Seen and Unseen: Visualizing Contradictions in Postwar Japan, 1950s–1960s

Christina Lai
CUNY Hunter College

How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!

Follow this and additional works at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/hc_sas_etds

Part of the Asian Art and Architecture Commons, Modern Art and Architecture Commons, and the Photography Commons

Recommended Citation
https://academicworks.cuny.edu/hc_sas_etds/463

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Hunter College at CUNY Academic Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in School of Arts & Sciences Theses by an authorized administrator of CUNY Academic Works. For more information, please contact AcademicWorks@cuny.edu.
Seen and Unseen: Visualizing Contradictions in Postwar Japan, 1950s–1960s

by

Christina Lai

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Art History, Hunter College The City University of New York

2019

Thesis Sponsor:

May 2, 2019
Date

Maria Antonella Pelizzari
Signature

May 2, 2019
Date

Wen-Shing Chou
Signature of Second Reader
Dedication

To my family.
Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................................. i

List of Illustrations .................................................................................................................................. iii

Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 1

CHAPTER 1: The Pictures in Question:
Victimhood and Contradictions Visualized in *The Family of Man* ......................................................... 16

CHAPTER 2: Coexistence:
Americanization, Magnum Photographers, and Photo-Realism in Japan ................................................. 40

CHAPTER 3: The Strange Reality of “Senryo”:
Shomei Tomatsu and the Conflicts Within the Japanese Souls ................................................................. 65

Conclusion: The Seen and Unseen
—Conflicted Japanese Souls and the Paradoxical Japan-U.S. Relation .................................................... 82

Bibliography ............................................................................................................................................... 88

Illustrations .................................................................................................................................................. 91
Acknowledgements

I owe my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Professor Maria Antonella Pelizzari, whose guidance and encouragement throughout my years at Hunter has been invaluable, not only in shaping my thesis project but also my career path in photography. I would also like to thank my second reader, Professor Wen-shing Chou, for her insightful feedbacks on my final draft.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the individuals whose assistance I have received during my research process: I would like to thank Claartje van Dijk for making the precious material in the Robert Capa archives available to me; Ryan Buckley for his research assistance during my visit to Magnum Foundation Archives; the staff of the Walther Collection for kindly providing the material; and Kristen Lubben for connecting me to Marco Bischof, son of Werner Bischof. I am also grateful to Lesley Martin for navigating me in my early research on Shomei Tomatsu and introducing me to Leo Rubinfien, who generously shared with me his experience in working with Mr. Tomatsu, as well as his translation material for Tomatsu’s retrospective at SFMoMA. Mr. Rubinfien’s translation and illuminating writing in *Chewing Gum and Chocolate* lay the foundation for my chapter on Tomatsu, and for this I am indebted to him.

I would like to thank all my friends for supporting me over the past three years, and my colleagues for their encouragement. A special thank you to my friend Kyoko Hamaguchi, whose assistance in translating the *Camera Mainichi* material was fundamental to my understanding of Robert Capa’s work in Japan. Finally, I would like to thank my family for the continuous faith in me and support for my dreams. This thesis would not have been possible without them.
List of Illustrations

Figure 0-1: Russell A. Bernier, [Storefronts from Occupied Japan Souvenir Album], gelatin silver print, ca. 1950. Courtesy The Walther Collection

Figure 0-2: Russell A. Bernier, [Storefronts from Occupied Japan Souvenir Album], gelatin silver print, ca. 1950. Courtesy The Walther Collection

Figure 0-3: Russell A. Bernier, [Storefronts from Occupied Japan Souvenir Album], gelatin silver print, ca. 1950. Courtesy The Walther Collection


Figure 1-7: “Atom Bomb Effects: U.S. Commission Analyzes Blasts Which Hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” Life, March 11, 1946

Figure 1-8: “When Atomb Bomb Struck — Uncensored,” Life, September 25, 1952, page 19

Figure 1-9: “When Atomb Bomb Struck — Uncensored,” Life, September 25, 1952, page 23

Figure 2-1: “People Are People the World Over,” Ladies’ Home Journal, May 1948

Figure 2-2: Image 50, Werner Bischof, Japan, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-3: Image 11, Werner Bischof, Japan, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-4: Image 34, Werner Bischof, Japan, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-5: Image 64, Werner Bischof, Japan, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-6: Robert Capa, [Man carrying a baby on his back, Asakusa, Japan], gelatin silver print, 1954. The International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.

Figure 2-7: Image 55, Werner Bischof, Japan, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-8: Image 63, Werner Bischof, Japan, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-9: Image 53, Werner Bischof, Japan, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-10: Robert Capa, [Child in a clothes store close to window displays, Japan], gelatin silver print, 1954. The International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.

Figure 2-11: Robert Capa, [Woman carrying a baby carriage in the street, Kyoto, Japan], gelatin silver print, 1954. The International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.

Figure 2-12: Robert Capa, [American soldier giving money to men in the street, Ginza, Tokyo], Japan, gelatin silver print, 1954. The International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.


Figure 2-15: Ken Domon, *Children*, gelatin silver print, c. 1955. The Museum of Modern Art. moma.org


Figure 3-2: Photograph by Robert Capa in “Impressions of Japan,” *Camera Mainichi*, July 1954. n.p. The International Center of Photography. Museum Purchase, 2013.

Figure 3-3: Shomei Tomatsu, *Untitled*, from the series *Pottery Town, Seto, Aichi*, gelatin silver print, 1954, printed 1974, 6 1/16 x 8 7/8 in. (15.4 x 22.54 cm). Collection of the Sack Photographic Trust © Shomei Tomatsu – INTERFACE photo: Don Ross

Figure 3-4: Shomei Tomatsu, *Untitled*, from the series *Memory of War, Toyokawa, Aichi*, gelatin silver print, 1959, printed 1974, 9 1/8 x 9 1/4 in. (23.18 x 23.5 cm). San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Al Alcorn © Shomei Tomatsu – INTERFACE photo: Don Ross

Figure 3-5: Shomei Tomatsu, *Untitled*, from the series *Home, Amakusa, Kumamoto*, gelatin silver print, 1959, printed 1980, 10 x 9 7/8 in. (25.4 x 25.08 cm). San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Randi and Bob Fisher © Shomei Tomatsu – INTERFACE photo: Don Ross


Figure 3-10: Shomei Tomatsu, Tokyo, 1960. In *Chewing Gum and Chocolate*, eds. Leo Rubinfien and John Junkerman (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2014), 72.


Figure 3-16: From Shomei Tomatsu, *<11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Figure 3-17: Book cover, Shomei Tomatsu, *<11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Figure 3-18: From Shomei Tomatsu, *<11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Figure 3-19: From Shomei Tomatsu, *<11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Figure 3-20: From Shomei Tomatsu, *<11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Introduction

On the walls of a small, dingy booth in Yokosuka, Japan, in 1950, portraits of Western faces encircle a man, who sits still and concentrates on the task of finishing the next portrait for his customer (fig. 0-1). The sign nearby reads, “DRAW YOUR FACE ON SILK 30 MINUTES.” The concealed face and modest attire of the anonymous portrait painter along with his simplistic working space forms a compelling contrast to his subjects in the exquisite portraits on the walls, who are properly dressed, with standardized smiles comparable to those in commercial advertisements. This picture of a Japanese man making a living on producing fine portraits for Westerners gives away a sense of incongruity: why are these faces all Westerners? And why is the sign of this shop written in English only?

Let us take a look at another image of the front of a movie theater in Yokosuka. (fig. 0-2) Here, the movie poster of William Wyler’s American comedy *Roman Holiday* (1953) — written both in English and Japanese, despite the distinctively smaller size of the latter — formulates the focal point of this picture. A group of American GIs walk past the theater, almost blending into the crowds of Japanese audience gathering at the door of the theater, although their military uniform belies the harmony. Again, the incongruous presence of American military men among the Japanese cityscape leads us to question the backstory of the picture.

These two images were taken by Russell A. Bernier (1922–1995), a U.S. Army officer stationed in Japan in the early 1950s. Bernier had a photo album that recorded his observation of Japanese urban life and culture from the perspective of a foreign visitor. The pictures, mostly taken in the city of Yokosuka, document Japanese festivals and street performances, interiors of shops and cabarets, and a series of westernized storefronts decorated with cheesy slogans and
cartoonish figures. Browsing through Bernier’s travelogue-like album, one finds the American Occupation embodied through photographs — “PAWNSHOP FOR FOREIGNERS,” “GRAND PALACE” that provided Turkish bath service, and “BAR MISSOURI,” where one could have “a good time with the beautiful girls” or “drink everything which you want.”1 (fig. 0-3) Bernier’s visual observation of the quotidian landscape of American military stationing not only bears witness to the Americanized neighborhood in Japanese cities, but also brings to light the intricacy of the Japan-U.S. relation in the postwar age originated largely from the American Occupation, the contradiction between the defeated and the victor, the passive subject and the active occupier—the contradiction between the two nations that has existed since the end of World War II.

“An Unnatural Intimacy”: The Intricacy of Japan-U.S. Relation in the Postwar Age

American historian Kenneth B. Pyle opens his new book on Japan-U.S. relation with this spot-on sentence: “No nation was more deeply impacted by America’s rise to world power in the twentieth century and its creation of a new international order than Japan.”2 What Pyle’s statement and his study inform is the reciprocal effects of the political relations between Japan and the United States — how the two countries shaped each other’s political decisions that determined the ways in which Japan and the U.S. developed economically, socially, and culturally over the course of modern history and until today. The beginning of this correlative and intricate relationship between the two nations could be traced back to 1853 when Americans’

---

1 Cited from the wall label by The Walther Collection. Most photos from Bernier’s album were in fact taken in Yokosuka, with an exception of a few spreads labeled “Yokosuka and Korea.” It is unclear as to which photos were taken in Korea.

interest in expanding its Pacific frontier led to the decisive episode where Commodore Matthew Perry and his Black Ships forayed into the bay of Tokyo, putting an end to Japan’s era of national seclusion (Sakoku) of over two centuries with the forced peace treaty signed in 1858.³

The opening by Americans signaled Japan’s entry to the international order and its submission to Western imperialism. It challenged the nation’s independence, national security, and a sense of Japanese identity embedded within a unique culture that the Japanese people had enjoyed for centuries — a sense that stemmed from Japan being a natural nation-state bordered by sea that allowed minimizing foreign influence. An awareness of crisis inspired Japan’s modern revolution that was determined to set the course for its path to power equal to its Western imperial counterparts. The Meiji Restoration (1868 – 1912) was a modern revolution rooted not in democracy, liberty, or equality, but rather in the nation’s conservative beliefs inherited from its feudal period, which included values of power, status, and respect for hierarchy. The result of the revolution was, as its name indicates, the overthrow of the Tokugawa government and the restoration of the emperor. The Meiji Restoration, however, did incorporate young elites who possessed the Western, modern knowledge, whose pragmatic attitude towards the imperialist challenge from the Western countries led to the importation and adoption of modern/Western knowledge, culture, science, and technology as a means to strengthen the nation in the international system of the modern world.⁴ What was embedded in the nationalist

³ Coined by Japanese astronomer and translator Shizuki Tadao, Sakoku was the period of national seclusion (1638-1858) during which a foreign isolation policy was enacted by the Tokugawa shogunate (徳川幕府, c.1600-1868), the last feudal military government. Sakoku started in 1638 as a result of the elimination of Catholic influence from Western countries and expulsion of the Portuguese merchants and missionaries.

⁴ The reformation programs in the Meiji Restoration covered a variety of aspects, including a system of obligatory education, new land tax, a modern banking system, and universal conscription. The Meiji Constitution of 1889 and the opening of a parliament (Diet) with an elected lower house were two major achievements in the programs, which were intended to impress other nations of Japan’s progress in modernization and civilization. For a more detailed analysis on the Restoration, see: Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 2018, 16-20.
undertone was a sense of colonialist imperialism akin to the Western powers, as conveyed by Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru’s comment in 1887 on the Meiji policy: “What we must do is transform our empire and our people, make the empire like the countries of Europe, and our people like the peoples of Europe. To put it differently, we have to establish a new, European-style empire on the edge of Asia.” As the Meiji Restoration transformed Japan from an economically backward country into a modern, powerful nation-state capable of self-defense, Japan adapted to the prevailing imperialist approach and became Asia’s first rising power. This is evidenced in the Sino-Japanese War (1894 – 1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904 – 1905). Japan has, as President Theodore Roosevelt observed in 1905, “rises with simply marvelous standpoint. She is a great civilized nation.”

After World War I, Japan and the United States were the two rising powers intended on altering the international system, both harboring their idealistic visions of Asia’s order and future, though in divergent views. Japan’s revisionist vision came to fruition in the form of “Greater East Asian Coprosperity Sphere” during World War II, an imperialist ideology that in truth allowed Japan’s colonization of other Asian countries.

Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, brought the two nations’ rivalry into a total warfare and was decisive in President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s determination of the unconditional surrender policy. The Pacific War was defined by the Japanese as the paramount crusade to establishing the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere against the Anglo-Saxon Western power, and by the Americans as the necessary battle that led to ultimate world peace.

---


6 The Sino-Japanese War expelled Qing influence on the Korean peninsula, made Taiwan Japan’s colony, and resulted in commercial treaty concessions in China. The Russo-Japanese War pushed Korea forward to Japan’s colonization and established Japan’s influence in Manchuria. See: Kenneth B. Pyle, *cit.*, 19-20.

with the leadership of the United States. The new world order the Americans envisioned was rooted in an idea of American exceptionalism as a justification of eliminating the militarist Japan and transforming it into a democratic nation. In August 1945, the dropping of two atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki — justified as “the necessary evil” by the Americans—officially ended the war.

The Occupation and Americanized Japan

The fifteen-year war and the defeat brought Japan to total disorder. 1945 was the darkest year for the Japanese people — with dozens of cities being bombarded, the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, one-quarter of the national wealth destroyed, around seventy million of the population wiped out, and more than ten million homeless people. Everything was in shortage, food in particular. Inflation and black market were normality until 1949. But perhaps the most significant normality after the defeat was the American Occupation that so profoundly altered the future of Japan, both materially and mentally.

The Occupation was largely formulated on America’s unconditional surrender policy, whose goals were articulated repeatedly during World War II: “dissolution of the Japanese empire, occupation of the country, permanent disbarment, war crimes trials, reconstruction of the political and economic systems, and reeducation of the people.” The unconditional policy not only shaped the course of the Pacific War, but it also determined the ways in which Japan would

---


9 Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 66.
serve as a subordinate state. The determination to reconstruct another nation also demonstrates the American commitment to remaking world order and promoting the democratic and liberal values so as to achieve world peace in the subsequent Cold War era, for the sake of America’s interest, of course. Nevertheless, this utopian plan of American idealism is proved oftentimes self-righteous and hypocritical, as we shall see in the following chapters.

The Occupation was an ambitious makeover project under General Douglas MacArthur’s military control, whose title SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers) soon came to represent the entire Occupation force. The goal of the remaking of Japan was fixated on transforming the ancient and complex society into a permanently disarmed, democratic state that would support the new world order. Even though during the war President Franklin D. Roosevelt envisioned the U.S. as a leader in the imperialism-free postwar world, the expanding American power was a self-evident (neo)colonialist empire in nature, which was most explicitly manifested in Japan’s Occupation. So willfully and self-assured in their “exceptionalism,” Americans ventured on the makeover of an Asian nation — whose culture and language the SCAP officials had little knowledge of — with an enthusiastic idealism of rebuilding a mirror image of the democratic and liberal America.

10 Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 104.

11 After World War II, the United States entered the new world order by taking the lead in remaking it. Among other institutions established to support the democratic capitalist world order, the United States was one of the founding nations of the United Nations, the international Monetary Fund, the World Bank. This sense of American responsibility was expressed in a radio address to the nation: “The power which this Nation has attained—the political, the economic, the military, and above all the moral power—has brought to us the responsibility, and with it the opportunity, for leadership in the community of nations. It is our own best interest, and in the name of peace and humanity, this Nation cannot, must not, and will not shirk that responsibility.” See: Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 106-107.

12 For Roosevelt’s vision of postwar arrangement and the trusteeship scheme for the colonies, see: Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 109-110.

13 Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 111-118.
Japan’s sovereignty was immediately challenged by the Occupation’s sweeping dismantling of the old structures of the nation — demilitarization, war crimes trials, democratization, and reeducation of the people. In democratization, SCAP and the military control abolished all laws against freedom of speech, thought, and religion. More strikingly, the Americans imposed “the most liberal constitution in history” — as in MacArthur’s own words — to rid of the old Meiji Constitution. Ironically, like most of the Occupation reformists, the SCAP members responsible for drafting the soon-to-be Constitution of Japan had very limited knowledge of Japan’s history or culture. Starting in February 1946 and proceeding with an astonishing speed, the draft Constitution was presented, discussed, negotiated, and finally published to the public in less than two months.

The new Constitution of Japan made revolutionary changes to the Meiji Constitution. The Emperor’s imperial sovereignty was officially relinquished as he became mere “symbol of the State and of the unity of the people.” In addition, the new Constitution entailed not only the basic democratic laws and rights, but also other rights that do not exist in the U.S. Constitution, such as equal rights for women, protection for collective bargaining, and many other novel human rights that were central to the UN Charter of 1945. More critically, the newly imposed

---

14 Quoted in Kenneth B. Pyle, _cit._, 134.

15 It seems the members were satisfied with their familiarity with the American institutions and practices that the reforms were based on. Charles Kades, the key person in charge of the drafting of the Constitution, acknowledged his lack of knowledge of Japan: “I had no knowledge whatsoever about Japan’s history or culture or myths… I was blank on Japan, except of course I knew about the atrocities that had occurred during the war and I was aware of their expansion into China and Southeast Asia. But I had no knowledge other than what one would glean from a daily newspaper about Japan.” See Kenneth B. Pyle, _cit._, 132.

16 The UN Charter was announced just months before the drafting of the new constitution for Japan: “We the people of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war… to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights…” See Kenneth B. Pyle, _cit._, 134. This quote also appeared in the 1955 Family of Man exhibition at MoMA. See Chapter 1, “The Pictures in Question: Victimhood and Contradictions Visualized in The Family of Man.”
Constitution encompassed the controversial Article 9 — the “no war” clause — one of the most defining factors in the complicated Japan-U.S. relation. Article 9 specified the total disarmament of Japan, declaring that “the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right.” While the Emperor became a figurehead, SCAP made compromises to preserve the imperial institution with the belief that it could be used to legitimate the Occupation reforms and evoke a sense of obedience from the people. Surprisingly, this compromise was secretly orchestrated by SCAP and the imperial court when Emperor Hirohito officially renounced his divinity in an imperial script commonly known as the Declaration of Humanity on January 1, 1946. State Shinto — the religious support of prewar ideology and militarism as well as the basis for Emperor-worship — was officially put to an end and all ties between government and religion were prohibited. With the general election for the Diet in April 1946, ordered by SCAP, the official promulgation of the new constitution on May 3, 1947, and the enactment of Fundamental Law of Education of 1947, the Occupation’s Japan was born and ready for reeducation.

It seems inconceivable for us to imagine two nations who had just gone through the ruthless killing of each other’s peoples were, to some extent, cooperating for the democratic

17 The final version of Article 9 reads: “Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right belligerency of the state will not be recognized.” See Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 135-136.

18 To retain the imperial system, MacArthur also insisted on absolving the emperor’s responsibility of any war crime. His insistence was based mostly on the concern that, should the emperor be removed, the hope for the Americans to introduce the democratic values would disappear. The emperor’s power in calling upon obedience could be observed when he called to his army at home and oversea to lay down their weapons, which had been accomplished with the troops’ obedience. For further discussion on MacArthur and the emperor, see Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 127-130.

19 The Emperor stated in the Declaration of Humanity, “the ties between Us and Our People… do not depend upon mere legends and myths. They are not predicated on the false conception that the Emperor is divine, and that the Japanese people are superior to other races and fated to rule the world.” See Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 128.

20 Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 122.
reforms. MacArthur was worshipped as “the god of social reforms” and his reforms as “gifts from above.” His military forces were seen as “an army of liberators.” 21 The initial fear for the Occupiers soon developed into a positive image, as recalled by Japanese photographer Shomei Tomatsu (東松 照明, 1930 – 2012):

Then the occupation army arrived and distributed food in great quantities. It was also the occupation army that sprayed DDT and vaccinated the Japanese against the typhus, thus stopping infectious disease from spreading. The image of the occupation army improved steadily. As people witnessed American soldiers giving chocolate and cigarettes to the starving Japanese, anxiety shifted to relief, and then to envy. It was at that time we first heard the word democracy. 22

Although the defeat was humiliating, most of the Japanese did welcome the opportunities offered by their conquerors to start over, by “enduring the unendurable and suffering what is unsufferable.” 23 This condition has been defined by historian John Dower as that of “embracing defeat.” 24 According to Dower, this “culture of defeat” represents an awareness of reinventing new lives in the immediate postwar years, and is epitomized by three overlapping subcultures: pan-pan prostitutes serving the American GIs, who were often associated with liberation of repressed sexuality and access to American materialism and consumerism; black market that resulted from rampant inflation, representing the way to cope with the hardship of making a

---

21 “MacArthur was worshipped as the god of social reform, and there were some intellectuals who referred to the occupation forces as an army of liberation.” See Shomei Tomatsu, “Occupation (Senryo)” in Chewing Gum and Chocolate, Leo Rubinfien and John Junkerman, eds. (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2014), 196.

22 Shomei Tomatsu, “Occupation (Senryo)” in Rubinfien, Leo, and John Junkerman, eds., cit., 195-196.

23 When announcing Japan’s capitulation through radio broadcast on August 15, 1945, Emperor Hirohito called upon his “subjects” (not yet “citizens”) to “endure the unendurable.”

24 In his book, Dower discusses the ways in which the Japanese dealt with the defeat by developing “cultures of defeat,” including the pan-pan girls who served the American military men, “Kasutori culture,” school of Decadence in literature and so on. See Chapter 4 in John W Dower, Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999), 121-162.
living and a sense of pragmatic materialism; and finally, *kasutori* (self-indulgence) culture where a tradition-defying pulp literature, decadence, and hedonism took center stage.\textsuperscript{25}

However, the Occupation’s idealistic makeover plan did not last long. As the threat from the Soviet Union was emerging, followed by Mao Tse-Tung’s Communist triumph in China in 1949 and the outbreak of Korean War in the following year, the United States was determined to build its security structure in East Asia and pressured Japan to remilitarize to become America’s ally in Cold War Asia. Caught between the old and new American vision — between the democratic and disarmed Japan and the rearmed and militarized Japan — the Japanese had little saying in their future as over 200,000 American troops still occupied the country, and the decision was in truth in the hands of the Americans. The paradox created by the “no war” Article 9 and the United States’ national interest in the new Cold War order led to the so-called “reverse course,” a political shift distinguished by its aim to stabilize and stimulate Japan’s economy, as well as its reintroduction of the conservative elites that included members of the wartime leadership.\textsuperscript{26} Eventually, reconstruction replaced the reformation ideology.

Ultimately, the “reverse course” resulted in the San Francisco Peace Treaty that officially ended the Occupation and restored Japanese sovereignty. The signing of the peace treaty took place on September 8, 1951.\textsuperscript{27} The Treaty demanded Japan to accept the verdict of the Tokyo

---

\textsuperscript{25} See John W. Dower, “Cultures of Defeat” in *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, cit.

\textsuperscript{26} The American embrace for the conservatives was the result of the concerns for the communists and socialists in Japan winning popularity and in turn falling under the Russian political pressure. See Kenneth B. Pyle, *cit.*, 153.

\textsuperscript{27} John Foster Dulles, who was responsible for drafting the treaty, noted that one of the points of the treaty was to make the Japanese people feel that “they are equals of the people of the West.” He also observed that seven-year occupation experience had left an American sense of superiority over the Japanese: “To meet this challenge in Japan it is peculiarly difficult because the challenge confronts soldiers who for over six years have looked upon the Japanese as inferiors, both because of their race and because of their defeat in battle.” Quoted in Kenneth B. Pyle, *cit.*, 164-165.
Tribunal and above all, it officially merged Japan indefinitely into the Cold War order led by the Americans. The majority of the Japanese population opposed to what they saw as treason against the ideals of democratization and demilitarization vouched in early Occupation period, with their protests and demonstrations in the following years. On the same day of the signing of San Francisco Peace Treaty, a bilateral pact named the Mutual Security Treaty was signed, where no mutuality actually existed. The security treaty sabotaged the previous peace treaty by, ironically, allowing a prolonged Occupation where American troops could be stationed indefinitely and used anywhere in Asia without consulting Japan. Neither the Peace Treaty nor the Mutual Security Treaty display the true alliance and promise on Japanese sovereignty. Another separate administrative agreement spelled out the details of the American stationing, the right for the U.S. military to arrest the Japanese in the areas outside the bases, and also, the exclusive jurisdiction of U.S. authorities for the American military personnel who committed crimes in Japan.

For Japan, the end of the Occupation in 1952 meant nothing more than embracing a new era of Cold War, forcing the people into another colonial status that echoed what Tomatsu would call the “strange reality.”

**Contradictions Visualized Through Photography**

With a focus on the 1950s into the early 1960s, my thesis looks at the photographic representation of the complex co-existence of Japan and the United States in postwar Japan that is informed by the historical study by Dower in *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World*

---

28 The peace treaty ended the Occupation on mainland Japan but left Okinawa an American military colony until 1972.

29 “This strange reality suddenly presented to us. I call it ‘occupation’” was Tomatsu’s catchphrase in reference to the Occupation, seen in “Iwakuni, Iwakuni, Iwakuni,” *Chuo Koron*, April 1960, 7-23.
War II, where Dower investigates the immediate aftermath after the defeat of Japan, offering the story from the viewpoint of the defeated nation and focusing on the mindset of Japanese people after the war. While Dower’s rich analysis centers mostly on the period of the Occupation, and specifically on the first two years after the war, Pyle’s Japan in the American Century provides an insightful analysis of the ways in which the two nations and their peoples came to confrontation, and how the histories of the two countries have been intertwined since late nineteenth century. This convoluted relationship is described by Pyle as “an unnatural intimacy.” Pyle takes a holistic view of the modern histories of both nations, detailing how President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s idealistic policy of unconditional surrender changed the course of the Pacific War and the direction of the reconfiguration of another country. While focusing on the political history, Pyle’s study complements Dower’s book by extending beyond the Occupation era into the Cold War age, which scrutinizes the political trade-offs for Cold War alliances, including Japan’s sacrifice of national autonomy in exchange for the end of the Occupation.

Postwar Japan is a broad subject, and its end has been officially marked in 1956. In July 1956, the annual economic report issued by the Japanese government in response to the GNP’s surpassing prewar levels declared the end of the recovery period, proclaiming that Japan “is no longer postwar.”30 At the end of the year, Japan finally became a member of the United Nations, marking its return to international affairs. The years between 1957 and 1964 exemplify a critical juncture for Japan in casting aside the label of a formally defeated villain and reestablishing itself as a modernized, prosperous, and peace-loving nation.31 That said, “postwar” is an ambiguous

---


31 From Postwar to Postmodern: Art in Japan 1945-1989, cit., 97.
term. In this thesis, I position “postwar” as a period of political, cultural, and psychological clashes centered on the American Occupation and its extended stationing in Japan during the Cold War period. Framed within this historical context, I observe how photographers — Japanese or foreign — strove to grapple with the contradictions between old and new, tradition and modernity, guilt and trauma.

The three chapters in this thesis are organized thematically following a thread concerning the Occupation, the Japan-U.S. relation, and Americanization. The thesis begins with *The Family of Man*, the blockbuster photography exhibition curated by Edward Steichen that opened at the Museum of Modern Art in 1955. The purpose of the show was to celebrate the sameness of human experience by means of the democratic language of photography — a literal representation of the universal “family of man.” Under the auspices of the United States Information Agency, the exhibition traveled internationally as part of an American cultural and political propaganda with an anti-nuclear message. Instead of retelling the story of the MoMA presentation, Chapter 1 “The Pictures in Question: Victimhood and Contradictions Visualized in *The Family of Man*” offers a detailed analysis of the overlooked episode of the Japanese version of this exhibition that took place in Tokyo, 1956. I point out through archival research that the original exhibition content was modified by the Japanese organizers, discussing an individual section entitled “Atomic Bomb” with images by Japanese photographer Yosuke Yamahata (山端庸介, 1917–1966) of the ruins and victims of the a-bombed Nagasaki. The intention of the Japanese organizers and the subsequent repercussions from MoMA and the American Embassy

---

32 The role of the United States Information Agency was to help undermine Communism, promote American values such as capitalism and democracy. See John O’Brien, “The Nuclear Family of Man,” *Asia Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, Vol. 6, Issue 7 (2008) https://apjjf.org/-John-O-Brian/2816/article.pdf. In addition to Japan, the show also traveled to Germany, France, Netherlands, Belgium, England, Italy, Yugoslavia, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Poland, Switzerland, Luxemburg, Guatemala, Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, Chile, Uruguay, India, Indonesia, and the Soviet Union, etc. The exhibition was not shown in Spain, China, and Vietnam.
insinuates the complicated relationship between the two nations since the end of the war. This chapter re-examines how the propaganda of universal humanism was tainted with a certain degree of censorship as well as Cold War agenda, how the exhibition was sabotaged by the power relation between two nations, and the meaning of the images of trauma for the victims as spectators.

Chapter 2, “Coexistence: Americanization, Magnum Photographers, and Photo-Realism in Japan” goes beyond The Family of Man and shifts the focus onto the historical context of humanist photography in the 1950s as well as contemporaneous artistic scenes in Japan. Magnum’s humanism and values of solidarity among humans was intrinsic to the photographers’ approach. To illustrate this point, I will discuss two specific photographers who visited Japan in early 1950s, Werner Bischof (1916 – 1954) and Robert Capa (1913 – 1954), who documented Japan in 1951 and 1954, respectively. Their work formulates an interesting comparison to the Photo-Realism style prevailing in Japan that is exemplified by the work of Ken Domon (土門 拳, 1909 – 1990), whose emphasis on the dark side of society in postwar Japan provides an alternative perspective from the locals.

The final chapter of this thesis, “The Strange Reality of ‘Senryo’: Shomei Tomatsu and the Conflicts Within the Japanese Souls” converges the previous discussions by focusing on Shomei Tomatsu. His work not only defines the turn of postwar Japanese photography but also pinpoints the core of this thesis: the contradictions of a defeated nation. Tomatsu’s photographs of the American military bases in his early stage of career testify to the postwar generation’s confusion with the status quo and the conflicting sentiments towards the Americans — the “love and hate” that Tomatsu would often refer to. The discussion also includes Tomatsu’s other series of images of Nagasaki, the second city that suffered the Americans’ atomic bombing. None of
these images show the devastation of the ruins captured by the pictures exhibited in *The Family of Man* of Tokyo. Rather, they show the city as reconstructed and recovered, as well as the survivors of the bomb. The series does not have an explicit relation to the Americans as his photographs of the American bases do, but offers an entry point to a subjective interpretation of traumatic experience inflicted by the Americans, and its relation to time and memory.

The question of how photography represents the historical moments and the political dynamics carries through the three chapters. Through a comparative study on the photographs of Japan in the 1950s and the various approaches to seeing and framing what the photographers perceived of the country, this thesis brings photography into a discussion of the political and ideological tensions between Japan and the U.S., shedding new light on the way we see photography as a means to visualize the alternative history, as well as the historical undercurrents intertwined with culture, trauma, and memory.
Chapter 1

The Pictures in Question: Victimhood and Contradictions Visualized in The Family of Man

In March 1956, the Takashimaya Department Store in Tokyo was overloaded with local visitors swarming in to see the opening of The Family of Man, the blockbuster show curated by Edward Steichen that debuted at the Museum of Modern Art in New York a year before and had embarked on its international tour afterwards. The temporary exhibition room was jam-packed. It was almost impossible to view the pictures hung on the walls as one would have to elbow himself through the crowd (fig. 1-1). One should not be surprised to see such a massive stream of visitors considering the worldwide popularity of The Family of Man. But in one particular exhibition room, Japanese visitors were seen in the act of looking attentively at an installation of gruesome pictures of the atomic bomb victims, superimposed on an enlarged backdrop image of ruins and burnt bodies following the bomb, dropped eleven years earlier under the sky of Nagasaki (fig. 1-2).

33 Opened in 1933 as part of the Takashimaya Co., Ltd. (株式会社髙島屋), a company that operated the biggest department store chain in the country, the Takashimaya Department Store in Nihombashi, Tokyo played an important role in mounting exhibitions. In fact, Takashimaya had been supporting painter and writers since its founding and established the Takashimaya Art Department in 1909 in conjunction with a large-scale exhibition of Japanese painters (“現代名家百幅画会”). In the postwar era, the Tokyo Takashimaya Department Store held several other photography exhibitions, including Impressions of Japan (1954) — an exhibition of Robert Capa’s photographs, the first International Subjective Photography Exhibition (1956), The Decisive Moment (1957), Masterworks of Life Photographers (1958), etc. On the other hand, Japan’s establishment of museums fell behind its counterparts in Europe and America. The first museum in the country was the Tokyo National Museum, which held its first exhibition by the Museum Department of the Ministry of Education at the Taiseiden Hall in its founding year 1872: https://www.takashimaya.co.jp/archives/history For a chronology of photography exhibitions in Japan, see also: Anne Wilkes Tucker, et al. The History of Japanese Photography (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)

These pictures of visitors at the exhibit were taken during the first Tokyo presentation, where the Japanese organizers inserted an additional section entitled “Atom Bomb (‘原爆’ in Japanese)” following the sections of civic rights images (fig.1-3, section marked as 23). Despite minimal information on the source of the images in the “Atom Bomb” section, some of them could be identified as the work by Yosuke Yamahata (山端庸介, 1917–1966), whose photographs of the immediate aftermath of Nagasaki was published in 1952 as the book *Nagasaki Journey: The Photographs of Yosuke Yamahata, August 10, 1945.*

Surprisingly, this installation of bomb pictures was not included in the original show at MoMA. In fact, they were not displayed elsewhere except in Tokyo, and only for a couple of days as they were forced to be taken down.

Until recently, the majority of criticisms on *The Family of Man* had been based on Roland Barthes’s unfavorable review of the exhibition’s French version took place in Paris in 1956, which took to task Steichen’s disregard for the historical contexts of each photograph and his sentimentalism of presenting the norms of human lives. Surprisingly, very little scholarship has been dedicated to the contested presence of the hydrogen bomb image in the original *The Family of Man* in MoMA and the controversial atomic bomb pictures in the Tokyo exhibition, which perfectly attests to Barthes’s critique on the hollow rhetoric of universality, and also, the hypocrisy resided in the ahistoricity of the show.

---

35 Although on MoMA Archive Image Database (MAID), the images of the bomb section are captioned as “Installation view the Hiroshima panel included in the Tokyo presentation of the exhibition,” the most recognizable photographs were by Yamahata and taken in Nagasaki. In the correspondence between the Japanese organizing committee and Steichen, the pictures were often referred to as “Nagasaki pictures,” in addition to “A-bomb pictures.”

The pictures introduced at the beginning present several questions: What did it mean for the Japanese to see the pictures related to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Or to be exact, what did it mean for the victims to confront the pictures of their trauma? Do images, in the case of *The Family of Man* in Tokyo, serve as a means to cope with or come to terms with trauma? This chapter investigates the controversy sparked by the Tokyo version of *The Family of Man* in an attempt to unravel the political and ideological intricacies between the United States and Japan during the Cold War in the form of a photography exhibition, where the universalism in photography as a language was highlighted.

**A Controversial Success: *The Family of Man* in Japan**

*The Family of Man* was on view in several cities in Japan with various sizes in accordance with the scale of the exhibition spaces.\(^{37}\) Co-organized by *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* (*The Economic Journal of Japan*; 日本経済新聞), the leading newspaper company in Japan,\(^ {38}\) the Museum of Modern Art, and the USIS (The United States Information Service), it was first presented at the Takashimaya Department Store in Nihombashi, Tokyo, from March 20 to April

---

\(^{37}\) Letter from Jiro Enjoji to Edward Steichen, December 18, 1956. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records, Exhs. 569.105. The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York. Under the supervision of Steichen, the exhibition was revised and divided into “larger version” and “smaller version” when presenting in Japan. The larger version was exhibited in Tokyo (twice), Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka, Kyoto, Okayama, Hiroshima, Shizuoka. The smaller version was exhibited in Sendai, Skita, Hakodate, Niigata, Sapporo, Saseho, Kokura, Kagoshima, Miyazaki, Kumamoto, Oita.

\(^{38}\) Letter from Edward Steichen, August 11, 1955. MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. Nihon Keizai Shimbun (now known as The Nikkei) was Japan’s major news publication established in late 19th century. Steichen’s letter to MoMA’s Photography Department on Aug 11, 1955 describes the news company as the following: “which I understand is the equivalent of the Wall Street Journal, is behind this project with an interest and an ardor that is overwhelming.” In addition to *The Family of Man*, Nihon Keizai Shimbun sponsored many exhibitions traveling to Japan, such as *Picasso: Guernica, Tokyo, Kyoto, Kuruma, Nagoya, 1962-1963*. [https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en/document/jiro-enjojis-letter-rene-dharnoncourt](https://guernica.museoreinasofia.es/en/document/jiro-enjojis-letter-rene-dharnoncourt)
15, 1956, and was exhibited at the same venue again in July due to its popular demand.\textsuperscript{39} The first presentation in Tokyo will be the focal point in this discussion, as the variations in its content and the sensational reactions it aroused among the public illuminate political agendas communicated via a photography exhibition.

*The Family of Man* was a success in Japan. According to a letter to Steichen on December 18, 1956, from Jiro Enjoji, the Managing Director and Executive Editor of *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, as well as a leading member of the Japanese organizing committee in charge of curatorial affairs, the total number of visitors to *The Family of Man* in Japan was 845,554, including the 243,448 and 74,477 visitors to the two Tokyo exhibitions. Along with the visitor numbers, Enjoji often reported reviews from Japanese visitors to Steichen, many of which were positive. For instance, Mr. Eiichiro Ishida, a Professor of Tokyo University, commented on the evocative power to relate oneself to the universal humanity. He said, “This is an exhibit which has some power to make us think seriously about a human being. It has a force to appeal to us, not by theory but through emotion, and makes us feel strongly intimacy with all the men in the world.”\textsuperscript{40}

Planned by Kenzo Tange (丹下健三, 1913–2005),\textsuperscript{41} the design of the first Tokyo version of *The Family of Man* faithfully adhered to the original MoMA format. The MoMA show was

\textsuperscript{39} Letter from Jiro Enjoji to Edward Steichen, July 23, 1956. MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. The second Tokyo exhibition ran from July 17\textsuperscript{th} to August 5\textsuperscript{th}, 1956.

\textsuperscript{40} MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY.

\textsuperscript{41} Kenzo Tange was a Japanese architect known for combining traditional Japanese styles and modernism and was associated with the Metabolism movement. He took part in Japan’s urban reconstruction after the war and won the first prize for designing for Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in 1949. Tange also designed a number of urban structures overseas, such as Europe and the Middle East. His representative projects include the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum (situated within Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park), Saint Mary’s Cathedral, Tokyo, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Office, among others. The Family of Man was Tange’s first exhibition design involving curatorial contributions such as scaling and arranging the sequence of nearly 500 photographs in the show. He was the exhibition layout designer for *The Family of Man* exhibition in Japan. See
divided into a total of forty-two thematic sections showcasing the various phases of human lives, most of which pertained to the generative aspects such as pregnancy, childbirth, children, family activities, dance, music, food, relationships, learning, religion, and so on. On the contrary, the destructive or mortal sections were distinctly fewer, including “Death,” “Hard Times,” “Famine,” “Inhumanities,” “Revolt,” “Man’s Judgement,” and “Bomb.” The exhibition ended with “Childhood Magic,” an image by Eugene Smith of two children stumbling towards light, conveying an optimistic undertone. (fig.1-4) Similar to the MoMA presentation, the viewing route of the Tokyo show led visitors from “the birth of the universe” to the various stages of shared experience in human lives, and the sections related to negative aspects of humanity were placed in the midway of the viewing, followed by sections of positive images related to the theme of hope.

However, one decisive installation was missing from the Tokyo presentation — the large color transparency of a mushroom cloud, which was the only image related to the bomb in the original presentation of The Family of Man in New York.42 In this context the image acted as a statement against the emerging Cold War crisis rather than an insinuation of the disaster in Hiroshima or Nagasaki, as the mushroom cloud was in fact referencing to the hydrogen bomb test took place in the early 1950s.43 It is also dubious that the Americans would publicly exhibit

https://jp.toto.com/gallerma/ex150123/profile_e.htm

42 The absence of the color transparency of the hydrogen bomb image was a shared feature for the traveling as well as the book versions of The Family of Man. At best, a black-and-white image of another bomb, the denotation of ‘Ivy Mike’ over Enewetak in November 1952 was shown in some occasions. See Miles Orvell, “Et in Arcadia Ego: The Family of Man as Cold War Pastoral” in The Family of Man Revisited: Photography in a Global Age, eds. Gerd Hurm, Anke Reitz, and Shamoon Zamir (London & New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2018), 194.

43 Limited information was provided on this particular image of the H-bomb in the show, or in the catalogue. Scholars have inconsistent views as well. John O’Brien suggests the bomb referred to the denotation of ‘Ivy Mike’ over Enewetak in November 1952, while Miles Orvell did not mention the exact test the image represented and
the atrocities they had imposed on the Japanese civilians. In the MoMA presentation, the image of the H-bomb explosion was placed next to the room exhibiting the “dead soldier,” adjacent to a collage of nine faces of three men, three women, and three children. (fig.1-5) The images combined were designed to be a warning, reinterpreted through Bertrand Russell’s words: “…the best authorities are unanimous in saying that a war with hydrogen bombs is quite likely to put an end to the human race. …there will be universal death—sudden only for a fortunate minority, but for the majority a slow torture of disease and disintegration…” Although one might see the quotation echoing the historical fact of atomic bombing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, through Steichen’s calculated curating, this implicit meaning was concealed and was never intended to be delivered to the viewer, or to be associated with some sort of introspection on the act of dropping the bomb. Rather, in tandem with Russell’s quote, the H-bomb image was diluted into Steichen’s rhetoric of universality and flattened to a symbol of the immediate threat to the “the family of man.” It became a caution against peace-wrecking nuclear weapons in the Cold War backdrop, rather than a reminder of past brutality.

Accordingly, one can see the addition of the bomb pictures as a misinterpretation on both the Japanese and the American sides. According to a letter from Enjoji to Steichen, the two met along with exhibition designer Tange in Kyoto in the summer of 1955, discussing for the first time whether the atomic bomb pictures could be shown in Japan. During their meeting, Steichen commented on the picture of the H-bomb explosion mushroom cloud at MoMA, regretting that it was too beautiful to “make the spectators realize how terrible the menace of the H-bomb is.”44 He also suggested to Enjoji and Tange that the selection of the A-bomb pictures “had better be

reconsidered from an entirely new angle for the exhibitions in Japan as the Japanese are the first victims of this terrible weapon.”⁴⁵ Steichen never left specific instructions as to what kind of A-bomb pictures should be selected. Coincidentally, during his visit, Steichen met with Shogyoku Yamahata, the father of the author of Nagasaki photographs Yamahata. A photograph shows them standing together, while Steichen holding Yamahata’s book *Nagasaki Journey.*⁴⁶ Whether Steichen’s meeting with Yamahata’s father or his access to the book played a decisive role in the selection of the Nagasaki pictures, it is intriguing to speculate the correlation.

After Steichen’s return to the United States, the members of the Committee responsible for the curatorial decisions and liaising with MoMA — Yoshio Watanabe (渡辺 義雄, 1907 – 2000), Shigene Kanamaru (金丸 重嶺, 1900 – 1977), Ihei Kimura (木村 伊兵衛, 1901 – 1974) and Tange — met to review the issue. Enjoji had a discussion with officials from the U.S. Embassy on the matter in November 1955, during which this American official “significantly implied the coincidence of the timing of H-Bomb test and *The Family of Man* exhibition in Tokyo.”⁴⁷ However, Enjoji and other members of the Committee did not take this implication of the sensitive timing into consideration, as they believed the exhibition should not be contaminated by any sort of political force, “lest the noble aspiration for humanity of *The Family of Man* should be twisted politically.”⁴⁸ After the meeting, there was a mutual understanding that

---

⁴⁵ Ibid. In the original letter, Enjoji misprinted the word “A-Bomb” while referencing the MoMA show, which might be mere typo or confusing A-bomb with H-bomb.


⁴⁸ Ibid. In his letter, Enjoji also points out that “if the intention of the American Embassy was made public, it would exert undesirable effects upon the friendly relations between Japan and the United States.”

22
the Japanese side would have full responsibility of the selection and the layout of the A-bomb pictures.

These circumstances added up to the Committee members’ impression of taking total curatorial control of the A-bomb pictures under Steichen’s authorization, without the need to contact him further. The selection of the A-bomb pictures was not made until March 1956, the same month when the exhibition layout was fully completed by Tange. Even Enjoji himself did not see the pictures in question until the completion of the layout on March 19, the day before the preview.

The exhibition had not encountered any form of objection or unfavorable remarks regarding the A-bomb pictures during the first few days but on March 22, the day before Emperor Hirohito was scheduled to visit *The Family of Man* with the companion of U.S. Ambassador John Allison, the Committee received an inquiry from the American Embassy demanding an explanation regarding the A-bomb pictures, and asking if these had been authorized by Steichen. Feeling threatened by the American Embassy, the Committee had no choice but to veil the pictures during the Emperor’s visit on March 23. The incident was soon

49 Ibid. While the layout was expected to be completed by the end of 1955, Mr. Tange took more time than expected since he “did his assignment so conscientiously,” writes Enjoji.

50 Ibid. In Enjoji’s letter, he quoted several guests’ remarks on the A-bomb pictures, including the one from Mr. Berding, Assistant Director of USIA, who did not express any critical opinion towards the pictures in questions. The other staff of U.S. Embassy present at the exhibition also offered positive reviews. None of them made complaints about the A-bomb pictures.

51 Ibid. “Right after we got the inquiry, we went to the Embassy to explain why the display of these pictures needed not the authorization by you [Steichen]. Despite our hard effort of explanation, the Embassy officials told us threateningly that unless the pictures be hided from the eyes of the Emperor and the Ambassador they would not have to Ambassador accompany the Emperor on the next day. It may seem a little funny to you Americans, but it is a custom of the Emperor not to accept the invitation of a newspaper to such kind of exhibition unless jointly extended by co-sponsoring country’s representative. In fear any grave mis-happening might arise as to the Emperor’s visit, which of course has a great value of publicity, we could not help yielding to the demand of the Embassy officials. According on the day of the Emperor’s visit, we ceiled the pictures in question. It seemed to have passed without troubles until the Emperor left the site.”
reported by the local papers *Asahi*, despite the fact that the Committee never clarified the reason behind the actions, nor did it imply any menacing attitude from the American Embassy.  

Upon learning about the existence of the A-bomb pictures from an Associated Press reporter on the same day the Emperor visited the exhibition, Steichen immediately released a statement to dissociate himself from the curatorial decision:

> There was only one photograph of a Japanese war victim [*Nagasaki Boy*] in the exhibition we sent to Japan, and we told the Japanese Committee and the USIS, which are sponsoring the showing with the Museum, that it could be removed if the Committee so desired. I did not authorize the addition of any group of photographs of bomb victims. In my opinion that would be like rubbing salt into an open wound. If such pictures have been added, and I hope the reports are erroneous, they should certainly be removed.

Later on, in response to the local paper *Asahi’s* request, Steichen released a more detailed statement on the reasons for the withdrawal of the A-bomb pictures, in which he admitted that he had seen the pictures in question during his visit to Japan in the previous year and found them deeply moving, but even so, he regretted that “through an unfortunate misunderstanding” his appreciation of the image had led the Japanese Committee to believe that the photographs were approved as additions to the exhibition. In defense of the withdrawal of the photographs, Steichen reinstated the perfectly justifiable theme of “universalism:”

*The Family of Man* is concerned with the presentation of the joys, aspirations and sorrows of mankind as a whole and no event no matter how moving or significant

---

52 Ibid. At that time the Committee answered to the inquiries from press on the matter as the result of unresolved differences of opinions among the Executive Committee members as to the propriety of the pictures. The Committee never publicized the fact that it was pressured by the Embassy for fear that should the fact be made public, “it would deteriorate the relation between the two countries” and the Committee would be under attack from the public that it had “surrendered to the pressure of the American Embassy.” On the same day of answering the inquiries from local press, the Embassy officials expressed appreciative words on the Committee’s choice not to mention the pressure from the Embassy.

can be given detailed coverage in it without distorting its universal meaning. All through the exhibition groups of individual pictures from different parts of the world serve to illustrate specific phases of the theme but the treatment of specific events in a typical manner through a series of photographs has been consistently avoided in order to make sure that the presentation of universal human problems would not be overshadowed by the impact of one event and its associations.

On March 24, two officials from the American Embassy firmly demanded that the Committee entirely remove the A-bomb pictures, showing Steichen’s statement published the day before. Eventually, the Committee compromised and changed the section of the exhibition in the way Steichen suggested by displaying Yamahata’s image of the Nagasaki boy. Taken the day after the bomb in August 1945, it was the only photograph of the bomb victim in the original show at MoMA. Recontextualized within a cluster of photographs of people in Steichen’s narrative of universal humanism, the boy is deprived of the history of the atomic bomb of Nagasaki and only known to the viewer as [a boy from] Nagasaki (fig. 1-5, center image). After the controversy of the Tokyo show, the Nagasaki boy was displayed as an independent installation — cropped, alone, and against a black backdrop, a contrast to other white walls in the rest of the exhibition. Interestingly, the picture of the boy in fact appeared uncropped on the Nagasaki wall installation (fig.1-6, third image from the right) before being taken down with

---

54 “Captain Steichen’s Statement re Withdrawal of Nagasaki photographs from FAMILY OF MAN exhibition in Tokyo,” n.d. MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. According to the letter from Rene d’Harnoncourt to Theodore C. Streibert, Director of United States Information Agency, this statement was issued on March 26 and cabled to Nihon Keizai Shim bun.

55 According to the records in the Museum of Modern Art Archives, Steichen issued two statements specifically in response to the A-bomb pictures in question, on March 23 and 26 respectively. The statement shown by the two officials from the Embassy would have been the one issued on March 23.

56 Letter from Rene d’Harnoncourt to Theodore C. Streibert (Director of United States Information Agency). IC/IP, I.B.151. MoMA Archives, NY. Steichen and Enjoji communicated on the controversy on March 24th and 25th. Despite contradicting opinions towards the presence of the A-Bomb pictures, a final consensus was reached that the pictures in question be taken out and the one picture of Nagasaki boy by Yamahata would “remain alone on the black wall.”
other A-bomb images. Steichen’s manipulation of the images informs not only the sentimentalism and optimism in favor of his curatorial interest, but also the illusion of the universalism in his anti-nuclear rhetoric. In this sense, the fact that the image was cropped in avoidance of showing the boy’s mother further suggests the decontextualization and alteration of meaning in *The Family of Man*. This echoes what Barthes described in his criticism of “suppressing the determining weight of History,” that the viewer was “kept at the surface of an identity, prevented by sentimentality itself from penetrating in that further zone of human conduct, where historical alienation introduces those ‘differences’ which we shall here call quite simply injustices.”\(^5^7\) The cropped image was turned into a vehicle of sentimentalism and provocation of empathy from the viewer: “with a bleeding face, dry-eyed, looking straight at us and asking, as all the faces asked, ‘Why?’”\(^5^8\) Here, instead of demanding answers from those who produced and dropped the bomb on Nagasaki, the boy’s accusing tone addresses the possible victims of an ahistorical menace — the hydrogen bomb — and calling upon them to see what consequences the bomb would lead to.

**Censorship and the Cold War**

The removal of the Nagasaki pictures sparked debates of whether or not including those pictures could be justified, with overall discontent on the part of many Japanese. In order to understand the meaning of this decision — to exhibit or not exhibit the bomb pictures — it is crucial to examine the historical context of the censorship established during the American


Occupation, as well as the ways in which the general public in Japan perceive the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the rising nuclear threat in the Cold War during the 1950s.

The images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been a controversy long before *The Family of Man*. During the American Occupation in the years between 1945 and 1952, SCAP established a censorship regime to safeguard the Occupation’s reputation in spite of the Potsdam Declaration’s promise of a new democratic order to be introduced to Japan. Phone conversations, mails, news agencies, newspapers, magazines, books, radio programs, films, and dramas were all subject to this censorship, a fact that the Americans at the time painstakingly managed to conceal.\(^59\)

The images of atom-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki were confiscated by the American military and all related information — photographic evidence of the wounded and the dead in particular — was suppressed to the public. In Japan, the visual dissemination of the immediate aftermath of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was discredited by the U.S. government as Japanese propaganda; the aim of those images or any form of information was regarded as a scheme to provoke emotional reactions from the world.\(^60\) The related materials allowed from the U.S. side were nothing more than neutralized descriptions of the bomb effects as a result of a scientific study conducted by the U.S. Commission. For instance, on March 11, 1946 — seven months after Hiroshima and Nagasaki — *Life* magazine published an article on the effects of the bomb, entitled “Atom Bomb Effects: U.S. Commission Analyzes Blasts Which Hit Hiroshima and


\(^{60}\) Paul Ham, *Hiroshima-Nagasaki: The Real Story of the Atomic Bombings and Their Aftermath* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, St. Martin’s Press, 2011), 427-431. The U.S. censorship banned everything that “might directly or by inference disturb public tranquility’ or ‘convey false or destructive criticism of the Allied Powers’. Besides photographs and films, American investigators’ medical findings on radiation poisoning were kept from Japanese doctors who were struggling to treat the victims.
Nagasaki.” (fig. 1-7) In the summary of the observation by the U.S. Commission sent to Japan, the morbid imprint of the heat on human skin, the internal bleeding caused by gamma rays, the rupture of inner organs resulted from the shock waves and other material damages on the cityscape were diluted into neutral descriptions one saw in scientific research reports.61

It wasn’t until 1952 that the censorship was lifted along with the end of the American Occupation, bringing the information on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to light. The first Japanese presentation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki photographs was published in Asahi Graph in August, 1952, entitled “First Exposé of A-bomb Damage.”62 The publication of those images allowed the public a revelation of the extent of the aftermath of the bombs, and the suffering of the survivors.63 About one month later on September 25, Life published “When Atom Bomb Struck — Uncensored,” a seven-page photo essay on the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (fig. 1-8). In this coverage, the visual evidence of the agony of the two cities, captured by Japanese photojournalists Yoshito Matsushige (松重 美人, 1913–2005) and Yamahata, were laid in front of the eyes of the world for the first time. The opening of the text states, “For the first time Japan [one] has seen — and has been shocked by — visual evidence of what happened to the people of the atom-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki.”64

---


What is telling is the undertone of *Life*’s narrative, an unapologetic reading of the visual evidence of the atrocity inflicted by the U.S. government. With regard to the consequence of the atomic bombs, *Life* downplayed the United States’ moral responsibility and diverted the focus by calling for the criticality of peace, which is self-evident in one of the passages on the first page: “Almost with one voice those who saw the long-suppressed photographs renewed a heartfelt cry—nearly forgotten since the Korean war and the threat of Russian aggression—for pacifism, neutrality and peace at any price.”

In the following spreads, *Life* recapitulated the horrid effects of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki with testimony from the locals, such as the aforementioned Japanese photojournalist Yamahata, whose photograph of the Nagasaki boy appear again with the same cropping device employed by Steichen: the mother was absent, cut out of the frame, leaving a full-sized picture of the “dazed boy,” whose “face cut by glass, stands clutching a rice ball.” (fig.1-9) Unlike the neutralized, report-like description on the bomb published in 1946, the connotation of this photo essay is clearly political, but eschewing the irony that the abhorrence and its delayed revelation was an American decision. The empathy or sympathy triggered by *Life*’s reportage, if any, was not intended for the dead and the suffering Japanese civilians in the pictures but rather, for the possible victims of Soviet nuclear power during the Cold War.

---

65 “When Atom Bomb Struck—Uncensored,” *Life*, September 29, 1952, 19. “In Japan it had been feared the stark record would touch off new waves of anti-Americanism. But the lesson of the pictures went much deeper than that on the people who had started the war which led to Hiroshima and Nagasaki... In Nagasaki, at a memorial to those who died there, a teen-aged survivor voiced to those who fear: ‘With all my might, as I once cried out for water out of thirst while crawling among the charred bodies on that fateful day, I should now like to cry ‘peace, peace.’”
Trauma, Memory, and Victimhood

As the Cold War atmosphere intensified in East Asia, and Japan was being remilitarized under its alliance with the United States, the former victim of two atomic bombs came to realize its antinuclear mission. The catalyst of this antinuclear and peace movement was the Lucky Dragon Incident in 1954, where an American hydrogen-bomb test at the Bikini Atoll in the southern Pacific resulted in the radiation sickness of some twenty-three Japanese fishermen on the nearby boat Lucky Dragon. The incident soon turned into national panic in Japan — people refused to eat fish for fear of radioactive pollution, and some tabloids even accused the Lucky Dragon Incident as yet another American atomic attack on Japan.66 The alarm triggered by the Lucky Dragon Incident finally woke the Japanese people to the hazard of the Cold War. In addition to the founding of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in 1955 — the first of several antinuclear organizations in Japan, the opening of the Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima in the same year marked the beginning of memorialization of the victims on the site. In popular culture, Japan witnessed the first Godzilla movie in 1954, which features a monster that wrecks Tokyo after being awakened from deep sleep in the Pacific by a nuclear test.67

This mentality spells out, and perhaps on some degree justifies, the Japanese people’s insistence on their “victimhood” caused by the atomic bombs. There were remarks on the bomb images or expressions of disappointment among the Japanese audience regarding the Tokyo

---

66 Denoted on March 1, 1954, the hydrogen-bomb was 750 times more powerful than the atomic bomb of Hiroshima. For more details of the Lucky Dragon Incident and the American effort of covering up the event, see Kenneth B. Pyle, cit., 189-193.

exhibition. A noted critic, Mr. Samitaro Uramatsu, commented on the exhibition’s lack of negative imagery of human hatred, the number of which was so few that it was like adding “pepper in gold dishes.”68 The Prince Takamatsu took issue with the absence of the bomb images, adding that the pictures “would have been better to be displayed.”69

Firm defense against the removal of the A-bomb photographs was also conveyed through a lengthy letter to Steichen from Tadashi Oide, the chief editor of PHOTO 35.70 Oide, like many other Japanese viewers, was in awe of the visual power of the A-bomb pictures:

“When I stood in front of the photographs showing the most disastrous of war, especially the pictures of ‘Nagasaki’ ruined by the devilish atomic bomb, I was deeply struck by their overwhelming power of expression. When I felt that this was the pivotal point of the exhibition and the climax of the whole drama of the human family as well as the greatest tragedy of the ‘family of man.’”71

However, unconvinced by Steichen’s statement regarding the withdrawal of the pictures quoted in Asahi on March 24, Oide stated that, “to allow display of the atom bomb pictures is the only reasonable conclusion drawn from the logic shown in your [Steichen’s] statement and is in accord with the purpose of The Family of Man. I think it was ridiculous to have removed

68 MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. “I was touched with this exhibit which faces boldly the pains of human life. What called my attention to is that the exhibition picks up very few pictures of human hatred such as war, quarrel and struggles. While stressing the pains and sorrows of humanity, the editor of the exhibit adds a little bit of hatred as pepper in gold dishes. It is an expression of the wonderful view of life cherished deep in the heart of Mr. Steichen.”

69 MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. “I got what may be called an inspiration from this exhibit. It was that men all over the world are one, despite the differences of races and manners. The exhibit teaches us this fact directly through our eyes, not through theories. What I have to add is that more strongly impressive pictures of atom bombs would have been better to be displayed.”

70 Letter from Tadashi Oide to Edward Steichen, n.d. MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. In his letter to Steichen, Oide writes: “The PHOTO 35 is the only magazine in Japan devoted to 35mm photography and is published monthly for the purpose of carrying various articles of the theoretical and critical studies on photography along with picture reproductions taken by professionals and amateurs.”

71 Ibid.
them.” To reinforce his argument, Oide quoted Steichen’s words in the catalogue in support of showing the removed pictures for the sake of world peace: “…the atomic bomb problem is the great concern not only for Japan but for the whole world. It is not a mere specific accident but a general and fundamental problem of world-wide significance. Because it directly influences the cause of world peace.” He called attention to the victimhood of Japan and the people’s determination of antinuclear movement:

So far as the atomic bomb is concerned, we the Japanese people are well entitled to protest vigorously against it. Because we experienced the atomic bomb attack and its horrible destructions, the records of which are correctly kept by the pictures in question. This protest of ours is not a rebellious mood. It means that we want to remain forever as the most peace-loving people of the world, and for that purpose we are resolved to do everything within our power to hinder the use of Atomic and also hydrogen bombs in whatever situation. Although I admit that the Atomic bomb pictures are a big accent to the exhibition, I think nobody feared that they would help the Japanese people to forget the importance of preserving peace or to foster hatred against America. We saw the Atomic bomb disasters with our own eyes and have had many chances to see the pictures of the A-bomb casualties.

Oide went further on accusing the American side of downplaying the responsibility of dropping the bomb, stating that if the Americans feared the pictures in questions would produce a counter effect, it is “an erroneous idea probably based on fear and conscience peculiar to the Americans.”

---

72 Ibid. “Why should only the Emperor, a member of the family of Japanese people, not see the pictures which the Emperor is one of the leaders who are responsible for having started the war which invited the atomic bomb attack. In this sense it may be said that the Emperor should be the first person to see the pictures. And if the Emperor is given the chance to see them, no doubt he would come to exert more efforts than ever before in enhancing the course of peace.”

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid. Oide also expresses his concern for the “oppressive and restrictive power” being forced on the Japanese public “and on the freedom of thought,” demanding the truth behind the removal of the A-bomb pictures.
The Japanese Committee’s attitude was as unyielding as these local visitors. Upon learning about Steichen’s agitation caused by the A-bomb images, Enjoji remained unapologetic about the inclusion of the pictures in question, as he believed that the pictures were in fact in keeping with the spirit of *The Family of Man*, as for the Japanese, “who are quite acquainted with the pictures of A-Bomb explosion disasters, they [the pictures] are never so much instigating…. the display of these pictures seemed not to violate the spirit of the FOM, I believed.”

It is evident that the Japanese were convinced that the existence of the A-bomb photographs were essential to *The Family of Man* in Japan, in so far as its humanistic sense. The controversy of the atomic bomb pictures testifies to the ideological confrontation between the American universalism and the Japanese emergency call on peace and antinuclear sentiment expressed by the showing of the pictures, as well as the contradiction between the American guilt and Japanese trauma and victimhood. The Americans were fervent in preaching humanism and world peace, which were challenged by an urge for the Japanese people to confront the images of trauma and of the “local memory of war.”

---

75 Letter from Jiro Enjoji to Edward Steichen, April 2, 1956. MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. Instead of acknowledging the addition of the A-bomb pictures as a mistake, Enjoji conceded that the misunderstanding may have been attaching the caption by Russell onto the installation of Nagasaki pictures, as Tange was convinced that the Russell quotation was suitable for the A-bomb pictures.

76 Letter from Jiro Enjoji to Edward Steichen, July 23, 1956. MoMA Exhs., 569.105. MoMA Archives, NY. Enjoji wrote: “…I just would like to draw your attention to our belief that the FOM Exhibition in Japan will not be successful, in its humanistic sense, if we don’t pay the fullest consideration to the specific situations of Japan who was victimized by the A-bombs just eleven years ago and is not permitted to join the World Family, the UN, yet.”

77 “Memory of war, like all memory, is mostly local.” See Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 35.
Rethinking Contradictions Visualized in *The Family of Man*

A milestone in the history of modern photography and the pinnacle of humanist photography exhibition in the postwar age, *The Family of Man* epitomizes Steichen’s ambition to “present the most complete exploration possible of photography’s achievement in recording human relations.”78 The idea of “universal humanity” saturates the exhibition, as explicated in MoMA’s press release: “*The Family of Man* is organized to portray the universal elements and emotions and the oneness of human beings throughout the world.”79

However, the optimistic ideology of “oneness” was the product of Steichen’s decontextualization and manipulation of the images, which substantiates Barthes’s critique of the ahistoricity in the show. For Steichen, *The Family of Man* was only historical in the sense of its ideological position against the imminent nuclear threat of the Cold War. Steichen constantly reiterated that *The Family of Man* was not concerned with “photographs that border on propaganda for or against any political ideologies,” and that it was essential to “keep in mind the universal elements and aspects of human relations and the experiences common to all mankind rather than situations that represent conditions exclusively related or particular to a race, an event, a time or a place.”80 Ironically, one may argue that the inclusion of the H-bomb image was related to a particular event (the testing of the H-bomb on the Enewetak atoll in 1952) and time (the Cold War). But Steichen’s overriding authorship transformed the image into a sign of warning of the total destruction of humanity — a universal disaster, so to speak — should the nuclear weapon were put to use.

---


79 Ibid.

80 Ibid., 2.
Indeed, in Steichen’s universalist discourse, the tragedy of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki should not be categorized as “universal human experience” in light of its specificity of people (Japanese) and locality (Hiroshima and Nagasaki). In this sense, what should the viewers make of other images of trauma in the exhibition? Take the Warsaw Ghetto images in the section of “Inhumanities” for example. Does showing these images related to the Holocaust inform the “oneness” or “universality” that Steichen advocated?

The Holocaust images worked through their “visual power of denial,” as suggested by Viktoria Schmidt-Linsenhoff. That is, by showing the positive side of the event (for example, the picture of woman raising her fist) and denying the sheer existence of the horrid genocide, The Family of Man in turn acknowledged the optimist yearning for hope in western humanism. The Holocaust images, therefore, became the metaphor for “inhumanity” in The Family of Man, as these photographs of trauma were not seen as depicting what Steichen thought of as “particular places, events or persons,” but as “visual symbols of a catastrophe for civilization and humanity.”81 By not directly showing the images of the concentration camps but instead making reference to the existence of the Holocaust, Steichen gave a “positive interpretation to the absolute, senseless negativity of Auschwitz as a breach of civilization.”82 In this sense, the H-bomb transparency operated in the same manner as the Holocaust images — as mere “visual symbols” of a disaster for humanity described by Schmidt-Linsenhoff.83

---


83 Ibid. 83.
However, if the Holocaust images only functioned as “visual symbols of catastrophe for civilization and humanity,” the denial of the atomic bomb images in the Tokyo exhibition would not seem persuasive on the basis of Steichen’s rejection of “particular places, events or persons,” as both the Holocaust and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were particular episodes in World War II. Why couldn’t the images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki work as “visual symbols of catastrophe for civilization and humanity” like the Holocaust images? Was it simply Steichen’s reluctance to permit any alteration to his curation? Or was it something of unspoken political nuance that prompted Steichen and the American side’s rejection to the A-bomb pictures in *The Family of Man* in Tokyo?

As the case may be, Steichen’s rationale informs the American victors’ notion of the “righteous punishment” imposed upon Japan through the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as proposed by John Dower.84 If such a sense of righteousness existed, why would Steichen and the U.S. Embassy so desperately desire the removal of the A-bomb pictures, which at some level reinforced the might of American power and its role as the leader in the postwar new world order? Though it seems far-reaching, this controversy correlates Susan Sontag’s discussion on American barbarian actions with regard to the country’s history of slavery. Sontag argues that having a museum preserving the dark history of slavery in the United States would be “to acknowledge that the evil was here,” and that “Americans prefer to picture the evil that was there, and from which the United States — a unique nation, one without any certifiably wicked leaders throughout its entire history — is exempt. That this country, like every other country, has

84 “In Allied eyes, the Japanese simply had reaped what they had sown. The terror bombing of Japanese cities, culminating in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, was seen as an appropriate homecoming for the horrors Japan had visited on others throughout Asia and the Pacific.” See: John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999), 415.
its tragic past does not sit well with the founding and still all-powerful, belief in American exceptionalism.”

The Cold War ideology that America was destined to lead the world away from the threat of Soviet Communism, as well as the utopian idealism in picturing all humans as one big family were rooted in the strong belief in “American exceptionalism.” Displaying the bomb images of Nagasaki would then be about acknowledging that the evil existed and therefore undermined American exceptionalism. To expand this argument, *The Family of Man* imposed the American model of world order in the sugar coat of harmony and solidarity among all men; it operated in the form of neo-colonization by imposing the dominant discourse onto the “peripheries.” In this discourse, the unity is derived from the difference in human beings over the world, as Barthes writes, “man is born, works, laughs, and dies in the same fashion everywhere; and if in these actions some ethnic particularity still subsists, there is now some understanding that there is deep inside each one of use an identical ‘nature,’ that their diversity is merely formal and does not belie the existence of a common matrix.” This is a family of Man envisioned by the neocolonialists, and in this case, the Americans.

Finally, let us return to the picture of Japanese visitors looking at the wall of Nagasaki bomb images (*fig.1-1*) and review the questions introduced in the beginning of this chapter. What does it mean for the Japanese to look at those pictures? What exactly is at work in this act of looking? As the victims, the Japanese could identify with the suffering in the pictures more than anyone else. This act of identification was the first step in the act of looking, which Steichen


86 For more discussion on American political ideology, see “Introduction.”


himself also stressed, “The audience not only understand this visual presentation, they also participate in it, and identify themselves with the images.”

In her discussion on the civil contract of photography, Ariella Azoulay points out that, “The secret that unveils photography as a convention is usually related to the level of representation — what is seen in the picture can been identified by people belonging to the same culture in which they have been trained to see photographs and to identify similarities between such photographs and the photographed object.”

What “was there” certainly existed and could be identified by the Japanese without difficulty. The members of the Japanese exhibition committee took one step further and added the installation of Nagasaki pictures, not only granting the Japanese audience’s need to revisit the traumatic experience but also making a statement about Japanese people’s commitment to antinuclear movement. To realize the intention, the Japanese viewers became spectator engaging in what Azoulay has called the “civil contract” in photography, that he or she “must reconstruct what was there from both what is visible and what is not immediately manifest, but what can — in principle — become visible in the exact same photograph.”

The Japanese spectators, then, took on the responsibility to reconstruct what lied beyond the pictorial surface of the bomb. As Azoulay argues, “The spectator is called to take part, to move from the addressee’s position to the addresser’s position to take responsibility for the sense of such photographs by addressing them even further, turning them into signals of an emergency, signals of danger or warning —

---


91 Ariella Azoulay, *cit.*, 159.
transforming them into emergency claims.”

In this sense, the Japanese curatorial committee for *The Family of Man* and the public who were dissatisfied with the removal of the bomb pictures were exerting their antinuclear, peace-seeking will on the occasion of the exhibition by reversing the pictures of trauma into what Azoulay called, “signals of danger or warning” against the possibility of repeating the disaster of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Notwithstanding the removal of the pictures and the gradual oblivion of the incident in art history, *The Family of Man* in Tokyo demarcated one major attempt to reverse the American dominance in the power of discourse.

---

92 Ariella Azoulay, *cit.*, 168.
Chapter 2

Coexistence: Americanization, Magnum Photographers, and Photo-Realism in Japan

Prelude: “People Are People The World Over”

The idea of universal humanism championed by *The Family of Man* was not unprecedented. In fact, it could be traced back to the foundation of the seminal photo agency Magnum Photos, as well as its very first story published in *Ladies’ Home Journal* in 1948, “People Are People The World Over” — a worldwide picture series on family life, proposed by John Morris, who would later become a longtime partner of the organization.

When Morris proposed “People Are People” to the editors of *Ladies’ Home Journal*, Bruce and Beatrice Gould, he clearly mapped out a humanistic ambition for the project to “explain peoples to peoples in intimate, vivid terms, taking them not country by country but trait by trait, problem by problem.”\(^\text{93}\) In so doing, the series would present families in all the countries on a monthly basis, “as they went about their quotidian business and engaged in the common preoccupations of humankind,” suggested by Morris.

“People Are People” was meant to be a serial photo essay under Morris’s meticulous conception. In addition to family portraits, he designated the rudimentary thematic situations for all the families, which included farming, cooking, eating, washing, bathing, playing, studying, shopping, worshipping, relaxing at home, traveling, and sleeping.\(^\text{94}\) The series presents twelve families in twelve countries — Japan, China, Pakistan, Egypt, Equatorial Africa,

---


\(^{94}\) John Godfrey Morris, cit., 116.
Czechoslovakia, Italy, Germany, France, England, Mexico, and the United States. Upon the
discussion on the project, Robert Capa saw “People Are People” as an ideal assignment for the
new cooperative agency, soon to be named Magnum Photos. Naturally, the project was divided
among photographers: George Rodger covered Egypt, Pakistan, and Equatorial Africa, David
“Chim” Seymour handled France and Germany, Horace Bristol took care of Japan and China,
and Capa himself would cover Czechoslovakia and a family in Iowa, United States. With an
exception of Life photographer Bristol, the rest of the photographers would soon be involved in
Magnum Photos.

The first issue of “People Are People” debuted in May 1948, “announcing the Journal’s
international picture survey of family life.” Accompanying the announcement of the project,
twelve family portraits border the introductory text written by Morris (fig. 2-1). Subsequent
issues follow a similar graphic layout, with one thematic title and introductory text wrapped by
twelve images of each family engaging in activities pertaining to the theme of the month. With
each presentation showing families from various racial and cultural backgrounds performing
quotidian tasks of everyday lives, Morris was trying to communicate the idea of universal

95 John Godfrey Morris, cit., 114.

96 John Godfrey Morris, cit., 116. Believing that should one photographer fail to shoot even one of the prescribed subjects, the whole series would be undermined, Morris refused to assign China and Japan to Henri Cartier-Bresson as he “simply could not see Henri following such a simplistic script.” In replacement, Morris commissioned Horace Bristol for China and Japan, who “had left Life to join Edward Steichen’s Navy unit during WWII and was living in Tokyo.” He was not a Magnum photographer. Cartier-Bresson would later make his international fame by photographing in India (1947 – 1948) and China (1948 – 1949).

97 In addition, Larry Burrows covered England, Marie Hansen photographed Italy, and Phil Schultz shot in Mexico. See John Godfrey Morris, cit., 116.

98 For example, “Woman’s World Revolves Around the Kitchen” displays images of women cooking, photographed in specific ways (in the position of stirring food in the pot, for instance) to highlight the “universal” trait of the female being the head in the kitchen; “This is the Way the World Washes” (June, 1948) shows women and wives bending over to wash the cloths for their family; “This is the Way the World Farms” (July, 1948) includes images of labor in the field, regardless of differences among the crops they harvest; “This is the Way the World Bathes” (August, 1948) stresses on children showering in harmony with their family.
humanism to his readers, as the project’s title clearly states, that we people are after all, just people — regardless of race, religion, and culture. “The conclusion of our survey,” Morris wrote with optimism and affirmation in the first month’s issue of the project, “will surprise only those who write newspaper headlines. It is simply that people are pretty much people, no matter where you find them.”

Although the “People Are People” series failed to make a public sensation at the time, it drew the attention of Edward Steichen and lay the foundation for *The Family of Man* in 1955. Additionally, it marked the starting point for Magnum Photos, positioning the group’s direction towards the humanistic approach.

**The Lens of Magnum: Seeing Japan through Werner Bischof and Robert Capa**

With “People Are People” as the stepping stone, Magnum Photos was officially founded in the same year by Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson, George Rodger, and David “Chim” Seymour. Two years after the war ended, the group of photographers — who had been accustomed to working in chaos and brutality brought by the wars — attempted to envision what position photographers should take in the new world of recovery and peace. At that time a photographer had a significant advantage of choosing anywhere and any story of their desire, as

---

99 “Here are eighty-eight of the two billion people who inhabit the planet Earth. They are twelve families who represent twelve countries, three races and five religious faiths. They speak eleven languages. They are posing for a photographer sent by an American magazine, the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. In the past few months the Journal, like a magazine on Mars, has sent photographers to inquire into the lives of families the world over. These, then, are the families you will meet each month in this series, in the order in which the sun awakens them. [...]” The paragraph follows Morris’s introduction of each family, emphasizing the family’s quotidian life with a touch of local activities. See John Godfrey Morris, cit., 120. See also *Ladies’ Home Journal*, May 1948, n.p.

100 Noticing the project, Steichen borrowed the pictures from “People Are People” to create Fifth Avenue window display in honor of the United Nations’ 1949 birthday. Additionally, Morris recalled that Steichen shared his hopes of mounting an exhibition that “he would eventually call ‘The Family of Man’.” See John Godfrey Morris, cit., 121.
the magazines were craving for literally any pictures photographers took. But what Magnum Photos demarcated was a photographer’s total control over his or her work as well as the ability to work outside the rules of magazines and journalism. To put it broadly, Magnum represented a sense of hope for photographers and curiosity for what was left to see in the new world.

Adopting a similar working pattern as in the “People Are People” project, Magnum loosely divided the world into several geographies for different photographers to cover. After the war, increasing interests in Asia were common among Western photographers, and that was no exception for Magnum Photos. In addition to Cartier-Bresson’s landmark series of Gandhi’s assassination taken in 1948 and his documentation of the historical moment of the civil war in China that would eventually turn the country into a new Communist state, the Swiss photographer Werner Bischof and Capa set Japan as their travel destination in 1951 and 1954 respectively.

Werner Bischof became a member of Magnum Photos in 1949. Following his well-received photo-essay “Famine Story” in India, Bischof spent a year in Japan starting 1951 — which was interrupted by short trips to the conflict region on the Korean peninsula — and was later joined by his wife Rosellina in 1952. His photographs of Asia were presented in Zurich in 1953 in exhibition form as well as in a feature story in Du magazine, entitled “Menschen im

---


103 In addition to Werner Bischof and Robert Capa, among the other Magnum photographers were Dennis Stock (1956), Elliott Erwitt (1958), Marc Riboud (1958), etc. Rene Burri (1961), Henri Cartier-Bresson (1965), and Bruno Barbey (1968) who made their visits in the 1960s. Though not a member of Magnum, it is also worth noting that William Klein traveled to Japan in 1961 and published a body of work titled Tokyo 1961 in 1964.
Fernen Osten (People in the Far East). In the same year, he started preparing for his book Japan, published posthumously in 1954, after his tragic death in South America.

In essence, Japan was Bischof’s book project about “a European’s observations on Japan.” The book begins with a long introduction by French journalist Robert Guillain, and the photographs are divided into three thematic sections as “Old Japan,” “Japan Today,” and “The Traditional Japanese Theatre.” The naming of the sections reflects Bischof’s personal take on Japan defined by two main subjects. First, the dichotomy of the internal, old/traditional Japan and the external, new/Westernized Japan, and second, the quest for the Japanese soul and the quintessential Japan, as perfectly summarized by Guillain in his introduction:

Old Japan can no longer be found in a pure form, just as there will never be a new Japan which is completely cut off from its past. In the Japanese nation, and in the heart of each Japanese, two worlds coexist. This dichotomy explains some of the conflicts in the Japanese soul. The people themselves, however, manage to put up with it fairly well, being able luckily, to move constantly and with extreme agility from one aspect of their personality to the other, and having little taste for Cartesian logic. ... Everything practical and relating to external creativeness usually bears the stamp of the West and constitutes that Westernized Japan which bears witness to the extraordinary Japanese powers of assimilation. But the other side of the picture, the inner side of Japanese thought, the interior of the houses, the innermost parts of the islands and of the countryside, is still Japanese Japan.

---

104 Du, July 1953, “Menschen im Fernen Osten.”

105 Letter from Rosellina and Werner Bischof to Rosellina’s mother Anna Mandel, Tokyo, February 27, 1952: “… Werner is working on his book, which will be published here in Japan: a European’s observations on Japan. Thus we are able to approach many problems and I am beginning to understand various things which seemed at first to be distant and alien.” See Werner Bischof: Backstory, eds. Marco Bischof and Tania Samara Kuhn (New York: Aperture, 2016), n.p.

106 A French journalist experienced in Asia affairs over the second half of the twentieth century, Robert Guillain (1908-1998) was considered one of the most resourceful and knowledgeable experts on modern Asia, especially on Japan and China.

107 “Twice in less than a century, it was thought that old Japan had been swept away. Twice the West misunderstood—at the time of Meiji’s revolution (he was the modern emperor who inaugurated the new age) and after World War II. Many Americans thought Japan had been entirely remodeled, and along American lines. How naive an illusion! Can the work of fifteen centuries be destroyed and replaced by something else in the space of a few years? In less than a decade after Hiroshima, it will already be obvious that the Japanese have remained almost untouched. This is not to say that old Japan survives intact. It certainly does not. The facts are more complex than that. […] It is there that one can feel the basic hardness of an ancient temperament and way of life, which remain steadfast or change only with extreme slowness. That was the side which first attracted the photographer in his
This tension of the coexistence of old/traditional and new/Westernized Japan, as described by Guillain, could be observed in section of “Japan Today:” the traffic direction inscription written on the road in Tokyo in both Japanese and English; pedestrians wearing modern western-style clothing; a Japanese housewife wearing a kimono and choosing a European dress in the department store (fig. 2-2); cheap *kakemonos* (paintings on silk rolls) of Christ; and Japanese visitors pensively staring at a Picasso painting. In all these cases, Bischof’s images bear witness to Japan’s westernization.

In addition to the “external creativeness” of new Japan that bears the mark of the West — as Guillain suggested in his text — in his correspondence Bischof manifested his search for “the inner side of Japanese thought,” a quintessential and traditional Japan. In his letter to Capa in 1951, he wrote: “I am trying to tune into the Japanese soul in order to understand the relationships from within.” In another letter to his wife Rosellina, he said, “how beautiful all

---

108 The caption for the image reads, “The painting of Christ is explained by the curiosity, not to say fascination, aroused by Christianity during the spiritual uncertainty of the post-war period.” See Werner Bischof, *cit.*, n.p.

109 The caption for the image reads, “The Picasso exhibition at Tokyo. Not only do the Japanese appreciate their own traditional art; they are often very enthusiastic, too, about Western art, even when it is ‘avant-garde’. The Picasso and Matisse exhibitions, both of which visited several towns, were seen by more than three million people.” See: Werner Bischof, *cit.*, n.p.

110 Letter to Robert Capa, Tokyo, 1951, in *Werner Bischof: Backstory*, *cit.*, n.p. “I am trying to tune into the Japanese soul in order to understand the relationships from within. Duncan, and with him most Americans, approach the problems from the American side, doing everything according to how the Americans see things, and particularly in Japan that is a misleading thing that often resembles a distorting mirror. I believe that we have an intelligent group of reporters at Magnum, and some of us forget this sometimes and publish pieces of work which do no great service to the Magnum name. ‘A big story never pays – that's right.’ Yes, I am one of those people who love doing such big stories, and I believe that I will never stop doing so, because these big essays give me a feel for the real circumstances in a country.”
of the symbols are, and yet what precious little time I have to concentrate on them.”111 This search is self-evident in the section of “Old Japan,” where things become romanticized and eternalized through the photographer’s lens, turned into signs of Japan, as seen in his celebrated image of Shinto priests walking in the snow with Japanese paper umbrellas, where the falling snow and figures in motion become static and eternalized beauty. (fig. 2-3) Or in another image of a tea ceremony in process, the anonymous hand holding the tool pouring tea is frozen in time, and again, eternalized as another sign of traditional Japan. (fig. 2-4) In this sense, Japan is objectified as a “she,” as Guillain put it, remaining an exotic and mythical entity waiting to be explored and deciphered. As he wrote, “However hustled and disturbed by Western civilization Japan may have been for almost a century now, she remains, basically, the product of something which happened before the modern epoch — of a unique experience undergone, as it were, outside world history. It is as if Japan had belonged to another planet.”112

When Bischof was trying to decipher the “symbols” he encountered during his time in Japan, he would not foresee that after three decades Roland Barthes would have semiotically invented Japan in Empire of Signs, where Barthes fashioned an “unheard-of symbolic system” through his observations as a visitor to the country.113 In Barthes’s text, the unfamiliar and exotic things — the language, haiku, chopsticks, pachinko, even the act of bowing — are turned into

111 “Here they use finely split wood, thin like paper, to wrap up food. I drew some lines onto such a sheet and the symbol of a tree, with my name stamped onto it, and the whole thing will be copied now…” Letter to Rosellina Bischof, Japan, n.d. From Bischof’s entry “The tree” for the word/symbol “wood” (“木”). Bischof contemplates on his enjoyment of nature — hence the study of symbol for “the tree” — and reflects on his purpose for pursuing art. See: Werner Bischof: Backstory, cit., n.p.

112 Robert Guillain, “Japan,” introductory text in Werner Bischof, Japan, cit., 11.

signs of Japan. Even though the nature of Barthes’s work is not meant to compare Japan and the West as “realities” — as Barthes assures his reader at the beginning of the book — it is telling of how Bischof’s aestheticized Japan fit perfectly into Barthes’s semiotic language. In fact, Bischof’s image of a close-up shot of a group of mesmerized children in front of a puppet show was included in the chapter “The Eyelid.” (fig. 2-5). The child at center stands out as he stares pensively at the puppet show’s direction (which is not captured in the image). In Empire of Signs, Barthes added a paragraph with reference to the French poet Mallarmé in the upper left corner of the image. Here, the child with single-layered eyelids is turned into another signifier in Barthes’s semiotic analysis. The Japanese, unfamiliar to the Westerners, is yet another example of fetishized reading of the “Orient” that exhibits a clear-cut dichotomy between the West and the East. On some level, this dualism, the external and new Japan that “bears the stamp of the West” versus its internal and old Japanese thoughts, as articulated either through Bischof’s photographs or Barthes’s semiotic interpretation, in fact gives away a sense of voyeurism.

---

114 “If I want to imagine a fictive nation, I can give it an invented name, treat it declaratively as a novelistic object […] I can also—though in no way claiming to represent or to analyze reality itself (these being the major gestures of Western discourse) — isolate somewhere in the world (faraway) a certain number of features deliberately form a system. It is this system which I shall call: Japan. Hence Orient and Occident cannot be taken here as ‘realities’ to be compared and contrasted historically, philosophically, culturally, politically. I am not lovingly gazing toward an Oriental essence—to me the Orient is a matter of indifference, merely providing a reserve of features whose manipulation—whose invented interplay—allows me to ‘entertain’ the idea of an unheard-of symbolic system, one altogether detached from our own.” Barthes explicitly positions himself as a reader on page 79 from the chapter “The Incident”: “[…] what they offer to be read (I am, in that country, a reader, not a visitor).…” See Roland Barthes. Trans. Richard Howard, Empire of Signs (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 3, 79.

115 “Under the porcelain eyelid, a broad black drop: the Night of the Inkwell, of which Mallarmé speaks.” See Roland Barthes, Empire of Signs, cit., 100-101.

116 “The several features which compose an ideographic character are drawn in a certain order, arbitrary but regular; the line, beginning with a full brush, ends with a brief point, inflected, turned away at the last moment of its direction. It is this same tracing of a pressure which we rediscover in the Japanese eyes.” See Roland Barthes, Empire of Signs, cit., 99.
intrigued by the exoticism — a loving, or penetrating “gaze toward an Oriental essence” that is ironically disavowed in Barthes’s own writing early in the book.117

If Bischof’s engagement with Japan became known through his posthumous book, Capa’s trip to Japan has remained peripheral in the discussion of this war photographer. Capa went to Japan right before his fateful move to Indochina, which inevitably led to his death. The trip originated from an invitation in 1954 by the local Mainichi Newspaper. The backstory is that the press company was planning to launch a new photography magazine, Camera Mainichi (1954 – 1985), and they longed for Capa’s visit and photographs as part of the promotional campaign.118 This transpired from the sanguine tone in the magazine’s inaugural issue in June, which stated that Capa would walk around everywhere in Japan and take photos and give lectures, and that six weeks of work in Japan could tell how he worked and influenced Japanese photo society.119 Mainichi Newspaper not only granted Capa the freedom to shoot whatever stories he desired at their expenses, but was also willing to supply him with the latest locally made cameras, lenses, and film.120 Arriving in Tokyo on April 13 in 1954, Capa traveled to a number of Japanese cities, including Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Kobe, Amagasaki.

---


118 Richard Whelan, *Robert Capa: A Biography* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 291. According to Whelan, Capa was permitted by Mainichi Newspaper to work on assignments from American and European magazines, although Mainichi reserved the right to publish his pictures of Japan. See also: John Morris, *Get the Picture*, 153. In addition to featuring Capa, another early issue of Camera Mainichi focused on Edward Weston, and contributions from Magnum’s global documentarians were the highlights.” See Ivan Vartanian, “Magazine Work’ in Aperture Magazine, vol. 219, Summer 2015, Tokyo, 30.


120 “While there (Klosters), he received an offer that he could not refuse. Mainichi, the huge Japanese newspaper chain, proposed to start a magazine, Camera Mainichi, and invited Capa to Japan for six weeks, with freedom to shoot whatever stories he wished, at their expenses. In addition, they would supply him with the latest Japanese cameras, lenses, and film.” See John Godfrey Morris, *cit.*, 153.
Tokyo. The photographer’s interest in the country was soon evidenced, as he would refer to Japan as “a photographer’s paradise” multiple times.\textsuperscript{121}

Out of an extensive collection of negatives and prints,\textsuperscript{122} only a small portion of Capa’s Japan photographs was published as special feature by \textit{Camera Mainichi} in July 1954, entitled “First Impressions of Japan.”\textsuperscript{123} The feature was accompanied by a partial transcript of a talk among Capa and other established Japanese photographers — Ihei Kimura (木村 伊兵衛), Nobuo Ina (伊奈 信男), Jun Miki (三木 淳), and Hisatake Anpo (安保 久武).\textsuperscript{124} It offered an overview of a mutual interest between Capa and the Japanese photo world at the time, followed by a prose-like entry “With Mr. Capa” by Hidenori Kanazawa (金沢 秀憲), who served as

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{121} Richard Whelan, \textit{cit.}, 76, 292-293. According to Whelan, Capa was excited about the Japan trip. He also notes that he felt that Capa seemed becoming “progressively less able to figure out what he wanted to do with the rest of his life—he couldn’t decide whether to regard the trip as a new beginning or as an ending for his picture-taking career. He was at last getting back to work after his ‘black year’… But for the past nine years photography had brought him more frustration than satisfaction, and now that he was forty perhaps it was really time to move on to something else…” Whelan also writes: “For three weeks Capa had a marvelous time in Japan, where his work was so highly esteemed that he received a hero’s welcome. He wrote to Werner Bischof, ‘I am very happy with the Orient,’ and to his friend Hiroshi Kawazoe, whom he hadn’t seen since before the war, he jubilantly remarked that Japan was ‘a photographer’s paradise.’” Capa referred to Japan as “a paradise for photographers” in his talk with Nobuo Ina, Jun Miki, and Hisatake Anpo for \textit{Camera Mainichi}. See also \textit{Camera Mainichi}, Vol.2, July 1954, 24-25. For a more personal impression and documentation of Capa at work, see also: Hidenori Kanazawa. Trans. Kyoko Hamaguchi, “With Mr. Capa” in \textit{Camera Mainichi}, Vol.2, July 1954, 28.
\item\textsuperscript{122} Hidenori Kanazawa. Trans. Kyoko Hamaguchi, “With Mr. Capa” in \textit{Camera Mainichi}, Vol.2, July 1954, 30. “He made 3,000 negatives in the Soviet Union, but he would make 10,000 negatives during his time in Japan as he said.”
\item\textsuperscript{123} An exhibition with the same title was held after Capa’s death at the Takashimaya department store (June 8-13). See Ann Wilkes Tucker, \textit{et al.} \textit{The History of Japanese Photography} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 325. Prior to “First Impressions of Japan,” \textit{Camera Mainichi} published Capa’s photographs in June’s issue, titled “Photos by Robert Capa,” which included Capa’s well-known war photographs and photographs from his travel in Europe. Many of Capa’s images were not published in \textit{Camera Mainichi} magazine. A large portion of Capa’s Japan work prints and contact sheets are in the Robert Capa Archive at the International Center of Photograph, the largest repository of Capa’s work and related material. The work prints demonstrate heavy focus on portraying children, while the contact sheets show Capa’s interest in spotting western signs in modern Japan society and local people’s fascination with camera and photography. Unfortunately, there is no known or existing correspondence pertaining to Capa’s trip to Japan.
\item\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Camera Mainichi}, Vol.2, July 1954, 24-25. Ihei Kimura was a famous photographer known for his realist approach; Nobuo Ina was a renowned photo critic in Japan who advocated the uniqueness of the mechanism of the camera; Jun Miki was a photographer and a pioneer in photojournalism in Japan, who also founded Group Photo in 1950.
\end{itemize}
Capa’s companion during his trip. Kanazawa’s personal observation on Capa allows a peek into the more intimate side of the world-famous photographer, which detailed their chit-chat and Capa’s personal style during work.

*Camera Mainichi*, in their statement in the inaugural issue, accentuated photography’s democratic nature and its capacity to communicate with the world and every single person. By ending the statement with a simple but powerful sentence, “*Camera Mainichi* is aiming to focus on photography,” the magazine not only expressed its alignment with the popular medium but also the spirit of diversity (“for every single person”; everyone can photograph). In the same issues featuring Capa’s works, *Camera Mainichi* also showcased a selection of photographs of diverse topics and styles, ranging from landscape, street photography, and portraits taken by leading figures in the photo world such as the aforementioned Kimura, as well as amateur photographers. *Camera Mainichi*’s decision to invite Capa, the President of the most prestigious photo agency and the most recognized reportage photographer for Japanese people, was more than just a gesture to solidify the newborn magazine’s status in the competitive art magazine market in Japan. It was perhaps a statement to diversify the perspectives, to democratize the use of photography, and to reassure what Japan looked like, or could be like.

What exactly did Capa capture during his stay in Japan? Capa’s work of Japan was, surprisingly, the most peaceful he had ever taken in his lifetime. In an unprecedented way,

---

125 *Camera Mainichi*, Vol.1, June 1954, n.p. “*Time* describes the photo fever as ‘Everyone is an artist.’ Some photographer said “Photography is a folk art.” Namely, photography is folk art for Japanese people as haiku and tanka are. One big difference would be that haiku and tanka are only for Japanese people. However, photography has the ability to appeal to the world. And this is possible for every single person. *Camera Mainichi* is aiming to focus on photography.”

126 *Camera Mainichi*, Vol.2, July 1954, 25. Kimura mentioned that in Japan, Capa and Alfred Eisenstaedt were the best photographers for reportage photography and had strong influence on Japanese photo world. Although Eugene Smith, Cartier-Bresson, and many famous photographers emerged, for Japanese photographers, Eisenstaedt and Capa were the original two for reportage photography.
children took up a considerable proportion in his images. In fact, he photographed an impressive quantity of children — in particular children on their parent’s back (fig. 2-6). In addition, Capa photographed everything he saw, but with caution. He turned his lens towards what appeared interesting or “unusual” to him as someone from the West, who had never been to Japan. Seen in this way, Capa’s photographs of Japan constitute a travelogue similar to that of Bischof, depicting the everyday lives, street scenes, the traditional rituals in Japanese cities seen through a foreign traveler’s eyes. But unlike for Bischof, in Capa’s photographs human figures are always present.

While looking at Bischof and Capa’s photographs of Japan, it is important to bear in mind the context of the U.S. Occupation, which both photographers managed to capture. Bischof’s visit to Japan in 1951 witnessed a pivotal and sensitive time in postwar Japan — after the outbreak of the Korean War and in the same year of the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty as well as the Security Treaty between Japan and the United States. As the Occupation formally came to an end in 1952, Japan began to re-militarize — with American military forces, of course — under the discretion of the United States. Capa had suggested that Bischof do a

127 John Godfrey Morris, cit., 154. “When he got to Japan, Capa broadened the idea, photographing children whenever he went. He seemed happy, writing from Tokyo to the Paris office, ‘I am here now five days and these are the first five minutes free. Mainichi is driving hard, but the country is lovely, exciting, and taking pictures is fine. By now I have received five cameras, fifteen lenses, thirty bunches of flowers, and made many speeches, and there are days when I can get away by eating only one Japanese, one French, and one Chinese lunch.’” In his biography of Capa, Whelan also points out Capa “focused especially on children” (293).

128 Hidenori Kanazawa. Trans. Kyoko Hamaguchi, “With Mr. Capa” in Camera Mainichi, Vol.2, July 1954, 29-30. Kanazawa describes the way Capa photographed in detail: “He takes photos of everything he sees. It looks like a random shooting, but he is used to hiding behind electric poles to take candid photos. He holds the camera tight and puts it on his forehead. When he shoots at a lower position, he always kneels down on one knee and it is very stable […] He doesn’t care so much about composition or exposure. He doesn’t use a lens hood, or filter. When the lens got dusty, he cleaned it with his tie very casually. He is obviously a cameraman who works on a battlefield. Also, when a subject notices him, he changes the direction of his lens. When the subject forgets about his camera, he quickly takes photos again. He is so used to this action, but he often misses good chances because he always tries to focus.”
story on “American influence on Japan.”” However, Bischof’s approach to the Americanization was more implicit. The pictures do not heavily exhibit elements and context of the Occupation, which could only be complemented by the captions. For instance, an image of American soldiers facing backward to a Japanese girl holding flowers (fig. 2-7) does not fully reveal the crude reality of children selling flowers late in the evening at night-club doors, hoping to ease the family budget. During the Occupation, it was common that the American soldiers bought flowers from children. This picture of a girl reveals in fact a Japanese strip-tease house, and so does another picture of an American soldier — whose face is not shown — at the doorstep of a Japanese strip-tease house (fig. 2-8).

The Japan Bischof and Capa captured also evidences the nation’s position in struggling between the old, traditional and the new, Americanized. During his journey Bischof interviewed a 20-year-old Japanese girl named Michiko Jinuma, as part of his assignment for Magnum’s “Generation X” — a group portfolio created in the 1950s about young men and women who had just become of age and experienced firsthand the ordeal in the past two decades. Through Bischof, Michiko represented the young generation in Japan that was caught between the

---

129 Letter to Rosellina Bischof, Tokyo, September 1, 1951 in Werner Bischof: Backstory, cit., n. p. “You, you—Capa wrote that I should quickly do a ‘general story: American influence on Japan.’ Oh yes, very quickly… So today I’m approaching my American-Japanese observations with great focus. They should form a decisive contribution to the world press in the coming weeks…”

130 Werner Bischof, cit., n.p. The caption for this image reads: “This little girl is earning her living as a flower-seller, after school-hours. Defeat and the American occupation have caused many upheavals in Japanese life. To help the family budget, children sell lowers very late in the evening at night-club doors. They are bought by American soldiers who give them to their girls.”

131 Werner Bischof, cit., n.p. The caption for this image reads: “An American soldier, just back from Korea, hopes to become acquainted with the strip-tease dancers by taking them cigarettes and chocolate.”

132 For the “Generation X” project, a photographer was given a task to portray the new generation in the destination country. Bischof’s photographs of Michiko Jinuma was published in Holiday in February 1953, entitled “Youth And the World: Japan”—Michiko, New Freedom Disturbs a Japanese Girl. Only several pictures of Michiko were included in Bischof’s Japan book.
confusing, in-between mindset of the old, traditional and the new, Americanized Japan, who lived “somewhere halfway between Japan and America, between the Oriental past and the western present.” Bischof observed the paradoxical psyche residing in Michiko: “Is she ‘Americanized’? No, she takes on certain customs that come from America, she admires an American washing machine or a modern kitchen, but she doesn’t have to have one — and that seems to me to be the critical difference, this self-restraint in character.”

In a certain degree, this young Japanese girl was Bischof’s most direct vehicle for portraying the “conflicted soul” of the Japanese people after the defeat. As a photograph show Michiko dining with her parents in a traditional Japanese wooden house, while being the only person embracing the Americanized lifestyle, wearing modern, Western clothing. (fig. 2-9)

When Capa arrived in Japan in 1954, the American bases and presence of foreigners persisted, and the Americanization was a cultural phenomenon all over the country. An image of a child standing at a clothing store, juxtaposed with the Western-style clothing in the background, is Capa’s telling evidence of the Americanized Japan. (fig. 2-10) Indeed, in Capa’s travelogue depicting Japan’s everyday scenes, the subtle yet ubiquitous presence of Westernized/Americanized elements within traditionally Japanese setting are hard to ignore. As Capa’s pictures show, he was particularly interested in the western-style amusement districts, “where American movies were being shown and one could play the slot machine.”

For example, Capa captures a woman carrying a baby carriage in the street of Kyoto, while a movie


134 Richard Whelan, cit., 293. “He traveled to Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, Kobe, Amagasaki, and everywhere he went he focused especially on children. He was also fascinated by the contrast of East and West in Japanese cities and took many pictures of Western-style amusement districts, where American movies were being shown and one could play the slot machine—as, of course, he proceeded to do.”
poster of King Kong takes up the foreground (fig. 2-11), forming a striking contrast with the traditional houses in the background and the woman in traditional clothes.

Similar contrast between the West and Japan is observed in the photograph of an American soldier giving money to injured men in the street in Ginza district of Tokyo (fig. 2-12). The contrast here is established between the robust American soldier, representing the powerful victor giving charity, and the defeated Japanese veterans. Among Capa’s photographs of Japan, this image manifests the nuance of Japan-U.S. relation after the war, in which the Americans imposed their will on the Japanese, who had no choice but to receive the “gift from above,” as described by Dower.

Both Magnum photographers captured the Americanized aspects of postwar Japan, before and after the end of the seven-year American Occupation. However, Americanized Japan was mere fascination and an exotic scenario wanting of pictorial documentation. Seen in this way, their pictures represent a subjective interpretation of postwar Japan from a Western perspective, with a focus on the optimistic side of the society but devoid of local voices or a deeper investigation into what was actually happening. As a matter of fact, by the time these photographers visited Japan, the country had already been undergoing a radical change in cultural and artistic scenes that was not informed in the pictures by Magnum photographers. Contrary to Bischof, Capa, or any other American/European photographers, the way Japanese photographers saw the country was dramatically different.

The Other Side of the Nation: Local Voices in Postwar Japan

When the two atomic bombs shattered Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, they also shattered the country’s last hope for fulfilling the Daitōa kyōeiken (“Greater East Asia Co-
Prosperity Sphere”) and immediately casted traumatic shadow on the people with the subsequent aftermath of the bomb, economic breakdown, black markets, and the U.S. Occupation.

Reformation came in all kinds of forms. For instance, a number of art museums and galleries started to emerge. By creating new museums and transforming old imperial structures into national museums available to the public, the Occupation encouraged more accessible art venues as a means to democracy.135 Starting early in 1946, art associations and artist societies sprung up, and the opening of three modern art museums between 1951 and 1952 — the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art in Kamakura, which was Japan’s first public museum fully devoted to modern art, along with Bridgestone Museum of Art and the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo (1952) — attested to the structural change in the art world and the American Occupation’s determination to bring democracy to every corner of Japan.136

Art exhibitions were booming. In addition to exhibitions focusing on Japanese art, exchanges with contemporary Western and European avant-garde art — popular in the prewar years but come to a halt during the war — were reestablished. For instance, in 1950, the *Contemporary Art of the World Exhibition* took place at Takashimaya department store, marking the first comprehensive exhibition in Japan of Salon de Mai and modern American art; in 1951, exhibitions of work by Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso were held at the Tokyo Nation Museum

---

135 Julia Adeney Thomas, “Power Made Visible: Photography and Postwar Japan’s Elusive Reality,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 2 (2008): 367-377. Thomas points out that a few small private galleries opened “amid the ruins of the bombed-out Tokyo” as early as 1946, and among the newly established museums the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo founded in 1953 was one example of the Occupation’s effort. Specifically with regard to photography, Thomas also points out that the Occupation promoted practices and institutions crucial to understanding of social and artistic use of photography, despite the Occupation was not specifically concerned with photography as an art form.

136 Michio Hayashi, “The Birth of New Art Criticism” in *From Postwar to Postmodern: Art in Japan 1945–1989: Primary Documents*, cit., 84. See also Julia Adeney Thomas, cit., 368, where Thomas discusses the Occupation’s support for curatorial ventures and accessible infrastructure for the arts.
and Takashimaya department store in Tokyo respectively (the latter was documented in Bischof’s photographs); in the same year, the third Yomiuri Independent show included work by Jackson Pollock and other Abstract Expressionists; in the year of its opening in 1952, the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo held the exhibition *Development of Modern Western-Style (Oil) Painting: Europe and Japan*, and *Modern Sculpture: Europe and Japan*. It can be said that, in the first decade after the defeat, the art world demonstrated a desire for catching up with contemporary Western art.

In terms of photography, Japan witnessed a rapid increase in artists’ groups and photo associations, as well as a boost in photo exhibitions, many of which inform the Western-Japanese exchanges as observed in the aforementioned exhibitions. In 1951, *Today’s Photography: Japan and France* at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo had a great impact on the photo world; and in the same year, *Combined Japanese, French, American, and British Photography Exhibition*, the first show of “Group Photo” was held at Mitsukoshi

---


139 The Tokyo Alpine Photography Society, the All-Japan Association of Photographic Societies, the Japan Photographic Society (1946); The Tokyo Photographic Research Society, the Japan Photography Salon (1947); The Photographers Group (founding members include Kimura Ihei, Watanabe Yoshio, Domon Ken, Hayashi Tadahiko, etc.), the Japan Photo Culture Association (1948); The Young People’s Photojournalism Research Society, the Young Photographers Association (1949); The Japan Professional Photographers Society, Group Photo (founded by Jun Miki) (1950); The Japan Federation of Reportorial Photographers Associations, the Photographic Society of Japan (1951); The All-Japan Student Photography League, the Shirayuri Camera Club (all female photographers group) (1952), etc. See Ann Wilkes Tucker, et al. *The History of Japanese Photography* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 324-325.

140 “The Post-war Period: The Consolidation of Realism in Photography” in Domon Ken: The Master of Japanese Realism, eds. Rossella Menegazzo, Takeshi Fujimori, and Yuki Seli (Milano: Skira editore, 2017), 65. *Today’s Photography* played a crucial role in the development of Photo-Realism movement in Japan as it included prominent figures of French realism such as Henri Cartier-Bresson, Brassai, and Robert Doisneau that offered a comparison.
department store in Tokyo’s Ginza district. In the same month, as the Occupation ended in
1952, Mitsukoshi department store held Contemporary Photographic Artists Exhibition,
followed by Masterworks of Photography Exhibition at Shirokiya department store in Tokyo
later in the year. The year following the end of the Occupation, the National Museum of
Modern Art in Tokyo presented its first photography exhibition in 1953, The Contemporary
Photography Exhibition: Japan and the United States, which was co-organized with the
director of the photography department of MoMA, Edward Steichen, prior to his visit to Japan in
preparation for The Family of Man show in Tokyo.

What is worth noting is that, although a new art venue was being founded, for
photographers at the time magazines were the primary vehicle. Old photo magazines such as
Camera and Asahi Camera resumed publishing, and new magazines were founded, such as the
aforementioned Camera Mainichi.

Realism was the dominating movement in the first decade after Japan’s defeat. Artists
and scholars argued in several art publications over what kind of realism should be put to

---

141 Like Today’s Photography exhibition, Combined also showed works by Carl Mydans and Cartier-Bresson,
whose style had a great impact on Ihei Kimura. The exhibition included works by Group Photo (Shudan Photo)—a
group founded in 1950 by Miki Jun, Tanuma Takeyoshi, Saeki Yoshikatsu, and other young photojournalists. Ihei
Kimura and Ken Domon were the advisors to the group. See Ann Wilkes Tucker, et al. cit., 211.

142 Ibid., 325. The 21 artists showcased in Contemporary Photographic Artists Exhibition included Kimura Ihei,
Hayashi Tadahiko, Hamaya Hiroshi, and Ueda Shoji. Masterworks of Photography Exhibition exhibited work by 13
photographers, including Domon Ken and Kimura Ihei.

143 The Contemporary Photography Exhibition: Japan and the United States presented works by around one
hundred artists, including Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Ihei Kimura, and Ken Domon. From Postwar to
Postmodern: Art in Japan 1945–1989: Primary Documents, eds. Doryun Chong, Michio Hayashi, Kenji Kajiya, and
Fumihiko Sumitomo. cit., 416.

144 The thirty American photographers included in the exhibition were selected by Edward Steichen, and the sixty-
nine Japanese photographers were chosen by Japanese photography critics Ina Nobuo, Kanamaru Shigene, and
Itagaki Takao. See Ann Wilkes Tucker, et al. cit., 326. Other photography exhibitions in the decade that evidenced
an interest in Western photography include: The Decisive Moment (1957) showcasing Cartier-Bresson’s
photographer and Masterworks of Life Photographers, both were held at Takashimaya department store in Tokyo.
practice, and the core topic was the attitude with which the artists should engage in reality and explore it through art.\textsuperscript{145}

Humanist photography took center stage in Western countries, France and America in particular. Aligned with social documentary photography and “concerned photography,” humanist photography is often characterized as a display of concern with the human condition, with a focus on the everyday, the streets, and the misfortune in society. During this time, photography was considered as a language widely used as a celebration of humanity, equality, and democracy — it was a movement where evoking human emotions and a feeling of community bonded in the era of Cold War.

In the 1950s, humanist photography had reached Japan through exhibitions and publications, and postwar Japanese photographers devised a similar way to cope with their perception towards the status quo with the trend of Photo-Realism. Being coined as “realism,” the term connotes a reaction to the crumbling system after the defeat: bombed and occupied by the Americans, the country lost faith in the imperial myth supporting the militaristic ideology during wartime, and the immediate economic breakdown resulted in the people’s need for materialistic goods such as food, housing, medicine, and transportation. Such difficulties and sudden loss of belief led to an opposite attitude against the manipulated, nationalistic reality in war propaganda, and in turn, toward a social sentiment for objective description of reality, of what was real in current life. With this sentiment, Japanese Photo-Realism was born around 1950

\textsuperscript{145} “The diverseness of the realism debate was not simply a matter of different formalistic preferences. The true topic being discussed was the attitude with which the artist should confront reality and explore that reality through art.” “Realistic depiction had been the fundamental requirement for paintings made during the war, with artists creating monumental, theatrical battle scenes at the request of the army and newspaper companies. But the question not raised then was whether or not ‘realism’ could ever be the right term for such work. This was the question that lay behind the postwar realism debate. The debate summed up art made during the war, confronted the reality of the occupation after the war, and was integral to the process by which its participants confirmed the nature of art in a society undergoing rapid change.” See Yuri Mitsuda, “The Realism Debate, 1946 – 1950” in \textit{From Postwar to Postmodern: Art in Japan 1945–1989: Primary Documents}, cit.
with the promotion by *Camera* magazine, which testified to photo magazine’s critical position in shaping the development of the postwar photo world.

Although there was no manifesto or consensus of how Japan’s Photo-Realism should be, the spirit was best observed in the work by the aforementioned photographer, Ihei Kimura, who was closely associated with photojournalism before the war, as well as Ken Domon. Both photographers’ work conveyed an interest in representing human lives by giving photographic form to the human being on the basis of an awareness of human relationship to the society. Such an awareness was equivalent to “realism,” as Tanaka Masao concluded in his article “On Beggar Photography: The Importance of Photographing Street Urchins and Lumpen,” published in 1953. Masao viewed Kimura and Domon as the pioneers of Photo-Realism for mastering the fundamental element in Realist theory, that is, the realization that “realism in art is rooted in the artist’s own way of thinking and social views.”

Between the two photographers, Domon is often crowned as the master of postwar Photo-Realism in Japan. After the war, he started advocating for social realism as opposed to war propaganda. He began his position as the judge for *Camera* magazine’s monthly photo contest in

---

146 Hayashi Tadahiko gained his popularity for his portrayal of postwar Japan society—images of the black market and street children became his hallmark and were published in the pulp magazines. See also Ann Wilkes Tucker, et al. cit., 211. Ihei Kimura was also a member of the Japanese Executive Committee for *The Family of Man* exhibition in Japan.

147 Tanaka Masao, “On Beggar Photography: The Importance of Photographing Street Urchins and Lumpen” (1953) in *From Postwar to Postmodern: Art in Japan 1945–1989: Primary Documents*, cit., 51: “But from this interest [in the way people live], as these series progressed, the two photographers gradually began to feel the strong need to represent the “human being” from a different perspective. With their “lens eye” focused sharply on the people, what captivated these photographers was the “human being” as a living being in all its interesting aspects. Human beings do not exist in isolation, but rather within relationships with one another. From this seemingly obvious fact, the artists gained a fresh feeling for their subjects. The new understanding became part of their conscious working method, and they began to realize that you cannot depict “living human beings” without showing “how the human being lives in society linked with other human beings.” Both Kimura and Domon have had long careers and have photographed countless people, but it was only with these series that they became truly aware of how humans can only really be captured in relationship to society. To try to give photographic form to the “human being” on the basis of this awareness is clearly Realism.”

59
In his essay “Photographic Realism and Salon Pictures,” published in *Camera* magazine in 1953 — the apogee for the movement — Domon mapped out his definition on Photo-Realism, a style that he had been refining over the years towards a more socially oriented direction. The overarching theme in the essay is Domon’s insistence on depicting the reality through “the direct link between the camera and subject” and with “the absolutely pure snapshot,” for which the mechanism of the camera provides the ideal vehicle:

Realism, or the ‘absolutely unstaged snapshot,” through the mere tool that is the camera, is a method for connecting oneself directly to society; it is a way of life that is fully engaged. This is beyond the camera, the tool. Today’s society encapsulates the anger, the happiness, and the suffering of living individuals. That is one photograph. Photographic Realism is the only true photography for contemporary times, and that one photograph is its substantiation…

Realism is not found in the cold, square device called “the camera.” The person who shoots, his view of the world, and his method of expression are what contain Realism. It is not a problem of the machine; it is a problem of the human being. The potential of photography as an art will come into its own. The cold, square device — the camera — became a mere tool in the hands of those who could see life. The true tool is the human being who uses the camera. The camera is just a vehicle; it is not the master. The human being and the camera work together to create a moment of truth.

---


149 Rossella Menegazzo, “The Realist Approach to a Changing Japan: From Art Photography to Social Documentation” in *Domon Ken: The Master of Japanese Realism*, eds. Rossella Menegazzo, Takeshi Fujimori, and Yuki Seli (Milano: Skira editore, 2017), 65. According to Menegazzo, 1953 was the apex of the Realism trend, and the exhibition *Today’s Photography: Japan and France*, held in 1951 at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo, had enormous impact on the movement as it offered the opportunity for comparison with French realism and with the work by Cartier-Bresson, Brassai, and Doisneau. In addition, in 1953 Tanaka Masao’s “On Beggar Photography: The Importance of Photographing Street Urchins and Lumpen” was published, and a roundtable on realist photography was held.

150 *Domon Ken: The Master of Japanese Realism*, cit., 182. In 1943, Domon participated in a round table on the theme of “Ethnophotography and Photography” with the ethnographer Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962), at which he became acquainted with the concept of the snapshot. Later, Domon refined his definition of “snapshot” to “the absolute unstaged snapshot” to distinguish from the snapshot photography genre in general. See also Ken Domon, “Photographic Realism and the Salon Picture” in *Setting Sun: Writings by Japanese Photographers*, cit, 22.
device called “the camera” is — like a paintbrush or a fountain pen — in itself no more than an inorganic tool.¹⁵¹

To Domon, the photographer was the one who possessed the potential to contribute to society with his creativity. In 1957, Domon published his final words on the subject of realism in a discussion on the two critical concepts in photography that had been his longtime concerns in his career, “fact” (事実; jijitsu) and “truth” (真実; shinjitsu).¹⁵²

There is no truth either on the surface or deeper down. Only reality exists. And reality is nothing but the mind. It is a thing that you can see with these eyes, hear with these ears, touch with these hands… It has nothing to do with our subjectivity; it is there solemnly and it occurs solemnly. Truth is ideal, abstract, subjective and is probably limited in great part to literary expression; reality, however, is material, tangible, objective.¹⁵³

A few months after Domon published these words, he arrived for the first time at Hiroshima. It was July 23, 1957. There, he witnessed the city with suffering survivors, and the visit was so overwhelming that he had to return six times the same year between July and November to complete the project. The photographs taken in these trips constitute another landmark body of work and were published as Hiroshima in 1958, a collection of 180 images of the survivors of the atomic bomb dropped on August 6, 1945 — more than a decade after the catastrophic event.


¹⁵² In Japanese, “jijitsu” means “truth” or “fact.” While “shinjitsu” also means “truth,” it connotes the nuance in which truth is “discovered” rather than explicitly exhibit itself, as in the sense of “discovering the truth.” In reference to “reality” in western sense, the word “genjitsu (現実)” would be a more accurate word.

Through Domon’s realist lens, the still existing aftermath of the bomb was laid bare in front of the public in Japan. His photograph of a survivor family, where the smiling faces juxtaposed with the scars left by the bomb effects on the father’s face, leaves a lingering touch of trauma occurred fifteen years ago. ([fig.2-13])

As observed for Bischof and Capa, the Americanized/Westernized Japan with movie posters and Western clothing was also visible in Domon’s photographs. However, since Domon’s approach was clearly formulated around the idea of social-realist, most of his work consist of images of the poor and repulsive aspects of postwar Japan — the so-called “beggar photography” as described by Masao.154 Domon did not pay an in-depth attention to the foreign force transforming his country; he pointed his camera at the “dark side of the society” and the people he thought deserved attention.

**Capturing the Truth: Magnum’s Humanist Photography versus Japan’s Photo-Realism**

What do these photographers say about Japan at that time? How did the prevailing Photo-Realism advocated by Domon distinguished itself from the humanist photography expounded by Magnum? And more importantly, what kind of contradictions are visualized through the use of photography?

Without doubt, Bischof and Capa’s Japan is visually more romantic and idealized than Domon’s. Both photographers’ images speak to the West’s fascination with the traditional, old Japan, as well as the bizarrely harmonious coexistence of the old Japan and Americanization.

---

The subject of children serves an example for the compelling contrast between what Capa captured and what Domon saw in postwar Japan. The children in Capa’s photographs appear, cliché, innocent and carefree. They are dressed in traditional clothing attending performances or ceremonies, being carried on their parent’s back, or spotted playing with their friends. (fig. 2-14) It seems, at least to Capa, that the children in Japan were living a satisfying life, welcoming the modern, Americanized society, and free from troubles of poverty or malnutrition.

As opposed to Capa’s optimism, the children in Domon’s photographs convey a similar touch of joy, despite their suffering. Domon started traveling around Japan from 1952 onwards, taking photographs of the local children in various cities, with a focus on his hometown Kōtō, where the poorer areas of Tokyo situated. His work became a series titled Children of Kōtō (Kōtō no kotomotachi).155 Domon’s another series entitled Children of Chikuhō, rather than depicting the positive or joyful aspects of childhood, chose to indirectly critique the political issue through the perspectives of local children of Chikuhō, where the new economy policy implemented from 1955 onwards led to the closures of mines and high unemployment rate, resulting in malnourishment among children.156 Nevertheless, the viewer does not see famished children with distressing complexion, but children who overcome the poor living condition with games and companionship.157 (fig. 2-15, 2-16)

155 “Towards Social-Realism: From Mining Villages to the Survivors of Hiroshima” in Domon Ken: The Master of Japanese Realism, cit., 30, 81. The book was intended to be published in 1956, but Domon blocked its release as he was discontented with the “bourgeois” touch of the images.


157 “These children were just overflowing with life. We see them amid ruined houses and pockmocket roads; they are dressed in rags, and perhaps for this reason they could run, jump and play without thinking. Cars were rare, and the street was everything for them. Food was scarce, and they lived in poverty, but they came up with a thousand ways to have fun. […] Miserable shacks sprung up across these districts, which had been razed to the ground by the bombings, and along with the ravaged buildings, became home to the evacuees. At sundown, before dinner, the children would spill out onto the streets and invent new games. Domon wandered amongst them, taking one photo after another. The children come across as so full of life because Domon was very much enamoured of them, and the
The images of both Magnum photographers are imagery travelogues comprised of “impressions of Japan.” Although Bischof’s photographs were once described by Ernst Haas as “a combination of beauty with truth: a stone became a world, a child was all children, a war was all wars,”158 what he photographed was a fragment of Japan that failed to represent the full picture of its postwar status, and so did Capa’s photographs. This discrepancy is partly intrinsic to the genre of humanist photography, as observed by Martina Caruso in her research on Italian humanist photographer Mario Giacomelli. This indigenous photographer also challenged Cartier-Bresson’s romanticized, traditional portray of the Italian village of Scanno by capturing a culture he personally identified with a different approach. As Giacomelli would later declare, “Cartier-Bresson went to Scanno as the detached witness of a strange and foreign culture. I went to Scanno as a participant.”159 This sentiment and gap in identification echo the ways in which the two Magnum photographers and Domon approached Japan. In this respect, Bischof and Capa were the detached witness of a strange and foreign culture, but Domon had been living in and seeing Japan as a participant.

youngsters knew it instinctively, which is why they did not put up any barriers between themselves and Domon’s lens.” See Kamekura Yusaku, “When Children Suffered from Intestinal Parasites: Editorial Notes” in Domon Ken: The Master of Japanese Realism, cit., 15-16.


Chapter 3

The Strange Reality of “Senryo”: Shomei Tomatsu and the Conflicts Within the Japanese Souls

In the 1960s, Japanese photographer Shomei Tomatsu (東松 照明, 1930–2012) captured a Japanese mother carrying her child on the back in Sasebo, a city stationed with American military force.160 (fig. 3-1) In this picture, the mother and her child are dressed in modern, western clothing. The mother, whose expression signals a certain degree of distress, appears to be pressed to the corner and almost to the point of exiting the picture frame by two American soldiers standing upright behind her, whose stern expressions and crossed arms give out a feeling of menace. Among the Japanese faces in this picture, the two white males seem to be an unexpected, yet towering and forceful presence.

This photograph elicits an interesting comparison with another picture of a Japanese mother, dressed in traditional clothing and crossing the street with a sleeping baby on her back and carrying another child in her arms. (fig.3-2) This is the first photograph of Robert Capa’s “First Impressions of Japan” published by Camera Mainichi in July 1954. The image is accompanied by a caption in the following pages, detailing Capa’s fascination with the fact that in Japan children were carried on their mothers’ backs. “What struck me first in Japan,” Capa wrote, “were the mothers who had their babies on their backs. It was one of very unusual things if you come from the West.” He would continue with his fond of children, and how this unusual custom impressed him: “I love kids and took a lot of photos of mothers who have their babies on

---

160 Located in Nagasaki prefecture, Sasebo was a major naval base during the World War II. Part of the base facilities were taken over by the United States Navy at the end of the war. It was also one of the original 17 targets selected for the dropping of the atomic bombs.
their back walking with their other children. This photo of the mother holding her boy in her arm and crossing a street in Ginza gave me a very strong impression.”¹⁶¹ In this image, imported automobiles in the backdrop act as symbols of Americanization, in contrast with the mother’s traditional clothing. Without doubt, this picture is a glimpse of a Western photographer in the “unusual things” perceived in a foreign country; again, a foreigner’s “lovingly gazing toward an Oriental essence.”¹⁶²

In their similarities, these two images convey strikingly contrasting sentiments from the perspectives of a foreign visitor and a local observer who had been through Japan from the end of the war through its postwar years. Capa’s picture and his caption convey an evident exoticism—discovering “unusual things” for someone from the West. Tomatsu took the American presence into task by juxtaposing the forceful American soldiers with seemingly vulnerable Japanese mother and child. Here, Tomatsu was clearly taking up a stronger political stance towards the American presence in his country — a “strange reality” he called the “senryo,” which means “Occupation” in Japanese.

For Tomatsu, Americanization was, without doubt, the emblem of the desolate postwar Japan which he often referred to as *genkoke*.¹⁶³ Since his first encounter with the American soldiers when he was a teenager, Tomatsu had never been able to look away from the ubiquitous American presence in his country:


In 1945, with the Japanese cities devastated, the nation was inundated by Allied soldiers. They threw chocolate and chewing gum out to us, who were famished. That was America. For better or worse, I met America in this way. … Since then, I have been obsessed with the Occupation. I cannot ignore the occupation by the American military. Meeting America was my destiny—America which occupied my mind, an invisible nation, appearing in the form of its soldiers.\textsuperscript{164}

Like many of the people in Japan, Tomatsu developed conflicting feelings towards the Americans, from whom he received material goods and democracy while famished and in despair, but whom he also saw meddling with his country’s affairs. Even after the end of the Occupation in 1952, in Tomatsu’s reality, Japan continued to be subordinated to the presence of the American soldiers and their bases, whose imagery had long been rooted in the minds of many youngsters and became impossible to get away with. What Tomatsu’s pictures reveals is the contradictions of postwar Japan — the ambiguous and paradoxical perceptions of the Japanese towards the Americans, the intricate relationship between the defeated/occupied and the victor/occupier, and the clashes between the traditional Japan and the Americanized Japan.

As Daido Moriyama once said, “Japanese photography began from Tomatsu Shomei,”\textsuperscript{165} hence, Tomatsu was the game changer in postwar Japanese photography. From his early work, Tomatsu rejected the universal humanism championed by \textit{Life}, Magnum, and even Steichen’s \textit{The Family of Man}.\textsuperscript{166} It seems that Tomatsu never had direct contact or exchange with the West, as opposed to many other Japanese photographers such as Kimura, who worked with Bischof, or as the four Japanese photo professionals interviewed with Capa for \textit{Camera Mainichi}, as

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{166} Tomatsu commented on \textit{The Family of Man}, ““The message is that everyone is happy—but is everyone really that happy?” This dismissive attitude towards the show’s optimistic, Christian ethos was prevalent in Tomatsu’s generation. See: Sandra S. Phillips, “Currents in Photography in Postwar Japan” in \textit{Shōmei Tōmatsu: Skin of the Nation}, ed. Leo Rubinfien (San Francisco: The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2004), 50-51.
\end{flushright}
discussed in the previous chapter. Tomatsu had his own special way of looking at the defeated nation. He did not beautify or romanticize this country as Bischof and Capa did, nor did he deliberately attempt to create social-realist pictures like Domon did. Rather, he picked up the camera to construct his worldview by composing a personal, visual document. He took pictures of what was pertinent for him: What did it mean to be a Japanese after the defeat and the nation being soaked with Americanization? Tomatsu, being one of the observers of the Occupation and the American presence in the postwar age created a compelling body of work that was, in essence, a pictorial documentation of Japan in an era of confusion.

Born in Nagoya in 1930, Tomatsu had a bitter childhood and an even tougher adolescence, spent under the raging bombings of the Americans. He was only fifteen when Japan lost the war and unlike his predecessors Kimura and Domon, he was too young to be involved with the combat of World War II. Tomatsu would often describe himself as one of the “beliefless generation” — people who reached adulthood late in the war, were forced into a world falling apart from the defeat, and faced only a bleak and uncertain future. War made him numb, and the defeat brought him neither sorrow nor joy. Tomatsu would later recall his memory of the day

---

167 Conversation with Leo Rubinfien on February 5, 2019. Rubinfien recalled that in their conversations, Tomatsu did not mention whether he visited The Family of Man in Tokyo in 1956, even though he was living there. In fact, as Rubinfien pointed out in our talk, Tomatsu avoided talking about any kind of “influence” on his style and seemed to be holding “disparaging” attitude towards other photographers’ work, whether Japanese or Western.

168 “…the deep reason why he got involved in photography was his mistrust of adults, who changed immediately after the war. ‘All I can believe in is what I see with my own eyes,’ he thought.” Oikawa Hideko. Trans. Tomoka Sato and Leo Rubinfien, “Tomatsu Shomei” in AERA, April 16, 2001, n.p. See also “The World of Shomei Tomatsu’s Photographs: Interview with Teruo Okai” in Camera Mainichi Showa Shashin Zen-Shigoto 15, Trans. Tomoka Sato and Leo Rubinfien. Tomatsu discussed his distrust for adults: “I was shocked by the way that the attitude of adults changed suddenly after the defeat. Adults were liars, and I stopped trusting them. It was the time of beginning of a new, distrustful generation… I faced the fact that there were nice guys [Americans] here who really liked kids, and not necessarily devils or beasts. In this way I had further doubts about the adults, who were lying. I felt this very strongly.”

when Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender: “Impassive, I paid little attention to the
Imperial broadcast and, leaving the adults’ despair and dismay behind, I ran outside the house. I
felt as if I myself was the towering, transparent August sky.” Yet, soon under this August sky
in 1945, the Americans turned up and changed the nation in a way one could hardly fashion.

Shomei Tomatsu: Making Sense of “Postwar” Status

Loosely built on a historical timeline, Tomatsu’s work bears witness to a country with a
complicated postwar history — a country that was reborn from the devastation of American air
raids, two atomic bombs, economic breakdown, and at the same time underwent drastic
democratization brought about by the Americans. While SCAP and the Japanese conservative
elites were engaged in the preservation of the imperial institution, most Japanese civilians were
indifferent and were more preoccupied with their livelihood in the immediate aftermath of the
defeat. Reflecting on the impact of the war, Tomatsu experienced this distress personally and
profoundly: “The fifteen-year war had drained Japan’s strength, and the nation now stood at the
extremes of exhaustion. People struggled in the depths of poverty, and there were shortages of
every daily necessity.”

Beginning to work as a photographer in 1950, Tomatsu emerged during the Occupation’s
later period of the “reverse course,” a time of transition for Japan from being occupied to
regaining sovereignty. In 1952, while working on his first series Disabled Veterans, he
participated in the monthly amateur photo contests held by Camera magazine, with Kimura and

170 Shomei Tomatsu, “Occupation (Senryo)” in Chewing Gum and Chocolate, eds. Leo Rubinfien and John
Junkerman (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2014), 195. This essay first appeared in the photobook Nippon, which
Tomatsu published in 1967 through Shaken, a publishing house he was managing.

171 Ibid., 195-196.
Domon as the judges. Tomatsu’s photographs received early attention, before he graduated in 1954 from Aichi University and moved to Tokyo for a position at Iwanami photography Library. Tomatsu’s earlier series reflect the poverty in certain regions and on some level, the dark side of society that Domon focused on, informing his interest in looking for what remained in Japan and the ways in which the people embraced the reality after the devastation of the war. One of such series was produced for Iwanami Photography Library, and entitled *City of Pottery, Seto, Aichi* (1954), focusing on local artisans who endured poverty after the war and persisted on a prewar artisan culture (fig. 3-3). Another series “At Uchinada,” published in *Camera* in October 1953, depicted local fishermen on the Sea of Japan coast, protesting the confiscation of their land for American military use, which marked the first example of popular opposition against American bases that would grow into a massive anti-American movement in the following years.\(^{172}\) In 1956, when *The Family of Man* came to Tokyo, Tomatsu went freelance, and his work started appearing regularly in photo magazines.

It became clear that Tomatsu was in pursuit of memories of war and trauma. In 1959, he began an examination of the devastation and aftermath of the war through the series *Memory of War, Toyokawa, Aichi*, featuring pictures of ruins without human presence, some left with small holes on the wall with lights coming through.\(^{173}\) (fig. 3-4) Upon closer inspection, the objects in the pictures speak of the feelings of war, and the small holes are in fact the result of the bullets. In another series of 1959, *Home*, Tomatsu captured ruins of intimate space and objects

---

\(^{172}\) Leo Rubinfien, “Shomei Tomatsu: The Skin of the Nation” cit., 15. At this point his interest in the effects of American Occupation was already showing.

reminiscent of his home. (fig. 3-5) These pictures are telling of his traumatic experience of an unfortunate childhood, during which he grew up almost like an orphan and was accompanied by poverty and hunger.\textsuperscript{174} He once expressed his connection to memories: “When I take photographs, memories from those times come up suddenly. I photograph unconsciously, but my eyes are always connected to the heart.”\textsuperscript{175} The objects in these pictures speak of the endured memory of war and traumatic past.

On some level, Tomatsu’s early work reminds the viewer of some of Domon’s pictures that show the opposite of the glamorous, modernized Japan, but they act on the viewer at a more metaphorical level. For example, in a Tomatsu’s pictures from the 1952 series \textit{Disabled Veterans}, a man who once fought the war is photographed as he is led by a child who may have never seen the war. This image signifies the defeated old Japan, in confusion and disoriented, following the young generation’s lead to the uncertain prospect. (fig. 3-6) On the other hand, this image elicits a different response than Domon’s \textit{Homeless Person} (fig. 3-7), which depicts a man, perhaps a veteran, dressed in ragged clothes, as a straightforward snapshot. Tomatsu’s photograph communicates in a way distant from Domon’s social-realist mirror.

\textquoteinsert{Senryo” and “The Strange Reality”: The Americans in Tomatsu’s Eyes}

Being a teenager when Japan lost the war, the young Tomatsu could hardly comprehend what the defeat meant.\textsuperscript{176} To the adults, the defeat symbolized the demystification of the


\textsuperscript{175} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{176} “I was not sensitive at all about whether Japan won or lost. Although I was living in wartime, I had no information about the war situation. Therefore, even when defeat came, I felt no shock.” See: Shomei Tomatsu. Trans. Tomoka Sato and Leo Rubinfien, “The World of Shomei Tomatsu’s Photographs: Interview with Teruo Okai” in \textit{Camera Mainichi Showa Shashin Zen-Shigoto 15}, n.p.
Emperor, the Shinto religion, the imperialist ideology of building an Asia Pacific empire, and the unprecedented occupation by Western powers. But to Tomatsu and his generation, the defeat ushered them into an era of confusion, during which the once demonized foreigners became the “liberators” of this country. At the time of the defeat, homeless and hungry, Tomatsu met the American soldiers, who threw chewing gum and chocolate to him when he reached out his hands and uttered his first English words “give me” — one of the first phrases Japanese children learned at the time. America came into Tomatsu's life as the foreign country that appeared in the form of an occupying army; it also occupied his mind, “an invisible nation.”

His prolific images on the Americanization in Japan signal his obsession with the people who colonized the country for seven years and transformed Japan into a democratic entity fitted to American values.

When Tomatsu started photographing in 1950, he was living in a town next to an American military base in the suburbs of Nagoya City, his hometown. Tomatsu’s interest in the American bases was already showing in his early work “My Town,” published in Camera in November 1952, which included his photograph of a mixed-raced child.

I snapped pictures of familiar everyday scenes in my hometown, a town where American soldiers and mixed-race children were living together as if it were normal to coexist in this way. However, this ordinary sight was also the representation of a historic change that had occurred in Japan as a result of losing the war: occupation by foreign troops. Thus, for me, these common scenes overlapped with Japan’s postwar history like a double exposure.

---


178 Leo Rubinfien, “Shomei Tomatsu: The Skin of the Nation” in Shōmei Tōmatsu: Skin of the Nation, cit, 15.

179 This photograph was included in the first All-Japan Student Photography League exhibition in Tokyo in 1952.

The “double exposure” Tomatsu designated was the superimposition of a variety of realities in postwar Japan. Concurrent with this initial exploration of the familiar everyday scenes in his hometown in early 1950s, Japan was also undergoing an intensified anti-American public sentiment in response to the remilitarization and new alliance with the United States. Bloody May Day on May 1, 1952 — only days after the signing of the treaties — an anti-American demonstration that eventually led to two deaths and multiple injuries, signaled the dawn of the “post-Occupation” and the prelude to popular protests that had since escalated towards the 1960s.\(^1\)

It wasn’t until late 1950s that Tomatsu started relentlessly capturing the everyday lives around the American bases. This was around the time when the bilateral U.S.-Japan Security Treaty were to be renewed in 1959-1960. During tumultuous protests against the renewal of the Treaty, he began shooting a series of photographs that he was referring to as “Base.”\(^2\)

Regardless of its name, the images are by no means a documentation of the lives behind the barbed wires, since the American military bases were off-limit to the Japanese according to legal restrictions based on the aforementioned 1951 Mutual Security Treaty. Rather, they could be viewed as snapshots taken around the city where the base was situated.

The first images, taken at Yokosuka city, were published as “Base (Yokosuka)” in April 1959 in *Asahi Camera*.\(^3\) Unlike the snapshots taken by Russell Bernier in the same city earlier

---

\(^1\) See John W. Dower, “Contested Ground: Shōmei Tōmatsu and the Search for Identity in Postwar Japan” in *Shōmei Tōmatsu: Skin of the Nation*, cit., 65.

\(^2\) Ibid. The demonstrators ended up bringing down the government of Prime Minister Nobusue Kishi, who was a former accused war criminal, and managed to disrupt and cause the cancellation of President Dwight Eisenhower’s visit to Tokyo.

\(^3\) *Chewing Gum and Chocolate*, cit., 186.
in the 1950s that document the Americanized urban scenes, Tomatsu’s first attempts of investigation into the Americans and the ways in which their presence alter the landscape of the city also show his fascination and curiosity towards the foreigners, in particular the African-American soldiers. Through his lens, these soldiers are not menacing occupiers; they appear relaxing, laid-back foreign men wandering around the city of Yokosuka. *(fig. 3-8, 3-9)*

Between April 1959 and November 1960 Tomatsu experienced his most prolific period in the shooting of the series “Occupation,” an expansion of the “Base” photographs which he began to call as such. He published eight photographic essays on the subject, specifically on the base towns of Misawa, Chitose, and Iwakuni, in addition to Yokosuka. It was not until September 1964 that his first direct references to the Americans in the titles of his work appeared. This was published under the names “American Embassy” in *Camera Mainichi*, and later in November as “Americanization” in the same magazine. Among the images he took in these cities, the children, the mixed-raced ones in particular, emerge with the almost inescapable American symbols.

Tomatsu felt strongly about the ubiquity of Americanization, and he believed the military bases went hand in hand with the cultural phenomenon, as he reflected: “It was my experience that Americanization started from the U.S. military bases. It was as if America seeped through the gaps in the wire fences surrounding the bases and, in time, soaked the entire country.” As in the image of a bar in Tokyo from the “Occupation” series *(fig. 3-10)*, the blurry figure in the foreground is unidentifiable, but the Coca-Cola sign and an English sign that says “DRY” already give away a touch of American “Coca-Colonization.” To the Japanese, the American

---

soldiers were the most direct introductions to American culture, as described by Tomatsu, “Mountains of supplies were piled up within the barbed-wire fences, off-limits to the Japanese. It shouldn’t be surprising that people saw the bases as the headwaters of the river of democracy.”185

(fig. 3-11)

American symbols could be straightforward in Tomatsu’s pictures. In another picture from the “Occupation” series taken in Tokyo (fig. 3-14), a Japanese boy, looking lost, stands beneath a billboard advertisement written in English, with the word “base” in the frame, as though Tomatsu was implying the Americanization being given from above as other reformations imposed from the SCAP authority. Again, the pictures become metaphors for Japan’s “strange reality.”

It is worth noting that, Tomatsu’s attention to the African-American soldiers and the mixed-raced children (fig. 3-12, 3-13), the marginal figures in visual representation in his earlier photographs, are telling of a tacit racial tension at the time — that of the taboo of interracial relations. This taboo existed not only in Japan but also in the United States, where miscegenation was banned until the 1960s.186 Up to late 1960s, it is estimated that the American GIs were responsible for 20,000 mixed-blood children, whose mothers were not necessarily prostitutes but ordinary women left defenseless in a chaotic postwar society. In Japan, a country where racial purity was taken seriously, the mixed-raced children were oftentimes rejected as outcasts in the

---

185 Shomei Tomatsu, “Occupation (Senryo)” in Chewing Gum and Chocolate, cit., 196.

186 Prior to 1952, SCAP censored the Japanese press from publishing articles on GI crimes, in addition to limiting images to benign fraternization. After the end of the Occupation, GI rapes were exposed, and the sexuality surrounded the base life was put under public scrutiny. Photographers of the base captured Caucasian servicemen and their families, but in Tomatsu’s photographs, African-American GI appear relatively more and sometimes with a menacing sense. See John W. Dower, “Contested Ground: Shōmei Tōmatsu and the Search for Identity in Postwar Japan” in Shōmei Tōmatsu: Skin of the Nation, cit., 66-67.
society. They were rejected at birth and often abandoned to orphanages once their fathers returned to the U.S.\(^\text{187}\) Through his images of the African-American GIs and the mixed-raced children living in segregation within military entertainment districts around the bases, Tomatsu not only raised questions about the liberal and democratic doctrines the Americans had been preaching,\(^\text{188}\) but he also showed his empathy towards the children, who were part of a lost generation in postwar Japan. Like the innocent-looking girl from the segregated section of Yokosuka, surrounded by American signs, he showed an African-American GI in the backdrop as if reminding the viewer of the girl’s lineage. (\textbf{fig. 3-15})

Tomatsu’s continuous exploration of the American bases and the Occupation, originally published and expanded in a variety of magazines for years, culminated in his personal project later known as \textit{Chewing Gum and Chocolate}.\(^\text{189}\) The choice of the title is a bitter reminder of the Occupation and the continuing stationing of American military during the Cold War, as well as the economic and cultural upheaval brought about by the Americans, from whom many famished Japanese children at the time had received the two items. Chewing gum and chocolate became the symbol for the American Occupation and Americanization, and a euphemism for the humiliation of the defeat.

\textbf{On the A-Bomb: Hiroshima-Nagasaki document 1961 and Nagasaki 11:02}


\(^{188}\) In reality, this racial discrimination hardly swayed the people’s admiration for SCAP; as Tomatsu described, “we learned that class and racial discrimination continued to exist in free-and-equal America. This realization made us doubt the sermons about democracy, but it did not diminish appreciation for MacArthur’s peace and occupation policies.” See: Shomei Tomatsu, “Occupation (Senryō)” in \textit{Chewing Gum and Chocolate}, \textit{cit.}, 196.

\(^{189}\) Originally a magazine series, “Occupation” was included in Tomatsu’s collection \textit{Nippon (Japan)} published in 1967. See: John W. Dower, \textit{cit.}, 65.
Tomatsu’s obsession with the Americans and the peculiar relation his country had with those people went beyond his pictures of the Americanization phenomenon, focusing on the portrayal of Nagasaki — the second city bombed by Americans, which marked the end of the war. The book project, entitled *Hiroshima-Nagasaki document 1961*, was strictly correlated to a commission by the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (*Gensuikyo* in Japanese), the first of several antinuclear organizations established in 1955.

*Hiroshima-Nagasaki document 1961* is a comprehensive publication in two volumes that brings photography, written testimonies, and statistics together. Issued in English and Russian, the book was apparently targeted for people from the two nations involved in nuclear competition to evoke emotions and inspire the readers in Western countries to pursue peace and avoid repeating the disaster. This is explicitly explained in the text on the last page: “the record of man’s striving and suffering cannot but evoke human feeling. Emotion can destroy; but it can also illuminate thought and nourish useful action. The purpose of this book is to arouse in its readers such emotions as well guide and encourage them in their efforts for peaceful progress toward those goals to which we all aspire.”

Although not the first photographic representation of Nagasaki, Tomatsu’s images offer new perspectives on the city’s aftermath that is distinct from his predecessor Yosuke Yamahata and Domon. Tomatsu’s presentation of human figures involves bizarre angles, close-ups, and the play with light and shadow. Unlike Domon’s realist, unambiguous portrayal of survivors undergoing surgery, Tomatsu fixes the viewer’s attention on the texture of the skin or the opaque figures partially disguised by shadow, perturbing the senses for the subjects the viewer is looking at. (fig. 3-16)

---

Tomatsu’s first visit to Nagasaki in 1960 marked a watershed in his lifelong photographic pursuit and had a significant impact on his perception towards this tragic history. He revisited Nagasaki in subsequent years and finally culminated in his own statement on the bombing of Nagasaki as the photo book 11:02 Nagasaki, published in 1966. The publication shed light on Tomatsu’s quest for the answers to his people and his homeland. 11:02 Nagasaki included the photographs he took for the book Hiroshima-Nagasaki document 1961 and additional images he took in his return to the city. The cover of 11:02 Nagasaki is an image of a wrist-watch (fig. 3-17), stopped at 11:02, a time when the atomic bomb “Fat Man” was dropped. This clock of timelessness epitomizes the moment of atomic bombing and carries a symbolic meaning that implies that the time of Nagasaki has stopped at 11:02 for good and the scars live on since the bomb dropped. As Tomatsu writes in his notes in this book, “Nagasaki has two times. There is 11:02, August 9th, 1945. And there is all the times since then. We must not forget either of them.”

11:02 Nagasaki is a purely visual poetic narrative, with excerpts that accompany images of survivors and the confessions obtained by Tomatsu during their acquaintance. Tomatsu starts the book with a series of objects of daily use and symbolic ephemera preserved from the

---

191 “I cannot find words to express the shock I experienced during that visit…I had a certain amount of knowledge of the destructive power of the bomb, I knew that a whole city had disappeared in an instant and more than 70,000 people died, but nothing had prepared me for the lives of the people...exposed to radiation.” See: Ian Jeffrey, Shōmei Tōmatsu (London: Phaidon, 2001), 62.

192 Ken Domon and Shomei Tomatsu, Hiroshima-Nagasaki Document 1961 (Tokyo: Japan Council Against A- and H-Bombs, 1961), n.p. The image first appeared in Hiroshima-Nagasaki Document 1961 with the explanatory text on the adjacent page: “the dead are no longer to be seen. / the things that once were theirs / remain as witness. the new force that killed men / is remembered in the atoms of things. / suspended in the stream of time / there is a clock of timelessness / man explores space-time, relativity, / but in our chronicle / deeds are done that cannot be undone. / points are fixed by man, unalterable, / from which his capacity for good or evil / may be measured. / hiroshima: 1945, august 6th, 8:15 a.m. / nagasaki: 1945, august 9th, 11:02 a.m. / points of no return.”

 bombing, which he saw at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum. Among them the image of an uncannily disfigured bottle is probably one of Tomatsu’s most widely circulated photographs (fig. 3-18), which is often misconstrued as surrealist photography. The image is arresting in a sense that its pseudo-organic form resembles a deformed human body, but upon close inspection the viewer comes to realize that it is a disturbing, grotesque product of the atomic bomb. Indeed, one might easily misinterpret the image if not informed by the context.

What follows is a series of scenes of ruins and the hibakusha (survivors of the A-bomb) who continued their lives in the wasteland. Tomatsu’s hibakusha is depicted with abstraction or quasi-surrealism: instead of focusing on the wounds or the faces of the “ruined people” to evoke a sense of sympathy from the audience, Tomatsu chose to zoom into the textures of their skins so close that the horrific keloid scars seem beautified and become a metaphor for the photographer’s homeland—the skin of the hibakusha symbolizes the skin of Japan, marked with trauma. Among the photographs of survivors, the close-up portrait of Tsuro Kataoka’s scarred face is particularly striking (fig. 3-19). Juxtaposed with the image is a page of the confession of her experience during the event and as a survivor. While the viewer reads her story under her gaze, he or she learns the consequences of the bomb for a young Japanese woman like Kataoka, such as her inevitable denial to marriage because of the keloid scars on her face.¹⁹⁴

have to endure the aftermath, decaying in the passage of time until the day death calls on them.

This interest in the idea of ruins and the ruined is exemplified in Tomatsu’s words:

> Japan has been reborn, like a phoenix, from the ruins. It was only from ruins that the country could start anew. Ruins are the basic image of postwar Japan. The ultimate ruin is the atomic wasteland. Scenes of people and cities metamorphosed by the ultimate weapon, the atomic bomb... The atomic wasteland is an entirely new kind of ruin, one that first appeared in the mid-twentieth century. It offers a glimpse of the end of the world, the dread of everyone who lives in the nuclear age.\(^{195}\)

By depicting the ruined, Tomatsu was not trying to evoke emotional or radical reactions from the viewer, to repel them. Nor was he intending to use his images as anti-nuclear propaganda as The Family of Man displayed the hydrogen bomb. Although Tomatsu did not go through the effects of the atomic bomb, he did experience profoundly the social-economic changes that the people who decided to drop the bomb brought along. He also witnessed how the victims of the atomic bomb were neglected by the public, and some even had to turn to the Americans for mercy.\(^{196}\)

With his penetrating photographs, Tomatsu attempted to show the substantial yet subtle changes underneath the skin of hibakusha, how history leaves its mark on mankind, and how the people struggled to deal with the endless postwar trauma as they strove to live a normal life.

Despite his mesmerizing portrait of Nagasaki, Tomatsu confessed later in an interview that, before 1960 he had never been in Nagasaki or even thought about the bombings themselves. Tomatsu’s negligence or indifference was no surprise, providing that such attitude indicates a

---


\(^{196}\) In his diary entry on January 19, 1968, Tomatsu wrote: “I went to Sasebo when I was working on my series Senryo (“Occupation”). At that time, on a street, I saw an old woman with an unusual demeanor. She was showing a celluloid leaflet to an American soldier, holding it silently in front of him. In this pamphlet, the following words were typed in English. ‘My family was killed in the bombing of Nagasaki. But the government is not taking care of me. Only your deeply merciful heart can help me. Could you give me a little bit of money?’” Shomei Tomatsu. Trans. Fabienne Delpy, *I am a King – Diary.*
broader context of national oblivion. Although Japan had been reported about the “new kind of weapon by the Americans” after they were dropped, few Japanese visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki in time to witness the immediate effects, and people tended to underestimate the situation since many other cities were suffering from air attacks as well. What Tomatsu’s rather belated revelation of the aftermath of Nagasaki and the aforementioned documentation of Hiroshima by Domon evidenced, was an involuntary consequence of the Occupation’s strict censorship regime, as discussed in Chapter 1.

The American militaries return in the end of the book, which concludes with a photograph of an American ship at the port of Nagasaki (fig. 3-20). Is Tomatsu’s choice of the image a conscious accusation of the Americans as the culprit of the vicious infliction on his people? As discussed throughout this chapter, his sentiment towards the Americans was complicated. It is possible that Tomatsu manipulated the images of American appearance as a way to remind the viewer of the Americans’ controversial relationship with Nagasaki, in order to appeal remembering the history without calling upon victimization or guilt of either country.197

In one way or another, Tomatsu documented the nuanced and complex Japanese-American relations — between Japanese victimization and American guilt, and between Japanese subordination and American imperialist supremacy over the defeated country.

197 John W. Dower, cit., 70. Dower discusses about the complex of Japanese victimization and American guilt: “...The memorialization of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that began in the 1950s was both a sincere cry for peace and a reaffirmation of Japanese victimization and American guilt. The two cities and their survivors, that is, symbolized more than just the horrendous end of a horrendous war. They were testimony to America’s willingness to target civilians with weapons of hitherto unimagined destructiveness... More subtly, ‘remembering’ Hiroshima and Nagasaki easily became, in practice, a way for the Japanese to screen off and forget the horrors they themselves had inflicted on others in the years that preceded that terrible nuclear denouement. Thus, even as the so-called peace movement was acquiring a new voice and vision, old-fashioned nationalistic sentiments of victimization were ever present, and abiding issues of ‘war responsibility’ remained unresolved.”
The three chapters in this thesis, despite their seemingly disparate characters of figures on the surface, all point to the gist of the American influence — politically and culturally — over Japan after the war, and how Japan embraced the defeat and its consequence. More critically, they demonstrate the ways in which photography visualize various conflicts in postwar Japan — the conflict between the defeated, subordinate Japan and the conquering, dominant America.

_The Family of Man_ in Tokyo discussed in Chapter 1 points out the conflicting views on whether to show the pictures of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, where the Japanese held a strong position against the Americans’ tough decision to exclude the Nagasaki images while propagating the ideology of oneness and harmony. Embracing their victimhood and the fact of the defeat, the Japanese believed that the showing of the Nagasaki pictures allowed a way to cope with trauma, as well as to take on the responsibility to warn the world against the danger of nuclear weapons — that is, to engage in the “civil contract of photography” and turn the pictures of trauma into “signals of danger or warning.”

The photographers discussed in Chapter 2 captured the conflicts in disparate ways. What Bischof and Capa’s photographs show is the conflict between the old/traditional Japan and the new/Westernized Japan. Their photographs testify to the predominant humanist photography that also served as the trademark of Magnum Photos. In their photographs, the complex relationship between Japan and America is obscured by their fascination with signs of Japan and the juxtaposition of the traditional and modernized sides of Japan seen as an exotic nation. Lacking a comprehensive understanding of Japan’s postwar status quo, the majority of their photographs
turned out to be subjective interpretations that sided with the romanticizing of the nation and its people. Like Russell Bernier, the American soldier discussed in the beginning of this thesis, Bischof and Capa were, after all, “the detached witness of a strange and foreign culture,” as Mario Giacomelli remarked sarcastically on Cartier-Bresson’s depiction of an Italian town he had little contact with. In this sense, their photographs of Japan could be seen as travelogues of “impressions of Japan.”

In depicting similar themes, such as the Americans as the conqueror vis-à-vis the Japanese as the vanquished, the voice from the locals works differently from that of a foreign visitor. For instance, Domon’s picture of a Japanese shoe-shine boy — whose face is unrecognizable — kneeling in front of the robust American soldier (fig. 3-21), is more imbued with political nuance than Capa’s photograph of an American soldier donating money to the wounded Japanese veterans on the street of Tokyo (fig. 2-12). Both are revealing of the unbalanced, dominance-subordination relationship between the two nations and their peoples, but in Domon’s picture, the shoe-shine boy appears to be humbled before the victor. His unidentified face could be substituted with any Japanese face to imply Japan’s subordinate position in the American-led Cold War order in Asia, and its embracement and dependence on the United States for economic development at the cost of providing military bases on its soil. Here, Domon is clearly offering an ironic and critical portrayal of Japan-U.S. relation, and of Japan’s mindset of embracing the defeat.

However, it is Tomatsu’s pictures, as discussed in Chapter 3, that narrate the most complicated stories of the conflicts existing between his people and the Americans. In addition to the self-evident contradictions between the defeated and the victor, Tomatsu’s politically charged

---

198 See Chapter 2, page 63.
photographs entail all at once all sorts of conflicts a young Japanese from his generation could experience at the time — the postwar mentality of “embracing defeat;” a chance to start over with materialistic affluence versus the contingent shame and humiliation; Japan’s victimization embodied in the antinuclear discourse in the 1950s as opposed to the guilt for war crimes and negligence of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and above all, the contradictory feelings of Japanese towards their occupiers, which is a mixture of love and hate, admiration and shame, welcoming and rejecting the effects of Americanization on the nation’s future.

As discussed earlier, Japan was overwhelmed by Americanization in various forms in the immediate postwar years — the new constitution, democratic systems, new education systems, progressive arts and cultural scenarios. The nation was so saturated with American signs that Tomatsu once reflected:

Americanization is common cultural phenomenon in the countries of the Western world. In advanced European countries, this is called Coca-Colonization with a slight fear and contempt, because Coca-Cola is a standardized beverage that is a symbol of American civilization. All world civilization has followed the pattern of Americanization. ... What about Americanization in Japan, then? It’s like adding one more star to the stars and stripes. In short, we are the state of Japan, of the United States of America. America has saturated Japan, and Japanese daily life. Well, this is Japan now.199

As Tomatsu’s pictures from Chewing Gum and Chocolate portray, Japan was so soaked with American symbols that at times it is hard to tell if one is looking at a cityscape of Japan or a small corner of American society. The pervasive American figures in Japan must have caused confusion over the Japanese identity — a subject Tomatsu spent his lifetime trying to untangle with photography. If Domon was taking photographs to reveal the truth, then it could be said that Tomatsu went beyond that and observed Japan in the era of confusion, posing questions to what

he saw; he went straight to what it meant by being Japanese at the time. His arresting images are revealing of the “strange reality” existing between the defeated and subordinate Japan and the patronizing and dominating America, as seen from the eyes of a young and perplex generation of postwar Japan. For Tomatsu, photography is in essence a document that transcends time, “an accumulation of instants” that allows a testimony of history. But what distinguishes Tomatsu’s photographs from those of Bischof, Capa, and even Domon is that they are more strongly imbued with Tomatsu’s personal feelings and memories. After all, the incentive of Tomatsu’s image-making career was highly related to his experience of the defeat. It was an urge to making sense of the reality, his own way of embracing the defeat:

My experience of defeat in the war encouraged me to take pictures, but I was not only doing this—I was studying also. I learned what the Occupation was, and what World War II was. After the war, the image Japan had was created by the victor; an unrealistic, ideal model … Given this, what was the meaning of the Occupation policy, and was the meaning of making a series of pictures of the “senryō (Occupation)”?—my pictures are concerned with this. Therefore, I can neither deny nor affirm. But, I kept asking questions. I can’t simply oppose the bases. I’m not a person in favor of the bases, though. I miss constantly about Japan, which started over again after the war. …I don’t push a particular ideology, but I look for meaning in the flow of reality.”

Among the images produced in this period, there is a paradoxical coexistence of the seen and the unseen. What is laid on the table in these pictures are the ostensible signs of Americanization such as the Western movie posters and clothing as well as the classic Coca-Cola symbols.

---

200 “There is no end to the photographic eye recording the world. We have to capture the convulsive daily reality of Japan without fail. Photography is, in its essential definition, a document. Photography cuts through the ongoing time. The fragment of time sliced by the camera becomes past at the very instant and, as an accumulation of instants, photography becomes a copy of history. Since photography survives time, and as long as, is in this respect, it will be useful to many people, I want to continue being a photographer, an anonymous reporter.” Shomei Tomatsu. Trans. Fabienne Delpy, “Afterword” in I am a King - Diary [ended on Jan 19, 1968], n.p.

However, it is what lies beneath the pictorial surface that constitutes the most jarring part of the images: the uncommonly intricate relationship between Japan and the United States caused by the devastation of the country by the American air strikes and the atomic bombs, the subsequent democratization through the Occupation, and the cultural influence followed by it, entangled with the “conflicts in the Japanese souls” put forth by Guillain in Bischof’s *Japan*, where he described such conflicts as the paradox between the old and new, Americanized Japan. Where the hidden “conflicts” truly manifest is in the Japanese’s mixed feeling towards the American, torn between love and hate, as Tomatsu would often refer to as the “two sides of a paper.”

Speaking in a more concrete term, the conflicts exist on the border of the barbed wire of the bases as well. As Tomatsu described the concrete feeling of the defeat through the Occupation, “Inside the fences of the bases seemed like heaven; outside, people were living hard lives, and it seemed like hell. On the border of defeat, we could see darkness and light, and values changed 180 degrees.”

Could Domon, Tomatsu, or any Japanese love or hate the Americans? The defeat brought the Americans who threw not only chewing gum and chocolate to the devastated and hollowed Japan, but it also brought American troops, the most democratic constitution in history and materialistic progression — the Americans “sowed the seeds of democracy” that they were so proud of through the unilateral reformation of the country. On the other hand, they also “plucked the buds of democracy” with their censorship regime and by dragging Japan into the Cold War

202 “People say that love and hate are two sides of the same coin [part of the same stack of paper]. For me “senryo” was a contradiction in terms…” Shomei Tomatsu. Trans. Tomoka Sato and Leo Rubinfien, “Senryo” in *Showa shashin zenshigoto 15: Tomatsu Shomei (Anthology of the Photography of the Showa Perioed, vol. 15: Shomei Tomatsu)* (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1984), n.p.

203 Ibidem.

game, as showcased in the belated exposure of images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and in the
episode of *The Family of Man* in Tokyo. As these episodes illustrate, the optimism of universal
humanity and American liberalism cast a shadow over the local’s traumatic experience of the
atomic bombs. Confused and lost in disbelief, the Japanese had no choice but to harbor the
love/hate complex and embrace their defeat by “enduring the unendurable,” struggling through
the difficult journey into progress and recovery, while looking into what was remaining on the
soil of Japan in search of the meaning of being a Japanese after the devastating war and in the
new one named the Cold War. Photographs as documents channeled these questions, “Who
are we as Japanese? What do we have left after the war? What has Japan become?” In response
to these questions, Tomatsu never answered, and he may never have intended to. The
possibilities for answers are left to the viewers.

---

205 Leo Rubinfien, “Shomei Tomatsu: The Skin of the Nation” in *Shōmei Tōmatsu: Skin of the Nation*, ed. Leo
Rubinfien (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 2004), 17. “Every nation that has endured the
difficult journey into modernity has cultivated a longing vision of its past. Wherever one goes in the modern world
one hears that the people of yesterday were more authentically themselves, less anxious, better skilled in matters of
beauty, nobler, more generous, and less acquisitive than those of today, that their societies were more organically
woven together, and although such ideas are also disparaged as nonsense, few people are eager or able to give them
up. In Japan, the yearning for the world that was has had a special character. There, the modern has been inseparable
from the Western, and—since the Second World War—from the more narrowly American, while the Japanese
premodern is said to be the authentically Japanese. Though Japan has demonstrated and unsurpassed hunger for the
modern since the beginning of the Meiji period, it has also fused its perennial, sometimes submerged, sometimes
open conflict with the West with the universal enmity between modern and premodern, praising and denouncing
‘modernization’ and ‘Westernization’ as if they were interchangeable. Pursing the modern, the nation is said to have
forsaken, even betrayed, its essential self. Japan’s finest modern artists have argued thus; so have its craven
demagogues.”
Bibliography


Hurm, Gerd, Anke Reitz, and Shamoon Zamir, eds. *The Family of Man Revisited: Photography*


*Additional unpublished Japanese-English translation on Shomei Tomatsu kindly provided by Mr. Leo Rubinfien*
Illustrations

Figure 0-1: Russell A. Bernier, [Storefronts from Occupied Japan Souvenir Album], gelatin silver print, ca. 1950. Courtesy The Walther Collection

Figure 0-2: Russell A. Bernier, [Storefronts from Occupied Japan Souvenir Album], gelatin silver print, ca. 1950. Courtesy The Walther Collection
Figure 0-3: Russell A. Bernier, [Storefronts from Occupied Japan Souvenir Album], gelatin silver print, ca. 1950. Courtesy The Walther Collection


Figure 1-7: “Atom Bomb Effects: U.S. Commission Analyzes Blasts Which Hit Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” *Life*, March 11, 1946
A collection of scratchy and dusty photographs, retrieved from half-forgotten files, has just struck Japan with the impact of a delayed fuse bomb. For the first time Japan has seen—and been shocked by—a visual vividness of what it witnessed in the man-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And the collection, published here for the first time in the U.S., has the immediacy of today’s news pictures for anyone who is in the not illusory fear of being caught themselves in an atomic blast or in the terrible work of tending those who are.

Like the rest of the world the Japanese knew only the physical facts of atomic destruction, the statistics of death, the stories of what happened under the mushroom cloud. But, with one or two exceptions, pictures taken by five Japanese photographers in the first hours of terror after the bombs had been dropped by Japanese U.S. military cameramen through seven years of the Occupa-
tion. In that time many negatives were damaged or lost. Some, processed in inferior wartime chemicals, deteriorated beyond use. Nonetheless, early this year, even before the Occupation formally ended, enterprise Japanese publishers decided to reveal photographs still left. Last month, with U.S. censorship abolished by the peace treaty, the publishers rushed these prints to bookstores and a special newspaper supplement. They sold out almost overnight and publishers ordered fresh editions.

In Japan it has been feared the stark record would touch off new waves of anti-Americanism. But the lessons of the pictures went much deeper than that on the people who had started the war which led to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Almost with one voice those who saw the long-suppressed photographs restored a heartfelt cry—nearly forgotten since the Korean war and the threat of Russian aggression—for peace, neutrality and the per-
atility. In Nagasaki, at a memorial to those who died there, a wounded survivor raised the common fear: “With all my might, as I once cried out for water out of thirst, while crouching among the charred bodies of that fateful day, I shall now like every ‘peace, peace.’”

Figure 1-8: “When Atom Bomb Struck — Uncensored,” Life, September 25, 1952, page 19
Figure 1-9: “When Atom Bomb Struck — Uncensored,” Life, September 25, 1952, page 23
Figure 2-1: “People Are People the World Over,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, May 1948


Figure 2-4: Image 34, Werner Bischof, *Japan*, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos
Figure 2-5: Image 64, Werner Bischof, *Japan*, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos

Figure 2-6: Robert Capa, *[Man carrying a baby on his back, Asakusa, Japan]*, 1954. The International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.
Figure 2-7: Image 55, Werner Bischof, *Japan*, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos
Figure 2-8: Image 63, Werner Bischof, *Japan*, 1951 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1955. Second printing) © 2019 Werner Bischof Estate / Magnum Photos
Figure 2-10: Robert Capa, [Child in a clothes store close to window displays, Japan], 1954. The International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.

Figure 2-11: Robert Capa, [Woman carrying a baby carriage in the street, Kyoto, Japan], 1954. The International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.

Figure 2-14: Robert Capa, [*Women and their children wearing kimonos, Osaka, Japan*], 1954. International Center of Photography Online Collection. The Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive, Gift of Cornell and Edith Capa, 2010.

Figure 2-15: Ken Domon, *Children*, c. 1955. The Museum of Modern Art. moma.org

Figure 3-2: Photograph by Robert Capa in “Impressions of Japan,” *Camera Mainichi*, July 1954. n.p. The International Center of Photography. Museum Purchase, 2013.

Figure 3-3: Shomei Tomatsu, *Untitled*, from the series *Pottery Town, Seto, Aichi*, gelatin silver print, 1954, printed 1974, 6 1/16 x 8 7/8 in. (15.4 x 22.54 cm). Collection of the Sack Photographic Trust © Shomei Tomatsu – INTERFACE photo: Don Ross
Figure 3-4: Shomei Tomatsu, *Untitled*, from the series *Memory of War, Toyokawa, Aichi*, gelatin silver print, 1959, printed 1974, 9 1/8 x 9 1/4 in. (23.18 x 23.5 cm). San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Al Alcorn © Shomei Tomatsu – INTERFACE photo: Don Ross

Figure 3-5: Shomei Tomatsu, *Untitled*, from the series *Home, Amakusa, Kumamoto*, gelatin silver print, 1959, printed 1980, 10 x 9 7/8 in. (25.4 x 25.08 cm). San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Gift of Randi and Bob Fisher © Shomei Tomatsu – INTERFACE photo: Don Ross

Figure 3-16: From Shomei Tomatsu, *<11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Figure 3-17: Book cover, Shomei Tomatsu, *<11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki* (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.
Figure 3-18: From Shomei Tomatsu, *11時02分* 11:02 Nagasaki (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Figure 3-19: From Shomei Tomatsu, *11時02分* 11:02 Nagasaki (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.
Figure 3-20: From Shomei Tomatsu, <11 時 02 分> 11:02 Nagasaki (Tokyo: Shashin Dōjinsha, 1966), n.p.

Figure 3-21: Ken Domon, Shoe-Shine Boy and American Soldier, Kyoto, 1954. In Domon Ken: The Master of Japanese Realism, eds. Rossella Menegazzo, Takeshi Fujimori, and Yuki Seli (Milano: Skira editore, 2017), 68.