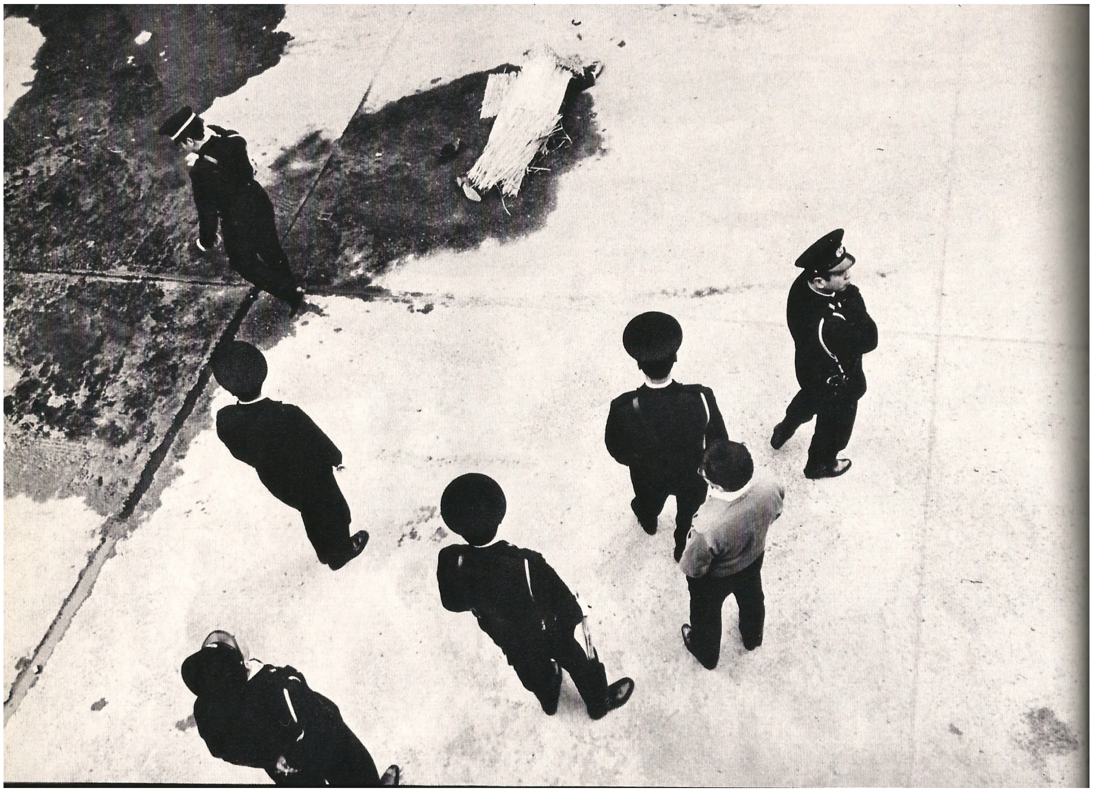
[91] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 138.

[92] Daido Moriyama and Kazuo Nishi, *Daido Moriyama* (London: Phaidon Press, 2012), 46.

The individual expression so expertly demonstrated in Moriyama's "10.21" began with Nagano Shigeichi and others of the Image Generation in the late 1950s and 1960s. No longer satisfied with the straightforward, objective approach to documenting reality, this new generation of photographers began to turn to subjectivity in order to express their anxieties over the social, political, and economic changes during the Era of High-Speed Growth.

While the first image in *Dream Age* carries the promise of a brighter future, the last few images express clearly Nagano's apprehension about changes in postwar society. In one print, a row of policemen, dressed in dark uniforms that contrast sharply with the light concrete upon which they stand, dominates the center of the frame (fig. 5.16). A dark substance spreading across the concrete draws the eye away from the policemen to the upper left of the image. Had the photograph been taken in color rather than black and white, the viewer might recognize the expanding stain as a pool of blood flowing out of the body wrapped in a straw mat in the upper portion of the image. The caption to this image, taken in Osaka in 1970, states that this anonymous person just committed suicide by jumping from an apartment building. Nagano recorded the scene from an aerial perspective. The police all face forward, so the viewer cannot see their faces. Combined with the aerial view, this erases their individuality, an effect further accentuated by the similarity of the policemen's uniforms. The body, wrapped in a straw mat, is also reduced to anonymity. It is an unsettling photograph, and one that conveys a growing awareness of social ills even in the midst of rapid economic growth and abundant material wealth. It is an image, to be sure, that casts doubt on whether this is truly Japan's "dream age."

FIGURE 5.16. Nagano. “Scene of a suicide by jumping off of a Mansion” Osaka, 1970 (*Manshon kara tōshinjisatsu no genba*). Photograph. From *Dorīmu eiji* (*Japan’s Dream Age*).

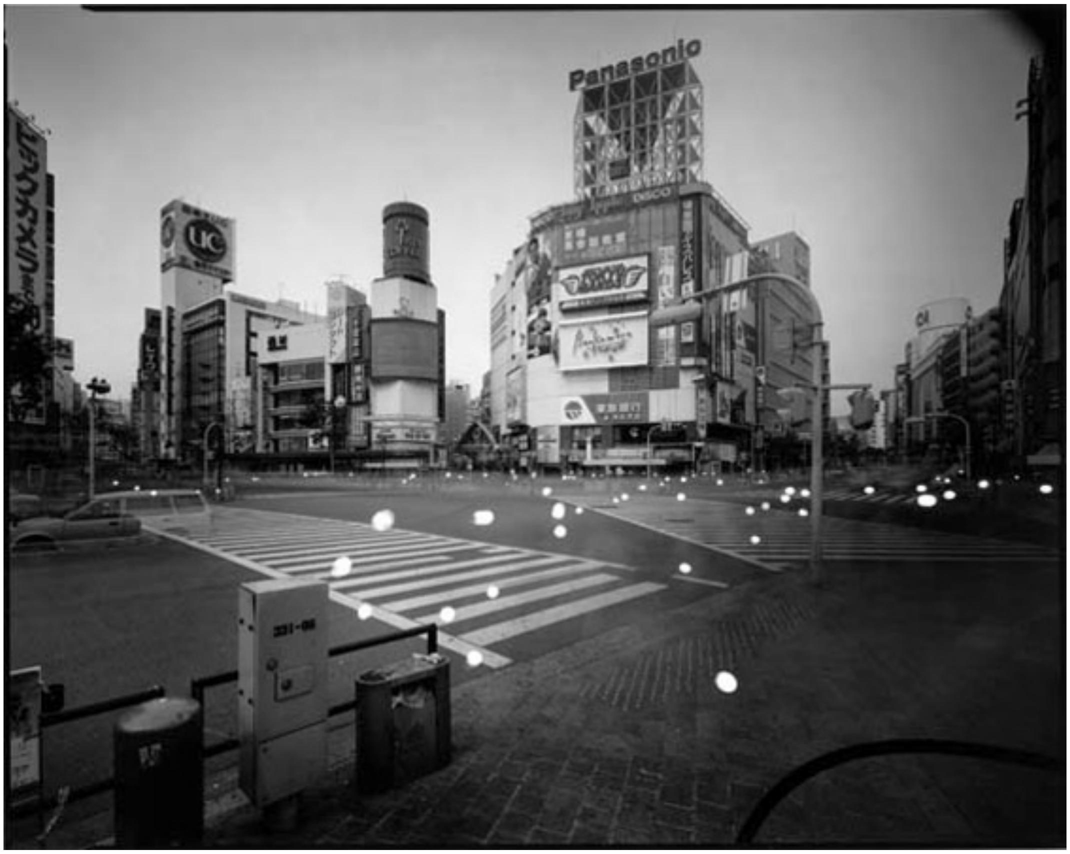


CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The streets of Shibuya appear vacant, an expanse of empty pavement that stretches out to meet multi-story buildings emblazoned with advertisements and billboards (fig. 6.1). The faint outline of a car can be made out here and there, their faded presence almost giving the impression that they are disappearing before the viewer's eye, erased into obscurity. The dim lighting creates a foreboding scene, made even more so by the void of human presence and the otherworldly orbs of light scattered throughout the urban landscape.

FIGURE 6.1. Satō Tokihiro, photographer. "Photo-Respiration #87," Shibuya, Tokyo, 1990. Photograph. From *Photo-Respiration: Tokihiro Sato Photographs*. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 2005.



Pulsing with the frenetic energy of pedestrians and automobiles, Shibuya Crossing is a constant hub of activity, never devoid of human life. Salarymen and women dressed in suits, teenagers waiting for friends, and a host of tourists usually fill this space, said to be one of the busiest street crossings in the world. But in "Photo-Respiration #87" (Shibuya, Tokyo, 1990), by contemporary Japanese photographer Satō Tokihiro, what appears before the viewer is not the lively *sakariba* (amusement quarters) of Shibuya, but rather what seems to be an abandoned street filled only with small orbs of illumination.

To make this photograph and others in his photo series entitled "Photo-Respiration," Satō uses a large-format, 8X10 camera set for an exposure that lasts between one and three hours. During the extended exposure, Satō walks around the scene with a mirror or flashlight, depending on the time of day. The long exposure erases all traces of movement—pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars—while the mirror or flashlight leaves small spots of light on the negative.

In offering possible interpretations for the curious orbs of light, curator Mark Scala states, "To the spiritual-minded, the lights may be the souls of the dead; to the child, they may be will-o'-wisps or fairies; to the fan of science fiction, they may be flecks of disembodied consciousness descending from a higher plane."[1] But to Satō, the orbs in Shibuya have a deeper meaning in the context of post-bubble economy Japan. The photographer, who chooses his locations for their social or historical significance,[2] says of Shibuya and the lights:

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[1] Feustel, "Tokihiro Sato," in *The World Atlas of Street Photography,* 358.

[2] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 120.

> It is a kind of monument of Japan's rapid bubble-economy expansion, and it is also a pulsating hub of activity in modern Tokyo. It has both vitality and 'weight,' and at the same time it possesses a peculiar emptiness that reflects the post-bubble economy. In my image, the people disappear and the scene takes on these intangible aspects.[3]

In transforming Shibuya Crossing from a vibrant *sakariba* to an empty street void of human presence, Satō equates this absence to the "psychic emptiness of the consumerist landscape" of the post-bubble economy era.[4] His image, while undoubtedly a constructed and manipulated scene, reflects the reality that many Japanese face living in an urban, consumer-oriented society.

In this and other images in his "Photo-Respiration" series, Satō makes a direct connection between himself as the photographer and his subject. "There is a direct connection," Satō states, "between my breath and the act of tracing out of light."[5] Satō infuses himself into his images, permeating the space with traces of his breath in the form of light reflected back into the lens. This technique can be seen as the culmination of the development of postwar Japanese photography that moved from the erasure of reality from photography magazines during the first half of the Allied Occupation, to the direct confrontation of reality in objective realism, and finally to the interpretation of reality in subjective realism. Furthermore, in using a long exposure to convey the "peculiar emptiness" of Japan's post-bubble society, Satō demonstrates a continuation of the tradition of subjective realism, a tradition that began with Nagano Shigeichi and photographers of the Image Generation in the mid-1950s.

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[3] Elizabeth Siegel, "An Interview with Tokihiro Sato," in *Photo-Respiration: Tokihiro Sato Photographs*, trans. John F. Bukacek (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 2005), 31.

[4] Fraser, *Photography and Japan*, 121.

[5] Feustel, "Tokihiro Sato," 358.

Moriyama Daido was particularly outspoken in questioning the ability of photography to portray an objective reality. “One may never be able to discover anything so enigmatic as ‘the truth’ in a photograph,” states Moriyama, “but if one were to settle for something close to it, it may be that it consists of neither an absolute affirmation nor an absolute denial of anything, but something between the two.”[6] Nagano shared similar sentiments, stating, “The photograph must physiologically express our important ideas. I think that photography primarily represents just individual physiology.”[7] Not longer satisfied with objective realism as a way to document society, these photographers drew on their own experiences and self-expression as a way to reflect and interpret reality. Rather than glamorize an increasingly affluent society, their pictures reveal the inherent anxieties that many felt during the Era of High-Speed Growth, anxieties resulting from a rising American-style consumer society, a standardized middle-class lifestyle, rapid urbanization, and violent protests that rocked the nation.

Nagano, Moriyama, and other photographers utilized a number of techniques to convey their apparent unease during this fast-changing era. High and low vantage points, shooting out of focus, zooming in on the subject, and close cropping all add to the emotional register through which their images work. By drawing on these techniques and others, photographers during the Era of High-Speed Growth present the normal, everyday lives of urban Japanese with an element of tension and unease. Their images do not record reality in a straightforward, impartial manner. Instead, photographers created images that document their own subjective viewpoints.

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[6] Moriyama , “The Decision to Shoot,” 35.

[7] Nagano, “Nagano Shigeichi Himself” (*Jisaku wo kataru*), n.p.

In contrast to photographers in the age of subjective realism, those in the early 1950s took a more straightforward approach to photography in order to depict their subjects in a stylistically realistic manner. In his explanation of the "absolutely unstaged snapshot," Domon Ken states that having an unstaged image is the only way to make a true photograph. In order to achieve the absolutely unstaged, the photographer had to remove himself completely from the image, doing nothing more than pushing the shutter button. Domon believed objective realism to be an essential tool in a society reeling from the effects of war and occupied by a foreign nation, stating that realism "looks directly at reality, and points reality in a better direction."[8]

After the end of Occupation-imposed censorship, photographers working in the style of Domon's objective realism movement captured prostitutes, repatriated soldiers, war orphans, and black markets clearly and distinctly. Photographers focused on these subjects as an inversion of wartime propaganda ideals, including chastity, discipline, and harmony. Finally able to photograph freely after the end of censorship controls, and reacting to wartime propaganda as well as the postwar condition of Tokyo, photographers pursued the reality that they saw in a *kyodatsu* society.

Such reality was largely absent in postwar magazines in the late 1940s. On the one hand, photographs and advertisements from *Camera*, *Amachua Shashin Sōsho*, and *Shashin Techō* aligned with the Occupation policies of demilitarization and democratization. Images of healthy bodies and clean, orderly neighborhoods, for example, supported the idea of a democratic Japan. And the absence of martial imagery evoked the notion of a peaceful, demilitarized nation. Images and ads from early postwar magazines also worked to promote American culture, mainly by depicting Western clothing and material wealth. As part of the postwar Americanization of the "whole way of life" of the postwar Japanese, these images were oftentimes set alongside images containing traditional Japanese elements, such as women in kimono or Noh masks. In this way, the juxtaposition of Western and traditional Japanese culture created a cultural hybridity that helped to facilitate the process of absorbing foreign cultural influences. The magazines, in other words, show the reality of the Japanese as they worked to (re)construct a new postwar identity. Images of Japanese wearing American clothing, images of strong, healthy bodies and undamaged urban landscapes, and the lack of images that make reference to a militarized nation, all illustrate the cultural and political reality of the Allied Occupation.

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[8] Domon, "Photographic Realism and the Salon Picture," 24-25.

Ultimately, however, the reality of World War Two and its aftermath of a devastated society, both physically and psychologically, were absent in early postwar magazines. This was largely the result of restrictions on information put in place by Occupation-imposed censorship. But the erasure of social reality also stemmed from two additional modes of censorship. Faced with the ambiguous nature of Occupation censorship controls, and afraid of punishments that could oftentimes be quite severe, Japanese editors and publishers continued the legacy of self-censorship in the Japanese publishing industry by exorcising their own materials. Self-censorship was further employed as a defense mechanism—a way to create distance from the suffering and despair of the *kyodatsu* society.

But other factors were also important in how photographers approached and depicted reality. Technological developments, for instance, had a great impact on changing photographic trends. Small format cameras allowed street photographers greater mobility as they moved among the crowds of urban areas like Tokyo. The growth of the Japanese camera industry, moreover, resulted in cheaper cameras, the more affordable prices giving rise to the widespread growth and popularity of amateur photography.[9] The study of developments in camera technology has received scant attention in recent scholarship, and its impact on postwar photographic trends is a rich field for further research.

Postwar photography magazines provide another area for future scholarship. Upwards of 35,000 photography magazines circulated between 1946 and 1949, and yet these publications have largely been ignored in histories of postwar photography. Because they were so integral in serving as an exhibition space for both professional and amateur photographers, and because they contain articles that describe developments in camera technology, photography magazines are an invaluable source for scholars of postwar photography.

Existing scholarship on postwar Japanese photography is concerned chiefly with professional photographers, but amateurs also played a large role in shaping postwar photographic trends. Thus, photography magazines further provide an important avenue for the study of amateur photography. Domon and Kimura received between 1,000 and 1,500 photo submissions from amateurs each month while serving as judges for *Camera*'s *getsurei*. While this monthly contest has received the most attention from scholars of Japanese photography because of its connection to realism and Domon, it was only one of countless *getsurei* that appeared in photography publications. While this thesis has attempted to shed some light on the popularity of objective realism among amateur photographers, a closer study of *getsurei*, and photography magazines more broadly, can provide additional insight into developments in postwar amateur photography.

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[9] The development of the Japanese camera industry was partially facilitated by the Korean War. In May 1950, for example, photojournalist Miki Jun gave a Japanese-made Nikkor lens to Horace Bristol. Bristol was so impressed with the product that he showed his negatives to *Life* magazine photographer David Duncan. After a tour of the Nippon Kogaku factory where the Nikkor lenses were made, arranged by Miki, Duncan and Bristol exchanged their German-made lenses, considered to be the best at this time, with Nikkors. Stories detailing Duncan's use of Nikkor lenses ran in a December 10, 1950 edition of The New York Times, as well as two 1951 issues of Popular Photography. As a result of these articles, the popularity of Nippon Kogaku and Nikkor lenses spread outside Japan. See Ono, "PhotoHistory 1950s," accessed March 23, 2014, http://photoguide.jp/txt/PhotoHistory_1950s.

An examination of postwar Japanese photography demonstrates how World War Two, the socio-political conditions during the Allied Occupation, and the economic and social transformations during the Era of High-Speed Growth influenced the ways in which Japanese photographers depicted reality. Nagano and others of the Image Generation abandoned objective realism as Japan entered an era of rapid economic recovery from the mid-1950s. Reacting to social and economic transformations, and resulting challenges, these photographers incorporated their own individual expressions into their images while recording the reality of a growing American-style consumerism, urban reconstruction, political tensions, and other key changes in Japanese society. For Domon and those of the objective realism movement, the memories of a recent war, wartime propaganda and the end of censorship, and a ruined society living under the Allied Occupation led to the objective reporting of reality in the early 1950s. And in the late 1940s, Occupation-imposed censorship and self-censorship converged to bring about the erasure of reality in early postwar magazines. In the end, then, the history of Japanese photography from 1945 to 1970 is a history of shifting realities: reality erased, reality "absolutely unstaged," and reality viewed through the subjective lens of the photographer.

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