

PHOTOGRAPHY AS PROCESS:
A STUDY OF THE JAPANESE PHOTOGRAPHY JOURNAL *PROVOKE*

by

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Abstract

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Advisor: Professor Geoffrey Batchen

This dissertation evaluates the significance of a series of four critical Japanese photography publications, referred to here as *Provoke*. First published in 1968, *Provoke* consisted of a run of three quarterly journal issues, each bearing the same title as the series: *Provoke*. The series ceased publication in 1970 with the fourth *Provoke* publication, entitled *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language].

Actively drawing on Western theory and literature, *Provoke* members—photographers Nakahira Takuma, Takanashi Yutaka, and Moriyama Daidō; critic-photographer, Taki Kōji; and poet Okada Takahiko—aimed to create visual images that would reveal a world indescribable by conventional language. The term *are-bure-boke*, which means grainy, blurred, and out of focus, was coined to describe their radical photographs, many of which look as though they were taken by accident and appear to be of nothing in particular.

I argue that *Provoke* members not only challenged the aesthetics of existing photography genres, but also illuminated the very notion of photography itself. Their deconstructivist attitudes

gave rise to photographs that were taken in the midst of unrehearsed settings, as well as developed and edited in rather random operations. Their process-oriented photography went hand in hand with the periodical style of the series, revealing the evolution of members' photography and ideas as each of the four publications was published. Rather than consider photography an end product of photographers' visualization, *Provoke* members demonstrated photography's intricate intertwining with the production process, beginning with taking photographs, extending through to developing prints, and ending with publishing the publications.

I explore the material aspects of *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* as well as examine the publications' photographs. By doing so, I also argue that the publications are more than journals and a book: they belong to a multi-faceted medium including photobooks and artists' book. The publications' strong graphic take on photography and the photographers' engagement in the relationship between photography and language made the photographic publications unique among other commercial photography magazines and photobooks.

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When I was exploring Japanese photography as a subject for my dissertation, a curator—Alexandra Munroe—suggested that I look at *Provoke* as a possible candidate: the shock I got upon first regarding the publication's photographs led me to make the rather impulsive decision of taking up this topic. I would also like to thank the film producer (and my former boss) Linda Hoaglund, who, by introducing Moriyama Daidō to me, paved the way for my subsequent interview with him; moreover, my work experience on her film ANPO enriched my knowledge of postwar Japanese art. Although her field differs from the one in which I am currently immersed, my dissertation benefited greatly from her professionalism and work ethic. Also of help was Chinzei Yoshimi, whom I met (through Linda) at Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo and who inspired me to conduct research on Enokura Kōji.

My dissertation would not have been possible had I not received such extraordinary cooperation from interviewees and from people who put me in touch with them. In particular, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Yanagimoto Naomi, who was incredibly generous with his assistance, not least in answering my endless questions. Speaking of questions, I cannot

forget the sincerity with which Moriyama Daidō answered so many of mine—nor can I forget the gift he thoughtfully bestowed on me. The photographer Yoshinaga Masayuki helped me contact my interviewee Moriyama. Another interviewee, Takanashi Yutaka, was open enough to respond to my request for an interview despite my lack of references or connections; indeed, his generosity led him to bring me a number of useful books and other resources at the interview. My former boss Fergus McCaffrey at McCaffrey Fine Art introduced me to Yokota Shigeru, who represented Enokura Kōji at his own gallery. Yokota is also a great educator who is not only willing to share any information about the artist, but also to listen to my opinion. Also at the gallery, Morikawa Yumiko helped me obtain resources on Enokura. Enokura's widow, Enokura Mitsuyo, not only answered my questions, but also was willing to share with me various pertinent works Enokura had left. My interviews with artists Nomura Hitoshi and Jacques and Catherine Pineau constitute a vital part of my dissertation. I am also thankful to Tel Aviv University's Oshrat Dotan, who invited me to conduct an interview with Nomura. In addition to these *Provoke* members and pertinent artists, former editor-in-chief of the *Design* magazine Okuda Akio was kind enough to share his knowledge about and his experience with *Provoke*. Both Itō Norio at Tama Art University and editor Demura Kouichi kindly helped me to get in touch with Okuda.

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Chapter One: Introduction

My dissertation will evaluate the significance of the critical Japanese photography journal entitled *Provoke*, one of that country's most important photographic publications.¹ Produced by a Japanese collective of photographers, a critic, and a poet, *Provoke* was first published in November 1968 and consisted of three issues—*Provoke 1* (Fig. 1.1), *Provoke 2* (Fig. 1.2), and *Provoke 3* (Fig. 1.3)—and a concluding book, *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language] (Fig. 1.4).² I will argue that these four publications constitute a multi-functional medium, serving simultaneously as a journal of photography, an artists' book,³ a photobook,⁴ and an art work. All the while, the publications demonstrate their unique qualities as photographic media; the publications present photography as a process rather than a final product. For these reasons, I will examine the publications as objects and analyze their photographs.

These four publications reveal the complex layering of intellectual, social, cultural, and political forces informing much of postwar Japanese photography. Ranging in age from thirty to forty, *Provoke*'s founding members were photographer Nakahira Takuma, photographer

¹ See Appendix 1-8 for the table of contents of the four publications and the thumbnail images.

² I translate “shashin to gengo no shisō” as “thought on photography and language” in order to reflect Taki and Nakahira's usage of “shisō” [thought] in the manifesto in *Provoke 1*. However, “thoughts” is more appropriate when it comes to describing the content of the book, because each entry in the book contains slightly different ideas.

³ In this dissertation, “artists' book” refers to a self-published publication by artists and their peers, a publication that has an artistic value in itself.

⁴ The complex origins of the term ‘photobook’ constitute an enticing research subject but one that is beyond the scope of my dissertation. Herein, the term “photobook” refers to any publication whose main component is photography; photographers themselves as well as editors take a lead in creating photobooks. For more about the definition of “photobook,” see “Introduction” in Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, *Photobook: A History* (London: Phaidon, 2004), 6-11.

Takanashi Yutaka, critic-photographer Taki Kōji, and poet-critic Okada Takahiko.⁵ Photographer Moriyama Daidō joined the group from the second issue on. The group represents a radical and revolutionary moment in the history of Japanese photography, both in theory and in practice. Despite the publications' legendary status, there has been little in-depth research exploring either its photography or its theory within the specific context of Japanese society, history, and culture.

My dissertation reflects my effort to elucidate the concepts that underscore the four *Provoke* publications. The photographs in the four *Provoke* publications are not simply the traces of reality that Rosalind Krauss says defines the photographic medium⁶ nor are they solely testimonies of what has already been, as Roland Barthes writes.⁷ Instead, *Provoke* members' photographs prove that the very act of taking photographs can be a critical way of being in the world. In order to fully appreciate the significance of the four *Provoke* publications, it is crucial to investigate this powerful concept at their core.

My dissertation also reevaluates *Provoke 1, 2, and 3*, and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* as publications. Previous research has not scrutinized the publications' material aspects, such as how the layout or structure of the publications relates to the concepts underlying these four publications. *Provoke* members established their four publications because other photography publications could not satisfactorily quench *Provoke* members' hunger to identify, explore, and transcend the limits of what photography could do. In this respect, I attempt to

⁵ In this dissertation, the names of Japanese people start with the family name and end with the given name, according to Japanese custom. This rule even governs references to Moriyama Daidō, a well-known figure in the West, because the dissertation discusses his works prior to the 1990s, when his international recognition took hold.

⁶ This point is exemplified in her articles "Notes on the Index: Part 1" and "Notes on the Index: Part 2" in *The Originality of the Avant-garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1985).

⁷ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), 111-119.

prove that the four *Provoke* publications were unique production sites that accommodated a variety of photographic works interrogating the notion of photography from different approaches. Therefore, a question arises: “What characteristics distinguished *Provoke* from all other photography publications?” The following sections and chapters answer this question in a rigorous, multi-faceted manner.

Among other things, I also investigate each photographer’s photographs to demonstrate that they were imbued with a rebellious and independent spirit. The most acknowledged manifestation of this spirit is probably *are-bure-boke*, which I will reevaluate.⁸ *Are-bure-boke* translates into “grainy, blurry, and out-of-focus.” The *Provoke* photographers often shot without looking through the viewfinder, and sometimes even while running or walking. The resulting images exemplified the group’s signature style, known as *are-bure-boke*.⁹ The photographers believed that this quality conveyed a sense of immediacy in the experience of reality. For example, Nakahira’s photograph of an underground passage presents *are*, or a grainy quality, which is an effect that photographers can achieve by excessively heating the chemicals used to develop negatives or prints (Fig. 1.5). Moriyama most likely shot the supermarket photograph (Fig. 1.6), typical of *bure*, or a blurred quality, while walking in an aisle without looking through his view finder, as evidenced by the image’s very low vantage point. Takanashi’s photograph of female models in fashion costumes exhibits *boke*, or an out-of-focus quality (Fig. 1.7).

⁸ Although *are*, *bure*, and *boke* are three quite different visual effects that derive from their own distinct approaches, I will refer to the three effects with a singular hyphenated noun phrase *are-bure-boke*, because this phrase is common in discussions concerning Japanese photography.

⁹ *Are-bure-boke* photographs might have reflected the influence of alcohol or drugs. *Provoke* members were heavily involved in the drinking scene, and Nakahira had an issue with sleeping pills after the disbandment of *Provoke*. Okada addressed Japan’s psychedelic culture in his essay “Fetico ni gyaku modori” [Going back to *fetico*] in *Provoke 2*, warning about the drug-based pitfalls of losing one’s grip on reality. Further research on whether this culture of using mind-altering substances affected the *Provoke* photographers’ output is advisable.

After a number of young photographers in the late 1960s temporarily took up *are-bure-boke* for their photography, photography critics came to consider the approach a passing trend in the Japanese photography world. When Nakahira saw a 1970 advertisement for the National Railway Company whose photograph used *bure-boke* (Fig. 1.8), he lamented that this approach to photography had become merely a style.¹⁰ The March 1976 issue of *Asahi Camera* carried a special feature about *are-bure-boke* entitled “Tokushū: Bure boke wa dō natta” [Special topic: What happened to *bure-boke*?], in which Moriyama, Nakahira, photographer Ōtsuji Kiyoji, and journalist Amano Michie (a contributor to *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*) offer their views on the approach. The feature treats *are-bure-boke* as a trend from the past and identifies Moriyama and Nakahira as its prominent figures.¹¹ In his interview, Moriyama expressed his regret that his photography had been reduced to the label *bure-boke*.¹² Nakahira’s self-critique centered on his unreasonably high expectations (as he characterized them) of *bure-boke*, although he also criticized the media for having turned *are-bure-boke* into a mere fashion.¹³

Recent scholarship has begun to reassess *are-bure-boke*. For example, Shimizu Minoru,

¹⁰ Nakahira Takuma, “Kiroku to iu genei” [An illusion called records], originally published in *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (July 1972), 80; reprinted in *Naze shokubutsu zukan ka* [Why an illustrated botanical encyclopedia?] (Tokyo: Shōbunsha, 1973); also reprinted in *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga... Hihyō shūsei 1965-1977* [Fire at the limits of my perpetual gaze: Collected essays of Takuma Nakahira, 1965-1977], ed. Yasumi Akihito and Ishizuka Masato (Tokyo: Osiris, 2007). (The English translation of *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga...* is from *Nakahira Takuma: Documentary* (Tokyo: Akio Nagasawa Publishing, 2011).)

¹¹ Moriyama Daidō, Nakahira Takuma, Ōtsuji Kiyoji, and Amano Michie, “Tokushū: Bure boke wa dō natta” [Special feature: What happened to *bure-boke*?], *Asahi Camera* (March 1976): 206-219. *Are-bure-boke* is often abbreviated as *bure-boke*.

¹² *Ibid.*, 206.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 210-213.

an independent scholar of photography, explains that *Provoke's* manifesto endowed Moriyama's use of *are-bure-boke* with a certain theoretical rigor—nullifying the traditional meanings of photographed objects.¹⁴ To Moriyama, the “naked world” was far from that revealed by descriptive photographic images. Shimizu argues that Nakahira's *are-bure-boke*, which shaped the “expression” of his encounters with the world, also informed Moriyama's work.¹⁵ Regarding these two photographers, *are-bure-boke* was anchored in their departure from modern photography, which encompassed both pictorialism and straight photography.¹⁶ In this sense, Shimizu observes, *are-bure-boke* was simultaneously the means and the aim of *Provoke*.

Shimizu's insightful essay explains the meanings that *are-bure-boke* held for Moriyama and Nakahira. Still, a number of relevant questions remain to be answered. Can *are-bure-boke* be explained only as Moriyama's “means” and Nakahira's “ways” in photography? How have *Provoke's are-bure-boke* works changed our views on Japanese photography? By investigating these questions, I aim to contribute to the existing scholarship on *Provoke* and to the scholarship on photography in general.

Launching *Provoke*

Provoke was initiated by Nakahira and Taki, who had become acquainted with each other while working as curators and researchers for the historic photography exhibition “One Hundred

¹⁴ Shimizu Minoru, “Are-bure-boke saikō: Moriyama Daidō no *Shashin yo sayōnara* fukkan” [Rethinking are-bure-boke: Reprint of Moriyama Daidō's *Farewell Photography*], originally published in *Inter Communication* 58 (Autumn 2006), 101; reprinted in *Moriyama Daidō to sono jidai* [Moriyama Daidō and his era], ed. Seikyūsha (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2007).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 98-100.

Years of Photography: A History of the Japanese People's Photographic Expression.”¹⁷ Nakahira subsequently recruited Takanashi, Okada, and Moriyama. The magazine title was derived from Nakahira's favorite Japanese word, *chōhatsu-teki*, which in English translates as “provocative.”¹⁸ Assigning an English title to the publication is not an anomaly in the history of Japanese photography. Examples of such titles include *Foto taimusu/ Photo Times* (est. 1924) and *Kamera āto/ Camera Art* (est. 1935), both of which predate *Provoke*. As *Provoke* members had familiarized themselves with photography and culture in the United States through foreign exhibition catalogues, photobooks, and Japanese monthly photography magazines, the *Provoke* members' decision to choose an English title was not particularly odd.

From the beginning, *Provoke* members' pursuit of photography was very different from that of preceding photographers. First, *Provoke* photographers not only proposed the question “What is photography?” but also investigated photography's relation to language. Second, the members privately launched their own journal, which was far different from any conventional photography magazines or photobooks in Japan. Third, many *Provoke* photographs are made used the approach known as *are-bure-boke*. These three attributes were all radical in the context of Japanese photography at that time.

Regarding the first point, Japanese photographers prior to *Provoke* were concerned primarily with what to photograph and how to convey personal impressions—two issues

¹⁷ Yasumi Akihito, “Journey of the Limits of Photography: The Heyday of *Provoke* 1964-1973,” in *Japanese Box*, ed. Christoph Schifferli (Paris: Edition 7L and Göttingen: Steidl, 2001), 12, 13. The Japanese title of this exhibition was “Shashin hyakunen: Nihonjin ni yoru shashin hyōgen no rekishi ten” [写真100年 日本人による写真表現の歴史展]. The Japan Professional Photographers Society organized this exhibition. It was held at Ikebukuro Department Store in Tokyo from June 1 to 12 in 1968.

¹⁸ Fukushima Yoshio, “Shashin no jidai e 15: Purovōku no toujō, shissō shi chōhatsu shitsuzuketa shashin” [The era of photography, 15: The emergence of *Provoke*, and photography that kept pushing forward and provoking], *Asahi Camera* (March 1996): 137.

involving a great amount of technical finesse and precision. Signaling a decisive shift and summarizing the publication's manifesto, *Provoke*'s subtitle "material to provoke thought" delineated the *Provoke* members' refusal to describe their collected works in any established, conventional terms. Their unabridged manifesto, written by Taki and Nakahira, graced the first few pages of *Provoke 1* (Fig. 1.9):

Visual images are not in and of themselves thought. Visual images cannot have a totality like ideas, nor are they an interchangeable code like language. Nevertheless, visual images' irreversible materiality—reality cut out by the camera—resides in the reverse side of language, and it thus sometimes inspires the world of language and ideas. At that moment, language overcomes itself as a fixed concept and transforms itself into a new language, which is thus new thought. Today, language has lost its material base, in other words, its reality, and is floating in the air. What we photographers can do is to capture with our own eyes fragments of reality that cannot be grasped by any existing language and to actively offer materials to thought and language. This is why we assign "material to provoke thought" as a subtitle to *Provoke*, although we are somewhat embarrassed by it.¹⁹

As their manifesto proclaims, *Provoke* photographers attempted to "provoke" thought and language by revealing—through photography and poems—a world indescribable by conventional language and imagery. *Provoke* photographers concerned themselves with the idea of 'reality,' which was sometimes rendered by journalists and photographers in clichéd words and stereotypical photographic images, as seen in photojournalism. The manifesto loudly voices the members' rebellion against this established relationship between photography and language,

¹⁹ Nakahira Takuma, Okada Takahiko, Takanashi Yutaka, and Taki Kōji, [manifesto], *Provoke 1* (November 1968): 2. The translation is by the author, with reference to the following six existing translations: the first is by Linda Hoaglund in the brochure issued by the Roth Horowitz Gallery, New York, 1999; the second is by Reiko Tomii and appears in *Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis*, ed. Iwona Blazwick (London: Tate Publishing, 2001): 205, 206; the third is by Sumiko Suga and Lynne E. Riggs in Yasumi Akihito, "Journey to the Limits of Photography: The Heyday of *Provoke*, 1964-1973" in *The Japanese Box* (Paris: Edition 7L and Göttingen: Steidl, 2001), 14; the fourth is by Nabuko Kobayashi in Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, eds., *Photobook: A History, Volume I* (London and New York: Phaidon, 2004), 270; the fifth is by Ivan Vartanian in Vartanian and Kaneko Ryūichi, eds., *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and 1970s* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2009), 17; and the sixth is by Fabienne Adler, "First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty: Theory and Practice of the 'Camera-generated' Image in 1960s Japan" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2009), 234.

and constitutes the conceptual core of the publication; indeed, the manifesto must be interpreted as a “work” itself, displayed along with photographs and poems in the *Provoke* publications.

Regarding the second point, the difference between *Provoke* and existing (or previously existing) photography magazines is that those magazines had usually been commercially driven and had emphasized the technical aspects of photography.²⁰ For example, the two major photography magazines at the time of *Provoke*, *Camera Mainichi* and *Asahi Camera*, were vehicles in which not only photographers could present their works, but also camera-equipment companies could advertise new products to amateur photographers. Besides, the design and structure of *Provoke* were entirely unlike those of other major photography magazines. Throughout its three-issue run, *Provoke* reads from left to right, unlike most of the Japanese photography magazines, which read from right to left. Major photography magazines often accommodated explanatory writings and text by photographers and comments from critics, but none of these “aids” existed in the four *Provoke* publications. *Provoke* was meant to generate new photography through its stark outlook, and it had a philosophy entirely different from that of other magazines.

In terms of style, the four *Provoke* publications were in line with contemporary photobooks, which served as vehicles for photographers’ personal expression.²¹ There were several photobooks on scientific studies in pre-War Japan, but the artistic photobooks that actively presented photographers’ aesthetic point of view first emerged during the 1960s.²² To

²⁰ See Chapter Two for a brief history of photo publications in Japan.

²¹ Editor and writer Ivan Vartanian calls *Provoke* a “magazine-style photobook” in his “The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media” in *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and 1970s*, ed. Ivan Vartanian and Kaneko Ryūichi (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2009), 17.

²² *Ibid.*, 13-14.

make them, photographers often collaborated with graphic designers to transform their photobooks into works of art. One example, dating from 1965, is Kawada Kikuji's *Chizu* [The map], which was designed by the renowned graphic designer Sugiura Kōhei (Fig. 1.10); the Nobel Prize novelist Ōe Kenzaburō wrote the text. Despite its similarity to periodicals, *Provoke* comes across also as a photobook, owing to the publication's stylish outlook (Fig. 1.1), its particular approach to showcasing photographs (Fig. 1.11), and its poems and essays written by poets and critics. It suffices to say that, compared to the major photography magazines and photobooks at the time, *Provoke* was an unconventional production site in the history of Japanese photography.

Regarding the third point, the justification for this spontaneous shooting style was most eloquently articulated by one of the founders of *Provoke*, Taki. His pivotal 1970 essay "Me to me narazaru mono" [Eye and what is not eye] elaborates on his philosophical investigations of photography. Rather than treat photography merely as a tool for recording 'reality,' Taki integrated physical circumstance, subject, and vision in a new way to grasp the world and photography. He stated, "We have to theorize photography. By doing so, we enable it, in the present time, to be an excellent tool for decoding the unseen layers of meaning in the mundane circumstances of life and for effectively viewing our human experiences more holistically."²³ For Japanese photography, the four *Provoke* publications blazed a new path that afforded photographers an opportunity to exercise a physical presence and that endowed the act of taking photographs with significance.

²³ Taki Kōji, "Me to me narazaru mono" [Eye and what is not eye], in *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o suteru: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language] (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1970), 201. "写真の方法は思想化しなければならない。それが、現代における写真が、環境の未知の意味を解説し存在の全体的把握に有効なひとつのすぐれた資料であることを可能にする。"

Management of *Provoke*

Provoke first took the form of a journal not only because publications are the conventional vehicles in which Japanese photographers exhibit their works, but also because all the members except Takanashi were quite active in the publishing of magazines. Having previously assumed an editorial position for the public relations magazine of a glass company, Asahi Glass Co., Ltd., Taki knew the entire magazine-production process. Nakahira worked as an editor at the opinion journal *Gendai no me* [Contemporary eye] and was on the editorial board of *Andā guraundo jenerēshon/ Underground Generation*, created by the artist Kanesaka Kenji in the same year *Provoke* was launched. With some colleagues, Okada spent time in 1961 publishing the poetry-anthology journal *Dramu kan* [Drum].²⁴ Moriyama planned to launch a magazine called *Scandal* with poet-dramatist Terayama Shūji (this plan ultimately went unrealized).

Publishing and circulating *Provoke*, however, was not an easy task. Taki's design office in Aoyama (west-central Tokyo) doubled as the office for *Provoke*. To amass the financial capital necessary for launching the project, each of the four founders—Taki, Nakahira, Takanashi, and Okada—contributed to the coffer 300,000 yen (approximately 830 dollars, according to the exchange rate of the time), but Taki covered most of the publication's operational costs.²⁵ Never intended to achieve commercial success, the publication was constantly in financial crisis right up until the end of its run.²⁶

²⁴ The co-founders were Aida Chieko, Inoue Teruo, Suzuki Shinji, and Yoshimasu Gōzō.

²⁵ Yanagimoto Naomi, "Yanagimoto Naomi: 90% ga seifu no hanashi datta henshū kaigi/ Yanagimoto Naomi: Ninety Percent of Their Talk Was Politics," interview, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 10, 1993): 70.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

Furthermore, *Provoke* sold no advertisement space that would have secured the publication's financial foundation, and the members' marketing strategy was quite elementary. For the first issue, Taki and his assistant created three versions of a poster featuring, respectively, photographs by Taki, Takanashi, and Nakahira (Figs. 1.12 and 1.13).²⁷ Approximately twelve by five inches in size, its vertical shape was designed to fit in available spaces at bookstores. The posters were also put up on the classifieds bulletin boards of university campuses and bookstores, which attracted the readership of youths and students.²⁸ Yanagimoto Naomi, one of Taki's assistants, packed his bag with copies of *Provoke* and brought them to one local bookstore after another in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Hokkaidō.²⁹ Takanashi's high school classmate, who owned a bookstore in Tokyo, helped establish connections between Yanagimoto and the bookstores in Kyoto and Hokkaidō. *Provoke* did not use the existing distribution network because it was a small operation by commercial standards. Approximately one thousand copies of each issue were printed. Its price of five hundred yen was relatively expensive for a journal, when a monthly newspaper subscription was around six hundred yen and a major monthly magazine cost less than three hundred yen.³⁰ Furthermore, many copies were handed out free to visitors to Taki's office; for example, only about half of *Provoke 1*'s printed copies were actually sold. By the time *Provoke 2* and *Provoke 3* were published, the number of back-orders of *Provoke 1* had increased

²⁷ *Provoke* members also made the Nakahira version, of which there seem to be no existing copies.

²⁸ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura on July 9, 2010.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ The average monthly expenditure on books and other reading materials by household was 1,076 yen in 1968. *New Edition Historical Statistics of Japan* Vol. 4, ed. Japan Statistical Association (Tokyo: Japan Statistical Association, 2006), 260. A monthly subscription to the Mainichi daily newspaper in 1968 cost 660 yen, and the price of the major literary magazine *Chūō kōron* [Central public discourse] in 1966 was 230 yen. The Asahi Shinbun Company, *Nedanshi nenpyō, meiji, taishō, shōwa* [Chronological tables of price history] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shinbun Company, 1988), 111.

and it was almost out of stock.³¹ Thus, the rudimentary marketing adopted for *Provoke* fit its alternative mode of publication.

In 1970, after a year and a half of operations, both the continuing financial difficulties and members' strong sense of burnout led to *Provoke*'s disbanding.³² The members' final publication was *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. Moriyama recalled that the members all had strong artistic egos and always criticized each other behind their backs.³³ In the end, the task of operating *Provoke* required more energy and money than the members could come up with. Having plenty of reasons to disband the journal, everyone except Moriyama agreed on closing it down.³⁴ To Moriyama, disbandment seemed too sudden an end.³⁵

Reception of the Four *Provoke* Publications and Their Influence

The reception of *Provoke* around the time of its publication is hard to assess, since there seem to be only a few contemporaneous records or documents regarding this matter. However, some interviews and book reviews reveal that the four *Provoke* publications drew attention from a wide range of people in the disciplines of photography, art, design, and film. A contemporary of

³¹ Yanagimoto, “Yanagimoto Naomi: 90% ga seifu no hanashi datta henshū kaigi/ Yanagimoto Naomi: Ninety Percent of Their Talk Was Politics,” 69, 70.

³² Taki covered almost all operational costs, Takanashi covered some of the costs, and Nakahira and Moriyama rarely paid their dues. Moriyama Daidō, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 8, 2010.

³³ Moriyama Daidō, “Moriyama Daidō: Yuiitsu no raibaru Nakahira Takuma to no semegi ai/ Moriyama Daidō: ‘Nakahira Takuma Was My Only Rival’,” interview, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 1993): 59, 61.

³⁴ Torihara Manabu, “‘Dōki to kōi no chokketsu’ o mezasu shashinka tachi: Moriyama to Nakahira no kunou o koso kiten ni sueyo” [Photographers who aim to link their inspiration with action: Being anchored in the agony of Moriyama and Nakahira], *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (April 2003): 93.

³⁵ Moriyama, “Moriyama Daidō: Yuiitsu no raibaru Nakahira Takuma to no semegi ai/ Moriyama Daidō: ‘Nakahira Takuma Was My Only Rival’,” 61.

the *Provoke* photographers, photographer Yokosuka Noriaki, recalled that he considered *are-bure-boke* to be a mere fad in photographic style.³⁶ Tōmatsu Shōmei, a sympathetic photographer senior to them, clearly took *Provoke* more as a political movement than a photographic one.³⁷ At the same time, photographer Araki Nobuyoshi was so completely taken with *Provoke* that he hoped to participate in the collective.³⁸ Photographer Ōshima Hiroshi, who was much younger than the *Provoke* photographers, recalled that *Provoke* had been shocking in terms of its content.³⁹

Others reacted with shock to photographs by *Provoke* members, who often contributed their photographs and writings to *Dezain/ Design* magazine, published by Bijutsu Shuppan-sha (as discussed in Chapter Four). At meetings of Bijutsu Shuppan-sha's magazine editors, *Design's* editor-in-chief Okuda Akio often came under fire from other editors for printing “unsellable photographs.”⁴⁰ This tension shows that the work of *Provoke* photographers was too radical even for specialized art publishing house at that time, although Moriyama and Takanashi were supposed to be rising stars in the Japanese photography world.

Most of the initial book reviews of *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* offer

³⁶ Yokosuka Noriaki, “Yokosuka Noriaki: Mainā na undō yori omoshiroi kyodai na shihon no ugoki/ Yokosuka Noriaki, ‘No, Working in the World of Big Money Is Much More Interesting Than Such a Minor Movement,’” interview, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 20, 1993): 80.

³⁷ Tōmatsu Shōmei, “Tōmatsu Shōmei: Jidai no ko toshiteno shashinka/ Tōmatsu Shōmei: A Photographer as a Child of His Era,” interview, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 20, 1993): 75.

³⁸ Araki Nobuyoshi, “Araki Nobuyoshi: ‘purovōku’ ni shigeki sareta ‘hitoridake no 70 nen anpo’/ Araki Nobuyoshi, ‘I was alone with my private protest,’” interview, *Déjà vu* (October 1993): 86.

³⁹ Ōshima Hiroshi, “‘purovōku’ to Nakahira Takuma, soshite sono jidai” [*Provoke*, Nakahira Takuma, and their era], *High Fashion* (April 2002): 212. Ōshima expressed his surprise at the fact that it was possible for photographers to create a journal in the discipline of photography, but *Kōga* predates *Provoke* as a journal that was privately published by a small circle of photographers.

⁴⁰ Okuda Akio, interview by author, IC recording, Saitama, October 27, 2010.

similar views of that publication, characterizing its pursuit of photography in both epistemological and ontological terms. For example, graphic designer Kimura Tsunehisa wrote that the book defined photography's logic even while it questioned conventional notions of seeing and being seen in photography.⁴¹

Despite its mixed reception and short life, *Provoke* had a significant impact on Japanese photography. For example, photographers Kuwabara Kineo, Hosoe Eikoh, and photography critic Yoshimura Nobuya launched the photography magazine *Shashin eizō/ The Photo Image* in 1969; clearly under the influence of *Provoke*, they fashioned their new magazine as a forum for critical thinking about photography. The premier issue (May 1969) devoted its first page to the publication's manifesto, which claimed that the publication would depart from the illustrative role of photography and explore photography as a means of artistic expression.⁴² Araki Nobuyoshi's photobook in 1970, *Zerokkusu shashinchō* [Xerox photobook], consisted of photocopied images that were a direct appropriation of Taki's and Moriyama's works in *Provoke*.

3. A scholar of visual arts, Yasumi Akihito, pointed out that the photographer Miyamoto Ryūji had briefly taken up *are-bure-boke* under *Provoke*'s influence.⁴³

To the present day, *Provoke*, along with the *Provoke* members' related photography, have been much discussed in the discourse on photography in Japan. What the four *Provoke* publications left to the following generations was not "the answer," but a question: "What is photography?" *Provoke* is still discussed among practitioners of photography because the

⁴¹ Kimura Tsunehisa, "Chikaku koso shashinnteki gengo: Chizu teki kigō e no keikoku" [Perception is indeed the photographic language: A warning about the codes in maps], *Nihon dokusho shinbun* [Japan book-readers newspaper] (June 15, 1970), 8.

⁴² [Manifesto], *Shashin eizō/ The Photo Image* (May 1969): n.p.

⁴³ Yasumi Akihito and Kuraisi Shino, "Nakahira Takuma: Sono kiseki to toi" [Nakahira Takuma: His trajectory and questions] in *Nakahira Takuma: Kitarubeki shashinka* [Nakahira Takuma: A photographer to come] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2009), 12.

question is fundamental and catalytic to the field.

In the following sections, I will explain the rationale of my dissertation and how my methodology illuminates the main issues surrounding the four *Provoke* publications. My literature review covers a wide range of sources from Japan and the West (exhibition catalogues, books, and articles) that mention postwar Japanese photography and the *Provoke* publications. The inclusive and comprehensive literature review will illuminate the place of the *Provoke* publications in scholarship and museology. Finally, I will lay out the content of each of my chapters.

Methodology

My methodology in addressing this subject involves three approaches: (1) studying the four *Provoke* publications (*Provoke 1, 2, and 3* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*) as independent objects; (2) harnessing social, historical, and cultural perspectives; and (3) using *Provoke* members' writings as primary sources for my investigation.

The first approach involves an examination of the *Provoke* publications as objects and will examine each photograph in these publications. I developed this methodology on the basis of inspiration drawn from Geoffrey Batchen's study of photography and from the process of my own research. Batchen's *Forget Me Not: Photography and Remembrance* explores various kinds of portrait photography and photographic objects and argues that they have functioned as sensory devices by which people remember the deceased.⁴⁴ Batchen's approach has been instrumental in my research on the four *Provoke* publications: his emphasis on sensory experience and memory has compelled me to constantly revisit the original publications, which have never ceased to

⁴⁴ Geoffrey Batchen, *Forget Me Not: Photography and Remembrance* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press and Amsterdam: Van Gogh Museum, 2006).

evoke vivid sensations in me, page after page. His discussion has convinced me that my observations of and my thoughts on the *Provoke* photographs should incorporate their physicality.

Indeed, I sometimes felt it meaningless to analyze each individual photograph as a different entity, because the various sequences of photographs, viewers' viewing experiences, and the conceptual connections among photographs are crucial aspects of the *Provoke* publications. For this reason, I occasionally treat a group of photographs as a single project, much as I do in Chapters Five and Six. Moreover, each issue of *Provoke* functions as an individual photobook and is different in size, theme, quality of paper, and printing method, while the three issues combined reveal the members' stylistic development. Therefore, I will treat each issue as an individual entity (e.g., *Provoke 1* instead of *Provoke*, no. 1), as each has its own independent presence.

I would like to clarify the designation of *Provoke 1, 2 and 3* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* as "publications" for both conceptualization and convenience. In terms of publication format, *Provoke 1, 2, and 3* are journals. However, regarding the three issues of *Provoke*, the term "publication" perhaps conveys more conceptual and material substance than does the term "journal." Nevertheless, I sometimes use the terms "journal" for *Provoke* and "book" for *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* in order to distinguish them. Most important, the word "publication" could more accurately reflect the group's spirited desire to produce "material to provoke thought," as declared in *Provoke's* manifesto.

The second approach consists of the contextualization of the four *Provoke* publications in the historical, social, and cultural milieus of Japan. Useful for this part of my dissertation is Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson's challenge to the significance of photographers'

subjectivity in the Eurocentric canon of photography. In their *Photography's Other Histories*, Pinney rejects the homogeneous, modernist reading of photography, assigning multiple meanings to photography in underrepresented areas.⁴⁵ Pinney's allusion to Heidegger's "world as picture" as representing the European conception of the world is an attempt to unravel the Eurocentric discourse of photography, which has been taken for granted in Western scholarship.⁴⁶ Rejecting photography as merely the fixation of referent and image, Pinney asserts that differences in culture, practice, and ideology require flexible accounts of the medium.⁴⁷ In this respect, Pinney and Peterson present essays on photography that hails from marginalized regions such as Peru, India, and Kenya, and illuminate issues in strikingly novel contexts so as to re-frame the subject-object relationship in photography.

My goal in relating the *Provoke* publications' metaphysical and physical investigations of photography to local history is to proclaim the publications' achievement without subsuming it under what Jean-François Lyotard refers to as the "grand narrative." For this reason, Pinney's claim is useful because the import of highly accessible facets of Western culture into Japan has added complexity to the four *Provoke* publications, and these circumstances and their implications require careful examination.

In order to avoid assessing the *Provoke* photographers' works as secondary to the works of Western photographers and artists, one must investigate the cultural circumstances of late-1960s Japan. This investigation would strengthen our understanding of why and how these Japanese photographers adopted aspects of Western aesthetics and would illuminate *Provoke's*

⁴⁵ Christopher Pinney, "Introduction: 'How the other half...'," in *Photography's Other Histories*, ed. Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), 1-14.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 12-14.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 4-8.

unique value.

For example, the *Provoke* members' experimental photography is by no means reflective of such early avant-garde photography as Russian Constructivism or the New Vision. In *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, Taki's essay "Me to me narazaru mono" [Eye and what is not eye] mentions Moholy-Nagy's *Vision in Motion*,⁴⁸ observing that Moholy-Nagy's works such as his light-modulator and photograms prove that the artist could skillfully integrate space and time into his photographic *methods* rather than exclusively into his photographic *subjects*.⁴⁹ However, Taki eschewed Moholy-Nagy's experimental photographic approach because it did not overcome the photography world's long-standing fixation on the dichotomous relationship between the subject (e.g., the artist or photographer) and the object (e.g., the circumstance and the object to be photographed).⁵⁰ After all, the photographer is the one who makes use of light and space for New Vision photography. In other words, Taki sought to collapse this modernist relationship between photographing and being photographed by reconfiguring photographers and their given circumstances through their act of taking photographs.

One might be tempted to also point out the affiliation of *Provoke* photography with Process art in the United States. The groundbreaking exhibition, *Tokyo Biennale '70: Between Man and Matter* (also known as *The 10th International Art Exhibition of Japan*) in 1970 would act as the official fanfare of the aesthetics attributed to Process art in Japan. It is plausible that the literature about Process art might have been available in Japan, but knowledge of Process art was quite limited within Japanese photography circles. None of the *Provoke* members cited Process

⁴⁸ Taki must have read this book in English, since there has never been a Japanese translation.

⁴⁹ Taki, "Me to me narazaru mono" [Eye and what is not eye], 192, 193.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 193.

art or related artists in their writings, and for this reason among others, it is not reasonable to conclude that *Provoke* members knowingly adopted the concept of Process art.⁵¹

Although New Vision photography and Process art had less to do with *Provoke* than one might think William Klein's works certainly influenced Nakahira and Moriyama. In the following chapter, I will briefly compare and contrast Klein's *Life Is Good & Good for You in New York: Trance Witness Revels* with the *Provoke* publications. Likewise, the references to Andy Warhol in Moriyama's photographs (Fig. 1.14) and Taki's photographs (Fig. 1.15) in *Provoke 3* are even more obvious due to their visual repetition and choice of subjects. Warhol had a powerful indirect relationship with Moriyama, an assertion that is not in dispute insofar as the Japanese photographer has openly admitted his appropriation of styles and techniques from the iconic artist. In Chapter Six, I will examine and evaluate Moriyama's works in *Provoke 3*, in which he audaciously appropriated Warhol's art. In both cases, I aim to also illuminate the uniqueness of the *Provoke* publications—that is, their independence from the works of Klein and Warhol.

The third approach rests on an analysis of the members' writings regarding *Provoke's* core concepts. The writings, most of which were by Taki and Nakahira, are not easy to read, typically revealing both their heavy reliance on rhetorical tools and their dense, sometimes perplexing arguments. In addition, the intense tone of their writings, a tone that many activists at that time recorded in their own writings, can be unfamiliar even to Japanese readers today.

Although one must read the writings to fully appreciate the publications, the complexity of the writings can be a major obstacle for anyone researching the four *Provoke* publications (especially

⁵¹ I will further explain the intersection of art and *Provoke* photographers in Chapter Six. Although Process art did not directly affect *Provoke*, Nakahira's *Circulation—Time, Place, Events* at the Biennale de Paris in 1971 reflects elements of Process art in its emphasis on the production of the work instead of the work itself.

for a researcher whose native language is not Japanese). Being Japanese and having studied art history in the United States, I am in a position to bridge scholarship between the two regions. Therefore, I will read, decode, and interpret the writings and use them to guide my study of the philosophy of the *Provoke* publications.

The State of *Provoke* Scholarship (in Japan and Abroad)

I will examine two types of literature in addressing the topic of this research. The first is U.S. exhibition catalogues, which reveal how museological institutions in the United States have been treating and understanding Japanese photography. Because my dissertation has been written and will be received in the context of U.S. academia, a critical review of U.S. exhibition catalogues is necessary to build the foundation on which my study is based. The second type of literature comprises those studies specific to *Provoke*. They can help us understand how *Provoke* has been received both in Japan and abroad. Overall, my review of the literature lays out the necessity of examining, with a strong revisionist approach, *Provoke 1, 2, and 3* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. I hope that the literature review helps rationalize my approach to the subject and serves as a useful guide for other researchers.

My review begins with the exhibition *New Japanese Photography* (Fig. 1.16), the first substantial study of Japanese photography in the United States, held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1974.⁵² It was co-curated by John Szarkowski, chief curator of the museum's

⁵² The exhibition *Photography 63: An International Exhibition* in 1963 at the George Eastman House also introduced some Japanese photographers who were included in *New Japanese Photography*. However, this exhibition's aim was to introduce U.S. audiences to contemporary U.S. and overseas photography, not just to photography from Japan. Besides Yamagishi, photographer Ishimoto Yasuhiro's contribution to erecting a bridge between Japanese and U.S. photographic trends was immeasurably influential on the exchange, since he served as a coordinator for both *Family of Man* and as a member of the nominating committee for *Photography 63*.

photography department, and Yamagishi Shōji, the editor-in-chief of *Camera Mainichi*. Of the photographers submitting their works to *Camera Mainichi*, Yamagishi selected fifteen photographers, some of whom were highly established and others of whom were emerging photographers.⁵³ Moriyama was also included among them.

As a well-known formalist advocate of photography, Szarkowski undertook an ongoing investigation into the essence of photography, an effort that is evident in his essay in the exhibition catalogue. With a strongly modernist view, Szarkowski assumes that photography is a universal language, and that this quality is the key to understanding photography. He states, “It is surely clear also that only in its most pedestrian and utilitarian functions does photography approach universality of meaning.”⁵⁴ Conceptualizing photography with a capital P, Szarkowski posits that the meaning of photography lies in the medium itself.

However, the show’s formalist treatment of photography leaves out an analysis of photographic practices in Japan.⁵⁵ As A.D. Coleman sharply points out in his exhibition review, the exhibition displayed neither a photobook nor a photography magazine of any sort, except Ohara Ken’s *One*.⁵⁶ Featured in a major institution in the United States, Yamagishi and Szarkowski’s introduction to Japanese photography certainly deserves positive appraisal, but the

⁵³ They were Domon Ken, Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Tōmatsu Shōmei, Kawada Kikuji, Naitō Masatoshi, Ichimura Tetsuya, Tsuchida Hiromi, Fukase Masahisa, Narahara Ikkō, Hosoe Eikoh, Moriyama Daidō, Akiyama Ryōji, Ohara Ken, Tamura Shigeru, and Jūmonji Bishin.

⁵⁴ John Szarkowski, “Introduction,” in *New Japanese Photography*, ed. John Szarkowski and Shōji Yamagishi (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1974), 9.

⁵⁵ Yamagishi rightfully acknowledged this risk and mentioned that he had initially hesitated to have Japanese photography shown at the Museum of Modern Art. Yamagishi Shōji, “Maegaki” [Foreword], *Camera Mainichi* (June 1974): 42, 43.

⁵⁶ A.D. Coleman, “It Doesn’t Tell the Whole Story: Photography Whole Story? Photography Exhibitions,” *New York Times*, April 7, 1974, section 34D, in ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/120047287/1310510362F3D5A6EBC/1?accountid=7287> (accessed April 29, 2011).

show's formalist approach to photography could not satisfactorily capture the distinctive qualities of the works of these Japanese photographers.

Five years later, in 1979, an exhibition entitled *Japan: A Self Portrait* (Fig. 1.17) was organized by Yamagishi and Cornell Capa at the International Center of Photography, another New York institution.⁵⁷ Yamagishi served as an editor and Capa as an associate editor for the exhibition catalogue. For this exhibition, nineteen photographers⁵⁸ were selected by the Japanese committee members, consisting of Yamagishi as chairman and another five photographers.⁵⁹

The show set a very different tone from that found in the Museum of Modern Art exhibition. As the executive director of ICP at the time, Capa organized the *Japan: A Self Portrait* under his driving premise that a humanistic bond existed between the United States and Japan.⁶⁰ The NASA photographs of the earth (Fig. 1.18) symbolized the show as conceptualized by Yamagishi: "The keen eyes of science can open up the inherent culture common to all mankind, and serve to bring about mutual cooperation among all."⁶¹ The photographers'

⁵⁷ The exhibition became a part of a three-month cultural-celebration program entitled "Japan Today." The program was conceived of by the National Endowment for Humanities, and funded primarily by the National Endowment for Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Matsushita Electric Industrial. Douglas Davis, "Japan's Art of the Moment," *Newsweek* (April 30, 1979): 100, in LexisNexis Academic, <http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/hottopics/lnacademic/?verb=sr&csi=5774> (accessed April 29, 2011).

⁵⁸ They were Narahara Ikkō, Morinaga Jun, Fukase Masahisa, Hamaya Hiroshi, Kawada Kikuji, Tōmatsu Shōmei, Arita Taiji, Moriyama Daidō, Araki Nobuyoshi, Ishiuchi Miyako, Shinoyama Kishin, Tomiyama Haruo, Ueda Shōji, Suda Issei, Akiyama Ryōji, Hanabusa Shinzō, Tsuchida Hiromi, Yamamura Gashō, and Yamazaki Hiroshi. A photograph of the earth (close up of the Kyūshū region) taken by a satellite camera is also included. Six of the nineteen participating photographers, including Moriyama, had had their works displayed at the Museum of Modern Art's 1974 exhibition.

⁵⁹ The five photographers were Hamaya Hiroshi, Miki Jun, Tōmatsu Shōmei, Narahara Ikkō, and Akiyama Ryōji.

⁶⁰ Shōji Yamagishi, "Preface," in *Japan: A Self-portrait*, ed. Shōji Yamagishi and Cornell Capa (New York: The International Center of Photography, 1979), 8.

⁶¹ Shōji Yamagishi, "Foreword," in *Japan: A Self-portrait*, 14.

depiction of Japan indeed provided a dramatic view of Zen monks, the U.S. military bases in Japan, and seasonal landscapes, among other objects. Yamagishi wove the photographs into a single fabric in the catalogue's foreword, hoping this rebus-like linkage would conjure up a portrait of Japan.⁶² Simply put, the exhibition was a cultural affair depicting Japan in the light of "universal humanism" through a photographic lens, rather than an examination of photography, Japanese or otherwise. The show illuminated the social role of photography and rested on a humanistic concept that failed to critically investigate Japanese photography.

After an interval of a few decades, a comprehensive historical survey of Japanese photography, *The History of Japanese Photography* (Fig. 1.19), was held in 2004 at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas. Organized by Anne Wilkes Tucker, the museum's curator of photography, the catalogue was completed as a cooperative effort with eight other contributors. The aim of the exhibition was quite different from the aims of the preceding two shows in the 1970s. Tucker stated that the goal of her exhibition and the accompanying name-sake publication would be "to provide a nuanced, thorough history of Japanese photography to a broad Western audience, and thus to encourage further research and cross-culture comparisons."⁶³ As her statement indicates, the catalogue almost served as a standard textbook of Japanese photography that would encourage further scholarship of Japanese photography.

The contribution of *The History of Japanese Photography* is that it covers a comprehensive history of Japanese photography from the beginning to the present day. Almost all the chapters were written by Japanese contributors such as Kaneko Ryūichi, Takeba Joe,

⁶² Ibid., 13.

⁶³ Anne Wilkes Tucker, "A Parallel Vision: The Evolution of Photography in Japan," *Aperture* 170 (Summer 2008): 38.

Kinoshita Naoyuki, and Iizawa Kōtarō, prominent figures who have been building up the history of Japanese photography in recent years. Kaneko, Takeba, Kinoshita, and Iizawa wrote all the chapters, except the last one, which was written by Dana Friis-Hansen, a curator of contemporary art, not a photography historian. Therefore, the overall content of the catalogue strongly reflects their views. As a consequence the catalogue can almost be reckoned a US-bound import of the history of Japanese photography—a history that is widely acknowledged in Japan.

Basically, these Japanese authors deem photography to be a vehicle employed by artistic, commercial, cultural, and political enterprises that have been pervasive throughout the history of Japanese society. For this reason, the survey proceeds in a chronological order and explains how photography has been meeting and shaping the needs of Japanese society. Some authors introduce photography ranging from so-called masters' photographs to anonymous photographs, as well as magazine-based photography prints and miscellaneous photographic objects. For example, Kinoshita explains that photographs attributed to Tamoto Kenzō served the Japanese government's efforts to record the settlement of Japan's northernmost island, Hokkaidō (Fig. 1.20). Kinoshita also included a photograph of Hokkaidō snapped by an unidentified photographer who had captured the process of settlement (Fig. 1.21).

The catalogue treats *Provoke* in several different ways. Responsible for the postwar-photography section, Iizawa chronologically situates both the established photographers and their works in that era, and his discussion covers *Provoke*.⁶⁴ Rather than analyze the publication itself, Iizawa emphasizes each photographer's professional background and works. At the end of

⁶⁴ Iizawa Kōtarō “The Evolution of Postwar Photography,” in *The History of Japanese Photography*, ed. Ana Friis-Hansen, Kaneko Ryūichi, and Takeba Joe, and Anne Wilkes Tucker (New Haven and London: Yale University Press and Houston: the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2003), 208-259.

the book are two sections that address *Provoke*: the resource section entitled “Major Photography Clubs and Associations” characterizes *Provoke* as a collective, and the resource section entitled “Major Photography Magazines” characterizes *Provoke* as a photography magazine.⁶⁵

Photography scholar Joel Smith’s review of the exhibition catalogue points out the critical problems with the exhibition. Smith argues that the book should have referred to the profound meaning that photography has held for Japan.⁶⁶ For example, he argues that the catalogue’s concentration on the works of Japanese-born photographers resulted in a total lack of Japan-related photographs and photographers, such as Felice Beato’s 19th-century souvenir photographs and Eugene Smith’s 20th-century Minamata photographs.⁶⁷ In other words, Smith criticizes the cut-and-dry essays and proposes that there should have been “more analysis and comparison across periods, media, and genres of image making, as well as across the geographic divide.”⁶⁸ He even mentions the “ideological kinship” between Domon Ken’s Buddhist sculptures and Ansel Adams’s High Sierra as a possible model, although this example rests only on the resonance between their respective styles.⁶⁹

What Smith’s opinion reveals is the scarcity of comprehensive sources that prevented such East-West comparisons until the publication of the Houston catalogue. In other words, *The History of Japanese Photography* enables Smith to conduct his own analysis; in turn, the

⁶⁵ Author Matsuda Takao compiled “Major Photography Clubs and Associations,” and librarian Shirayama Mari (at the Japan Camera Industry Institute, Tokyo) compiled “Major Photography Magazines.”

⁶⁶ Joel Smith, *Review* (September 11, 2003), in the website of College Art Association, <http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/576> (accessed April 6, 2006).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

Houston catalogue affords an excellent opportunity, not only to consider how photography has been conceptualized in Japan, thus offering the possibility of cross-cultural, cross-chronological analysis, but also to ponder which direction area studies should take in the history of photography.

From this standpoint, it is important to scrutinize and challenge this conventional model, the Houston catalogue, in order to shape the history of Japanese photography in both Japan and the United States. I do not seek to emulate the catalogue as my “model” but I do use it as a starting point in my dissertation. In this light, the term “Japanese photography” as it appears in my dissertation refers to this historical model.

Another important reason to use the Houston catalogue as my starting point is that it offers the conventional view of *Provoke*, the view established by Iizawa Kōtarō, a photography critic active from the mid-1980s. As mentioned above, in the Houston catalogue Iizawa wrote the section that covers postwar Japanese photography from the 1950s to the 1970s and that includes *Provoke*. In the history of Japanese photography, *Provoke* is generally understood as an heir to the postwar giant Tōmatsu and a big brother to Araki and *Konpora* photography. *Konpora* derives from the English word “contemporary,” which is pronounced in Japanese as *kontenporarī*. This abbreviation was devised from the title of the milestone 1966 exhibition “Contemporary Photographers: Towards a Social Landscape” at the George Eastman House.⁷⁰ *Konpora* photography is generally known for its tendency to capture uneventful daily-life with static images, exemplified by Gochō Shigeo’s photography (Fig. 1.22).

In Iizawa’s 1993 book, *Sengo shashinshi nōto: Shashin wa nani o hyōgen shite kita ka* [Notes on postwar Japanese photography: What has photography been expressing?], he put forth

⁷⁰ Iizawa Kōtarō, *Sengo shashinshi nōto: Shashin wa nani o hyōgen shite kita ka* [Notes on postwar Japanese photography: What has photography been expressing?], (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1993), 103.

a genealogy by devoting a section each to Tōmatsu, *Provoke*, Araki, and *Konpora* photography. Iizawa argues that *Provoke* radicalized Tōmatsu's pursuit of photography. Tōmatsu often visited the southern islands of Japan from the late 1960s in order to explore the capacities of his photography, and *Provoke* inherited this exploration of and conceptualization of photography.⁷¹ The interrogation of photography, as a task, merged with the photographers' craft, eventually surfacing as a component of Araki's and *Konpora* photographers' introspective expressions (Figs. 1.22 and 1.23).⁷² While *Provoke* photographers tried to close the gap between fictitious reality and their living reality, Araki and *Konpora* photographers used their photography to capture their private lives and their relationships with others.

Around the same time as this landmark publication, Iizawa featured *Provoke* in *Déjà vu*, a quarterly photo journal he founded in 1990 and for which he served as publisher and editor-in-chief through its termination in 1993. A monographic treatment of *Provoke* in *Déjà vu* signaled the importance of the group.⁷³ This issue includes interviews with all the members of *Provoke* and several of their contemporaneous photographers; transcribed symposium talks given by Taki, Iizawa, photographer Ōshima Hiroshi, and the visual-arts scholar Yasumi Akihito; and essays by Iizawa and Nishii Kazuo, the former editor-in-chief of *Camera Mainichi*. The passing away of Okada and Taki respectively in 1997 and 2011 makes this *Déjà vu* truly valuable today to those who would seek to understand their ideas and ambitions.

However, Iizawa's genealogy from Tōmatsu to *Provoke* deserves further examination, if only because Iizawa's view falls short of articulating the complexity of *Provoke* and fails to

⁷¹ Ibid., 84-102.

⁷² Ibid., 102-113.

⁷³ There is also a special issue on Araki, published in 1991.

examine its photography in the context of other disciplines. Iizawa characterizes *Provoke* members as “master photographers,” while overlooking other elements (such as photojournalism and photographs taken by anonymous photographers) that affected *Provoke* members’ ideas about photography. Iizawa also limits his discussion to photography, remaining silent about a wide range of artistic and cultural references in the four *Provoke* publications.

In addition to Iizawa, and indispensable in any study of *Provoke*, is the only monograph to date on *Provoke*: Nishii Kazuo’s *Naze Imada Provoke ka* [Why does *Provoke* still matter?], dating from 1996. It anthologizes Nishii’s numerous introspective essays. As a former editor-in-chief at *Camera Mainichi*, Nishii developed a strong sense of camaraderie with magazine regulars, including Moriyama.⁷⁴ Reflective of his personal affinity with practitioners of photography, his view establishes *Provoke* as a prominent group in the history of Japanese photography. Nishii claims that what *Provoke* accomplished was to arrive at the question “Who is a photographer?” through an investigation of the question “What is photography?”⁷⁵ According to Nishii, the definition of “professional photographer” was quite simple back in 1960s Japan: one who earns money by taking photographs.⁷⁶ However, Taki as a critic and Nakahira as an editor began their philosophical and phenomenological quest by exploring photography in and of itself. In doing so, they identified themselves as photographers without titles (such as commercial, professional, or amateur photographer). As a result, Taki and Nakahira inadvertently revealed the differences between commercial photographers and

⁷⁴ Nishii Kazuo, “Dōjidai teki de aru koto, shashinka towa dare ka” [On being contemporary: Who are photographers?], in *Naze Imada Provoke ka* [Why does *Provoke* still matter?] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1996), 10, 11.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

photographers who create their own work. Nishii's observation that the *Provoke* photographers succeeded in provoking a paradigm shift in photographers' consciousness about their profession is an interesting insight into the importance of *Provoke* in the history of Japanese photography.

On the other hand, the discussion in Nishii's writings concerning *Provoke* is quite similar to a view held by Iizawa, because he has also covered works by Gochō and Araki, along with works published in *Provoke*. Furthermore, Nishii's analysis overlooks the material aspects of *Provoke*; that is, the analysis treats only the photographs in *Provoke*, not *Provoke* as a publication. Finally, the biggest problem with Nishii's monograph is that he rarely mentions *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. Despite differing from *Provoke 1, 2, and 3* in terms of publication format, the book should be treated in the same context, having been shaped by the same concepts that informed the three issues of the journal. Together, the four publications presented a new genre of photography and portrayed an unseen world.

If Iizawa's and Nishii's publications were geared toward exploring the critical issues of photography, as manifested by *Provoke*, a different direction was taken in Europe, where *Provoke* was the object of avid collecting activities. Japanese photography has become visible for the past ten years or so through the Japanese photography magazines and photobooks made available at international art fairs and auctions, despite the continued scarcity of literature on Japanese photography in English. For example, *Paris Photo*, an annual photography event in France, featured Japan in 2008, the first Asian country in the exhibition's history to be so honored. In particular, *Provoke* has drawn serious attention from collectors overseas. A Christie's auction catalogue of May 2008 estimated that the four *Provoke* publications combined were worth 14,000 to 20,000 dollars.⁷⁷ The monetary value of these publications had doubled since

⁷⁷ Christies, London, *Photographs*, auction cat., (May 15, 2008), 124.

1999, when three copies of *Provoke* had been on sale at the Roth Horowitz Gallery in New York for 7,500 dollars.⁷⁸

In this respect, Martin Parr and Gerry Badger's *Photobook: A History* is a new type of reference in evaluating *Provoke* as a photobook. Parr is a British practicing photographer and collector who has devoted himself to establishing the value of photography in the form of printed matter. Their tireless efforts shed light on an overlooked aspect of the history of photography. One of their accomplishments is to highlight the role of photography publications as a primary production site of Japanese photography in the 1960s and 70s.

Parr and Badger's book is roughly divided by country, devoting Chapter Nine to Japan under the title "Provocative Materials for Thought: The Postwar Japanese Photobook." The chapter title amply demonstrates the importance they assign to *Provoke*. They also quote Taki to emphasize *Provoke*'s impact on other photographers, including those who were *Provoke* members' seniors.⁷⁹ Parr and Badger argue that *Provoke* had so strong an impact on the history of Japanese photography that even *Provoke* members' predecessor Tōmatsu published a photobook, *Oo! Shinjuku* (Fig. 1.24), which clearly shows *Provoke*'s influence.⁸⁰ Although this example needs further verification, Parr and Badger's enthusiasm for *Provoke* is much emphasized in their treatment of the journal.

Although Parr and Badger established an important milestone for photobooks, their

⁷⁸ Roth Horowitz Gallery, "Provoke" exh. brochure, (New York: Roth Horowitz Gallery, 1999), 4, 5.

⁷⁹ Taki's quote is on the page 266: "The act of expression is the ceaseless process of rendering the invisible visible. That which is visible, that which structures the everyday, passes for reality. The act of expression requires a transition from a world of apparent certainties to a world in which we cannot even locate ourselves." Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, eds., *Photobook: A History, Volume I* (London and New York: Phaidon, 2004).

⁸⁰ Parr, "Provocative Material for Thought: The Postwar Japanese Photobook," in *Photobook: A History, Volume I*, 270, 271.

knowledge of *Provoke* depended heavily on the conventional chronology of photography in Japan. For example, Parr and Badger's book introduces Araki as a successor to the *Provoke* photographers in terms of his energetic production of over three hundred photo-books.⁸¹ And their views on the *Provoke*-Araki genealogy emphasize the transitional era between the political turmoil of the 1960s and the emptiness in the ensuing 1970s, indicating their direct indebtedness to the Japanese discourse shaped by Iizawa. The historical study of Japanese photography does not seem to have progressed much since Iizawa proposed his views in the early 1990s.⁸²

The same linear narrative is also followed in *The Japanese Box*, which can be called a commodification of *Provoke* itself (Fig. 1.25). Encased in a stylish black wooden box, *The Japanese Box* contains facsimile reproductions of six publications: *Provoke 1, 2, and 3*, Nakahira Takuma's *Kitarubeki kotoba no tame ni* [For a language to come], Araki's *Senchimentaru na tabi* [Sentimental journey], and Moriyama's *Shashin yo sayōnara* [Farewell photography]. They are accompanied by a small booklet with a brief essay by Yasumi. The collection was edited by Christoph Schifferli, a collector of photobooks published in the 1960s and 1970s. In his foreword to the booklet, he notes that he was introduced to *Provoke* by Parr.⁸³ The selection of facsimiled volumes, especially Araki's first photobook, unambiguously reflects the view that Parr helped to introduce concerning the impact of *Provoke* photographers' works on succeeding generations in the 1970s.

Each facsimile in *The Japanese Box* is an exact replica of the original in terms of size,

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 271.

⁸² In fact, Iizawa iterates this view in the expanded edition of his *Sengo shashinshi nōto: Shashin wa nani o hyōgen shite kita ka* [Notes on postwar Japanese photography: What has photography been expressing?], which was published in 2008.

⁸³ Christoph Schifferli, "Foreword," in *The Japanese Box* (Paris: Edition 7L and Göttingen: Steidl, 2001), 5, 6.

colophons, and kinds of paper. However, the experience of reading these replicas is quite different from the dramatic and raw experience of looking at their originals. The packaging of the sleek and clean reproductions in an eye-catching box signals the fact that they form rare collectors' items legitimized in the history of Japanese photography. They have lost the raw feel of the original publications that radicalized Japanese photographic imagery. *The Japanese Box* is a limited-edition publication, with each box assigned a unique number between one and one thousand five hundred, emphasizing to collectors the rarity value of their purchase.⁸⁴ Araki's *Sentimental Journey* was originally self-published and sold for the price of one thousand yen (approximately three dollars at the time); in fact, most of the copies were sold to colleagues in the advertising agency where Araki and his wife Yōko were working.⁸⁵ In contrast, *Sentimental Journey's* impressively produced replica is fashioned for purchase on the high end of the contemporary art market.

Aside from the effort to commodify the items in *The Japanese Box*, its major flaw is the lack of important texts and publications. The absence of *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* lessens the theoretical value of the publication. As Schifferli notes, Okada's texts are missing from *Provoke* and *For a Language to Come*, because of his widow's refusal to grant permission for their reproduction.⁸⁶ In these two books, the lyricism in Okada's poetry and texts is critical in conveying the romantic atmosphere of the social change in the late 1960s. Without those texts, the publications inevitably shift to a much quieter tone. Likewise, the complete absence of *Provoke's* final book from the set makes *The Japanese Box* feel strikingly incomplete.

⁸⁴ The Metropolitan Museum of Photography holds one of them, number 841 of 1,500.

⁸⁵ Araki Nobuyoshi, *Araki by Araki* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, Ltd., 2003), 404.

⁸⁶ Schifferli, "Foreword," 7.

First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty not only carries a substantial weight as a critical text, but also reveals the trajectory taken by Moriyama's photographs toward far more violent expression than in *Provoke 1, 2, and 3*. The book was not included in the box collection, probably owing to the book's dependence on text and a paperback-like format, which would not appeal to the intended collectors in Europe.

Therefore, the collectors of *The Japanese Box* (as this plain title suggests) would not so much experience the vibration of innovative, rebellious minds, as find a commodified result of archival efforts. The materialization and commodification of *Provoke* have been due largely to Parr's keen interest in photobooks, and he has responded to the desires of Western collectors and readers well. In the end, *The Japanese Box* is an interpretation of *Provoke* from the Western collector's perspective, from which one can appreciate the set of photobooks as a creation completely dissociated from the originals.

Scholars' examination of *Provoke* has lagged behind the rapidly growing commercial visibility of *Provoke* and of Japanese photography in general. However, Ivan Vartanian (who is an editor) and Kaneko Ryūichi (who is a photography historian, curator, and collector) have made certain efforts to catch up with the commercial interest in *Provoke* and Japanese photobooks. Vartanian and Kaneko's *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and '70s* is again collector driven even if a good source for scholarly research on *Provoke*. It introduces forty-three Japanese photobooks collected by Kaneko, and as such, the research strongly reflects his personal preferences. The innovation of this book is that Vartanian and Kaneko not only mention the content of the photobooks, but also offer a brief historiography of Japanese photobooks' layout, structure, circulation, printing methods, and other aspects. In his "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media," Vartanian places considerable emphasis on the

Provoke publications for their importance. He argues that the publication presented photographs as printed matter instead of as an illustrative source of credible information.⁸⁷ As Vartanian and Kanedo did in their work, I aspire in my dissertation to fill the gap between scholarship and a collector-driven market that pays great attention to *Provoke*.

A germination of this closing of the gap is seen in Fabienne Adler's PhD dissertation about film directors' and photographers' image-making in 1960s Japan.⁸⁸ Entitled *First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty: Theory and Practice of the 'Camera-generated' Image in 1960s Japan*, the dissertation analyzes the Japanese term *eizō* (i.e., camera-generated imagery), which was a lively topic among film directors and photographers back in the 1960s. In Chapter III, Adler discusses *Provoke*, especially Nakahira's and Taki's ideas about *eizō* in comparison with similarly themed ideas espoused by the film directors Oshima Nagisa and Matsumoto Toshio. Despite focusing on film practice, Adler elucidates the core concept of *Provoke* by meticulously examining the great effort that *Provoke* members made to avoid having their photography embody their ideas. In contrast to Adler's commendable study of *Provoke*, which rests heavily on a film-studies framework, my approach to *Provoke* draws from a wider swath of perspectives.

Two prominent museum exhibitions prompted me to explore another aspect of the four *Provoke* publications: the relationship between *Provoke* and contemporary art. One of the exhibitions was *Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis*, held by Tate Modern in 2001. The exhibition focused on nine cities at specific times, with the curators pronouncing on the relationship in each case between art and the modern metropolis. *Provoke* was included in the

⁸⁷ Ivan Vartanian, "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media," in *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and '70s* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2009), 18.

⁸⁸ Fabienne Adler, "First, Abandon the World of Seeming certainty: Theory and Practice of the 'Camera-generated' Image in 1960s Japan" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2009), 234.

exhibition's Tokyo section, focusing on the period around 1970. The section's curator, art historian Reiko Tomii, contributed an essay to the catalogue, introducing *Provoke* and its manifesto as part of the volatile and shifting political and cultural landscape that encompassed not only art but also design, theater, photography, and architecture.⁸⁹ The other exhibition, entitled *Art, Anti-art, Non-art: Experimentations in the Public Sphere in Postwar Japan 1950-1970*, concerned postwar Japanese art and was held by the Getty Research Institute in 2007. In its exhibition catalogue, Charles Merewether characterizes *Provoke* as a radical photography magazine against the backdrop of the social and artistic changes taking place during the 1960s in Japan.⁹⁰ These two catalogues show the linkage between art and photography in Japan, and this is the realm I explore in Chapter Six.

As the historical import of *Provoke* has been solidified, individual *Provoke* members have begun to receive more attention. The rush of *Provoke* photographers' solo exhibitions has been informed by the critical acclaim afforded to the *Provoke* works, and yet, these exhibitions have illuminated the striking differences between their bodies of work. This issue will be discussed in Chapters Five and Six. Various publications accompanying the retrospectives of individual photographers are available and useful for further research. For example, Moriyama's catalogue raisonné *Moriyama Daidō: Zen sakuhinshū* [Moriyama Daidō: Complete works] is a voluminous compilation necessary to understanding the whole scope of his oeuvre.⁹¹ Also available are

⁸⁹ Reiko Tomii, "Tokyo 1967-1973," in *Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis*, ed. Iwona Blazwick (London: Tate Publishing, 2001), 205-206.

⁹⁰ Charles Merewether, "Disjunctive Modernity: The Practice of Artistic Experimentation in Postwar Japan," in *Art, Anti-art, Non-art: Experimentations in the Public Sphere in Postwar Japan 1950-1970* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007), 26, 27.

⁹¹ *Moriyama Daidō: Zen sakuhinshū v. 1-3* [Moriyama Daidō: Complete works, vol. 1-3] (Tokyo: Taka Ishii Gallery, 2003-2004).

catalogues accompanying Moriyama's solo exhibitions: "Daidō Moriyama: Stray Dog" at the Japan Society in New York and the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1999, and "Daidō Moriyama" at the Cartier Foundation in Paris in 2003. Prolific in his photography, Moriyama has also published collections of his essays in Japanese.⁹² His interviews are other important sources, included in both his books and other authors' publications on Moriyama's works (all of them are in Japanese).⁹³

Nakahira's standing as a photographer has recently been enhanced by his solo exhibition at the Yokohama Museum of Art in 2003. Accompanying the exhibition was a Japanese-language catalogue for which the then-museum curator Kuraishi Shino wrote an essay about Nakahira's oeuvre. Some of Nakahira's writings from the early 1960s are also available, but all of them are in Japanese.⁹⁴ Nakahira's two photobooks, *Kitarubeki kotoba no tameni* [For a language to come] from 1971 and *Naze Shokubutsu zukan ka* [Why an illustrated botanical encyclopedia?]

⁹² Examples are Moriyama Daidō, *Mō hitotsu no kuni e* [To another country] (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun Publications, Inc., 2008), Moriyama Daidō, *Kako wa tsune ni atarashiku, mirai wa tsune ni natsukashii* [The past seems to be new to me, and I feel nostalgic about the future] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2005), Moriyama Daidō, *Inu no kioku* [Memories of a dog] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1984; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), Moriyama Daidō, *Inu no kioku shūshō* [Memories of a dog: Epilogue] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1998; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), Moriyama Daidō, *Shashin kara shashin e* [From photography to photography] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1995), and Moriyama Daidō, *Shashin tonō taiwa* [Dialogue with photography] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1995).

⁹³ Some examples of collected interviews are Moriyama Daidō, *Moriyama Daidō shashin o kataru* [Moriyama Daidō talks about photography] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2009) and Moriyama Daidō, *Hiru no gakkō, yoru no gakkō* [Day school and night school] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2006); and some examples of anthologies are Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, *Moriyama Daidō ron* [Theory on Moriyama Daidō] (Tokyo: Tankōsha, 2008), and *Moriyama Daidō to sono jidai* [Moriyama Daidō and his era], ed. Seikyūsha (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2007).

⁹⁴ Examples are the anthology of Nakahira's writings from 1965 to 1977, *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga: Hihiō shūsei 1965-1977...* [Fire at the limits of my perpetual gaze: Collected essays of Nakahira Takuma 1965-1977], ed. Yasumi Akihito and Ishizuka Masato (Tokyo: Osiris, 2007) and *Nakahira Takuma no shashin ron* [Theory of photography by Nakahira Takuma] (Tokyo: Rikiesuta no Kai, 2001). *Nakahira Takuma: Kitarubeki shashinka* [Nakahira Takuma: For a photographer to come] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2009) is an anthology that contains various scholars' writings about Nakahira.

from 1973, are worth viewing for anyone conducting research on *Provoke*.

In 2009, Takanashi's long overdue retrospective exhibition opened at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo. The catalogue is a good comprehensive resource for studying Takanashi's oeuvre, and includes an essay by the curator Masuda Rei and some of Takanashi's writings from the past. However, almost all the literature about Takanashi mentioned here has been published only in Japanese.⁹⁵ Despite the high regard in which he is held by Western aficionados of Japanese photography, the only book on Takanashi yet available in English seems to be the reprint of the 1974 photobook *Toshi-e/ Towards the City*, published in 2010.⁹⁶

As a critic, Taki published a number of books on architecture, interior design, war, sports, design, art, and other topics.⁹⁷ Published only in Japanese, Taki's *Zatsugakusha no yume* [Dream of an omnivorous student] is useful for understanding the development of his thought, because he mentions the history of his reading experience in this book.

Okada published books on art and an anthology of his poems (all of them are in

⁹⁵ Useful resources about Takanashi in Japanese are his essay *Raika na me/ Like a Leica Eye* (Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 2002) and a small booklet, *Shikku suru shashinka: Takanashi Yutaka 'hōhō ron' no Kanata e* [A tantivy photographer: Takanashi Yutaka, beyond 'methodology'], the latter of which is an exhibition catalogue published by the Guardian Garden gallery in Tokyo in 1996. This booklet includes Takanashi's and other writers' writings selected from the past.

⁹⁶ This is one of the photobooks that the "Books on Books" project by the U.S. publishing house Errata Editions has published. "Books on Books" reprinted various photobooks from all over the world. Rather than simply reprint the original photobooks, the "Books on Books" project has released photobooks by presenting entire pages from original photobooks. Takanashi's *Toshi-e/ Towards the City* was published in February 2010 along with William Klein's *Life Is Good & Good for You in New York: Trance Witness Revels*, first published in 1956.

⁹⁷ Taki's books on photography, all of them written in Japanese, are *Shashin ron shūsei* [Corpus of the theory of photography] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003), *Shōzō shashin: Jidai no manazashi* [Portrait photography: The gaze of the era] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2007), *Nūdo shashin* [Nude photography] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992), *Tennō no shōzō* [Portraits of the emperors] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002), and *Shashin no yūwaku* [The seductiveness of photography] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990). Taki also analyzed Walter Benjamin's *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* in his *Benyamin 'Fukusei gijutsu jidai no geijutsu sakuhin' seidoku* [An intensive reading of Benjamin's *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000).

Japanese), but not on photography. Therefore, the four *Provoke* publications are the only photography publications in which Okada was involved. Neither Okada nor Taki wrote much about *Provoke* in their books.

The review of existing literature shows that, despite a significant amount of writings about *Provoke* or by *Provoke* members, an in-depth scholarly analysis of *Provoke 1, 2, and 3* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* is long overdue. There is enough literature to know the overview of the *Provoke* publications, but the major problem found in the publications I reviewed here is that Iizawa's views have prevailed and indeed have gone unchallenged for years. Although Iizawa's contribution has been significant in his contextualization of *Provoke* within the history of Japanese photography, his views rest on his preoccupation with the genealogy of major photographers. Parr and Badger's *Photobook: A History* acknowledges the importance of *Provoke* in the context of material culture, but remains loyal to Iizawa's genealogy of Japanese photography. The same problem is found in *The Japanese Box*, which transforms the avant-garde photography magazine of the late 1960s into a commodity for the contemporary art market. In short, *Provoke* has drawn much attention from the art market, collectors, and critics, but critical analysis of the four *Provoke* publications has not caught up with its popularity.

The catalogue review also illuminates the necessity of exploring how *Provoke* photography has served as a related area of contemporary art, as particularly demonstrated by the *Century City* and *Art, Anti-art, Non-art* shows. This point has not yet been critically discussed in the discourse on Japanese photography.

Therefore, I propose that the field would be well served by scholarly research on *Provoke 1, 2, and 3* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. In particular, I will unpack the orthodoxy of Iizawa's views and investigate the material aspects and content of these

publications. How did the forms of journal and book serve *Provoke* members' objectives? What significance do those forms hold in the history of Japanese photography? An investigation into the dialogue between *Provoke* photography and other disciplines (e.g., philosophy, politics, art, film, and design) is also crucial to further articulating the significance of the four *Provoke* publications.

Chapters in This Dissertation

I would like to briefly outline each chapter to explain the materials and approaches this dissertation covers. The next chapter (Chapter Two) introduces the physical details of the *Provoke* publications in order to provide an overview of arguments in other chapters. The following two chapters (Chapters Three and Four) theoretically investigate *Provoke*'s underlying concepts. Owing to *Provoke*'s (most often Taki's) heavily conceptual take on photography, I have put forth much effort into elucidating and articulating what the publications stood for when they first appeared. The last two chapters of my dissertation (Chapters Five and Six) offer a rigorous visual analysis of the photographs in the *Provoke* publications. At this point, it would be useful to discuss each chapter's content in slightly greater detail.

Chapter Two, "*Provoke* as a Publication," concerns the structures of the *Provoke* publications. I will explain the characteristics that are distinctive of related Japanese photography publications. The chapter also contains a brief history of Japanese photography publications that illustrates the context in which the *Provoke* publications were produced.

The theme of Chapter Three mirrors the chapter's title, "*Provoke* and Radical Politics." Iizawa's and Nishii's writings often narrate the relationship between the two merely as a background to the *Provoke* publications. Therefore, this chapter locates the four *Provoke*

publications within a specific historical context in order to differentiate them from the clichéd associations of art and politics. *Provoke* members (especially Taki and Nakahira) had strong political minds, and their photographs often express or display political subjects. However, politics did not figure as a main thrust of *Provoke*: the members' main concern was to scrutinize the nature of photography and the 'reality' in photography and language, challenging the received ideas about both photography and language. This rebellious spirit itself was in line with contemporary political situations, although they by no means used photography as a catalyst for change in society. I compare and contrast the ideas and activities of *Provoke* members with those of Japanese students who joined the anti-US political movements and who engaged in struggles against various university administrations. Both the *Provoke* members and the students had existentialist sentiments and manifested their ethical stances in physical acts, but the members' goals and the ways in which they adopted French theory were quite distant from each other. Through an examination of the ways in which Taki and Okada dealt with the theories of Jean-Paul Sartre, Antonin Marie Joseph Artaud, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, I elucidate the theoretical foundations of the four *Provoke* publications.

Chapter Four, "*Provoke Against Hōdō Shashin: Provoke in the History of Japanese Photography*" bridges *Provoke* and Japanese photography in the prewar, wartime, and immediate postwar years. This connection has been overlooked in the existing literature on *Provoke*. My revisionist attempt in this chapter is to unpack the genealogy directly connecting Tōmatsu and *Provoke* by illustrating both the *Provoke* members' objection to *hōdō shashin* and its influence on them. Literally meaning "press photography" or "photojournalism" today, *hōdō shashin* refers to the particular look of photojournalism, which was introduced in the 1930s by photographer Natori Yōnosuke. The *Provoke* members, especially Taki and Nakahira, despised the didactic

visual messages conveyed by contemporary photojournalism and rejected Natori's use of photography—particularly in his *hōdō shashin*—as a tool for weaving stories. Therefore, it is imperative to understand the specificity of *hōdō shashin* in order to truly understand *Provoke*'s fundamental ideas. By tracing the conceptual and stylistic development of the four *Provoke* publications, I elucidate how *Provoke* members departed from the legacy of Natori's *hōdō shashin* and contemporary photojournalism and arrived at their own concept of photography, in which photographs are “fragments of reality.”

Chapter Five, “*Provoke* in the Changing Landscapes,” demonstrates the *Provoke* photographers' unconventional approaches to photography from an unprecedented perspective: a focus on landscape as the subject of both photography and discourse at the time in Japan. In *Provoke* photography, landscape is the most prominent topic because of its accessibility to and theoretical importance for the members. Massive physical changes in the Japanese landscape and equally massive changes in *Provoke* members' visual perceptions of these landscapes occurred simultaneously in the rapidly growing country. The construction of highways in preparation for the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 and the introduction of the New City Planning Law in Japan in 1968 are two examples. The changing landscape was also the topic of theoretical debate about national authority, and prominent in this debate was a left-wing film critic, Matsuda Masao, who generated a great deal of discussion called *Fūkei ron* [landscape discourse] among photographers, filmmakers, and critics. The chapter demonstrates that Taki, Takanashi, and Nakahira daringly captured the locus of these changes in the urban environment. I compare and contrast each *Provoke* photographer's conceptualization and practice of landscape photography.

Chapter Six, “*Provoke* and Contemporary Cultures,” investigates the individual *Provoke* members' works (Takanashi, Moriyama, and Nakahira) and their relationship to various

contemporary disciplines, such as fashion, design, and art. This cross-disciplinary approach to the four *Provoke* publications is an urgent task, because neither *Century City* nor *Art, Anti-art Non-art* offers an in-depth analysis of the content of the *Provoke* publications. In the first section, I demonstrate that a group of Takanashi's photographs in *Provoke 2* illustrates his distinctive approach to engaging with *Provoke's* manifesto—an approach that used fashion as subject matter. The second section analyzes Moriyama's photographs in *Provoke 3*, which reflected the influence of Andy Warhol. Challenging the common view that Moriyama's works were derivative of Warhol's, I offer a cultural and biographical background of Moriyama to demonstrate that his works constitute an expression distinct from Warhol's. The third section also examines the intersection of *Provoke* photographers' works and contemporary art around 1970. In particular, I take up Nakahira's works at the *Biennale de Paris* in 1969 and 1971 in order to demonstrate the change in his treatment of photography as a medium in the context of contemporary art. This change simultaneously occurred in the work of other contemporary artists. The chapter concludes with *Provoke's* influence on contemporary art around 1970, using as a case study the relationship between the work of Nakahira and that of the artist Enokura Kōji.

Chapter Seven, "Conclusion," sums up my arguments. I also briefly discuss the work of individual members after the disbandment of *Provoke*. This final chapter evaluates the dissertation's contributions to the discipline and proposes the scope of future research on the four *Provoke* publications in the discourse of photography.

Chapter Two

Provoke as a Publication

I. Introduction

This chapter examines the four *Provoke* publications' physical appearances, structures, and other characteristics. The existing literature has not explored these details even though they are crucial to any rigorous study on the subject, as the publications do differ from one another. In order to fully understand the arguments in this dissertation, it is imperative to understand the basics about the publications themselves. In the following sections, I will also outline the brief history of Japan's photography publications, which should establish a context for *Provoke*. Then, I will discuss each issue of the *Provoke* publications in relation to this context.

II. A Brief History of Photography Publications in Japan

I would like to offer a brief history of photography publications, including magazines—and, to some extent, photobooks—in Japan. In this study, 'photography magazine' is defined as a periodical publication whose main themes are photography and photographs (e.g., *Aperture* and *Shutterbug*) or whose main vehicle for conveying messages is photography (e.g., *National Geographic* and *Life*). It is helpful to grasp the general contours of the history of Japanese photography publications because the subject not only receives frequent mention in this study but also can illuminate the differences between *Provoke* and related Japanese publications.

The formative years of photography magazines went hand in hand with the promotion of camera equipment by camera manufacturers; the magazines that instructed readers on how to use cameras were thus also called "camera magazines." The first Japanese photography magazine is believed to have been *Datsuei yawa* [Tales of photography]. Dating from 1874 and lasting only

three issues, the magazine essentially gave photography lessons to professionals. *Shashin shinpō* [News on photography] was the first major photography magazine in Japan. It was launched in September 1882 and folded in 1940 owing to the wartime restrictions placed on all aspects of Japanese culture. *Shashin shinpō* became a major how-to source for amateur photographers, and also reported the latest information about photography from abroad.⁹⁸ Another major photography magazine was *Shashin geppō* [Photography monthly], which started in February 1894. *Shashin geppō* was published by camera manufacturer Konishiroku Honten (now Konica Minolta); it introduced readers to new products and also explained the techniques of shooting and developing. Both *Shashin shinpō* and *Shashin geppō* were commercially driven magazines that ran advertisements for newly released products.

Photography magazines strikingly increased in number during the 1920s as amateur photography boomed in Japan and new printing techniques were invented.⁹⁹ Inspired by the import of Eastman Kodak's Vest Pocket Kodak in the early 1910s, Konishiroku Honten released in 1925 its original product Pearlette, which was the first mass-produced camera in Japan.¹⁰⁰ With the growing number of photographers in Japan, photography magazines began to specialize in a wide range of related fields, from art to amateur hobbies. The Japanese public's widening and deepening interest in art photography was demonstrated by the publication of *Shashin geijutsu* [Photographic art] in 1921, *Geijutsu shashin kenkyū* [Studies on art photography] in

⁹⁸ Shirayama Mari, "Major Photography Magazines" in *The History of Japanese Photography*, ed. Ana Friis-Hansen, Kaneko Ryūichi, and Takeba Joe, and Anne Wilkes Tucker (New Haven and London: Yale University Press and Houston: the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2003), 378.

⁹⁹ Nakai Kōichi, "Sōron: Fotojānarizumu" [Pantograph: Photojournalism] in *Nihon shashin zenshū 10: Fotojānarizumu* [The corpus of Japanese photography, vol. 10: Photojournalism] (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1987), 90.

¹⁰⁰ Iizawa Kōtarō, *Shashin ni kaere: Kōga no jidai* [Return to photography: The era of *Kōga*] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1988), 35, 45.

1922, and *Foto taimusu/ Photo Times* in 1924. Amateur photographers had their own magazines in two how-to specialized-topic magazines, *Camera* (est. 1921) and *Asahi Camera* (est. 1926). At the same time, the launch of Japan's first news magazines, *Asahi gurafu/ Asahi Graph* and *Sandē mainichi/ Sunday Mainichi*, both in 1923, was a milestone for the integration of photography into people's visual experiences.

The 1930s was another decade in which photography and magazines blossomed in Japan, and two factors explain the growth: the introduction of *Shinkō shashin* [New photography] and the colonialism of the Japanese military. *Shinkō shashin* was ignited by the *Film und Foto* exhibition, which originated in Stuttgart in 1929 and traveled to Japan in 1931, introducing *Neue Sachlichkeit* to the country. *Neue Sachlichkeit* kindled the boom in *Shinkō shashin*, which espoused the idea of photography as mechanical production and embraced constructivist photography such as the work made by Bauhaus artists. The publishing of *Shinkō shashin kenkyū* [New photography studies] in 1930 and *Kōga* (which literally means “light picture” and signifying “photography”) in 1932 was the culmination of this trend.¹⁰¹ Japan's photography publications reflected the expansionism of the Japanese military during the decade, when the public first encountered such colonialist photo magazines as *Manshū Graph* [Illustrated Manchuria] and *Shashin shūhō* [Photo weekly]. The strong propagandistic tone characterizing these magazines served to justify the Japanese invasion of other Asian countries.¹⁰²

In 1941, a number of photography magazines ceased publication or merged into a few

¹⁰¹ Launched in 1930, *Shinkō shashin kenkyū* was an outcome of *Foto taimusu/ Photo Times* and received advice from art historian Itagaki Takao. *Kōga* was founded by an active photographer, collector, critic, and gallery owner, Nojima Yasuzō, in 1932. It consisted of photographs and writings that ranged from *Shinkō shashin* to pictorialism. Photography critic Ina Nobuo and photographers Hanaya Kanbei, Horino Masao, and Natori Yōnosuke were among the major contributors.

¹⁰² *Shashin shūhō*'s initial function was to report on Japanese government policy, but by the end of its existence (in 1945), the publication had become unabashed propaganda.

titles owing to the wartime lack of paper. The surviving photography magazines were *Shashin bunka* [Photographic culture], *Hōdō shashin* [Press photography], *Shashin Nihon* [Photography Japan], and *Asahi Camera*.¹⁰³ However, amateur photographers' enthusiasm quickly returned after the war, with the revival of how-to magazines such as *Camera* (the first to be revived, in 1946) and *Shashin saron* [Photography salon] (revived in 1951). Another photography boom, this time in the 1950s, served the burgeoning market of amateur photographers with such new magazines as *Nihon Camera* (est. 1950), *Sankei Camera* (est. 1954), *Camera Mainichi* (est. 1954), and *Photo Contest* (est. 1956).¹⁰⁴ They had a common format, with articles on new products and shooting methods, monthly photo contests, and the works of professional photographers in the front section.¹⁰⁵ Photography became a widely discussed subject in media other than magazines by the mid-1950s, and major publishers started to launch weekly magazines (called *Shūkan-shi*) that usually featured photography pages and reportage stories.¹⁰⁶

The history of photobooks changed course around this time. Before the Second World War, photobooks were mainly for research purposes, as in the case of *Dōbutsu seitai shashinshū* [Photobook of the biology of animals] and *Kagaku no me: Saishin kagaku shashinshū* [Scientific

¹⁰³ Kusumoto Aki, “‘Hōdō shashin’ ni matsuwaru akuryō no kigen” [The origins of an evil spirit surrounding ‘hōdō shashin’], *Photographers’ Gallery Press* no. 5 (April 2006): 114. *Shashin bunka* later changed its title to *Shashin kagaku*.

¹⁰⁴ “Shashin zasshi no kiseki” [The trajectory of photography magazines] in *Shashin zasshi no kiseki* [The trajectory of photography magazines], ed. Saeki Rakugorō, et al., exh. cat., (Tokyo: Japan Camera and Optical Instruments Inspection and Testing Institute, 2001), 3.

¹⁰⁵ Kuwabara Kineo, “Kamera zasshi to tomo ni 20 nen—Sengo, derashine henshūsha no me” [Twenty years with a photography magazine: Perspectives of an uprooted editor in the postwar era], *Asahi Camera* (special issue) (January 5, 1983): 194.

¹⁰⁶ The first weekly magazine was *Shūkan shinchō* [Weekly new currents], which made its debut in 1956 under Shinchōsha, a publisher of books (not of newspapers).

eye: The most recent photobook of science], both established in 1940.¹⁰⁷ In this context, the first Japanese photographer for Magnum, Hamaya Hiroshi, published *Yukiguni* [Snow country] in 1956, with the support of the Mainichi Newspaper. The Mainichi Newspaper published this book in an attempt to demonstrate photography's socially meaningful role and to create a model photobook that would fulfill the needs of press photography.¹⁰⁸ However, what distinguishes this photobook from the preceding ones is that the former work's photographs reflect the photographer's personal views (namely, of a small village in central Japan) rather than nominally objective instances, captured by subjectless photographers. In their recent volume on the Japanese photobook, Ivan Vartanian and Kaneko Ryūichi designate *Yukiguni* as a prototype for future Japanese photobooks that entered the mainstream.¹⁰⁹ From the 1960s on, photographers started actively participating in the making of photobooks in collaboration with designers, turning their photographs into concrete objects.

Photobooks, together with photography magazines, became the major outlet through which professional photographers would present their personal work. In addition to the scarcity of exhibition space, it was Japanese photographers' exposure to exhibition catalogues from abroad that inspired the photographers and galvanized their decision to make their own photobooks.¹¹⁰ As a result, photographers and (often) designers created photobooks as works of

¹⁰⁷ Yamada Munesato, *Dōbutsu seitai shashinshū* [Photobook of the biology of animals] (Osaka: Yamada Hakubutsugaku kenkyūjo, 1940-1942). The Asahi Shimbun Company, *Kagaku no me: Saishin kagaku shashinshū* [Scientific eye: The most recent photobook of science] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1940).

¹⁰⁸ Ivan Vartanian, "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media" in *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and 1970s*, ed. Ivan Vartanian and Kaneko Ryūichi (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2009), 13, 14.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 14-19.

art, exploring a gamut of design possibilities ranging from book covers, layouts, and structures to printing methods.¹¹¹ Since the late 1970s, even after Japanese gallery spaces and museums started to exhibit photography, photobooks have remained prominent sites of operation for photographers in Japan.

Around 1970, shortly after *Provoke* was launched, photographers in Japan began publishing photography magazines, essentially taking on the duties of large-scale publishers. This trend was possible in large part because, from the 1960s on, the development of printing technology had been reducing the cost of publishing.¹¹² Prominent examples of these magazines are *Shashin Eizō/ The Photo Image* (est. 1969), published by Yoshimura, Kuwabara and Hosoe, *KEN* (est. 1970), published by Tōmatsu Shōmei, and *Zerokkusu shashinchō* [Xerox photobook] (ca. 1970), published by Araki Nobuyoshi. Unlike major commercial magazines, these magazines functioned as experimental sites for the managing photographers. *Eizō/ The Photo Image* often provided roundtable discussions where photographers, filmmakers, and critics could foster critical thinking about photography. Tōmatsu's magazine addressed both current political issues and recent works by up-and-coming photographers. Araki's solo project took up "guerrilla" tactics, among which was his random distribution of his photobook to cultural practitioners.

During the 1980s, weekly tabloid magazines flourished within the bubble economy. For example, *Focus* (launched in 1981) featured exclusive photographs of pop stars, politicians, and miscellaneous news events.¹¹³ The magazine's phenomenal sales (more than two million copies a

¹¹¹ Ibid., 19-23.

¹¹² Ibid., 22.

¹¹³ *Focus* started out as a more serious photojournalism magazine, and this respect for photojournalism has distinguished *Focus* from magazines that have a stronger taste for tabloid journalism.

week at its peak) prompted similar magazines to follow, including *Friday*, *Touch*, *Emma*, and *Flash* throughout the decade. At the same time, photography critics and photographers published journals of photography criticism such as *Shashin sōchi* [Photographic apparatus] (est. 1980), published by photographer Ōshima Hiroshi, and *Déjà vu* (est. 1990), published by photography critic Iizawa Kōtarō. These journals have played pivotal roles in providing space for both critical discussions about photography and photographic works themselves.

Today, photography magazines are more diverse than ever before, ranging from commercial to independent publications. *Friday* and *Flash* continue to publish, and *Days Japan* has continued the tradition of photojournalism. The how-to photography magazines target their respective audiences according to their generation, gender, and specialization. *Asahi Camera*, *Nihon Camera*, and *Capa* continuously attract male readers. Since 2000, camera magazines that target young female amateur photographers have become quite common. Examples include *Kamera biyori/ Life with Camera*, *PHaT PHOTO*, *Shagāru* [A girl does photography], and *Joshi kamera* [Girls' cameras]. Some photography magazines focus on digital photography, including *Foto tekunikku dejitaru* [Photo Technique Digital] and *Deji kyapa* [Digital Capa]. In contrast, *Snap!* and *Camera Life* specialize in discussions of film cameras. *Fūkei shashin* [Landscape photography] is devoted solely to its titular theme: landscape photography.

This brief history of Japanese photography publications illuminates the *Provoke* publications' radical artistic values (as I will explain in Chapter Six) and theoretical positioning. The content of *Provoke*, in itself, justifies the labeling of *Provoke* as an artists' book rather than a photography magazine. Moriyama's and Taki's photocopied works in *Provoke 3*, in particular, demonstrate the artistic tradition of appropriation. In fact, art historian Gwen Allen's *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art* introduces *Provoke* by referring to it as an artist's

magazine.¹¹⁴ Cultural historian Mary Panzer observes that *Provoke* worked under a subversive artistic intent in the vein of photojournalism.¹¹⁵ It seems that current scholarship in art and photography cannot define *Provoke* one way or the other, and this inability to adhere to any rigorous definition or labeling is, I argue, due to *Provoke*'s versatility as a medium. Perhaps the aspect of the *Provoke* publications that most strikingly differentiated them from all other contemporary photography publications in Japan was its self-conscious effort to be, rather than just publish, a manifesto for a certain approach to photography.

III. *Provoke 1*

Taki, Nakahira, Takanashi, and Okada published *Provoke 1* on November 1, 1968 (Fig. 2.1). Taki was the main designer of the cover and inside layout. The first issue could not have been simpler in its initial appearance, owing largely to the white cover and black lettering that grace the cover of the publication. In the case of mainstream Japanese photography magazines, English-language titles are usually accompanied by Japanese-language characters that express the phonetic sounds of the English-language title. However, this is not the case with *Provoke*: the typography of the journal's English-language title (i.e., '*Provoke*') included no Japanese characters and must have had a largely visual effect, rather than a precise linguistically communicative effect, for those Japanese unfamiliar with this word.

¹¹⁴ Gwen Allen, *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2011), 287-288. Allen described artists' magazines in page 2 as "...magazines that were published by artists and their supporters as alternatives to the mainstream art press and commercial gallery system." Although *Provoke* shares the characteristics of artists' magazines, such anti-institutionalization did not characterize the *Provoke* publications, since magazines are mainstream production sites for photographers.

¹¹⁵ Mary Panzer, *Things as They Are: Photojournalism in Context Since 1955* (Amsterdam: World Press Photo, 2005), 27.

The first issue is distinctive from other *Provoke* issues because of its square shape. The first issue measures approximately 8.27 by 8.27 inches. When opened, it provides an oblong, almost cinematic, 1-by-2 spread.¹¹⁶ The square shape of the journal stemmed from such exhibition catalogues of contemporary art as those published by the Museum of Modern Art in New York.¹¹⁷ The adoption of this kind of museum-catalogue format signals *Provoke* members' decision to create something beyond the scope of conventional photography production. The sizes of photographs in this publication vary, and it seems that *Provoke* members exercised layout design rather liberally.

In terms of its content, *Provoke 1* is rich in both writings and photographs. The second page presents a written manifesto, and its font is slightly larger than that used in *Provoke 2* and *Provoke 3*. Although the second page notes the names of the four founders, Taki and Nakahira put asterisk marks beside their names to identify themselves as the authors of this manifesto. It was rare that either photography magazines or photobooks would operate under this kind of agenda. The manifesto spoke *Provoke* members' mind, which greatly differed from the perspectives of existing publications' photographers.

Following the manifesto is Okada Takahiko's essay "*Mienai, setsunai, tobitai*" [I cannot see, I feel heart-broken, and I want to leap]. In addressing creative activities in fields such as literature and art, Okada argues that the resulting works should be synonymous with the creators' psyches, not mere reflections of social and political conditions. In this regard, Okada urges readers to fully commit themselves to living their lives instead of compromising themselves and

¹¹⁶ *Provoke 1* is 210 by 210 millimeters.

¹¹⁷ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010. Published by the Museum of Modern Art, such exhibition catalogues as *The Machine* (1968), *Brassai* (1968), and *Word and Image* (1968) are prominent examples quadric-shaped catalogues published at about the same time as the first issue of *Provoke*.

settling in a comfortable circumstance. As a well-educated, emerging poet, Okada cited philosophers and novelists, presented rich examples, and composed heavily rhetorical writing in his advocacy of unprecedented creation.

What has been perhaps most shocking to viewers of *Provoke 1* is the publication's photographs that follow Okada's essay. Many of them are either *are* (grainy), *bure* (blurry), or *boke* (out of focus)—some to such an extent that the identity of the photographed object is inescapably murky. For example, a photograph by Taki appears to be the headshot of a hardly recognizable man as he emerges from complete darkness (Fig. 2.2). The ambiguous facial expression of the man and the graininess of the print draw viewers into a world of doubt and wonder. The high contrast between light and dark in this photograph is pervasive in the photographs by Nakahira and Taki. In contrast, Takanashi's photograph of Asama Mountain in the heart of Japan is a starkly articulate presentation of an active volcano's desolate landscape (Fig. 2.3). The photograph has a relatively sharp focus, but the sharpness—so effective as to capture grains of sand—inadvertently echoes grainy photographs in *Provoke 1*.

Also unusual about the photographs in *Provoke 1* (and indeed about the photographs in the three other *Provoke* publications) is that they do not have titles or captions. Although *Provoke 1* presents the overarching theme of "Summer 1968 [sic]" and although each photographer provides short verses on the first page of his section, they do not explain the photographs as would conventional text accompanying an image. To expedite their epistemological investigation into photography, *Provoke* members departed from standard practice: they refused to present photographs as faithful representations of objects, and took advantage of the opportunity to present their photographs as photographs. Therefore, the untitled-ness of *Provoke* photographs has nothing to do with, for example, Donald Judd's application of the pseudo-title *Untitled* to his

works.

At the end of *Provoke 1* is an essay by Taki. In “Oboegaki 1: Chi no taihai” [Memorandum 1: Degeneration of intelligence], Taki unabashedly criticizes the bourgeois ideas that were pervasive in Japan’s cultural establishment at that time. Both Okada and Taki attached a strong sense of crisis to the superficial idealism that was prevalent in Japanese society’s mindset and that found expression in such events as the 1970 World Expo in Osaka. I will discuss these two essays in Chapter Three.

IV. *Provoke 2*

Provoke 2 (Fig. 2.4) was published on March 10, 1969, about four months after the publication of the first issue. The publication had changed its appearance: the color of the cover had changed from white to gray and its size now had the dimensions of 9.53 by 7.09 inches.¹¹⁸ The change from the square shape of *Provoke 1* to the rectangular shape of *Provoke 2* was due to members’ complaints about the difficulty of fitting each image into the 1-by-2 oblong spread or 1-by-1 page formats.¹¹⁹ The rectangle in *Provoke 2* could accommodate photographs in their original aspect ratios. Another change was the addition of an important new participant to this issue. Moriyama had hesitated to join such a theory-laden journal for its initial publication, but his intuition eventually prompted him to join the members from the second issue onward.¹²⁰

The second issue’s content also marked a departure from the first: the second issue features different types of writing than the first issue. For example, the second issue includes

¹¹⁸ *Provoke 2* is 242 by 180 millimeters.

¹¹⁹ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

¹²⁰ Moriyama Daidō, *Inu no kioku* [Memories of a dog] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1984; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), 251, 252.

Okada's poem "Oomata biraki ni taete samayoe" [Withstand the wide-spread legs and wander] (Fig. 2.5). The issue also includes Okada's essay "Fetico ni gyaku modori" [Going back to *Fetico*], which is divided into two parts that flank the photography section. There is also an anonymous short text, "Eros," explaining the theme of *Provoke 2* and directly preceding the photography section.

In his essay, Okada uses the late-15th-century Portuguese term *fetico*, which refers to objects fixated on and worshiped as possessing mystical qualities (i.e., 'fetish' in English), only Okada's usage offers an analogy between fetishism (in the Freudian sense) and the Japanese people's heavy reliance on materials in everyday life. Okada's essay rhetorically warns readers not to "divinize" a part of culture (e.g., mass-media images and market commodities), but to confront them.¹²¹ Okada argues that this confrontation should occur simultaneously with demystification of one's fetishism, because excessive artifice and materialization would turn artwork into mere plastic. Only by going through this dynamism can readers, according to Okada, experience "reality."¹²²

The photographs in *Provoke 2* reflect the theme "Eros," and members' responses to the theme varied: Nakahira photographed the city at night; Taki captured images of unidentifiable women in the sex industry; Takanashi presented portraits of fashion model Oka Hiromi; and Moriyama presented nudes of his ex-girlfriend in a motel. Moriyama and Taki responded to the carnal implications of the theme, while Nakahira and Takanashi seemed to interpret the theme as a part of their own lives. In "Henshū kōki" [Editor's note], Nakahira confessed that many

¹²¹ Okada Takahiko, "Fetico ni gyaku modori" [Going back to *Fetico*], *Provoke 2* (March 1969): 8, 105.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 108, 109.

implications of “Eros” had made it difficult for members to produce their photographic works.¹²³

Okada’s poem expresses the importance of exploring things without rushing to know their purpose. Together with his essay, Okada praised confrontation and exploration while condemning hasty presumption in every aspect of creative activities. The poem is printed in black on the same white paper as the paper on which the photographs appear: in a sense, Okada’s poem distinguishes itself from his essay by presenting itself in a form similar to that of the photographs. Nevertheless, a black page intervenes between Taki’s last photograph and Okada’s poem, and this intervention enables the poem to be an autonomous work of art in *Provoke 2*. The poem’s visual structure is such that the poem’s lines have the same start lines, making them look like the running water of a waterfall. In sum, the text in *Provoke 2* came to have a more visual effect than was the case with *Provoke 1*, where text was chiefly, if not solely, an explanatory tool.

V. *Provoke 3*

Provoke 3 (Fig. 2.6) was published on August 10, 1969, exactly five months after the publication of *Provoke 2*. The physical dimensions of *Provoke 3* (being 9.41 by 7.28 inches) remained almost the same as the dimensions of the second issue, and the austere cover design echoed covers of the previous issues.¹²⁴ The third issue of *Provoke* differed from both the first issue and the second issue in two important regards: the texture of paper and the method of printing. The paper in *Provoke 3* was less expensive, coarser, and more matted than the paper in *Provoke 1* and 2, and members used a zinc plate for their printing method, called *jinku ban insatsu* [zinc-plate printing]. This method was not suitable for mass production, but could sustain the production of a thousand copies of *Provoke*. The printing method in *Provoke 3* created

¹²³ Nakahira Takuma, “Henshū kōki” [Editor’s note], *Provoke 2* (March 1969): 110.

¹²⁴ *Provoke 3* is 239 by 185 millimeters.

images whose appearance was flatter than the images shaped by the off-set printing method in *Provoke 1* and *2*, and this distinct flatness made for a greater contrast between black and white and a milder intensity on the grayscale. This characteristic is especially evident in Moriyama's and Taki's photographs; these underwent a single photocopying before going through the final production stage (Fig. 2.7).

Another significantly distinguishing characteristic of *Provoke 3* is its absence of essays. The issue includes only two poems—one by the poet Yoshimasu Gōzō and the other by Okada—side by side right after the table of contents. Yoshimasu presents “Shashin no tame no chōhatsu teki danshō” [Provocative morsels for photography] (Fig. 2.8), which consists of six verses divided by the star marks. The verses are written in a colloquial style, and together, they give the impression of being the “clouds” of Yoshimasu's stream-of-consciousness floating by. The poem by Okada, “Ten to sen de ima o egakuna” [Do not draw the present moment with dots and lines] (Fig. 2.9), is a surrealistic word-play that unfolds the imaginary worlds of Okada. The visual forms of the two poems weave a contrast: Yoshimasu's poem presents the fragments of verses whereas Okada's poem rests on a rigid construction. The difference between these two poems' respective visual effects reflects the difference between the two poets' modes of expression.

Following the two poems in *Provoke 3* are sections of photographs. Unlike the photographs in the previous issues, those in the third issue do not have overarching themes, and each photographer liberally integrated his personal approaches to photography and life into his photographic work. For example, Takanashi shot most of his photographs from this issue at the fashion shows of Courrèges and Paco Rabanne, Moriyama shot the interior of a supermarket, Taki created numerous portraits of unidentifiable people, and Nakahira presented a city corner in his spontaneous shooting style.

Those “raw” records of everyday life instantly remind readers of a photographer who immensely influenced *Provoke* photographers: William Klein. Klein himself edited, wrote, and designed his ground-breaking *Life Is Good & Good for You in New York: Trance Witness Revels* in 1956 (Fig. 2.10), and in at least these three regards, the *Provoke* members exhibited many commonalities with Klein. For example, Klein’s Japanese peers were in charge of the production process, and the photographs have strong visual effects by virtue of striking dark-and-light contrasts. Klein’s photobook and *Provoke* also shared an interest in artistic design¹²⁵ and their capability of presenting photography as a personal mean of record. Nakahira argued that, in this book, Klein’s brilliance surfaced when he explored his own unconventional methodological approaches to his examination of the world.¹²⁶

Nevertheless, the *Provoke* publications are not by-products of Klein’s photobook. Klein created his visual diary of New York by presenting photographs and a leaflet that both meticulously record the locations of the photographed sites and includes his comments pertaining to the photographs. Panzer considers Klein’s *Life Is Good & Good for You in New York* a towering presence in the genre of book-form photo essays, which has been internationally significant from the 1930s onward.¹²⁷ If Panzer’s observation is valid, then the *Provoke* publications do not fall neatly under the umbrella of Klein’s approach to photography. They

¹²⁵ In fact, Klein’s second edition of the photobook, published in 1995, states that the first edition is about “graphic design.” Jeffrey Ladd, “Making *Life Is Good & Good for You in New York*,” in William Klein, *Life Is Good & Good for You in New York: Trance Witness Revels*, ed., Ed Grazda (New York: Errata Editions, 2010), n.p.

¹²⁶ Nakahira Takuma, “Fudō no shiten no hōkai: Wiriamu Kurain ‘Nyū Yōku’ kara no hassō,” [The collapse of an unshakable viewpoint: Ideas germinated from William Klein’s *New York*], originally published in *Photo-Critica* 1 (December 1967), 32, 33; reprinted in *Kitaru beki kotoba no tameni* [For a language to come] (Tokyo: Fūdōsha, 1970); reprinted in *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga...*

¹²⁷ Mary Panzer, *Things as They Are* (Amsterdam: World Press Photo, 2005), 25.

rather loosened the tight relationship between photography and writing by presenting an uncoordinated sequence of vague or ambiguous images, essays, and poems. In particular, *Provoke 3* is far more dynamic than the first two issues in terms of its visual vocabularies, such as a four-page fold-out spread. By incorporating the spread, *Provoke 3* combined the inexpensive paper of periodicals with the posturing content of photobooks.

It is also in terms of photographs that Klein's shadow over the *Provoke* publications is less traceable in *Provoke 3* than in the previous two issues. Klein's photographs in *Life Is Good & Good for You in New York* are confrontational. Children and adults often strike poses and penetrate the camera eye with their gaze. For example, in a set of three different photographs combined together on one page, two of the three photographs present a direct confrontation between the camera and the photographed person: a man in the photograph on the left is looking at Klein's camera, and a man whose face is darkened with shadow in the central photograph on the page is also facing the camera (Fig. 2.11). Even these highly blurry photographs of street scenes convey a sensible communication between photographers and people to be photographed. In other words, readers communicate with Klein's photographs through the eyes of subject on the basis of the representational power of photographs. In contrast, Nakahira's photographs in *Provoke 3* give one the sense that the photographer went blazing through the photographed space. One of his photographs shows his movements relative to the photographed objects and people, which are slightly deformed in the direction of his camera (Fig. 2.12). The deformation proves that Nakahira was striding forward with a camera in hand. The photograph is more *are-bure-boke* than Klein's photographs—so much more, indeed, that Nakahira's photograph approaches the point of complete abstraction. The abstraction bars readers from “reading” the photograph. Therefore, Klein's and Nakahira's ways of engaging the subject and their

photographs' respective effects are quite different.

Provoke 3 turned out to be the last issue of *Provoke* as a periodical, but it seems that the journal's cessation was not set in stone at the time of the third issue's publication. Taki wrote an extensive, two-page-long editor's note, stating that the fourth issue would be on shelves sometime in October 1969.¹²⁸ Despite this forward-looking view of the journal's existence, fractures had developed in and among the publication's members. For example, Taki expressed at the time his irritation with *Provoke's* failure to emerge as a breakthrough force in the realm of photography; and he went on to state that *Provoke* was not a "splendid, comprehensive record," but rather "fragments" of each photographer's life.¹²⁹ Taki's contemporaneous comments reveal his conflict between achieving personal accomplishments and being suspicious of photography's ability to provoke readers.

VI. *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty: Thought on Photography and Language*

First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty was published on March 31, 1970 by Tabata Shoten (Fig. 2.13). This *Provoke* publication, which takes the form of a book, is a collection of *Provoke* members' photographs and writings, the latter of which appeared in other magazines during *Provoke's* heyday. As Taki mentioned in "Atogaki" [Postscript], the book amounted to an "add-up" of what the members had done for *Provoke*.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Taki Kōji, "Henshū kōki" [Editor's note], *Provoke 3* (August 1969): 109.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹³⁰ Taki Kōji, "Atogaki" [Postscript] in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty: Thought on Photography and Language* (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1970), 339, 340.

The fourth publication's format was entirely different from the formats of the three previous *Provoke* issues. The height and length of *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* were approximately 7.40 by 5.12 inches, dimensions that constituted a standard book-size in Japan. The first thing a person would notice about the fourth publication is a half-transparent thin paper covering the entire book, including the photograph by Nakahira on the cover. The thin paper cover rendered the photograph blurrier than it already was, and made it hard for readers to determine that the photograph was a shot of the underground passageway. The cover design seems to indicate the elusiveness of photography.

First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty has a unique structure as a book, because its photographs occupy about the same volume of space as do the essays (one of which is a dialogue between Moriyama and Nakahira).¹³¹ This characteristic makes *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* function as both a book and a photobook. Furthermore, the layout of the book alternates the text sections with the photography sections: for example, six texts are labeled "Predict 1" through "Predict 6," and five sections of photographs (each one the work of a single photographer) are labeled "Provoke 1" through "Provoke 5." The book begins with "Predict 1," and "Provoke 1" follows; then comes "Predict 2," which precedes "Provoke 2," and so on. Even though a given pair's two component sections have the same number, they do not correspond to each other. Thus, each section in a given pair does not correlate to the pair's other section—the two sections are independent entities.

The content of the book's essays varies from Okada's writings on Surrealism and language, to Taki's and Nakahira's thoughts on photography, to current events discussed in the

¹³¹ See Appendix 7 for a presentation of the book's structure.

articles by the guest contributor and journalist Amano Michie.¹³² Takanashi and Moriyama did not contribute to the book as writers, but Moriyama and Nakahira's aforementioned dialogue (which also appeared in the *Dezain/Design* magazine) shows their relentless effort to uncover the nature of photography.

Photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* reveal the differences between *Provoke* members' respective approaches to photography. While Nakahira's and Moriyama's photographs are strikingly illegible for their *are-bure-boke* (grainy, blurry, and out-of-focus) qualities, Takanashi's photographs of cityscapes are somber and clear. Taki also captures landscapes and cities, but his photographs of an architectural edifice's exterior wall are distinctive from Moriyama's and Nakahira's photographs, which race with motion.

Although this was the last issue of *Provoke*, its members never lost their experimental spirit. "Predict 5" in the photobook contains the collaborative works of Moriyama and Taki, most of which were photocopied from tabloid magazines. In one photograph, an image of female feet in high-heels is composed of dots, indicating that the viewed image was a duplication of print media printed according to the off-set method (Fig. 2.14). The last photograph in "Predict 5" shows nothing but dots, which do not, together, form any particular imagery: being a duplication of a ready-made image, the photograph appears to be in a state of endless reproduction.

VII. Conclusion

In conclusion, the four *Provoke* publications consistently involved members' efforts and aspirations directed at producing new photography media. Although the publication series started with a clear manifesto that defied conventional relationships between photography and language,

¹³² Amano's articles in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* originally appeared in *Asahi jyānarū/Asahi Journal*.

the course of their experimentation never settled on a solid, unified answer to producing this new photography.

Nevertheless, the four publications boasted an independent spirit that set them apart from any other photography publication up to that time. The *Provoke* members never set out to produce a catalogue of exemplary photography or to teach readers the subtleties of taking spectacular photographs; the members rather served as a catalyst for questioning photography itself. The *Provoke* publications' anti-aesthetic photographs, non-commercial nature, artistic layout and design, and experimental spirit were fresh and unique during that period, and nothing like them had ever before emerged in the history of Japanese photography publications.

Chapter Three

Provoke and Radical Politics

I. Introduction

The first issue of *Provoke* magazine was published in November 1968 (Fig. 3.1). The sixty-eight page publication contained photographs by Nakahira, Taki, and Takanashi as well as two essays, by Okada and Taki. As the magazine's title suggests, Nakahira and Taki attempted to shake people's ideas of photography to the core and quite literally provoke examinations of their assumed concepts of 'reality.' Naturally, the founders' rebellious mindsets were very much informed by the era in which they lived. Moriyama recalls that *Provoke*'s office in Tokyo functioned as a makeshift *salon* for university students who participated in the student movement, and the politically minded Taki and Nakahira served as their organizers, ideologues, and agitators.¹³³ Beyond their work for *Provoke*, Nakahira and Taki were active members of *Tatakau jyānarisuto no renraku kaigi* [Council of Struggling Journalists], a forum in which journalists from various media argued about contemporary cultural and political issues.¹³⁴

It is certainly true that in describing the intellectual backbone of 1960s art, one cannot avoid the notion of political upheaval in general. However much of the past discussion has been tied to a clichéd and facile association of art and politics. This is particularly relevant in the case of *Provoke*'s ideologues, Taki and Nakahira, because they were active in the heyday of Japan's student movement, when a profound shift in the nation's intellectual discourse by the New Left

¹³³ Moriyama Daidō, *Inu no kioku shūshō* [Memories of a dog: Epilogue] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1984; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), 164-165.

¹³⁴ Yanagimoto Naomi, "Yanagimoto Naomi: 90 pāsento ga seiji no hanashi datta henshūkaigi/Yanagimoto Naomi, 'Ninety Percent of Their Talk was Politics,'" interview, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 10, 1993): 70.

was taking place. Martin Parr, for example, states, “In photography they [*Provoke* members] saw a singularly appropriate means of expression for the turmoil of 1968.”¹³⁵

However, for the *Provoke* members, photography was not a tool for expressing the contemporary political situation; photography, instead, facilitated ontological investigations of both the self and photography, and these investigations were promoted and informed by philosophical concerns unique to the history of Japanese photography. Even for Taki and Nakahira, the issue was the reconciliation of an engagement in politics with taking photographs, not transforming photography into a tool that would serve a political agenda. To support this claim, this chapter aims to demonstrate the richly paradoxical and unique qualities of the *Provoke* publications’ concepts. These stand outside of the global sentimentalism currently surrounding the 1960s and provide a means to demystify and re-articulate the significance of the *Provoke* publications. This chapter also delves into the publications’ historical and political backgrounds, a topic that has not been satisfactorily examined in the existing literature.

The Japanese student movement of the late 1960s is often either subsumed under the global phenomenon of student activism or dismissed altogether from the Western context. This may be due to the ideological and tactical similarities they shared. Fundamentally, both French students and the Japanese student movement embraced leftist ideology and Marxist ideals. Japanese students used tactics that French protestors employed in May 1968 and these included distributing flyers and establishing a council of student organizations. This connection is further illustrated by an incident in which over a thousand students clashed with the police force on the streets of Kanda in January 1969; the students called the incident *Kanda Quartier Latin* after the Paris section where French students had fiercely battled authorities. The *Provoke* photographers’

¹³⁵ Martin Parr, “Provocative Material for Thought: The Postwar Japanese Photobook,” in *Photo Book: A History, Volume I*, ed. Martin Parr and Gerry Badger (London: Phaidon, 2004), 270.

physical engagement with photography similarly provides a parallel with the strategies of direct action adopted by each country's student radicals. These students often saw a connection between such action and a clarification of the meaning of their lives. In fact, although it is unclear how many Japanese students actually read and understood the theories of Jean-Paul Sartre, it is safe to assume that they strategically employed or superficially adopted existentialism to suit their own ends.

In spite of all these ideological and tactical intersections, *Provoke* should in fact be distinguished from the student movements because the journal's ultimate goal was to reduce photography to its existential core by analyzing the practice and concept of photography within the lives of its photographers. In parallel with this attempt, Taki and Nakahira aimed to dialectically live their lives between the taking of photographs and participating in political activities. I argue that Sartre's notion of engagement served as a subtext to *Provoke* members' activities, but that Sartre's confidence in humans' ability to change the world did not thoroughly appeal to these same members.

Instead, Taki took photographs after drawing deeply on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological observations of seeing. Taki questioned our faith in both humans' ability to comprehend the world and cameras' objectivity in capturing the world. Thus, he attempted to identify a space where photography existed between photographers' agency and cameras' mechanical autonomy. At the same time, Okada referenced the actor and playwright Antonin Marie Joseph Artaud's writings to advocate creative language and "unseen" photography. The *Provoke* photographers' ontological experiments moved at a perpendicular angle to the Japanese student movements insofar as the experiments' assumption was that the source of photographic agency was not the photograph itself but the photographers and cameras.

Therefore, the focal points of my argument rest on the ways in which *Provoke* and Japanese students in the 1960s diverged in theory and practice as well as on the unique course of thought taken by *Provoke*'s ideologues, Taki and Nakahira. For this purpose, I will focus on particular writings and works by Taki, Nakahira, and Okada in this chapter.

II. The Formation of Zenkyōtō [the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council]

To begin with, I am going to trace the trajectory of the Japanese student movement in the late 1960s. Zenkyōtō [the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council] was an emerging force that played a pivotal role in the goals of activist students in Japan.¹³⁶ It was a council formed by Japanese students who rebelled against what they saw as the administrative injustices of universities and against the actions of the United States in the Vietnam War. One of the earliest of these councils, Zenkyōtō was formed in 1968 at the University of Tokyo, also known as Tōdai,¹³⁷ which was considered to be the training ground for the nation's elites (Fig. 3.2). Zenkyōtō's fundamental ideology was communism and it concerned itself mainly with political issues, but the crucial problem the council addressed was students' conflicts with universities' administrations.

Previously, the medical school at the university had experienced a conflict between interns and the administration over the exploitive system of trainee doctors, a situation that drew a great deal of criticism from the students. One of the students, Tsubura Kunihiko, was unjustly

¹³⁶ There was a major student organization called Zengakuren [All-Japan Federation of Self-governing Associations], which was formed in 1945. Different political parties governed the organizations, and fought against administrations at various universities regarding both domestic and international political concerns. I am going to discuss primarily Zenkyōtō in this chapter, since Nakahira, Taki, and Okada were conceptually close to the non-sect radicals, though Nakahira felt sympathy for Zengakuren students.

¹³⁷ Kosaka Shūhei, *Shisō to shite no Zenkyōtō* [The ideological basis of the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2006), 71. The first Zenkyōtō was formed at Nihon University on May 23, 1968.

kicked out of the university for attacking the dean of the medical school, Harumi Ken'ichi (the Harumi incident). The students' collective frustration and indeed rage finally exploded when a police force intervened in the students' occupation of Yasuda Hall on June 16, 1968. On July 5, the day Zenkyōtō was formed, students distributed their 'declaration to fight' through endless strikes against the oppressive university administration.¹³⁸ In sympathy with the students at other universities, Tōdai Zenkyōtō finally seized Yasuda Hall on the Hongō campus of the University of Tokyo on January 18 and 19 in 1969 (Fig. 3.3). Over seven hundred people on campus were arrested,¹³⁹ and approximately eight thousand five hundred riot police were mobilized during those two days.¹⁴⁰

Another prominent Zenkyōtō was formed by the students of Nihon University on May 27 of the same year (Fig. 3.4).¹⁴¹ The formation took place in response, nominally, to both a professor's sale of untaxed backdoor admissions and the university's failure to account for two billion yen in expenditures.¹⁴² The students' distrust and anger came to a head in the unprecedented twelve-hour face-to-face discussion between thirty-five thousand students and the university president Furuta Jūjirō.¹⁴³ On top of that, Nihon University frustrated many students with its mass-production, large-classroom style of education, which contrasted with the styles of

¹³⁸ The Mainichi Newspapers, reprinted flyers in *Shirīzu 20 seiki no kioku: 1968* [Memories of the 20th century: 1968] (Tokyo: The Mainichi Newspapers, 1998), 113.

¹³⁹ Shima Taizō, *Yasuda Kōdō 1968-1969* [Yasuda Hall 1968-1969] (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 2005), 279.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 225.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁴² Takagi Masayuki, *Zengakuren to Zenkyōtō* [The All-Japan Federation of Students' Self-governing Associations and the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1985), 118-119.

¹⁴³ Takazawa Kōji, Takagi Masayuki, and Kurata Kazunari, *Shinsayoku nijyūnenshi: Hanran no kiseki* [A twenty-year history of the New Left: The trajectory of revolt] (Tokyo: Shinsensha, 1981), 119.

other universities, and its regulation of students' activities on campus.¹⁴⁴ The surging wave of students' rage at those two universities immediately engulfed a number of other universities in Japan in the same year.

What Is New about the New Left?

Basically, what distinguished Zenkyōtō from other New Left groups, as well as from the Old Left, was that Zenkyōtō consisted of a significant number of so-called *non sekuto rajikaruzu* [non-sect radicals] who did not support any particular political parties.¹⁴⁵ Thus, there was no hierarchical order within the organizations, forming almost a direct echo of Sartre's "fused group." An adjunct professor at the University of Tokyo at that time, Murao Kōichi, had suggested that Tōdai Zenkyōtō offered an "antithesis" to the conventional Leftist form of organization.¹⁴⁶ He also argued that pursuing a personal, rather than an organizational, commitment to the struggle eventually fostered the possibility of deterring Stalinist totalitarianism.¹⁴⁷ Murao pointed out that the significance of Tōdai Zenkyōtō was its birth in the university, where students were the "reserve" for elite academic and bureaucratic positions.¹⁴⁸ The students' conflicted realization that they would become part of the establishment ultimately

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 119, 120.

¹⁴⁵ Henshūbu [Editorial desk], "Gakusei ishiki chōsa: Tōdai Tōsō to gakusei no ishiki" [An opinion poll of students: The struggles and awareness of students at the University of Tokyo], *Sekai* [The world] 286 (September 1969): 67.

¹⁴⁶ Murao Kōichi, "Tōdai Zenkyōtō: Kono kimyo naru 'seitaikei'" [The All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council at the University of Tokyo: A strange "ecosystem"], originally published in *Jōkyō* [Situation] (March 1969); reprinted in *Zenkyōtō o yomu* [Interpreting the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council] (Tokyo: Jyōkyō Shuppan, 1997), 124.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 130.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 127.

resulted in *jiko hitei* [self-negation],¹⁴⁹ which paralleled their ongoing struggle against the administration and its exploitive practices and excessive controls.

However, Tōdai Zenkyōtō should not be automatically considered representative of the whole body of students because the number of students who participated in it was very limited. As sociologist Oguma Eiji points out, even at the peak of the Zenkyōtō movement in January 1969, only 16.9% of the students at the University of Tokyo actively participated in its activities.¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, one should acknowledge and take into account the sentimentalism and specifically the nostalgia that often accompany such discourses about student movements.

That said, despite being a minority force on the political scene, Zenkyōtō reflected a frustration that was widely shared by Japanese youth. In Oguma's 1968, *wakamono no hanran to sono haikai* [1968: The youth rebellion and its background], he de-mythologizes the year, typified as one of dramatic political and cultural changes, thereby contextualizing the youth rebellion in the history of postwar Japan. He argues that contemporary issues such as truancy and the sense of restriction felt by Japanese youth were already observable in the student movements of the late 1960s.¹⁵¹ In his first chapter, for example, Ogura argues that the demographic shift of working youths from regional areas to Tokyo, along with rapid economic growth, forced these young people to adjust to a new urban life and, consequently, placed enormous stresses on them. Sometimes these youths became rabble rousers, throwing stones at police and engaging in other

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 129.

¹⁵⁰ Poll results originally published in *Sekai* [The world] 286 (September 1969): 64; quoted in Oguma Eiji, 1968, *Wakamono tachi no hanran to sono haikai*, vol. 1 [1968: The youth rebellion and its background] (Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 2009), 94. The poll targeted 3,400 students at the University of Tokyo, and 1,800 of them responded.

¹⁵¹ Oguma Eiji, 1968, *Wakamono tachi no hanran to sono haikai*, vol. 1 [1968: The youth rebellion and its background] (Tokyo: Shinyōsha, 2009), 14.

rebellious acts when students and riot forces would clash in Tokyo.¹⁵²

Oguma's sociological account differentiates the New Left from the Old Left in that the former had a strong existentialist foundation. In the first two chapters, Oguma demonstrates that the majority of youths experienced an identity crisis and a sense of disappointment in a highly controlled educational system that did not promise them a bright future. At the same time, rapid economic growth provoked dramatic social changes that confounded youths and that, more specifically, included changes in the educational system. Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato's Double Income Policy implemented a strategy to increase the number of Japanese experts in various scientific fields because the government was predicting a relative scarcity of such human capital. In conjunction with this policy, the government emphasized a merit system and sought to foster elites. These educational policies imposed consecutive tests on students, and high schools became mere preparatory schools for university entrance examinations. High school students' unusual anger towards adults who would send their children to "good" universities in order "to better" the students' futures only festered, and this rage led many high school and university students to reject their schooling and to struggle with a sense of imprisonment, in turn leading them to join the anti-establishment struggle in one way or another.¹⁵³ By amassing an exhaustive amount of testimony and other data not only from university students but also from working youths, Oguma articulates the intense frustration that provoked the student movements and that germinated in contemporary youths' problems.

Young people felt that they were both victims of society and assailants in the Vietnam War. The collective anger and guilt that arose from this situation drove students to protest the

¹⁵² Ibid., 34-39.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 43-60.

War. Throughout his chapters, Oguma argues that shifts in both national and international policies made youth feel “betrayed” by duplicitous adults.¹⁵⁴ Using this sense of betrayal as a starting point, Oguma’s analysis unravels the complex background of the student movement, which led to Zenkyōtō’s radical ideas and actions. Despite this rather precisely contoured starting point, Zenkyōtō rested on a much larger foundation of youths’ questioning their existence in a rapidly changing society.

As discussed above, Zenkyōtō was a form of vocal contestation driven by the cumulative frustrations attributable to a wide range of youths who protested authority figures throughout society, especially at universities and in government. It was a council-form of organization, in which Japanese students found purpose in acts of protest. The organization did not present a unanimously agreed-upon, concrete vision of a future society beyond the immediate goals of defeating the university authorities and Japanese and U.S. “imperialism.” As Oguma’s analysis suggest, student movements likely differed from one another regarding their responses to differences between Japanese positions and French positions in the postwar international community, but these movements also likely differed from one another regarding each one’s unique theoretical or philosophical foundations.

III. The Primary Influence of Sartre on Zenkyōtō

This section examines the theoretical and philosophical backbones of the Tōdai Zenkyōtō, which had a more introspective nature than most. One of the possible mentors for the Tōdai Zenkyōtō students was French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. I will suggest that, although students felt a strong affinity for Sartre’s stoic attitude toward political engagement, their usage of the term ‘self-negation’ was quite distant from what he meant by the term ‘negation’ in his

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 60-75.

metaphysical quest for consciousness.

There has been a general consensus that Sartre's political influence was limited to the early New Left movement from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s,¹⁵⁵ but his ideas seem to have constituted the latent subtext for the Japanese student movements in the late 1960s. In 1956, a prominent scholar of Sartre's ideas, Takeuchi Yoshirō, published *Sarutoru tetsugaku josetsu* [An Introduction to the philosophy of Sartre], which elucidates Sartre's early work, centered on *Being and Nothingness*.¹⁵⁶ Japanese translations of *Being and Nothingness* and *Critique of Dialectical Reason* were published in 1956 and 1962 respectively. As a result, Sartre was widely accessible to Japanese readers by the end of the 1960s.

Many anecdotes about Tōdai Zenkyōtō reflect Sartre's influence on this movement. Critic Kosaka Shūhei remembers the students' slogan "Throw your existence against the police force!"¹⁵⁷ On the University of Tokyo campus, the critic Kawamoto Saburō saw Japanese-language signage on display, the English translation of which would read in part, "...for he shows clearly that this irrepressible violence is neither sound and fury, nor the resurrection of savage instinct, nor even the effect of resentment: it is man recreating himself." It was an excerpt from Sartre's preface to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Ōtake Hideo, *Shinsayoku no isan: Nyū refuto kara posutomodan e* [The legacy of the New Left: From the New Left to post-modernism] (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2007), 261-264. Ōtake also mentions that intellectuals like Sartre tended to seclude themselves from the masses. Assistant professor at Rikkyō University, Watanabe Kazutami, mentions that Western activists in the 1960s read Albert Camus and Paul Nizan more than Sartre. Anonymous, "Sekaishi no naka no gakusei undō" [The Student movement in the world history], *Asahi Journal* (April 28, 1968): 11.

¹⁵⁶ In his postscript, Takeuchi enthusiastically stated that he urged readers to harness Sartre's ideas in the fight against the ineptitude of postwar Japanese society. It is plausible that his publication had a strong impact on the students who opposed the sealing of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in 1960.

¹⁵⁷ Kosaka, *Shisō to shite no Zenkyōtō* [The Ideological Basis of the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council], 66.

¹⁵⁸ Kawamoto Saburō, "60 nendai makki no Sarutoru taiken" [Experiencing Sartre in the late 1960s],

Sartre in Japan

Probably, Sartre's most visible moment in Japan was at his lecture series in 1966. Three lectures—"The Situation of the Intellectual," "The Function of the Intellectual," and "Is the Writer an Intellectual?"—were collectively referred to as *A Plea for the Intellectual*.¹⁵⁹ Many Japanese enthusiastically welcomed Sartre and his partner Simone de Beauvoir at the first lecture at Keiō University (approximately six thousand audience members occupied one large lecture hall and twelve classrooms for the televised lecture).¹⁶⁰ One prominent news magazine, *Asahi Graph*, featured headshots of Sartre and de Beauvoir while they were in Japan (Fig. 3.5). The pronounced public interest in their visit demonstrates that their ideas had already been widely read and well received in Japan. In fact, Sartre's articles in *Situation* magazine were immediately translated into Japanese, and they inspired a new readership.¹⁶¹ A prominent Sartre scholar, Hasegawa Hiroshi, has observed that Japanese people's acceptance of Sartre stemmed from their widespread embrace of individualism, itself a counter-response to Japan's recent imperial system and Japan's ongoing modernization and rapid economic growth.¹⁶²

In the last of his lectures, Sartre borrowed the term *Sein in der welt* [Being-in-the-world]

Gendai shisō [Contemporary philosophy] 8 (July 1980): 129. The quote of Sartre's writing is from his preface to Frantz Fanon's *Damnés de la terre* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1961); translated as "Preface," in Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans., Richard Philcox with commentary by Jean-Paul Sartre and Homi K. Bhabha (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 21.

¹⁵⁹ The Japanese translation of this lecture series was published in 1967.

¹⁶⁰ Asabuki Tomiko, *Sarutoru, Boubowaru tono 28 nichi kan* [28 days with Sartre and de Beauvoir] (Tokyo: Dōhō Shuppan, 1995), 46.

¹⁶¹ Ōtake, *Shinsayoku no isan: Nyū refuto kara posutomodan e* [The legacy of the New Left: From the New Left to post-modernism], 265.

¹⁶² Hasegawa Hiroshi, *Dōjidai jin Sarutoru* [A contemporaneous man, Sartre] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2001), 184-186.

from Heidegger, arguing that the indescribable reveals itself as a part of the world. ‘Being-in-the-world’ refers to ways of comprehending that treat objects not as autonomous entities but as dependent on their relationship with the comprehending self. Sartre argued that to elucidate the authenticity of one’s experiences could also elucidate events and states of consciousness. In this regard, Sartre stated, “The commitment of the writer is to communicate the incommunicable (being-in-the-world as lived experience) by exploiting the misinformation contained in ordinary language, and maintaining the tension between the whole and the part, totality and totalization, the world and being-in-the-world, as the *significance* of his work.”¹⁶³ Acknowledging the solitude experienced by intellectuals who find themselves amidst the masses and the status quo, Sartre urged these seekers of truth to continuously oscillate between personal experience and the world. In other words, occupying a fluid position was the way for them to live in freedom.

Coincidentally, Sartre’s idea of the intellectual who needed to act in the public realm resonated with the popularity of Japanese intellectual giants such as Yoshimoto and Tanikawa Gan, who had an enormous impact on the students at that time. In his second lecture, Sartre asserted that intellectuals, rather than lead the unprivileged, ought to throw themselves into the struggles shouldered by the masses. Sartre advocated suppressing the intellectual ego and becoming part of the movement rather than fomenting it. Indeed, in his “Intellectuals and Politics,” J. Victor Koschmann points out that Sartre’s inclination to learn what the masses were trying to achieve expressed in his “Friends of People,” published right after May 1968, was in many ways consistent with the direct action taken by Yoshimoto and Tanikawa, both of whom radically changed the role of intellectuals in 1960s Japan.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Jean-Paul Sartre, “A Plea for Intellectuals,” in *Between Existentialism and Marxism*, trans. John Matthews (London and New York: Verso, 2008), 284.

¹⁶⁴ J. Victor Koschmann, “Intellectuals and Politics,” in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon

The lectures also revealed the dilemma that Sartre faced as one of the privileged few. As the lecture titles suggest, Sartre privileged intellectuals like himself even while denouncing their inability to change society solely by their own effort. Sartre provided intellectual support, but the protagonists in the movement were students, and leading figures among them were likewise engaged in a deeply personal, agonistically self-reflexive struggle. I argue that students in Tōdai Zenkyōtō shared Sartre's dilemma of being an intellectual brought up in a bourgeois household (he held the privileged titles of Normalien and Agrégé) and of struggling to engage in acts of protest against the bourgeois system.¹⁶⁵

The Notion of Self-negation in Tōdai Zenkyōtō

Sartre's personal determination and inner conflict were also reflective of Tōdai Zenkyōtō's use of the key word 'self-negation.' The term appeared in writings by the Tōdai Zenkyōtō leader Yamamoto Yoshitaka, who was then a doctoral student in the department of physics at the University of Tokyo. He noted in his *Chisei no hanran* [Rebel of intelligence] that fellow scholars had to negate themselves as future ideologues in the system or as seniors in corporations through perpetual struggle. He claimed that students would see the contradiction in

(Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 411. However, I have to note that Yoshimoto himself distinguished his ideas from Sartre's. For example, in his "Jiritsu no Shisō teki Kyoten" [Philosophical bastion of independence], Yoshimoto criticizes Sartre's ideas and language as only conceptually grasping the surface of the world.

¹⁶⁵ A sociologist, Takahashi Akira showed that students from the middle class (households having an income between at least 1.02 million yen and up to 1.5 million yen in the currency value of 1968) and students from the lower-middle class (households having an income between at least 540,000 yen and up to 1.02 million yen) comprised 69% of student activists in "Katsudōka gakusei: sono undō eno sankadōki" [Student activists: Their motivation to join the movement], *Chūō kōron* [Central public discourse] (June 1968): 179. Takahashi notes that students from the lower classes (households having incomes under 540,000 yen) remarked on their inability or their reluctance to join the movement owing to vocational time constraints (these students worked wage-earning jobs to earn a living) and to future vocational prospects (these students were particularly nervous about landing a decent job upon graduation).

academic research once they were objectivized as part of the bourgeois system of producing intelligence. Yamamoto urged scholars to continuously negate themselves in the struggle against the system in order to liberate themselves.¹⁶⁶ Tōdai Zenkyōtō obviously folded the conflict and contradiction into itself, while Zenkyōtō at other universities such as Nichidai (an abbreviation of Nihon University) raged against the university's systematized mass production of white collar labor, whose raw material was the student body.¹⁶⁷ Thus, students of Tōdai Zenkyōtō took on a more critical and stoic attitude toward themselves.

The Executive Office of the Joint-Struggle Council on the Komaba campus of the University of Tokyo also saliently articulated the concept of 'self-negation' in its anthology, *Kutsujoku no maisō* [Burial of humiliation], published in 1970.¹⁶⁸ It defined 'self-negation' as self-objectivization, which in turn can be described as the critical contextualization of oneself within a system. This then would lead to the paradoxical situation in which one makes oneself the object of Marxist scrutiny. It argued that Zenkyōtō was responsible for strictly objectivizing the self, which was rhetorically expressed as the "process of restless souls."¹⁶⁹ For them, 'self-negation' referred not only to the negation of both the self that was going to be a part of bourgeois society and the self that was unintentionally complicit in the Vietnam War, but also to

¹⁶⁶ Yamamoto Yoshitaka, *Chisei no hanran* [Rebel of intelligence] (Tokyo: Zeneisha, 1969), 112-113. He also stated that "students at the University of Tokyo itself were the objects of smash" "否、東大生であることこそ粉碎の対象であった。" (p. 179).

¹⁶⁷ Ōta Kyōko, "Onna tachi no Zenkyōtō undō" [The Women's All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council], in *Zenkyoto kara Ribū e* [From the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council to women's liberation] (Tokyo: Impact Shuppankai, 1996), 72.

¹⁶⁸ The Komaba campus houses mainly the Department of Liberal Arts.

¹⁶⁹ Komaba Zenkyōtō Inkai [The Executive Office of the All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council on the Komaba Campus], "Komaba Kyōtō Kaigi no tōsō shutai to tatakai no tenbō" [Struggling with subjectivity and the vision of the Komaba Campus Joint-struggle Council], in *Kutsujoku no maisō* [Burial of Humiliation], ed. The All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council at the University of Tokyo and the Komaba Campus Joint-Struggle Council (Tokyo: Aki Shobō, 1970), 410.

the notion that ‘self-negation’ should be an opportunity for rethinking the process of class formation. According to the students of the Executive Office, people could successfully rethink this process by maintaining an awareness of self-objectivization.¹⁷⁰

Yet neither Yamamoto nor the Executive Office actually articulated the outcome of ‘self-negation.’ Rather than indicate a concrete way of achieving ‘self-negation,’ they held the term up as a critical attitude in the fight against the hegemonic powers that produced the ruling ideology. In other words, their idea of ‘self-negation’ via self-objectivization paradoxically failed to rise to the level of a reflexive acknowledgement of the self within a given system.

Sartre’s *Négation* and Students’ Negation

It is important to compare Sartre’s notion of *négation* [negation] with the students’ corresponding notion in order to accurately assess his influence on them. Sartre examined ‘negation’ in his *Being and Nothingness*, which is an attempt to elucidate the philosophical structure of human consciousness. Having studied under Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, Sartre’s investigation of human beings and their existence owed much to phenomenology. In the beginning of *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre investigated a ‘negation’ that works to recognize the object being contemplated or observed. For example, if he recognized the glass in front of him, it was a simultaneous recognition of the glass as “not himself.” For Sartre, ‘negation’ was the most crucial process involved in the idea of *l’être-pour-soi* [self-for-itself] (i.e., that one recognizes oneself through reflexive consciousness). Sartre explained, “The being of consciousness qua consciousness is to exist *at a distance from itself* as a presence to itself, and this empty distance

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 409-411.

which being carries in its being is Nothingness.”¹⁷¹ According to Sartre, Nothingness was the precondition for negation, and “determination” worked within one’s consciousness as a form of “consciousness of negation.”¹⁷²

In Sartre’s philosophy, all human experience contains the possibility of ‘negation,’ which depends on both human consciousness and external factors. Sartre argued that “consciousness of negation,” which is conditioned by external factors, produces negation.¹⁷³ Sartre used the example of looking for Pierre in a café. While Sartre was in the café, the interior and all its various props presented themselves as a mere background so that Sartre’s gaze might alight upon Pierre and confirm his existence. However, Sartre did not see Pierre in the café. In the end, Sartre realized that Pierre was not there and that this absence was a kind of non-being. In this sense, negation is both cognitive and relative to conditions supported by Nothingness.¹⁷⁴

However, as mentioned above, the protesting Japanese students’ ‘negation’ referred only to their recognition of the self within the context of bourgeois elitism and did not delve into a metaphysical investigation of being. For students, their struggles against university administrations and state powers signified ‘self-negation,’ whether or not the use of this term was true to Sartre. Furthermore, students like Yamamoto assumed that they could act as solo agents in negating the self, but in actuality, the completion of the students’ ‘self-negation’ needed external factors (e.g., the students needed a school to “drop out of,” the students needed the other to acknowledge them as non-elite). Herein lies a deep contradiction: most Zenkyōtō students at the

¹⁷¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology*, trans. and with an introduction by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984), 125.

¹⁷² Ibid., 43, 48-49.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 43.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 40-44.

University of Tokyo were successful graduates of the university and, in turn, were awarded important posts in corporations and government offices.¹⁷⁵ This two-fold pattern essentially collapsed the students' logic behind their rousing slogans of 'self-negation' and “*Teidai kaitai*” [dissolving the University of Tokyo], which were ironically the very reason for Tōdai students' existence.¹⁷⁶

In conclusion, the existential overtones in Tōdai Zenkyōtō were very strong in Japan as evidenced by students there (especially those of Tōdai Zenkyōtō) who transformed—although superficially—Sartre's notion of 'negation' into the theoretical core of their movement. Sartre's devotion to politics and psychological dilemmas might have invoked further sympathy for students who also occupied fairly privileged positions in society. Finally, despite employing 'self-negation' as one of their slogans, Japanese students ended up not being able to indicate their course of action beyond Zenkyōtō.

IV. Sartre and *Provoke*

The first issue of *Provoke* was packed with literary works (the manifesto of *Provoke*, essays by Okada and Taki, and a postscript by Nakahira) containing ideas from a range of disciplines. *Provoke*'s authors dropped the names of André Breton, Karl Marx, Yoshimoto, Arthur Rimbaud, Jean-Luc Godard and other cultural pioneers from all over the world in their essays. Nevertheless, the fundamental idea of the journal was tied primarily to three elements: French phenomenology and its parallels to photography, the ways in which *Provoke* members lived, and the examination of the relationship between photography and language.

¹⁷⁵ Takagi, *Zengakuren to Zenkyōtō* [The All-Japan Federation of Students' Self-governing Associations and the All-campus Joint-struggle Council], 132-134.

¹⁷⁶ “*Teidai kaitai*” writes as 帝大解体.

I argue that one of the critical subtexts to *Provoke* was Sartre's theory of politics. Nakahira recalled that Taki taught him about Sartre's *engagement*, proving that both Taki and Nakahira were familiar with the French thinker's ideas.¹⁷⁷ Not only did Taki and Nakahira refer to Sartre in their writings, but their political activism was also highly consistent with his idea of direct action. For example, Taki's former assistant Yanagimoto Naomi recalled that Taki, Nakahira, and he had distributed flyers advocating that Japanese stand up against the World Expo in Osaka on International Day to protest war (October 21, 1968) (Fig. 3.6).¹⁷⁸

Therefore, it is critically important that we examine Sartre's ideas, because they seem to have served as a springboard for Taki's theorization of the practice of photography. This section examines how the writings of Nakahira, Okada, and Taki reveal their (un)conscious affinity for Sartre's philosophy as they laid out the groundwork for their theories of photography.

Okada and Sartre

As the only poet in *Provoke*, Okada left a number of essays regarding the relationships among language, art, and photography. He was also an active art critic familiar with Surrealism and Dadaism. However Okada's essay "*Mienai, setsunai, tobitai*" [I cannot see, I feel heart-broken, and I want to leap] in *Provoke 1* is most strongly related to Sartre's ideas of freedom. Throughout the essay, Okada asserted the importance of freedom, by which he could reveal the unseen world and thereby "throw off" any "heart-broken" feelings he might have toward the world's social repression and injustice. Engaging in such an action was precisely what he believed practicing art constituted. As a result of failing to undertake this type of engagement,

¹⁷⁷ Nakahira Takuma, "Nakahira Takuma: Purovōku no saisentan wa Takanashi Yutaka datta/ Nakahira Takuma, 'The Best Work was Takanashi's'," interview, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 10, 1993): 55.

¹⁷⁸ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

some people lived with repressed, disguised feelings, which Okada called a “corruption of consciousness,” after the theory of British philosopher Robin G. Collingwood.¹⁷⁹

Okada’s metaphysical idea of freedom certainly paralleled Sartre’s, but was also slightly divergent from it. Okada defined freedom as the state in which the totality of being human could be exposed, and footnotes state that the spirit of freedom suspends itself between idea and practice.¹⁸⁰ He noted that he was going to consider a “freedom that embraces the fact that all human beings are analogous,” and this phrase resonates with Sartre’s universal take on human beings and their actions.¹⁸¹ Okada went on to consider freedom as preceding the choice or judgment of what to do and as actually referring to the external condition in which human beings lived fully with honest feelings. Okada stated that people “lose” freedom “when the situation makes people give up (or actively give up) wholly grasping the essence of matters and retaining the idea as a reflection of one’s true consciousness.”¹⁸² Having made this point, Okada lamented that his heart was broken (*setsunai*) because he could not see (*mienai*) the momentum of releasing his creative energy (*tobitai*). In contrast, Sartre argued that freedom was innate to human beings, and was therefore inescapable. He explained, “it [human-reality] is free because it is perpetually wrenched away from itself and because it has been separated by a nothingness

¹⁷⁹ Okada Takahiko, “Mienai, setsunai, tobitai” [I cannot see, I feel heart-broken, and I want to leap], *Provoke I* (November 1968): 6.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 3. “もっとも抽象的にみてもみれば、たぶん<自由>とは、人間の全体性が展開される事態の謂であり、人間にとってもっとも豊潤な可能態のことであるだろう。”

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 11-12. “。。。人間が類似的存在であること、そのことをまるごと引き請けた上での「自由」のあり方を私は考える。。。”

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 6. “その本質の十分な把握と、本人の真なる意識がぜんめんに反映したかたちで観念を抱懐することが、諸々の事情で不可能となったとき（あるいは、それをあきらめてしまうとき）、けっきょく人びとは、自由を喪い。。。”

from what it is and from what it will be.”¹⁸³ As human beings have the consciousness to observe themselves from a distance, we are all born with the capacity to achieve freedom.

Taki and Sartre

While Okada’s essay exhibits slight parallels with Sartre’s ideas, Taki’s essay “Oboegaki 1: Chi no taihai” [Memorandum 1: Degeneration of intelligence] seems to use Sartre as a springboard. Starting his essay by blaming the professors at the University of Tokyo (where Taki himself graduated) for their self-protective attitude, the first part defines ‘intelligence’ in an especially overt existentialist tone.¹⁸⁴ Taki audaciously declared that nothingness would cause humanity to become decadent, because nothingness was impotent in conferring on humans the ability to wholly grasp their existence in the world.¹⁸⁵ Taki acknowledged that the world was incomprehensible to begin with, and then stated that there was a deep, unbridgeable fissure between the acknowledged self and the unacknowledged world.¹⁸⁶ For Taki, the relentless effort to overcome this condition constituted intelligence. Borrowing Okada’s lyrical phrase, Taki stated, “We do not ‘leap’ because we ‘cannot see’. What I would like to call ‘intelligence’ is the will to determine ‘toward what’ we make ourselves exist through the theorization of ‘what we cannot see’.”¹⁸⁷ Taki did not fully trust that human beings have agency in the world, in

¹⁸³ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, 568.

¹⁸⁴ Taki also criticized the Japan Advertising Artists Club and the Osaka World Exposition for being notorious examples of the embodiment of mindless petit-bourgeois ideology and for, thus, triggering a “degeneration of intelligence.”

¹⁸⁵ Taki Kōji, “Oboegaki 1: Chi no taihai” [Memorandum 1: Degeneration of intelligence], *Provoke I* (November 1968): 64.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 64, 65. “われわれは「見えない」から「とぶ」のではない。「見えない」ものの理論化

opposition to Sartre's enthusiastic attempt at becoming the one to grasp the world. Moreover, the extremely pessimistic and nihilistic tones in Taki's arguments markedly differ from Sartre's political motivation to change the world.

Nevertheless, both thinkers converged on the idea that human beings exist only through their continuous engagement in an effort to make sense of the world and existence as a whole entity.¹⁸⁸ And Taki's claim of moving toward a *zentai-chi* [totality of intelligence]¹⁸⁹ might remind the reader of Sartre's notion of 'negation,' not in *Being and Nothingness* but in *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. In the former work, Sartre described a human being as a transparent entity that did not generate any spontaneous feeling, and in turn he developed the notion of 'negation' by anchoring it to the human needs that motivate engagement in a dialectical process. In the latter book, Sartre reread Marxism through the lens of existentialism, attempting to resuscitate dialectics as a way to live and be an effective tool in the analysis of the formation of class. The beginning of the book explains 'negation' as a condition that naturally generates one's orientation. Sartre states,

In short, the intelligibility of the negative as a structure of Being can be made manifest only in connection with a developing process of totalisation; negation is defined on the basis of a primary force, as an *opposing force* of integration, and in relation to a future totality as a destiny or end of the totalizing movement.¹⁹⁰

Sartre explained that humans start by negating the present condition in order to strive toward the

のなかに「何にむかって」自らを实在させるかをきめようとするを「知」とよびたいのである。”

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 64.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 63. *Zentai-chi* writes as 全体知.

¹⁹⁰ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason, Volume One*, trans., Alan Sheridan-Smith (London and New York: New Left Books, 1976; repr., London and New York: Verso, 1991), 85.

unity that answers all human needs, which ultimately ends up negating the initial condition upon achieving the goal.

Regarding this point, the chief difference between Sartre and Taki concerns the role that dialectics plays in the two authors' respective take on practice. Sartre's ambitious purpose in his *Critique of Dialectical Reason* is to make history intelligible through dialectics. According to Sartre, a critical investigation's "sole concern will be to rediscover the moments of their [different types of knowledge's] inter-relations, the ever vaster and more complex movement which totalizes them [different types of knowledge] and, finally, the very direction of the totalization, that is to say, the 'meaning of History' and its Truth."¹⁹¹

In contrast, for Taki, dialectical activity itself constitutes "intelligence," and humans must live through such activity. Thus, Taki's attitude toward reconsidering the ways of associating oneself with the world paradoxically takes a different kind of double negation—rejection of the human inability to be an agent—that circles back to the manifestation of the totality. Although Taki acknowledged that there was no such thing as "totality," he found his value in the act of blazing toward what seems to be, in fact, "totality."

Japanese protesting students' (mis)conception of Sartre's notion of negation, their absorption of his notion of engagement into their politics, and his arbitrary and inter-textual influence on Taki and Okada, may all demonstrate that his theory had seeped into society and had almost become a social norm. The core subjects of Okada's essay, and the search for freedom itself, conjured up the ghost of Sartre. Taki, on the other hand, eschewed Sartre's faith in humanity and tried to go beyond his idea by making an uncompromising effort to reveal the unseeable world. Thus, Sartre's fundamental ideas formed a foundation for both students and

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 69. Specifically, Sartre defined the "intelligibility of historical Knowledge" as a foundation for a progressive moment and defined "sociological Knowledge" as a foundation for a regressive moment in critical investigations.

Provoke photographers to act upon. Their existential questions came to be the motivation behind the *Provoke* photographers' method of taking photographs, as I will demonstrate in the following paragraphs.

V. The Meaning of Violent Action in Zenkyōtō and in the Photography Methods of *Provoke* Photographers

In this section, I will compare the meaning of violent action for Japanese students and the meaning of physical action for *Provoke* photographers. As for the Japanese students, violence was both a political tool motivated by Sartre and a form of self-expression. *Provoke* members like Taki, Moriyama, Takanashi, and Nakahira interestingly shifted toward phenomenological experimentation in taking photographs. Overarching the realms of photography, language, and the world they lived in, Taki ventured into the “real world” with his camera.

Japanese Students and the Meaning of Violence

The notion of engagement would have justified Zenkyōtō's violent tactics, and *engagement* [engagement] as a word—coined by Sartre—was probably one of the best-known terms in late-1960s Japan. In his breakthrough lecture *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, Sartre explained that the self was more than just a matter of choosing what it ought to be, and that the self had a responsibility to all mankind.¹⁹² Although novelists rather than political activists initially used Sartre's ‘engagement’ as a provocative term, the students could rather easily adopt the term in order to legitimate their violent tactics. One of Sartre's comments from his second

¹⁹² Jean-Paul Sartre, “Jitsuzon-shugi towa hyūmanizumu de aru” [Existentialism is a humanism] in *Jitsuzon-shugi towa nanika* [What is existentialism?], ed. and trans. Ibuki Takehiko, (Kyoto: Jinbun Shoin, 1955), 45.

lecture in Japan could have served as an effective theoretical justification for Japanese students seeking to transform his philosophy into action:

...join it in *mid-course* in its elemental forms (a wild-cat strike, or a stoppage that has already been canalized by a trade union), to integrate himself in it, participate in it *physically* [emphasis added], allow himself to be captured and borne along by it and only then, to the extent that he judges it necessary, to decipher its nature and illuminate its meaning and possibilities.¹⁹³

This statement indicates that violence itself endows significance on a movement that is supposed to enforce the students to be violent in a conventional sense. Acknowledging the situation in Japan, Sartre optimistically interpreted the violent nature of the movement as a sign of revolution: “Anyway, what I would like to say is that, not only in Europe, but also in Asia—Japan for example—we witness enormous protest movements, which can be called ‘the thaw of revolutionary spirit and violence’.”¹⁹⁴

Sartre’s attitude toward violence fueled the students’ vindication of their actions, and went even further.¹⁹⁵ The students’ physicality was imbued with specific meanings drawn from the students’ political movement. Students’ actions retained a conceptual and expressive core, which was evident in the students’ tendency to refer to violence as *Gewalt* and to wooden staves as *geba-bō* [Gewalt sticks]. According to an anonymous author’s article in *Asahi Journal*, the term *Gewalt* initially signified anti-violence ideas and treated the illegitimacy of violence itself

¹⁹³ Sartre, “A Plea for Intellectuals,” 261.

¹⁹⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, “Gakusei no bōryoku to taisei no hinin” [Violence by students and the negation of establishment] in *Hinin no shisō*, [Idea of negation] trans. Ebisaka Takeshi, et al., (Kyoto: Jinbun Shoin, 1969), 62. “いずれにせよわたしが言いたいことは、ヨーロッパにおいてばかりではなくアジアにおいてさえ——たとえば日本において——わたしたちが眼にしている暴力的なこの巨大な抗議運動は、＜革命的精神の雪解け、革命的暴力の雪解け＞と呼びうるものだという事です。”

¹⁹⁵ For the public reception and the performative aspects of students’ violence, see William Marotti’s “Japan 1968: The Performance of Violence and the Theater of Protest,” *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 1, (February 2009): 97-135.

as an effective political meaning.¹⁹⁶ In spite of its implication, the *Gewalt* stick became chiefly a symbolic weapon for student activists. Furthermore, Ogura pointed out that fighting with helmets and wooden staves was their means of self-expression in a protest against adults who did not stand up to the government's wrong doings.¹⁹⁷ The students' naming of their weapons as *Gewalt* sticks and the sticks' emblematic presence in the student movement signified students' physical engagement in a struggle that was loaded with symbolic meaning far surpassing simple references to unruly, idiosyncratic physical behavior.

Engaging in violent action had another dimension for students. According to Oguma, research conducted by the sociologist Takahashi Akira in 1969 has shown that more than half of the student activists who participated in demonstrations did so on the basis of psychological coercion and solicitation from other student activists.¹⁹⁸ Oguma points out that the reluctant ones took advantage of the physical aspect of demonstrations to liberate themselves. Takahashi's statement, cited by Ogura, is quite revealing about the students' psyche: "in most cases, demonstrations, especially the first one, are places where students who are on the verge of losing themselves in the degeneracy of conventional daily life can project themselves in order to retrieve themselves."¹⁹⁹ In other words, violence also functioned as a catalyst for students' effort

¹⁹⁶ Anonymous, "Fūsokukei: Geba-bō no ronri" [Anemometer: The theory of the Gewalt stick], *Asahi Journal* (December 15, 1968): 3.

¹⁹⁷ Oguma, 1968, vol. 1, 493, 494.

¹⁹⁸ Takahashi Akira, "Katsudōka gakusei: Nihon gakusei undō no shisō to kōdō, dai 2 kai" [Student activists: The ideas and activities of Japanese student movements, 2], *Chūō kōron* [Central public discourse] (June 1968): 184, 185; cited in Oguma, 1968, vol. 1, 268.

¹⁹⁹ Takahashi, "Katsudōka gakusei: Nihon gakusei undō no shisō to kōdō, dai 2 kai" [Student activists: The ideas and activities of Japanese student movements, 2], 185; cited in Oguma, 1968, vol. 1, 269. "ここでは、多くのばあい、デモ、とくに最初のデモは、風化し儀礼化した日常生活のなかで退化しそうになっている自己を回復するための、状況への自己投企の場と考えられているようである。"

to retrieve their own identities, which had been lost in the competition surrounding such matters as university entrance examinations and boring lectures.

For students, violence was simultaneously an agent of expressive and political meaning—taken up by students as a way for them to realize self-liberation and to appeal to the public’s interest in radicalism—and a means of achieving concrete goals. These two aspects of violence might help explain why the students barricaded themselves in Yasuda Hall while riot police took up positions outside in January 1968, and why other *Zenkyōtō* students called their battleground in the section of Tokyo *Kanda Quartier Latin* and created a barricade on the street. Those impractical acts functioned as a means, not simply of self-protection, but also of imbuing the students’ actions with meaning. When Yasuda Hall “fell” to riot police after two days, a student made the following statement from the broadcasting station in the building: “Our struggle ended in victory. To the fellow students, citizens, and laborers, our struggle is by no means over, but we will suspend our broadcasting until the day our fellow comrades will fight instead of us and make their own announcement from this liberated hall.”²⁰⁰ The announcement suggests that the act of struggle was only meant as a catalyst that would solicit a new generation’s rise in revolt.

***Provoke* Members’ Photograph-taking Patterns**

Just as Japanese students found abstract principles and existential meaning in their physical acts, *Provoke* members were paying attention to the gestures involved in the making and

²⁰⁰ Watanabe Hitomi, *Tōdai Zenkyōtō 1968-1969* [The All-Campus Joint-Struggle Council at the University of Tokyo] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2007), 119. “われわれの闘いは勝利だった。全国の学生、市民、労働者のみなさん、われわれの闘いは決して終わったのではなく、われわれに代わって闘う同志の諸君が再び解放講堂から時計台放送を行なうまで、この放送を中止します。”

taking of photographs. In practice, the *Provoke* photographers often shot without looking through the viewfinder, and sometimes even while running or walking. As a result, the images are called *are-bure-boke*, which refers to the grainy, blurred, and out of focus quality that became the “signature style” of the journal. These kinds of images also served as cut outs of the individual photographers’ living reality. For example, the photograph by Nakahira, which reveals a *bure*, or blurred, quality, was probably taken when Nakahira was running or walking (Fig. 3.7). A woman in Moriyama’s photograph is definitely out of focus, or *boke* (Fig. 3.8). So is Takanashi’s image of model girls in fashion costumes (Fig. 3.9). The location, time, date, and method pertaining to the taking of these photographs are not entirely clear.

Even in the dark room, Moriyama and Nakahira sometimes boiled negatives to make them darker and more distorted.²⁰¹ In this rough, slapdash manner, they often made extremely dark-toned prints, and probably even deformed negatives to produce imagery that was captured quite literally in the process of disintegration. Taki’s photograph on the right page of the journal demonstrates typical *are* effect in its grainy surface, which is usually induced by developing negatives with chemicals in high temperatures (Fig. 3.10).

According to Nakahira and Moriyama, these rough approaches to taking photographs were rooted in physiology rather than in theory. When an interviewer asked Moriyama to explain the meaning of *are-bure-boke*, the interviewee noted, with irritation, that Moriyama was not especially aware of making *are-bure-boke* images to begin with.²⁰² Nakahira also indicated that

²⁰¹ Takanashi Yutaka, *Raika na me/ Like a Leica Eye* (Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 2002), 131.

²⁰² Moriyama Daidō, “Tokushū: Bure boke wa dou natta: Isshun isshun kawaru riaritī no arika—Moriyama Daidō shi ni intabyū” [What happened to bure-boke?: The reality that changes from moment to moment: Interview with Moriyama Daidō], *Asahi Camera* (March 1976): 210.

are-bure-boke images are, in part, a natural result of the human eye.²⁰³ The triadic approach ended up being reflective of how Nakahira had been living his life. His quest to understand being and his quest to explore photography were synonymous. The following quotation from his article, written in 1970, is the most revealing of the concepts behind his efforts to take photographs:

I definitely dwell on living my own life. Then, I wish to justly place the act of taking photographs in the totality of my own being. Because taking photographs is, for me, more than anything but my being alive, a consecutive record of my triumphs over my own being, and an act of looking straight at what is not choice but “reality” coming down on me.²⁰⁴

Rather than line up the photographs to construct a grand narrative, Nakahira stirred up temporal and spatial conventions with extremely dark-toned photographs of the city at day and night (Fig. 3.7 and 3.11). For Nakahira, collapsing the conventions of photography went hand in hand with proving his existence through the fragmentation of what he called “reality.”

In their writings in *Provoke* and *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language], Taki and Okada eloquently theorized the spontaneity and practices of photographers. The most enlightening reference point was provided by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a fellow philosopher, companion, and rival of Sartre, and Antonin Artaud, who was a French actor, director, and writer, known for his advocacy of metaphysical language in theater.

²⁰³ Nakahira Takuma, “Nihon no seitai: Shūdensha” [The mode of life in Japan: The last train of the day], *Asahi Camera* (October 1968): 59.

²⁰⁴ Nakahira Takuma, “Shashin no kachi o kimeru mono” [The element that decides the value of photography], *Asahi Shimbun*, 30 March 1970, evening edition, 7. “ぼくは決定的に自分が生きるということにこだわる。そして自らが生きる生の総体の中に写真をとるという行為を正当に位置づけたいと願う。なぜなら写真をとるということは、ぼくにとって、なによりも自らが生き、かちとってゆく生のそのつどの記録であり、その中で抜きさしならぬ形でぼくに迫ってくるものを「現実」として直視してゆく、そのようなものであるからだ。”

Taki and Okada advocated the principle that photographers should physically associate themselves with the world by placing emphasis on bodily gesture. The manifesto in *Provoke I* recounts members' attempts to interrogate the very notion of 'reality.' The 'reality' that the *Provoke* photographers questioned was represented, for example, by the long tradition of documentary photography and photojournalism, in which photography functioned as the framing device of a narrative or as the tool of the photographer's preconceived vision, as exemplified by Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother* (Fig. 3.12). (This point is closely examined in Chapter Four.) In other words, *Provoke* members' primary concern was photography itself rather than capturing the political situation of the late 1960s.

Provoke photographers strove to reveal the fundamental "fissure" in the world by presenting images that defied conventional explanation, thereby creating new vocabularies of imagery. According to Taki, "Photography, in metaphorical terms, is a scar on the wall of reality left by the body (not the intellect) when it aspired to go to the world beyond."²⁰⁵ Clearly, *Provoke* photographers attempted to show something entirely unexpected or unintended through their intuitive physical engagement with the world.

From Metaphysical Thinking about the Self to the Physical Act of Being One's Self: Taki's Adoption of Merleau-Ponty's Ideas

Taki formulated his ideas on photography according to an analysis of seeing that revealed limitations in Sartre's idea of seeing. Sartre retained the structure of me-against-the-circumstance

²⁰⁵ Taki Kōji, "Me to me narazaru mono" [Eye and what is not eye], in *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o suteru: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language], ed. Nakahira Takuma and Taki Kōji (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1970), 184, 185. "それどころか、写真は、比喩的な言い方をすれば、肉体（知ではない）が彼岸へ向おうとするときに、現実という壁のなかのこす痕跡である。"

in seeing, because (he argued) the one who sees formulates the world through selective viewing, such as looking for Pierre in a café. ‘Seeing’ refers only to seeing the physical world, and the agency of seeing still resides in the one who sees. The relationship between one who sees and what was seen is fixed in this case. In contrast, Taki thought photographers should reveal a new “environment” through seeing and, thus, through taking photographs.²⁰⁶ This “environment” is more than the physical surroundings of photographers, and includes the active relationships between photographers (e.g., their emotions and impulses) and their surroundings.

Taki and *Provoke* photographers were weary of what is considered “reality” in photography (i.e., something that is at once fictitious and clichéd and perpetuated by mass media and photojournalism). In this context, Taki found theoretical solace in Merleau-Ponty’s ideas, ideas that were imbued with actuality and directness. The first half of his 1970 essay “Me to me narazaru mono” [Eye and what is not eye] discusses Merleau-Ponty’s influence on him.²⁰⁷ Taki rhetorically expressed this idea as follows: “we are in between two kinds of impulse: the impulse of being entirely an ‘eye’ and the impulse of being ‘what is not an eye’.”²⁰⁸ Here, “eye” refers to photographers’ subjectivity regarding the creation of images, and “what is not an eye” refers to the uncontrollability of photography (specifically, the uncontrollability of photography’s mechanical procedures). Eschewing the Cartesian dichotomy of subjectivity and objectivity, Taki thought seeing should be a mediator in a gestalt sense, as if it is an expansion of perception in the

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 189-193.

²⁰⁷ Taki himself acknowledged that his analysis owed much to the theory of Merleau-Ponty. Ibid., 191-192.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 206. “われわれは「眼」になり切ってしまうことと「眼でないもの」になることのふたつの衝動のあいだにいる。”

process of bridging a gap to the outer world.²⁰⁹

A successor of Edmund Husserl's late period of phenomenological theory, Merleau-Ponty refuted intellectualism by turning his attention to the living world, aspiring to grasp it through perception alone. It is precisely this ability to see both objects around him and his own body that warrants the equation of "world as flesh." Merleau-Ponty states, "I perceive a thing because I have a field of existence and because each phenomenon, on its appearance, attracts towards that field the whole of my body as a system of perceptual powers."²¹⁰ Thus, the ambiguity and reflexivity of perception ensure the seeming contextualization of the body within the world. Taki's following statement further demonstrates the influence of Merleau-Ponty's above idea: "What I attempt to capture in my photography is not a condensation of my conscious being transmitted from my side, but that which is transmitted from there. It seems to me that I can call it also 'consciousness'."²¹¹ This statement finds expression in a photograph that Taki took of a coalminer for *Provoke I* (Fig. 3.13). The coalminer seems to be walking toward Taki (also, Taki may be walking toward the coalminer), and Taki presses the shutter button in the midst of his physical encounter with the coalminer. There is no hierarchy attaching itself to the coalminer's movements and Taki's movements; reciprocity exists between the two men in Taki's act of taking the photograph. Taki's advice to photographers is pertinent in regard to this photograph: photographers should perceptively photograph the physical world, rather than strive to reflect their own intentions in some photographed aspect of the world.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 188.

²¹⁰ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962; repr., London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 370-371.

²¹¹ Taki, "Me to me narazaru mono" [Eye and what is not eye], 185. "つまり、私が写真にとらえようとするのは、こちらがわから送りだす意識の凝結ではなく、むこうから送られてくるものであり、それをも「意識」とよんでいいように思えるものである。"

Therefore, Taki and other *Provoke* photographers aggressively and spontaneously shot a given object in order to perceptually and without thinking capture their “raw” experience of the object. Standing within the world and simultaneously being engulfed by it, Taki confessed in 1970, “When I was moving, I was subsumed into the world. At once, I was subsumed by the world *and* I subsumed the world. In short, I discovered my body in action, and the world was organized not through my eye but through my body” [emphasis added].²¹² For example, Taki’s photograph of a truck on a road reveals the quintessential characteristics of *are* and *boke* that create the illusion that he is striving toward an unseen destination (Fig. 3.14). In fact, Taki would likely have pressed the shutter-release button while he was in a car. The resulting photograph creates an effect as though Taki himself had been sucked directly into the landscape. Taki formulated the concrete physical function and idea of attempting to totalize the self and the world through his camera.

Ultimately, for Taki, photography was not a manifestation of his activity the way it was for the other *Provoke* photographers: it was a point along the way on his quest to apprehend the world he inhabited. Taki states, “If photography were to pursue its theory, one of the agendas would be...to elucidate how photography comes to be the ‘thing to signify’ through the system of seeing.”²¹³ Taki audaciously investigated the potential of photography not only as a cultural entity of conventional genres of visual culture such as photojournalism or art photography, but also as a metaphysical catalyst of his perception.

²¹² Ibid., 207. “動いているときはは[原文ママ]、世界に組みこまれていた。組みこまれると同時に世界をとりこみえた。つまり、私は行動する身体を見出していたのであり、この身体が、（眼でなくて）世界を組織していたのである。”

²¹³ Ibid., 184. “だから、もし写真に理論的な追及があるとすれば、そのひとつは。。。視覚の構造を通じて、写真がいかなる「意味するもの」になりうるかを明らかにすることである。”

Okada's Adoption of Artaud's Theory

While Taki conceptualized photography as a testimony to his body's engagement with the world, Okada attempted to redefine photography as a poet. He focused his attention on the relationship between language and bodily gesture. *Provoke* photographers were aware of the danger that photography could be reduced to a merely explanatory device, signifying no more than conventional language; and conventional language might in turn be applied to photographic images to fix their meanings.

To break this vicious cycle, Okada drew on the ideas of Artaud. In his seminal work, *Theater and Its Double*, Artaud attacked Western theatre for prioritizing the dialogue between actors and relying too much on the script. Artaud strongly believed that lighting, costumes, props, subjects, and physical movements should constitute the non-verbal theatrical language, and the spontaneous presentation of them would provoke the audience's concealed thoughts and feelings. He states, "We must first break theatre's subjection to the text and rediscover the idea of a kind of unique language somewhere between gesture and thought."²¹⁴ For Artaud, gesture, which encompassed a range of elements from bodily movement to stage props, was the key to revealing human nature, which could not be expressed by conventional spoken language.

Inspired by Artaud, Okada theorized the equivalence of gesture and language in his writing in 1970. Okada asserted that gesture was a genuine language capable of conveying the essence of matter. He elucidated the ways in which gesture can bear meaning:

Above all, when the body, in its naked state, confronts naked matter, it reveals the "original gesture" (*Urgebärde*) through its innate orientation. Needless to say, therein emerges a reciprocal relationship between the body and the matter (*chose*) or material

²¹⁴ Antonin Artaud, "The Theatre of Cruelty-First Manifesto (Le théâtre de la cruauté-Premier manifeste)" in *Artaud on Theater*, ed. Claude Schumacher (London: Methuen Drama, 1989), 100-101.

(*matière*), which constitutes for the first time the world of life. Moreover, therein revealed is the gesture itself. Therefore, we should note that not a static but a dynamic space will vividly unfold there. I have to emphasize that what I mean is . . . this living expanse.²¹⁵

According to Okada, this horizon should be filled with language, by which he meant language as the communication of body and matter, resulting from gesture, rather than as mere text or spoken words.²¹⁶ Having lost his trust in textual and spoken language, Okada thought that only a dynamics of gesture, space, and object could reveal the whole truth. His interpretation of Artaud clearly encouraged *Provoke* photographers to shoot in the midst of physical motion.

Ultimately, Okada stretches this idea to suggest the interchangeability of the body and language. He states, “As the human body is unavoidably a *physique sociale*, it obviously follows that language is also a social matter because it is a living organism. If language should be a complex image that mirrors or is analogous to the body, a linguistic expression can also be a body.”²¹⁷ On the basis of this idea, Okada concluded that poetry was the ultimate form of the body. It then seemed logical that no text appear in the third issue of *Provoke*, except for poetry (by Okada and his fellow-poet Yoshimasu Gōzō) accompanying the *are-bure-boke* photographs.

²¹⁵ Okada Takahiko, “Kikan ni hataraki kake, uttaeru kotoba” [The language which appeals to and calls for my organ] in *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty], 59. “まず、裸形の事物と肉体が裸形のまま相対するところから、肉体の志向性により、原身振り（ウルゲベルデ）をあらわにするであろう。そこで事物（chose）なり物質（matière）なりと肉体とのあいだに往復関係がなりたち、はじめて生の世界が形成されるのはいわずもがなのこととして、身振りがあらわにされてくるのだから、静的であるよりもむしろ動的な空間が生き生きとひらけることとなるだろうことに注目したい。断わっておくが、ここでは。。。この生きたひろがりをいっている。”

²¹⁶ Ibid., 58, 59.

²¹⁷ Okada Takahiko, “Ikeru genzai: Kotoba to nikutai ni kansuru oboe gaki” [A living present—Memorandum on language and flesh], in *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty], 88-89. “人間の肉体がいやおうなしに *Physique sociale* であるのと同じように、言語も生きた有機物であることによって社会的な事物であるのはいまをまたない。言語が肉体と相似の、複合した影像でありうるとすれば、言語による表現もまた一つの肉体であっている。”

As mentioned in the previous chapter, this was a major change from the first and second issues, both of which contained lengthy essays. To Okada, poetry as living language was equivalent to photographs crystallized from the bodily, spontaneous method of taking photos.

As discussed above, both Japanese students and *Provoke* members embraced the physical movements led by intuition, but the motivations behind them were quite different. Zenkyōtō students justified their violence—hitting riot police with staves, throwing firebombs and stones—in the name of direct action against injustice. The Japanese students also displayed an aspect of self-expression and psychic liberation in the face of a suffocating society. The *Provoke* members' engagement with phenomenology and Artaud's theory of theatre, however, distinguished them from the students. Simply put, *Provoke* photographers proceeded in their own ways to engage with the world by taking photographs in a phenomenological manner.

VI. Conclusion

This chapter compared and contrasted student movements in late-1960s Japan with the four *Provoke* publications in order to articulate the similarities and differences between the two. In terms of methodology, both the movements and the *Provoke* publications employed physical engagement to achieve their disparate goals. In politically motivated strikes against authority figures, Zenkyōtō students' familiarity with Sartre's philosophy of direct action and his tolerance for violence revealed itself. Unsatisfied with Sartre's humanism and his trust in the human ability to comprehend the world through seeing and action, the *Provoke* members employed the theories of Merleau-Ponty and Artaud to grasp the world they lived in, presenting the meaning of photography as an intersection of the self and the world. In sum, the students of Zenkyōtō and the *Provoke* photographers were similarly engaged in an existential search bearing Sartre's idea

of direct action in mind, but the latter were greatly concerned about the ontology of photography through the act of taking photographs. Therefore, *Provoke*'s physically oriented venture developed some resonance with students, yet their philosophies differed from each other.

A common element characterizing both *Provoke* members and anti-establishment students was the contradiction between their remarks and behaviors. As indicated above, most of the activist students failed to pursue "self-negation," because they chose to take career paths leading to conventional success rather than drop out of school. In spite of their anti-establishmentarianism, the *Provoke* members had to gain their living by involving themselves in major corporate and commercial jobs. During *Provoke*, Taki ran the design office and had already worked on a public relations magazine for one of the biggest glass companies in Japan.²¹⁸ In his interview in 1971, Nakahira frankly admitted that he often earned quick money by participating in the roundtable discussions held by photography and opinion magazines.²¹⁹ In addition, Taki and Nakahira occasionally worked as freelance photographers for the major news magazine *Asahi Graph*. Moriyama brought his works to Yamagishi Shōji, the most powerful editor at *Camera Mainichi*, and successfully attracted the attention of readers and photographers around the time of *Provoke*. Takanashi was an established commercial photographer in a major advertising company at the time *Provoke* first made its appearance. All in all, the *Provoke* members benefited from the establishment. For that matter, neither the protesting students nor the *Provoke* members rose to the level of rebels: in reality, they got caught up in circumstances taking place somewhere between pure independence and submission to the establishment.

²¹⁸ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

²¹⁹ Nakahira Takuma, in Kumagai Yukiko, Takamatsu Jirō, Hori Kōsai, Yamao Sanshō (?), and Haryū Ichirō, "Torieazu Geijutsu ka to shite" [Being an artist for the time being], roundtable discussion, in *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (June 1971): 78.

In the end, the comparison demonstrates that *Provoke* was greatly informed by the zeitgeist of the year 1968, but also that its goal was not to illustrate the political turmoil. Taki and Nakahira engaged with political activism, but photography was not their tool either for broadcasting or for intervening in political activism. Rather, Nakahira tried to achieve fulfillment by engaging in politics while investigating photography. In “Henshū kōki” [Editor’s note] in *Provoke 1*, Nakahira stated, “At this time, I believe in nothing but accepting the contradiction of politics and creative activity and living in the tension between the two.”²²⁰ Nakahira just as quickly advocated separating politics from taking photographs. But as I demonstrated in this chapter, the two activities were dialectically present in his undertakings. Therefore, *Provoke* aligns neither with “participatory” nor “social” art because of their different purposes. Instead, *Provoke* was intended primarily to be an intellectual inquiry into the question of what photography and photographers really are, through the practice of taking photographs.

From the phenomenological point of view, members physically engaged in taking photographs to reveal the unrevealed. The end result of such photographs is not a visual representation of a message directed at an audience, but a presentation of a photographic autonomy crystallizing the testimonies of photographers’ living realities. In other words, *Provoke* interrupted and even dismantled the previously assumed bond between photographers and audiences. Thus, the current study’s examination disentangles *Provoke* from any clichéd association of art and politics.

²²⁰ Nakahira Takuma, “Henshū kōki” [Editor’s note], *Provoke 1* (November 1968): 69. “さしあたっては、政治と何かを作り出す行為との矛盾をそのままわが身にひきうけること。その緊張の中でまぎらず生きること。これしかないと思います。”

Chapter Four

Provoke Against *Hōdō Shashin*: *Provoke* in the History of Japanese Photography

I. Introduction

This chapter describes the complex relationship between the *Provoke* publications and *hōdō shashin*, a specifically Japanese photographic genre, which literally means “press photography” and is equivalent to “photojournalism” today. The relationship between the *Provoke* members, especially Taki and Nakahira, and *hōdō shashin* is important because the *Provoke* publications intentionally produced non-explanatory, unconventional photographs that went against the prevailing photojournalistic approach. Taki and Nakahira were focused on unpacking the conventional relationship between language and photography as formulated in *hōdō shashin*, in which a didactic, moralistic story presented as “objective truth” is intentionally imposed on viewers.

Cultural historian Mary Panzer introduces *Provoke* in the context of photojournalism, but one should note that the background to Japanese photojournalism was both unique and evolving.²²¹ Photographer and editor Natori Yōnosuke (1910-1962) expanded the idea of *hōdō shashin* in the context of Japanese photography upon his return from Germany in the early 1930s. Natori introduced *hōdō shashin* as a form of photo-reportage, which was associated with a particular photographic look, and this look became a new trend in Japanese photography. As a consequence, what influenced the *Provoke* publications was twofold; the *hōdō shashin* of Natori and its direct effect on Domon Ken (1909-1990) and Tōmatsu Shōmei (1930-). These two examples serve as a subtext for the approach taken by *Provoke*, with the contemporary *hōdō*

²²¹ Mary Panzer, *Things as They Are: Photojournalism in Context Since 1955* (Amsterdam: World Press Photo, 2005), 27, 178, 179.

shashin constituted the immediate object of opposition for *Provoke* members. Therefore, a close study of the trajectory of the *hōdō shashin* debate illuminates both what the *Provoke* publications fundamentally opposed and how this opposition led the group to devise a unique position in the history of Japanese photography.

What the *Provoke* publications proposed was the idea of photography as a form of personal documentary that showed only “fragments of reality,” as expressed in *Provoke I*’s manifesto. Taki and Nakahira’s influence on the conceptual and stylistic development of both the journal and its approach to photography is evident throughout the three issues of *Provoke* and the concluding volume entitled *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language]. Another innovation was Taki, Moriyama, and Nakahira’s assertion that photography is a phenomenon involving the personal behavior of seeing by the photographer and the mechanical autonomy of cameras and related processes. These individuals described this state of photography as oscillating between the two poles of the “personal” and the “anonymous.” Photographers’ agency is fluid between these two states, in contrast to the anchoring of this agency to editorial themes in Natori’s case and to the photographers’ subjective gazes in Domon’s and Tōmatsu’s case.

Rather than simply contextualize the *Provoke* publications within the history of Japanese photography, this chapter examines the publications’ achievement and uniqueness against *hōdō shashin*. As mentioned in my Introduction, *Provoke* photographers have often been described as an Oedipus pitted against the father figure of Tōmatsu. However, little attention has been directed to the publication’s relationship with Natori and his *hōdō shashin*.²²² A scholar of visual

²²² Kuraishi Shino, a scholar of visual arts, briefly compared *Provoke* with the photojournalism of *Life* magazine and Natori in his dialogue with Yasumi Akihito. But he did not offer a deeper analysis of this relationship. “Nakahira Takuma: Sono kiseki to toi” [Nakahira Takuma: His trajectory and questions] in *Nakahira Takuma: Kitarubeki shashinka* [Nakahira Takuma: A photographer to come] (Tokyo: Kawade

arts, Yasumi Akihito briefly mentioned that Nakahira considered *hōdō shashin* too thematic, but Yasumi's use of the term *hōdō shashin* was limited to the contemporary photojournalism pertaining to the Vietnam War and to issues regarding Okinawa.²²³ Thus, it is vital to trace the *hōdō shashin* discourse from Natori to the time of *Provoke*, as this will help to elucidate the origins of the *Provoke* publications' conceptual framework. First, I will explain *hōdō shashin* in the context of Japanese photography. Then, I will explain the *Provoke* publications' deviation from it through the conceptual and structural development of the publications. Finally, I will illuminate distinctive characteristics of *Provoke* photography that distance it from its predecessors' in two regards: the relationship between photography and language and the photographers' agency.

Throughout this chapter, I emphasize Natori's and Tōmatsu's influence on the *Provoke* publications, an influence that was greater than Domon's. While Natori, Tōmatsu, and *Provoke* members had some direct associations with one another, Domon developed no personal relationships with *Provoke* members. Therefore, there was less conceptual association between *Provoke* and Domon than between the two aforementioned photographers and *Provoke*. In the current study, I treat Natori and Tōmatsu in the same sections, because they directly and publicly exchanged their opinions about *hōdō shashin*.

II. The *Hōdō Shashin* Debate between Natori Yōnosuke and Tōmatsu Shōmei

Shobō Shinsha, 2009), 8-9.

²²³ Yasumi, Akihito, "Kiroku/kioku no sākyurēshon: Nakahira Takuma o megutte" [Circulation of records and memories: On Nakahira Takuma], in *Gendai shashin no riaritī* [Reality in contemporary photography], ed. Miyamoto Ryūji and Yasumi Akihito. (Tokyo: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, 2003), 86-87.

Natori's *Hōdō Shashin*

Natori's advocacy of *hōdō shashin* through his news magazine *Nippon* was one of the most important events in the history of Japanese photography and magazine culture. In effect, it amounted to the establishment of a new genre. Before Natori, photojournalism had established itself in Japan by virtue of some news magazines such as *Kokusai shashin jōhō* [International photographic information], *Kokusai jiji gahō* [Photography magazine on current international affairs] (both established in 1922), *Sandē mainichi/ Sunday Mainichi*, and *Asahi gurafu/ Asahi Graph* (both established in 1923).²²⁴ The term *hōdō shashin* had already been used by the *Asahi Shimbun* [Asahi newspaper] in its advertising column.²²⁵ However, Natori's *hōdō shashin* was peculiar in terms of its emphasis on the delivery of storyline through combined photographs that led photographers to surrender their agency to the themes of articles. Without an understanding of Natori's concept of *hōdō shashin*, one cannot begin to understand the photography of the *Provoke* publications, because *Provoke* members refused to convey such stories.

A photographer under contract with *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, Natori brought a knowledge of German *Reportage-foto* [photo-reportage] to Japan in the early 1930s (at that time, Germany was the most advanced country in that field). According to Natori, he himself asked the renowned photography critic Ina Nobuo to translate the German term, and Ina proposed *hōdō shashin* as the Japanese equivalent.²²⁶ Natori contributed his writings about *hōdō shashin* to

²²⁴ Inoue Yūko, “‘Hōdō shashin’ to gurafu zasshi no reimei” [Dawn of ‘hōdō shashin’ and news magazines] in *Senji gurafu zasshi no sendensen: Jūgonen sensōka no ‘Nihon’ no imēji* [News magazines' advertisement battles during the War: The impression of ‘Japan’ during 15 years of war], *Ekkyō suru kindai 7* [Transgression of modernism, vol. 7] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2009), 22.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

²²⁶ Natori Yōnosuke, “Hōdō shashin no bōkkō” [A sudden rise in *hōdō shashin*], *Serupan/ Le Serpent* (November 1935): 87. Ishikawa Yasumasa, *Hōdō shashin no seishun jidai: Natori Yōnosuke to nakama tachi* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1991), 239.

numerous magazines after the launch of Nippon Kōbō, a publishing company that Natori, Ina, and others had founded in 1933.²²⁷ Natori stated that the photographer practicing *hōdō shashin* “does not shoot news events or topics as a mere record. Rather, *hōdō shashin* explains the ‘matter’ itself, its history, and its background [to the readers]. *Hōdō shashin* is the ‘article’ that does more than merely report—it elucidates, as well.”²²⁸ In contrast to the photographs accompanying news reports, Natori’s *hōdō shashin* should provide visual narration to photographers’ stories to serve the function of instantaneous transmission of content.

Natori strictly distinguished his *hōdō shashin* from news photography. For Natori, photography was more than just a supplementary illustration for a text. He relied on the photography’s descriptive power, the complexity of the layout of multiple images, and the manipulation of images (e.g., cropping, trimming) to tell the story. In line with Natori’s formulation, photographers of *hōdō shashin* had to possess the ability to weave together a storyline based on their selection of a theme. What clearly distinguished Natori’s *hōdō shashin* from news photography was the clarity and fluency of storylines through the editorial decisions invested in layout.

Following Natori’s concept, Ina theorized *hōdō shashin* in his article “Hōdō shashin ni tsuite” [On *hōdō shashin*] in the first brochure of the publishing company Nippon Kōbō [Studio

²²⁷ For example, the following articles are frequently quoted to explain Natori’s ideas of *hōdō shashin*. Natori Yōnosuke, “Hōdō shashin no bokkō” [A sudden rise in *hōdō shashin*] in *Serupan/ Le Serpent* (November 1935) and the series of his writings on *hōdō shashin*, “Hōdō shashin dangi” [On *hōdō shashin*] in the photography magazine *Camera* from January to May and from October to December in 1952. Natori also published two books, *Atarashii shashinjutsu* [New method of photography] in 1955 and *Kumi shashin no tsukuri kata* [How to make the combined photograph] in 1956.

²²⁸ Natori Yōnosuke, “Hōdō shashin dangi 1” [On *hōdō shashin* 1], *Camera* 362 (January 1952): 50. “。。ニュースやトピックスを、単なる記録として撮影したものではなく、その『事』の背景や歴史を知り、その『事』を理解し、それを解説する写真である。ただの報告でなく、解説する記事である。”

Japan].²²⁹ Ina stated, “[Hōdō shashin] can report and express the wholeness of various matters only when photography is the first to follow an explanatory text, and when photographs are combined—which is so-called *kumi shashin*—all under the umbrella of clear concepts.”²³⁰ *Kumi shashin* was the most important strategy proposed in this article. It literally means “combined photographs,” in which several images are laid out with texts in the format of a page spread. An example can be found in “Japanese Textile Industries” in the first issue of *Nippon*, which Natori and others launched together in 1934 (Fig. 4.1). In his conception of this strategy, these kinds of laid-out photographs would effectively tell a story by themselves. As demonstrated in “Japanese Textile Industries,” *kumi shashin* thus constructed a unified look accentuated by syncopating rhythms, as if readers were listening to a story read aloud to them.

Natori and *Nippon*

Natori’s *hōdō shashin* crusade began in 1933, when he had to remain in Japan because of Hitler’s rising power. Natori founded the collective publisher Nippon Kōbō in July with another photographer (Kimura Ihei), a designer (Hara Hiromu), a film producer (Okada Sōzō), and the critic Ina Nobuo. By November of the same year, the identified members, except for Natori (and

²²⁹ For the differences between Natori’s concept of *hōdō shashin* and Ina’s corresponding concept, see Inoue’s “‘Hōdō shashin’ to gurafu zasshi no reimei” [The dawn of ‘hōdō shashin’ and news magazines]. Ina theorized that *hōdō shashin* was so socially meaningful that it could even form certain ideologies. Precisely for this reason, Ina believed that photographers must possess a “keen journalistic sense” and the ability to do graphic design and layout. Ina Nobuo, “Hōdō shashin ni tsuite” [On *hōdō shashin*], originally published in a Nippon Kōbō brochure in 1934; reprinted in *Ina Nobuo shashin ronshū: Shashin ni kaere* [An anthology of Ina Nobuo’s photography: Return to photography] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005), 92, 93.

²³⁰ Ina Nobuo, “Hōdō shashin ni tsuite” [On *hōdō shashin*], originally published in a Nippon Kōbō brochure in 1934; reprinted in *Ina Nobuo shashin ronshū: Shashin ni kaere* [An anthology of Ina Nobuo’s photography: Return to photography] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005), 93. “写真が主で、文字の説明が従であり、しかも意識的に、ある意図の下に組み合わせされたいわゆる「組写真」にして、はじめて種々なる事象の全貌を明確に表現し、報道し得るのである。”

his wife Erna Mecklenburg), had left the group. At this time he reformed the organization and published the sixty-four-page graphic quarterly magazine entitled *Nippon* on October 20, 1934, two years prior to the birth of *LIFE* in the United States (Fig. 4.2).¹⁰ *Nippon* promoted Japanese culture from its ancient past all the way to the present, including advanced industrial technology, and was intended to be a diplomatic act helping to initiate an exchange with other countries. The first issue of *Nippon* contained text that was in four languages: English, German, French, and Spanish. The publication had an approximate size of ten by fifteen inches, and contained about one hundred-twenty black-and-white photographs printed on high-quality coated paper (called *ātoshi*, or “art paper,” in Japan). The price for a single issue was 1.5 yen, which was quite pricey for a magazine when the major literary magazine such as *Chūō kōron* [Central public discourse] sold at 0.8 yen in 1933; nevertheless, *Nippon* was accessible to the Japanese public at that time.²³¹ Prominent designers such as Yamana Ayao, Kōno Takashi, and Kamekura Yūsaku and photographers such as Kimura, Fujimoto Shihachi, and Domon Ken contributed their works to *Nippon*.

Nippon became a platform for Natori’s *hōdō shashin*. As mentioned above, the first issue included a photo-reportage article, “Japanese Textile Industries,” that covered the factory of the Kanegafuchi Cotton Spinning Company, Ltd. (now Kanebo and Kracie Holdings, Ltd.), which was the primary patron for the first three issues of *Nippon* (Fig. 4.1). An extravagant four-page fold-out spread of photographs of the mechanical production of cotton celebrates the rise of Japan’s spinning industry. The composition of the photographs underscores the modernity of

²³¹ *Bukka no bunkashi jiten* [An encyclopedic cultural history of price indexes], ed. Kōga Tadakazu and the committee members (Tokyo: Tenbōsha, 2008), 322, 323. According to page 321, the monthly subscription to the Mainichi Newspapers in 1935 was 1 yen. According to *Nedanshi nenpyō, meiji, taishō, shōwa* [Chronological tables of price histories], the average daily income of a day laborer was 1.31 yen in 1934. The Asahi Shinbun Company, *Nedanshi nenpyō, meiji, taishō, shōwa* [Chronological tables of price histories in the Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa eras] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shinbun Company, 1988), 173.

Japanese industry, especially as captured in the somewhat abstract photographs of machinery on the front pages of the spread. Elsewhere, a row of cotton mills mimics the mechanical pattern of form, which is further enhanced by the layout that combines similar images. Seeing the world from a new, unconventional vantage point easily recalls the photographs of *Neue Sachlichkeit*, this being the foundation on which *hōdō shashin* was built to gain smooth acceptance from Japanese photographers and critics (Fig. 4.3).²³²

Nippon did not advocate *hōdō shashin* in Natori's mold alone. Also notable is a more conventional layout having a closer affinity to today's photojournalism. For example, the gridded layout of the photography and its equal emphasis on text can be seen in Ōta Saburō's article "The Significance of the China Affair," published in issue no. 13, dated October 1, 1937. It traces the Second Sino-Japanese War from the Manchurian Incident up to that moment (Fig. 4.4). With obvious propagandistic overtones, the photographs show Japanese soldiers training, their pastimes, and women's dedicated support for soldiers at home (Fig. 4.5). Rather than present an unconventional combination of photographs, this particular article reinforces its arguments in an orderly way. The inclusion of such an article suggests that *Nippon* had to shift its direction toward political propaganda at a time when Japan was striving to occupy China. In November 1937, Natori became a temporary employee for the Cabinet Information Bureau, and in the next month he published issue no. 14 (1938) in a Japanese edition only. This issue illustrates the advancement of the Japanese Army and Navy into China (Fig. 4.6). The last issue of *Nippon* is believed to be no. 36, published in 1944. By this time, Natori's enthusiasm for *hōdō shashin* was

²³² Natori Yōnosuke, "Hōdō shashin dangi 4" [On *hōdō shashin* 4], *Camera* 365 (April 1952): 87. This topic is also extensively explored by Kusumoto Aki in her "'Hōdō shashin' ni matsuwaru akuryō no kigen" [The origin of an evil spirit surrounding *hōdō shashin*"], *Photographers' Gallery Press* 5 (April 2006): 109-122.

being exploited by the Japanese government on behalf of its war strategy.²³³

Natori and Tōmatsu on *Hōdō Shashin*

In postwar Japan, Natori's *hōdō shashin* followed different courses in response to the emergence of new generations of Japanese photographers. The contentious exchange of opinions between Natori and Tōmatsu in the wake of the 1960s signaled the surfacing of a new generational aesthetic regarding Japanese photography, and also signaled the “curse” of *hōdō shashin* that persisted therein. Receptions of and practices of *hōdō shashin* could both endure and change.

In 1954, Tōmatsu entered the Iwanami Photo Library as a photographer, after Natori had left his director's post.²³⁴ Natori remained in the capacity of a consultant, coming in to the office twice a week.²³⁵ As photography critic Ueno Kōshi points out, two illustrated books for which Tōmatsu provided photographs vividly demonstrate Natori's influence on the younger photographer. *Suigai to Nihonjin* [Floods and the Japanese], which was made under Natori's direct guidance, uses *kumi shashin*, while *Yakimono no machi: Seto* [The city of ceramics: Seto], which was made in the senior photographer's absence, emphasizes individual photographs.²³⁶ It is true that during his years with Iwanami, Tōmatsu learned the professional basics of

²³³ For the wartime shift in *hōdō shashin*, see Kusumoto for details.

²³⁴ However, Tōmatsu stated that he was not directly guided by Natori during his years at the Iwanami Photo Library. Tōmatsu Shōmei, “Boku wa Natori-shi ni hanron suru” [I refute Mr. Natori's argument], *Asahi Camera* (November 1960): 156.

²³⁵ Ueno Kōshi, “Hyōden: Tōmatsu Shōmei, shashinka to sei 45-nen: Iwanami shashin bunko” [A critical biography: Tōmatsu Shōmei, 45 years as a photographer: Iwanami Photo Library], *Asahi Graph* (April 26, 1996): 42.

²³⁶ Ueno Kōshi, *Shashinka Tōmatsu Shōmei* [Photographer Tōmatsu Shōmei] (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1999), 67-76.

photography, which have since been touted as the “Iwanami School of Photography.”²³⁷ After two years of apprenticeship there, Tōmatsu became an independent photographer and started presenting his works in such photography magazines as *Sankei Camera*, *Asahi Camera*, *Camera*, and other major publications. His personal works centered on representations of postwar Japan under the shadow of the U.S. military presence there.

The friction between Natori and Tōmatsu was triggered by an article in *Asahi Camera* (September 1960) written by the photography critic Watanabe Tsutomu, who was intrigued by Japanese photography’s latest trends, which were most apparent in the works of the younger generation (i.e., Tōmatsu, Nagano Shigeichi, Narahara Ikkō, Hosoe Eikoh, and Imai Hisae). Watanabe defines the frequently used term *eizō* as “a projected image’s expression through reflections of light” (thus including photography, film, TV, and video), and he applied the term to the works of those photographers.²³⁸ For example, Narahara’s “Shibareru: Kaosu no chi/Hokkaido Series: Frozen near Russia” shows that the photographer “bet[s] everything on [the power of] *eizō*” to express nature’s robustness (Fig. 4.7).²³⁹ Watanabe argues that each photograph speaks for itself, in contrast to predecessors’ works that focused on either pictorial artistry or photography’s ability to function as a visual record.

Natori immediately struck back, in the next issue of *Asahi Camera*, refuting the premise

²³⁷ Tōmatsu Shōmei, “Natori shiki kariyuramu de manabu” [Learning through the so-called Natori curriculum], in *Shashin sakoku shugi o toranakatta senkusha: Natori Yōnosuke no shigoto, 1930-nenndai* [A non-isolationist pioneer in the field of photography: Works by Natori Yōnosuke during the 1930s] (Tokyo: Seibu Museum Art, 1978), n.p.

²³⁸ Watanabe Tsutomu, “Atarashii shashin hyōgen no keikō” [New tendencies in photographic expression], *Asahi Camera* (September 1960): 148. For the detailed discussion about the term *eizō*, see Adler’s “First, Abandon the World of Seeming certainty: Theory and Practice of the ‘Camera-generated’ Image in 1960s Japan” (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2009).

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 149. *Eizō* writes as 映像. Narahara’s “Shibareru: Kaosu no chi” literally means “Frozen: Land of chaos.”

of “newness” in their photography and singling out Tōmatsu for his deviation from the traditions of *hōdō shashin*: if there was anything “new” about these photographs, it derived merely from their arrangement, but not from any significant change in their formal quality. Natori further claimed that many of these photographs were shown as a group in a way similar to *kumi shashin*.²⁴⁰ Natori’s criticism of Tōmatsu was focused on his “Senryō” [Occupation] series, published in *Asahi Camera* from January to March in 1960. The young photographer’s work, he opined, sorely lacked a storyline, which is the foundation of *hōdō shashin*. Referring to the fact that Tōmatsu had started his career at the Iwanami Photo Library, where he had once been director, Natori castigated his former employee: “*Hōdō shashin* respects the specific fact, the specific time. . . . [However,] Tōmatsu discarded this respect for specificity in *hōdō shashin*. He attempted to go in a direction that defies time and place. In other words, Tōmatsu severed his tie with *hōdō shashin* by disregarding time and place.”²⁴¹

Tōmatsu’s response precisely concerned Natori’s formulation of *hōdō shashin*. His counterargument was twofold. First, he was no *hōdō shashin* photographer in Natori’s definition. And, second, he showed no disrespect for specific facts.²⁴² This exchange represents a major signal that photography was changing from the *hōdō shashin* type of reportage to a less explanatory style of photography. The deployment of poignant metaphors by Tōmatsu—his use of the word “arteriosclerosis,” for example—points to the younger generation’s frustration with

²⁴⁰ Natori Yōnosuke, “Atarashii shashin no tanjō” [The birth of new photography], *Asahi Camera* (October 1960): 147-149.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 149. “報道写真は特定な事実、特定な時間を尊重する。前にも書いた通り東松はこの報道写真の、特定の事実尊重を捨てた。時とか場所とかに制限されない方向に進もうとした。逆にいえば、報道写真とは、時間、場所にとらわれないことによって絶縁してしまったのだ。”

²⁴² All quotations and summarized opinions by Tōmatsu in this paragraph are taken from his “Boku wa Natori-shi ni hanron suru,” 156-157.

the enduring notion of *hōdō shashin*. In order to restore a more personal gaze in photography, Tōmatsu must altogether purge Natori's concept of *hōdō shashin*. Ultimately, in Tōmatsu's argument, if there were to be a "new photography," it would be completely dissociated from Natori's concept of *hōdō shashin*.

***Hōdō Shashin* and Tōmatsu's Photography**

It is useful to examine how much Tōmatsu deviated from Natori's *hōdō shashin* in practice. Indeed, despite his aspiration to find a new direction, his "Occupation" series still followed the format of *kumi shashin*, that is, Natori's primary strategy of *hōdō shashin*, to construct a visual message. Take, for example, the first installment of the series published in the January 1960 issue of *Asahi Camera*. A five-page work was titled "Shisen: Hokkaidō Chitose Kichi" in Japanese, which literally means "Gaze: Chitose Base in Hokkaidō," with its English title given as "U.S. Bases in Japan, Series 2: Chitose Air Base." As the Japanese title indicates, this installment turned a stern gaze toward Japan's northernmost U.S. military base, which was critical to U.S. Cold War strategy owing to the base's proximity to the Soviet Union.

On its first page, an aged man's face framed within his fur hood looks out, confronting the reader's gaze (Fig. 4.8), followed by a nun's face covered by dark-toned sunglasses (Fig. 4.9). The page concludes with a man whose face is partially covered by a white mask, peeking from behind a worn fabric screen (Fig. 4.10). Each photograph of people is combined with another photograph that indicates the presence of the U.S. base. For example, the aged man's face is paired with a pile of drum cans with English letters; the nun with military aircraft on a snowy runway; and the man behind the curtain with a small English sign. In comparison with the original photograph (Fig. 4.11), the cropped image of the nun enhances the connection between

the base and her life and, by extension, between the base and the lives of people around it. Although Tōmatsu's layout is much more subtle than Natori's *kumi shashin* and devoid of explanatory text, the subtitle with a string of words below the title "Gaze" is far more eloquent than any lengthy text. In approximation of its literary style, it reads, "Strange Reality" "Given" "Suddenly" "I" "Call It" "Occupation."²⁴³ The effective combinations of photographs make a forceful point about the conflictual presence of the U.S. bases in Japan.

However, the element of *hōdō shashin* in Tōmatsu's "Occupation" series was not pronounced enough to please traditional photojournalists like Natori. Tōmatsu's attempts to distance himself from Natori's *hōdō shashin* continued. In 1970 he even coined his own term *gun shashin* to counter Natori's *kumi shashin*. The term *gun shashin*, which literally means "grouped photographs," as opposed to Natori's "combined photographs," may have a hidden dimension in that *gun*, or 群, means a seemingly unorganized group, whereas *kumi*, or 組, can mean an "organized group." In fact, Tōmatsu's method involved the grouping of photographs with different themes to form a single work. For example, his 96-page photobook *Okinawa 沖縄 Okinawa* [Okinawa, Okinawa, Okinawa] consists of ten themes, or *gun* [groups], ranging from the area's U.S. military bases to local politicians (Fig. 4.12).²⁴⁴ Tōmatsu assigned a significant number of pages to the *gun* of the military-bases and to various related issues, but assigned fewer pages to other *gun*. Tōmatsu argued that the disproportionate number of assigned pages reflected the proportion of areas occupied by the U.S. base in the whole geography of Okinawa.²⁴⁵ In other

²⁴³ Tōmatsu Shōmei, "Kichi: Shisen/ U.S. Bases in Japan, Series 2: Chitose Air Base," *Asahi Camera* (February 1960): 67. "とつぜん 与えられた 奇妙な現実 それをぼくは <占領> と呼ぶ"

²⁴⁴ The Japanese title flanked by English titles is a literary expression of the Americanization of Okinawa.

²⁴⁵ Tōmatsu Shōmei, "Kumi shashin kara gun shashin e" [From combined photography to grouped photography] in *Sunappu shashin, Asahi Camera kyōshitsu dai 3 kan* [Snapshot, Asahi Camera lecture series, vol. 3] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1970), 138-145.

words, Tōmatsu literally created a structure that reflects his statement on the cover: “The bases are not in Okinawa; Okinawa is in the bases.” This is the structure Tōmatsu called *gun shashin*, which signaled his critical departure from Natori’s *hōdō shashin*.

Tōmatsu further differentiated his photography from Natori’s *hōdō shashin* by shifting the relationship between photography and writing. With Natori, as Tōmatsu pointed out, a single photograph was metaphorically equated with a word, and *kumi shashin* with a text made up of these words.²⁴⁶ Tōmatsu questioned whether the combined photographs could articulate ideas, claiming that only writing could explain the meaning of photographs.²⁴⁷ He states: “For me, the creation of *kumi shashin* does not mean combining photographs. It means combining photographs and texts in the most effective way.”²⁴⁸ Needless to say, “effective” referred to the efficacy of this combination in conveying his message to readers.

Tōmatsu’s first photobook *Nihon* [Japan] of 1967 precisely embodies this statement, with various writers’ essays inserted among the thematically assembled photographs (Fig. 4.13). Together with Tōmatsu’s photographs of postwar Japan, the essays stimulate the readers’ imagination and facilitate a further understanding of his photographs. While attempting to escape from Natori’s didactic photo story based on “specific facts,” he managed to convey his own view through the combination of photography and writing.

In the end, the schism between Natori and Tōmatsu was informed by the latter’s vocal rejection of the former’s concept of *hōdō shashin*. Whereas Natori thought words and

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 135-137.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 146. “ぼくにとって組むという作業は、写真と写真を組合わすのではなく、写真と文章を最も効果的に組むことにほかならない。”

photographs have one-to-one correspondences, Tōmatsu insisted on a looser relationship between the two. Although Tōmatsu continued to respect the specifics of time and place and employed *kumi shashin* in order to convey his message to the audience in his earliest works, he subsequently developed his own *gun shashin* method in a critique of Natori. *Provoke* photographers, in turn, refuted both Natori and Tōmatsu in that they neither exploited the authority of photography nor placed faith in themselves as the agents responsible for imposing language upon photography.

III. Domon Ken's "Realism"

Before examining *Provoke* members' objections to *hōdō shashin*, photographer Domon Ken's influence on *hōdō shashin* should be noted. Domon's desire to develop a photographic form of "Realism" had been fostered under the guidance of Natori, and the idea subsequently fostered the craft of emerging generations of photographers. For example, Tōmatsu and Kawada Kikuji enthusiastically submitted their photographs to the photography magazine's monthly contest juried by Domon. Also, Ina formally incorporated Domon's "Realism" into the vein of *hōdō shashin* in Ina's article.

Domon joined Nippon Kōbō in 1935 to be a *hōdō shashin* photographer, because *hōdō shashin* seemed to him be "artistically and socially meaningful."²⁴⁹ Natori's rigorous training fostered in Domon the skills and the knowledge necessary for him to be a professional photographer. He nevertheless had grievances against Natori, who did not credit Domon for his photographs. For example, in 1936, Natori contributed Domon's photographs to *Life* under

²⁴⁹ Domon Ken "Jijyoden: Shashin ha hitotsu no gūzen ni suginakatta" [Autobiography: Photography was merely a coincidence], in Domon Ken, *Showa shashin zen shigoto series 5 Domon Ken* [Corpus of photography in Showa era, series 5, Domon Ken], ed. Kimura Ryōko and Okai Teruo, (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1982), 146.

Natori's name.²⁵⁰ Although Natori insisted that photographers must possess a wide range of abilities for setting themes, taking stunning photographs, and envisioning and creating layouts, Natori's editorial decisions held sway over other people's work. Deeply frustrated by Natori's "dictatorship," Domon contributed his photographs to *Life* without Natori's permission, and one of these photographs appeared in the September 5 1938 issue of *Life*.²⁵¹ Domon's unapproved act infuriated Natori, who considered his employees' photographs to be strictly the property of either the publisher or himself.²⁵² As a result, Domon left Nippon Kōbō in 1939.

Domon initially supported Natori's idea of *hōdō shashin*, but Domon's philosophy of photography changed after his split from Natori. In a roundtable discussion with other young photographers about *hōdō shashin* in *Photo Times* magazine in 1938 (before the split), Domon distinguished *hōdō shashin* from the style of news photographs just as Natori did in his article.²⁵³ However, Domon bid farewell to Natori's *hōdō shashin* by advocating so-called Realism photography, in which he strongly discouraged any manipulation in the taking of photographs and used photography as a means for social criticism.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰ "Nenpu" [Chronology], in Domon Ken, *Showa shashin zen shigoto series 5 Domon Ken* [Corpus of photography in Showa era, series 5, Domon Ken], 150.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Mishima Yasushi, *Kimura Ihei to Domon Ken: Sono shōgai* [Kimura Ihei to Domon Ken: Their lives] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1995), 51, 54.

²⁵³ Domon Ken in "Seinen hōdō shashinka zadankai" [A roundtable discussion held by young *hōdō shashin* photographers], *Foto taimusu/ Photo Times* (August 1938): 21. Twenty-eight photographers, including Domon, participated in this discussion.

²⁵⁴ At the same time, Domon also embraced the artistic quality of photography. Critiquing one of the photographs for the monthly contest in *Camera*, Domon stated, "Seeing this photograph makes me want to talk with Mr. Nijima [the photographer] about the paintings of Matisse and Bonnard over a hot cup of coffee at a café in Ginza in the evening twilight." Domon Ken, "Getsurei senpyō" [Monthly critique] originally published in *Camera* (February 1950); reprinted as "Riarizumu shashin ni tsuite: Kamera to mochīfu no chokketsu" [On Realism photography: Direct connection between motif and camera] in Domon Ken, *Domon Ken Zenshū 13 Kessakusen ge* [Complete works of Domon Ken, vol. 13: Selected

Domon's "Realism" was staged in a photography magazine, *Camera*. In 1950, the editor-in-chief and photographer Kuwabara Kineo recruited Domon to be a panelist on a jury for a monthly amateur photographers' contest in the magazine. In *Camera*, Domon was attempting to educate amateur photographers in the art of precisely capturing ordinary moments, people, and their lives with a dramatic eye. Although Domon never clearly defined or articulated the theory underlying his "Realism," the two most well-known phrases coined in the photo-contest became the guiding principles for postwar amateur photographers: "direct connection between motif and camera" and "absolute snapshot with absolutely no staging."²⁵⁵ The first phrase implies capturing the object directly (*mochīfu* or "motif" in Japanese photography means the object to be photographed), and the second phrase refers to taking a photograph without any manipulation. Domon claimed that "Realism photography was the [photographers'] photographic expression stemming from a rebellious spirit that would be exhibited when looking straight at reality and shifting it in the right direction."²⁵⁶

With a vision of photography as a social agent, Domon published his early photobooks, *Chikuhō no kodomo tachi* [Children in Chikuhō] (Fig. 4.14) and *Rumie chan wa otōsan ga shinda* [Rumie's father has died] (Fig. 4.15), both dating from 1960 and both portraying the lives of poor families in a coalmining community in southern Japan.²⁵⁷ In 1966, Ina borrowed

works no. 2] (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1985), 86.

²⁵⁵ They are written in Japanese as "mochīfu to kamera no chokketsu" [モチーフとカメラの直結] and "zettai hi enshutsu no zettai sunappu" [絶対非演出の絶対スナップ] respectively.

²⁵⁶ Domon Ken, "Rearizumu shashin to saron pikuchā" [Realism photography and salon pictures], *Camera* (October 1953): 186. "つまり、リアリズム写真は現実を直視し、現実をより正しい方向へ振り向けようという抵抗の精神の写真的な発現としてあるのである。"

²⁵⁷ Domon is equally famous for his photographs of Japan's old temples and Buddhist sculptures, in which he captured the objects' breathless beauty.

Domon's "absolutely no staging" term and principle to explain the nature of *hōdō shashin* in his "Hōdō shashin wa hienshutsu o kenji seyo" [*Hōdō shashin* must retain no-staging] in the September 1966 issue of *Asahi Camera*.²⁵⁸ Ina introduced to Natori's *hōdō shashin* the new tenet, by which he attempted to save the integrity and credibility of *hōdō shashin*. Both the publication of two of Domon's photobooks and Ina's advocacy of *hōdō shashin* signaled the persistence of Natori's *hōdō shashin*, even after Tōmatsu insisted that *hōdō shashin* should undergo radical changes.

A friend of Domon and former editor in chief of *Camera Mainichi*, Kishi Tetsuo, argued that Domon's proclamation of "Realism" stemmed from his regrets about—and his reflections on—having taken illusionistic propaganda photographs, which appeared in the works of Nippon Kōbō and the Society for International Cultural Relations during the war.²⁵⁹ If Domon in fact deeply regretted his participation in the creation and use of these photographs, then Domon's firm belief that photographers should possess social awareness likely grew firmer in light of his personal experiences both at Nippon Kōbō and during the war. As demonstrated above, Domon brought to *hōdō shashin* a strong sense of social justice for marginalized people and a sentimental tone through his "Realism." Owing considerably to Natori's *hōdō shashin*, the ideas underlying *hōdō shashin* grew more complex.

²⁵⁸ Ina Nobuo, "Hōdō shashin wa hienshutsu o kenji seyo" [*Hōdō shashin* must retain no-staging], originally published in *Asahi Camera* (September 1966); reprinted in *Ina Nobuo shashin ronshū: Shashin ni kaere* [An anthology of Ina Nobuo's photography: Return to photography], ed. Ōshima Hiroshi (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2005), 353-355. However, Ina drew on the example of Eugene Smith's "Spanish Villa" for a fine example of non-staging *hōdō shashin*. Therefore, Ina took advantage of Domon's phrase (and its underlying principle) to reinforce his own idea of *hōdō shashin* rather than propose new ideas about *hōdō shashin*.

²⁵⁹ Kishi Tetsuo, untitled article originally published in *Domon Ken jisen sakuhinshū* [Domon Ken's works selected by the photographer] (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, 1977); reprinted in Domon Ken, *Showa shashin zen shigoto series 5 Domon Ken*, 114.

IV. *Provoke* Members' Objections to *Hōdō Shashin*

Taki and Nakahira's view of *hōdō shashin* was one of the most critical components of what constituted the concept of the *Provoke* publications. They did not directly refer to Natori's name in their discussion of *hōdō shashin*, but what they criticized—not only the use of photography as a vehicle for conveying stories didactically but also, therefore, the imposition of photographers' predetermined views on the subject matter—was an indirect reference to him.

The important socio-historical background of *Provoke* members' rebellion against *hōdō shashin* was the Vietnam War, which was a deeply provocative, ongoing conflict at the time of *Provoke*'s launch. The devastating situation was visually conveyed through press photography and television, even in Japan. In 1965, *Mainichi shinbun* [The Mainichi newspapers] for the first time sent special correspondents (six altogether) to Vietnam.²⁶⁰ After the United States began bombing North Vietnam in 1965, over four hundred editorials about the Vietnam War appeared in Japanese newspapers.²⁶¹ In addition to the flood of war images, works by Magnum photographers surfaced in Japan through numerous exhibitions at prominent department store galleries, with newspaper companies eager to promote news photography.²⁶² In this active circulation of visual information about the Vietnam War, *hōdō shashin*'s didactic morality and its imposition of conventional messages on viewers were nothing new to Japanese audiences.

This section illustrates how *Provoke* photographers examined the idea of *hōdō shashin*

²⁶⁰ Yamamoto Fumio, *Nihon masu comyunikēshon shi* [The history of mass communication in Japan] (Kanagawa: Tōkai University Press, 1970), 327.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 328.

²⁶² Newspaper companies were enthusiastic about promoting *hōdō shashin* and held related exhibitions. The Mainichi Newspapers hosted an exhibition entitled "Concerned Photographer" from August 9-21, 1968 at the Ginza store in the Matsuya Department Store.

through their predecessors' handling of photography and through Taki's and Nakahira's experiences as *hōdō* photographers. As one will see, *Provoke* photographers had three significant objections to *hōdō shashin*.

Objection 1: Domon's "Realism" vs. Nakahira and Moriyama

Aside from its social implications, the most disturbing aspect of *hōdō shashin* for Nakahira and Moriyama was its social realism. Both questioned the conventional notion of the reality that was supposedly observed in so-called Realism photography. As mentioned above, photographer Domon was an advocate of "Realism," and Moriyama especially refuted Domon's works.

In their dialogue in August 1971, Nakahira and Moriyama harshly criticized the given notion of "Realism" in Japanese photography. Nakahira stated, "To be frank, what we are obsessed with is realism,"²⁶³ and Moriyama explained that "Realism" is observed in the fields of "objective *hōdō shashin*" and "reportage," but it is set aside in other fields, such as "art photography."²⁶⁴ Moriyama implied that he could not see reality in Domon's photographs,²⁶⁵ and further attacked Domon's "Realism" as nothing more than the symbolic illustration of events.²⁶⁶ Moriyama felt that Domon was an observer of events,²⁶⁷ whereas Moriyama desired to be *in* the

²⁶³ Moriyama Daidō, "8 gatsu 2 ka Yamanoue hoteru 'taidan' Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō" ['Dialogue' Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō at the Yamanoue Hotel on August 2] in *Shashin yo sayōnara* [Farewell photography] (Tokyo: Shashin Hyōronsha, 1972), 300. "はっきりいって、ぼくもアナタも固執しているのはリアリズムだ。"

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 301.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 283.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 301.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

events.

In their dialogue, Nakahira and Moriyama redefined the idea of “Realism”: the two photographers questioned the reality of what is believed to be real.²⁶⁸ Nakahira and Moriyama shared neither Domon’s “Realism” nor Natori’s belief in photography’s storytelling capacity. They pursued their own notion of “reality” in photography.

Objection 2: Natori and Tōmatsu vs. *Provoke* Members

Hōdō shashin was a serious issue for *Provoke* photographers, probably because of their direct association with Natori and Tōmatsu. Taki personally knew Natori, having worked under him at Iwanami Photo Library, where he had also met Tōmatsu. Taki recalls that this experience was a major impetus behind his interest in photography.²⁶⁹ Tōmatsu had particularly close relationships with *Provoke* members. Both Taki and Okada contributed their writings to Tōmatsu’s photobook *Nihon*, and Taki also taught Tōmatsu how to edit the book.²⁷⁰ Moriyama often spent time with Tōmatsu when he was an assistant to Hosoe Eikoh, Tōmatsu’s colleague, and Nakahira jointly presented his works with Tōmatsu in the journal *Gendai no me* [Contemporary eye]. Already strongly influenced by Tōmatsu, Nakahira was inspired to become a photographer when Tōmatsu presented him with a special gift: a camera.²⁷¹ Nakahira’s staunch

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 300, 301.

²⁶⁹ Taki Kōji, in Iizawa Kōtarō, Ōshima Hiroshi, Yasumi Akihito, “Shinpojiumu: Gendai shashin no isō—‘purovōku ikō’/ Symposium: *Provoke* and After,” panel discussion at the symposium, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 1993): 34.

²⁷⁰ Tōmatsu Shōmei, “‘Toru’ koto to ‘torasareru’ koto” [‘Taking pictures’ and ‘being forced to take pictures’], interview, in *Nihon no shashinka 30 Tōmatsu Shōmei*, ed. Iizawa Kōtarō, Nagano Shigeichi, and Kinoshita Naoyuki [Japanese photographer 30: Tōmatsu Shōmei] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 66.

²⁷¹ According to the chronology compiled for an exhibition catalogue, Tōmatsu gave a set of Pentax

rejection of Tōmatsu ironically demonstrated the predecessor's enormous impact on him. Nakahira criticized the preoccupation of Tōmatsu's photography with overarching themes (e.g., the political relationship between Japan and the United States) and stated that he had to “deny [this idea attributable to] Tōmatsu.”²⁷² Takanashi jointly presented his work with Tōmatsu in the series “I am a King” in *Gendai no me*, for which Nakahira served as an editor. Takanashi clearly stated that he called his works “Mumokuteki shashin” [Purposeless photography] in his revolt against the then-mainstream *hōdō shashin* approach. Takanashi recalled that “*hōdō shashin* was mainstream when I started to take snapshots, and you could see their [*hōdō shashin* photographers'] clear goals in taking and showing all those photographs.”²⁷³ In sum, in their formative years, *Provoke* members were highly aware of *hōdō shashin* almost as *the* norm of Japanese photography.

Tōmatsu played one very important, though rather indirect, role in pushing *Provoke* to reconsider the nature of photography: he recruited Taki and Nakahira to organize and select the works for the exhibition “One Hundred Years of Photography: A History of the Japanese People's Photographic Expression.”²⁷⁴ Taki and Nakahira came to formulate their conceptual attitude as they examined various kinds of photography through their work as researcher-

cameras to Nakahira for a wedding gift. Yasumi Akihito, ed., “Nakahira Takuma nenpu” [Chronology of Nakahira Takuma], in *Nakahira Takuma: Degree Zero—Yokohama*, exh. cat., (Tokyo: Osiris Co., Ltd, 2003), 156. According to Moriyama's recollection, Nakahira showed up one day with a Pentax camera draped around his neck, saying that he had become a photographer. It would be reasonable to suggest that this camera was a gift from Tōmatsu. Moriyama Daidō, *Inu no kioku* [Memories of a dog] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1984; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), 237.

²⁷² Moriyama, “8 gatsu 2 ka Yamanoue hoteru ‘taidan’ Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō” [‘Dialogue’ Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō at the Yamanoue Hotel on August 2], 283.

²⁷³ Takanashi Yutaka, *Raika na me/ Like a Leica Eye* (Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 2002), 99. “その当時は、報道写真が主流で、撮る目的、見せる目的がはっきりした写真ばかりでした。”

²⁷⁴ Taki, “Shinpojiumu: Gendai shashin no isō—‘purovōku ikō’/ Symposium: *Provoke* and After,” 34.

curators. The experience of surveying work by a variety of photographers, ranging from Magnum photographers who covered the Vietnam War to anonymous practitioners, informed Taki and Nakahira's main claim in the manifesto of *Provoke*; photographers should present what they see as a fragment of their living reality.

The exhibition's goal was to present a historical survey of a century's worth of Japanese photography from its inception to the end of the war in 1945. While examining more than fifty thousand photographs, many taken by famous photographers but many others of unknown origin,²⁷⁵ Taki and Nakahira found the latter to be particularly exciting because of how they spontaneously captured historical incidents, natural disasters, and daily-life scenes as "scenery." Spontaneity and a lack of photographers' intention appealed to Nakahira, who gravitated toward photographs taken sometimes on the spur of the moment (perhaps in response to a sudden, unexpected event) or for less obvious reasons.²⁷⁶ (Nakahira saw these qualities in the "documentary" and "accident" sections in the exhibition.)

Through this experience, Nakahira came to realize the urgent need to devise a new approach to photography, with his distrust of conventional *hōdō shashin* and so-called art photography cemented. Photography curator Kohara Masashi mentions that Nakahira was painfully aware of photography's inability to change society, and this experience made him come up with the term *kiroku*, or "record," which was counter to the notion of photography as *hyōgen*,

²⁷⁵ Moriyama, "8 gatsu 2 ka Yamanoue hoteru 'taidan' Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō" ['Dialogue' Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō at the Yamanoue Hotel on August 2], 299.

²⁷⁶ Nakahira Takuma, "Shashin ni totte hyōgen to wa nani ka: Shashin hyaku-nen, nihon-jin ni yoru shashin hyōgen no rekishi ten" [What gives expression to photography? One Hundred Years of Photography: A History of the Japanese People's Photographic Expression], in *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* 6 (July 1968): 130-131.

or “expression.”²⁷⁷

Objection 3: Taki and Nakahira’s Experiences as *Hōdō* Photographers

The last reason for the importance of *hōdō shashin* to Taki and Nakahira stems from their experience of working for such magazines as *Gendai no me* [Contemporary eye], *Asahi Journal*, and *Asahi Graph*. Nakahira once argued that the production system of photojournalism magazines diminished the quality of photography.²⁷⁸ Upon selecting their preferred approach to a given topic, editors would order a photographer to take a photograph that would closely reflect their approach: their personal interpretation. (This is exactly what Natori did for his *hōdō shashin*.) In this situation, photographers made a conscious effort to visually present what their editors (and also the photographers) thought the “facts” were, rather than probe deeper to understand the “facts.” In critiquing this routine, Nakahira firmly believed that photographers must be autonomous and convey their own logics.²⁷⁹ In the production of *Provoke*, the absence of any hierarchical order among members could have unintentionally helped them to close the gap between their photography and what they tried to communicate.

Nakahira’s first-hand experience as a press photographer further solidified his will to pursue the autonomy of photography. After he photographed the Yasuda Hall incident at the University of Tokyo on a press assignment in January 1969, Nakahira asserted that it was high

²⁷⁷ Kohara Masashi, “Kamera no yōni” [Like a camera] in *Nakahira Takuma: Kitarubeki shashinka* [Nakahira Takuma: A photographer to come] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2009), 60-61.

²⁷⁸ Nakahira Takuma, “Eizō wa riron de aru: Tōmatsu Shōmei to gurafu jānarizumu no genzai” [Image is theory: Tōmatsu Shōmei and present-day photojournalism], originally published in *Nihon dokusho shinbun* [Japan book-readers newspaper] (February 22, 1965); reprinted in *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga...*, 9-11.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

time to reconsider the role of press personnel (both photographers and journalists).²⁸⁰ The Yasuda Hall incident lasted two days, as student activists besieged the landmark lecture hall on campus. More than eight thousand five hundred riot police were mobilized to take it back, with media reporters watching the police surrounding the building. In the eyes of Nakahira, press photographers were complicit with the state in this incident, because their vantage point was located exactly on the side of riot police.²⁸¹

Nakahira's observation informed his photograph published in *Asahi Journal* in the February 2 issue. His photograph opens the special-feature article on the Yasuda Hall incident (Fig. 4.16), and shows the aftermath of the revolting students' defeat: bricks that the students threw at the police are scattered on the ground, wet from the riot police's spraying of high-pressure water. No one appears in the photographs, but the presence of Nakahira can be felt, as he is evidently standing in front of the hall to take this photograph. The photograph accompanies an article reporting on the university administration that was criticized for the mobilization of the riot force. Nakahira's photograph poignantly expresses his status as an outsider in spite of his active sympathy for the students at the time.

Taki also covered students' strikes on different campus sites at the same university. Five photographs from this assignment were published in the February 7, 1969 issue of *Asahi Graph*, which followed a traditional pattern of photojournalism (Fig. 4.17). The four-page article reports on the Tōdai Zenkyōtō barricading, which took place in parallel with the Yasuda Hall incident. The story basically reads from the right to the left of the spread (in the same direction as the vertical text is read, line by line), with the text narrating the students' evacuation from a building

²⁸⁰ See Chapter Two for the historical background of the Yasuda Hall incident.

²⁸¹ Nakahira Takuma, "Dōjidaiteki dearu towa nanika? 1" [What is contemporaneity? 1], *Design* (May 1969): 69.

under pressure from other political sects among the student body. Each photograph is accompanied by a single explanatory sentence. For example, the sentence with the two-page spread of photographs says: “Seventy-three students who retreated from Building 8 were greeted by the rescue party. As they were kicked and targeted by stone-throwing members of the Yoyogi sect and students who wished to end the strike, they [the retreating students] hurried from the Komaba campus” (Fig. 4.18).²⁸² All the photographs were taken outside of the building, and Taki’s vantage point was hardly that of students but of an observer. The accompanying caption explains what Taki’s blurry photograph does not immediately explain, and this approach differs from one in which the accompanying caption would function to convey the “whole” story, and the photographs would repeat the conveyed story in the caption.

As press photographers, Taki and Nakahira experienced the power structure of image circulation and learned from this experience the powerful association between mass media and institutions of authority. In his “Kiroku to iu genei: dokyumento kara monumento e” [Illusion named as record: From documentary to monument] in 1972, Nakahira harshly criticized mass media’s manipulation of images’ meaning and even asserted that the structure underlying mass media’s circulation of these meanings needs to be collapsed.²⁸³ He describes this system as “one that protects its class benefits, where the bourgeoisie instills an illusion of equality in deprived citizens, who are controlled by the nation, and heightens bourgeois morals to a universal plane,

²⁸² Anonymous, “Komaba dai 8 gōkan no tettai: Gasu, suidō, denki nashi no hyōrō zeme” [Retreating from Komaba’s Building 8: The starvation tactics of cutting off gas, water, and electricity], *Asahi Graph* (February 7, 1969): 21. “第8本館を撤退した73人は 約50人の救援隊に迎えられ 代々木派やスト収拾派学生の投石と足げりを受けながら 急ぎ足で駒場を去った。”

²⁸³ Nakahira Takuma, “Kiroku to iu genei: dokyumento kara monumento e” [Illusion named as record: From documentary to monument], *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (July 1972): 73-87.

depriving us of our consciousness...”²⁸⁴

Taki strongly opposed the unjust oppression of press personnel, which occurred at this time in Japan’s history: for example, Japanese police censored a documentary crew’s filming of the National Antiwar Day events, and authorities arrested a cinematographer without cause during the Sanrizuka Struggle.²⁸⁵ Taki claimed that the only way to defy this authoritarian oppression was to theorize the act of taking photographs.²⁸⁶ He stated that “this situation forces on us an occasion to fundamentally rethink photography by understanding the structure of photographers’ crisis.”²⁸⁷ Nakahira and Taki chose to question photography through their experience with and observation of *hōdō shashin*, which went through several conceptual and stylistic developments in *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*.

V. Towards “Fragments of Reality”: Stylistic Developments in *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*

In this section, I will demonstrate that the *Provoke* publications’ objective was to show how photography, rather than broadcasting “reality” according to the principles of conventional *hōdō shashin*, could and should constitute an immediate experience of reality. *Provoke I*’s

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 75. “。。。ブルジョアジーはその階級的利益から発して、それを守り抜くために国民という形で国家に統合された彼らの非収奪者に、同じ国民どうしという幻想をふきこみ、たかだかブルジョアジーという一支配階級のモラルを人間としての普遍的なモラルにたかめて、われわれの意識までを収奪する。。。 ”

²⁸⁵ Taki Kōji, “Dokumento” [Document], *Design* (February 1969): 53. The Sanrizuka Struggle refers to the conflict between the Japanese government and Chiba Prefecture’s residents who were protesting the construction of present-day Narita International Airport.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid. “しかしこの状況はわれわれに、写真家の危機の構造を通じて、写真について根本的に考える機会をいやおうなしにあたえてくる。”

manifesto used the phrase “genjitsu no danpen” [fragments of reality], and “fragments” was the *Provoke* publications’ core strategy for dispersing the meaning of photography.²⁸⁸ This was in stark contrast to the strategies of Natori and Tōmatsu, who assembled photographs and texts to form a single coherent theme.

As this section demonstrates, the difference between *Provoke* members and Natori is evident in their concepts of photography and language. Natori regarded each photograph as a single word to be combined whereas Nakahira and Taki regarded each photograph as a “shard” of their experiential reality that would neither necessarily form a complete sentence nor require an accompanying text. As a result, photographs in *Provoke* became more illegible, and the writings became more minimal as the publication approached its last issue. This combination of illegibility and minimalism reflects the idea that photography presents the photographer’s experience in an incomplete condition. The two photographers’ strategy encourages readers to comprehend the *Provoke* publications as nothing more than “materials.” In addition, the structural development of the publications makes it impossible to read them as complete end products.

Such “incompleteness” was developed throughout the publication of *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. Toward the end of the journal’s life, the photographs became stylistically more and more obscure and playful, as Taki and Moriyama presented Xeroxed images from other media in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (Fig. 4.19). There was also a tendency to include relatively abstract texts, as evidenced by two didactic essays in *Provoke 1* and two pieces of poetry in *Provoke 3*. These fragmented images and texts demonstrated the *Provoke* photographers’ (especially Nakahira’s) firm allegiance to the idea of

²⁸⁸ Nakahira Takuma, Okada Takahiko, Takanashi Yutaka, and Taki Kōji, [manifesto], *Provoke 1* (November 1968): 2.

“personal documentary,” which, I argue, formed the antithesis of the established genres of photography, including *hōdō shashin*.

***Design* as a Discursive Forum**

The source of this development can be found in the argument offered by Taki and Nakahira in a series of articles published in the magazine *Design* (Fig. 4.20). The two photographers wrote many articles on photography in other media, but those that appeared in *Design* during the year 1969 are particularly important because their arguments precisely paralleled the photography in *Provoke*. These articles constituted a kind of back-and-forth Platonic dialectic that was also present in the activities that the two men undertook for *Provoke*. Most of the articles were reprinted in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* and, in a way, summarized the journal. The articles were compiled in the section entitled “Photography 1969,” which consisted of eight articles by Taki and Nakahira, a dialogue between Nakahira and Moriyama, and photographic works by Moriyama and Tōmatsu. In those articles, both Taki and Nakahira attacked *hōdō shashin* and demonstrated their efforts to pin down photography itself beyond the established genres. As the articles developed a more individualistic tone, their photographs came to serve personal ends, demonstrating a limited connection between the photographers and the social and political situation at the time. The articles by Taki and Nakahira in *Design* could explain this gradual change in their photographs and in the structure of their publication.

a) Nakahira’s “Restoration of Reality” and Taki’s Personal Project in *Provoke 1*

In Nakahira’s article “Riaritī fukken” [Restoration of reality] in *Design* of January 1969,

he claimed that photography should be deemed a record that refers only to what is in front of the camera.²⁸⁹ Nakahira argued that “reality” can be grasped only in fragments and that this epistemological assertion applies to both language and photography. He attributed the phrase “Create two, three...many Vietnams” to Che Guevara, citing it as rhetorical proof of Nakahira’s own concrete, experiential reality.²⁹⁰ Nakahira noted a similarity between each photograph and the meanings of this phrase, because both the words and the images could depict only part of a theme or object. Nakahira argued that the mainstream news media’s photographs of the Vietnam War illustrated merely the formulaic and worn-out language of war, tragedy, and antiwar sentiment.²⁹¹ Harshly criticizing photography as both illustrations and photographers’ expressions, he asserted that photography “is reality in the form of questions that reject all adjectives and forever interrogate us.”²⁹² As demonstrated above, Nakahira’s concept of ‘reality’ was strongly opposed to Domon’s.

Provoke 1 addressed the theme “Summer 1968,” and the photographs comprise basically

²⁸⁹ Although this idea closely resonates with ideas articulated by Roland Barthes, the French intellectual’s name did not surface in the articles.

²⁹⁰ This phrase appeared in an English-language pamphlet under the title “Message to the Tricontinental: ‘Create Two, Three...Many Vietnams’.” The pamphlet was attributed to the Executive Secretariat of the Organization of the Solidarity of the People of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OSPAAAL), Havana, April 16, 1967. This pamphlet included Guevara’s last known article, written at a guerrilla camp in Latin America. An English-language version of this phrase can be found in *Venceremos! The Speeches and Writings of Ernesto Che Guevara*, ed., annotated, and with an introduction by John Gerassi (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), xiii, 413. However, it is not clear where Nakahira found the phrase. He wrote the phrase in Japanese as “Futatsu, mittsu, soshite musū no betonamu o tsukure!” [二つ、三つ、そして無数のベトナムをつくれ！] Nakahira Takuma, “Riaritī fukken” [Restoration of reality], *Design* (January 1969): 53, 56.

²⁹¹ Nakahira Takuma, “Riaritī fukken” [Restoration of reality], *Design* (January 1969): 56.

²⁹² *Ibid.* “それはすべての形容詞を拒絶してぼくたちに問いを発し続ける一つの疑問形の現実なのだ。”

a visual collection of each photographer's encounters.²⁹³ Takanashi's photographs are about the places he went to on assignment, and include the photographs he took at Hokkaidō (Fig. 4.21) and Asama Mountain (Fig. 4.22). Nakahira's photographs present his daily activities. Examples of these photographs include one of his sister and wife sitting on a beach (Fig. 4.23) and others showing the nightlife in various Tokyo neighborhoods such as Shinjuku (Fig. 4.24) and Gotanda (Fig. 4.25). The photographs formed not so much diary-like narratives as rambling records of where the photographer had been. In other words, the theme of "Summer 1968" resulted in an expression of individuality in each photographer's works, unlike Natori's ideal of *hōdō shashin*, which advocates unity under a theme.

However, Nakahira's argument was not fully realized in *Provoke 1* because, in order to complete his first personal photo-project, Taki had to borrow the mode of *hōdō shashin* from Natori, and *gun shashin* from Tōmatsu. The oldest among the *Provoke* members, Taki was generationally closest to Natori and Tōmatsu and learned the most from these two predecessors.²⁹⁴ His photographs fit under the theme of "Summer 1968" because his photographs clearly reflect the unsettling political situation of that year, as Taki's brief statement on the first page stated:

There was also no huge riot by African Americans in the United States. [In Japan,] only one took place in San'ya, in June; otherwise, the summer quietly went by. However, disquiet was everywhere. The being simultaneously revealed its plenitude and lack in the almost season-less, timeless coalmine. University students persevered in their barricades during summer break. Therein lay a being akin to dark blood. Even in the city, strikes were waged in backstreets known to nobody, and laborers and gangsters repeatedly brawled. The wind has started to blow, shaking our souls and forcing a painful awakening.²⁹⁵

²⁹³ See Appendix 1 and 2 for details and thumbnails.

²⁹⁴ Natori and Tōmatsu were born in 1910 and 1930 respectively, whereas Taki was in 1928. In contrast, Nakahira, Moriyama, Takanashi, and Okada were all born in the mid- to late 1930s.

²⁹⁵ Taki Kōji, "1968 natsu 1" [Summer 1968 1], *Provoke 1* (November 1968): 15. "アメリカでも大きな黒人暴動はなかった。山谷でも6月に起ったきり、夏は静かに流れていった。しかし、いたる

As his lyrical statement indicates, Taki's photographs centered on the theme of protest against authority. The first photograph shows two activists with helmets and masks (Fig. 4.26). They are members of a workers' union standing presumably in front of the San-ichi Publishing Co., Ltd., which produced mainly leftwing, anti-authoritarian publications.²⁹⁶ Following the headshot of an anonymous man, two photographs show groups of San-ichi employees (Figs. 4.27 and 4.28).²⁹⁷ Those photographs captured the labor conflict that was unrolling at this minor publishing company.

Three other photographs are portraits of miners in the Mikasa Coalmine in Hokkaidō (Figs. 4.29-4.31).²⁹⁸ Taki flew there in order to take these photographs.²⁹⁹ As the nation's energy policy was switching from coal to oil in 1960s Japan, coalminers in general became the symbol of the labor struggle against exploitive capitalist corporations. Thematically, Taki's photographs of coalminers remind viewers of Domon's photographs of the coalmining community in Chikuho. However, it is not clear whether Taki, when he took these photographs, was aware of Domon's work. What is clear to viewers' eyes is that, like Tōmatsu's *gun shashin*, Taki's photographs can be grouped under different categories of labor struggle.

ところに不穏があった。ほとんど季節もなく、時間も流れていないような炭坑では、存在がその充実と欠落をさらけていた。大学では、夏休み中バリケードのなかで学生たちはもちこたえた。そこに暗い血のような実存があった。街のなかでも、だれにも気付かないような露路のなかでストライキが行われ、労働者と暴力団とが乱闘をくりかえしていた。風が吹きはじめた。われらの魂をゆさぶり、苦痛な目ざめを強いている。”

²⁹⁶ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

Those photographs also echoed Natori's *kumi shashin*. On pages 24 and 25, two photographs are juxtaposed, with the left image occupying two-thirds of page 24 and the right image occupying the rest of the two-page spread (Fig. 4.29). The left photograph shows two men smoking, while the right one captures two men with box-like devices in their hands. An echo of the four men's left-facing profiles almost transforms the whole spread into a single photograph. The seamless connection of two photographs was a layout strategy that one could observe in *kumi shashin* in *Nippon* as well as in Tōmatsu's "Occupation" series. Although it is not clear whether Taki was directly referring to Natori in Taki's deployment of *kumi shashin*, it is obvious that Natori's style is lurking in Taki's first personal project.

Taki's photographs, even while recalling Natori's and Tōmatsu's, are nonetheless more suggestive. One reason for this is that the topics Taki covered were relatively less known to the public than were the major university conflicts and the coalminers' labor struggle in Kyūshū.³⁰⁰ Another obvious reason is that the photographs neither form a temporal sequence nor offer a portrait of laborers in a social-realist mode. As opposed to the photojournalistic tradition that would have emphasized the pathetic state of exploited laborers, Taki daringly left the image of the miners eerie yet slightly dignified, thus simultaneously defying an established criterion of photography and the authoritative state government (Fig. 4.31). Rather than depict the plight of coalminers in general, Taki captured a personal, physical encounter with an individual miner, thus leaving the commentary ambiguous. San-ichi Publisher employees were unidentifiable in the photographs unless the caption explicitly noted their identity (Fig. 4.26-4.28). Viewers would have had a hard time penetrating the seemingly neutral facial expressions and gestures of the protagonists in those photographs.

³⁰⁰ Two major sites of the student movements were Nihon University and the University of Tokyo, while the famed coalminers' strike took place at the Miike Coalmine in Fukuoka.

Furthermore, Taki reconfigured his predecessors' methods in order to create a new graphic effect. In the aforementioned photograph of coalminers' profiles (Fig. 4.29), Taki laid out two photographs according to the principles of *kumi shashin* so as to confound a simple narrative. This was in contrast to Natori, who would have structured a narrative faithful to *kumi shashin*. Taki paired the two photographs of coalminers in a way that, rather than reinforce a narrative, only strengthened a visual rhythm. Using Natori's *hōdō shashin* and Tōmatsu's *gun shashin* as springboards, Taki tried to probe a direction different from the directions taken by his predecessors.

b) Taki's "Document" and *Provoke 2* as "Incomplete Code"

Taki drew from the perceptive views articulated in Nakahira's "Restoration of Reality." In this way, Taki further developed his practice, as though seeking to close the gap between his and Nakahira's ideas about photography. Taki articulated this evolved view in his article "Dokyumento" [Document] in the February 1969 issue of *Design*. Taki noted photography's existential duality: as visual testimony, it could be exploited by state power, yet could also be deployed against authority because photography was supposedly a medium by means of which one could "record" specific events. If so, the task of photography should be mere record making: it unavoidably captures an unintended object in such a way as to demonstrate that the world transcends our comprehension and control. Examples that Taki cited in this regard include Capa's *Falling Soldier* (1937) (Fig. 4.32) and Eddie Adams' photograph of a North Vietnamese general executing a suspected member of the Viet Cong (1968) (Fig. 4.33). He claimed that these examples revealed "photography's very 'directness' against the world, being not an exchangeable

but an inescapable part of the world.”³⁰¹ By *sekai*, or “the world,” Taki meant not an abstract concept but a concrete place where “flesh and matter exist, [and] so do life. And many kinds of vanity cover them.”³⁰² In Taki’s conception, photographers who are practicing their craft must be aware of both uncontrollability and directness.

Taki’s argument in “Document” also announces his departure from Natori and Tōmatsu, because he now spoke about individual photographs rather than a group of them. In other words, whereas Natori and Tōmatsu engaged the power of photography by presenting images *en masse* and connecting them through editing and layout, Taki employed the structuralist analysis of individual photographs.

In “Document,” Taki defined photography by relating the term to language: photography is an “incomplete code” that cannot tell more than what it captures.³⁰³ If language is an arbitrary combination of phonology and meaning (in the sense of Charles Sanders Peirce), photography is directly linked to what is photographed. Due to its concreteness, photography itself does not generate syntax, because what is photographed remains represented in each photograph. Therefore, to be “incomplete” refers to photography’s inability to explain fully—an inability that rests on photography’s physically fragmentary nature, which “cuts out” the subject from its surroundings. If Nakahira attempted to elucidate what ‘reality’ means in his previous article, “Restoration of Reality,” Taki paid particular attention to the mechanical function of photography that made photography an “incomplete code.” Taki’s conclusion was that photography should be truthful to this nature and that photographers pursuing ‘reality’ must ground their practice in the

³⁰¹ Taki, “Dokumento” [Document], 56. “まさに世界に対する写真の「直接性」であり可換的なものとしてではなく、ぬきさしならぬ世界の部分なのである。”

³⁰² Ibid. “。。。肉体や事物が存在し、生活があり、さまざまな嘘がそこにかぶさっている世界なのである。”

³⁰³ Ibid.

physical environment rather than visualize their concept of it.

One of Takanashi's photographs in *Provoke 1* constitutes a precise case in point (Fig. 4.34). It presents a group of people surrounded by the seas near the Izu Peninsula. The bird's-eye view gives a sense of capturing the whole situation, yet the viewer cannot know where those people came from or what the scenery outside the frame is like. The photograph is a cut-off environment, and it does not try to explain anything else. Incompletely describing its surroundings, Takanashi's photograph reiterates isolation in various landscapes. For Taki, photography is likewise inseparable from surrounding physical environments that cannot be shown in their totality.

The photographs published in *Provoke 2* (March 1969) seem to conform to Taki's definition of photography as "incomplete code."³⁰⁴ They tend to be rougher, blurrier, and more out of focus than in the previous issue, making vague the connection between what was in front of the camera and its representation. Some of Nakahira's photographs are less legible than before owing to high contrast and blurriness (Fig. 4.35). In Moriyama's photographs presenting his ex-girlfriend in a hotel room, the contours are out of focus, preventing viewers from clearly making out the portrait of a woman (Fig. 4.36). He intentionally blurred some of them at the time of printing in order to avoid charges of obscenity.³⁰⁵ Takanashi's photographs serially show the blurred image of a woman's pale skin tones (Fig. 4.37). Taki himself included the photographs of various female figures from a nude studio, and many of these images are similarly out of focus (Fig. 4.38).³⁰⁶ Although some of the photographs remained indexical in terms of presenting

³⁰⁴ See Appendix 3 and 4 for details and thumbnails.

³⁰⁵ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

³⁰⁶ Nude studios are places where customers can take photographs of nude women. Most of them used to be in Shinjuku.

identifiable objects, the legibility was partially obscured because of *are-bure-boke*. The trio rendered the “code” further incomplete.

Nonetheless, *Provoke 2* (March 1969) was edited under the theme “Eros,” with which the members’ submittals were all compliant.³⁰⁷ In other words, each photograph adhered to a predetermined linguistic construct. Okada’s essay “Fetiko ni gyaku modori” [Going back to fetico] and his poem “Ōmata biraki ni taete samayoe” [Withstand the wide-spread legs and wander] also correspond to the theme in their erotic implications.

c) Nakahira’s “Forensic Evidence” and “What Is Contemporaneity?”

As Taki decisively moved away from the concept of *hōdō shashin*, Nakahira continued to develop his idea of photography, equating it with photographers’ unique experiences. In his “Shōko bukken” [Forensic evidence] in the March 1969 issue of *Design*, Nakahira examined David Douglas Duncan’s Vietnam War photographs (Fig. 4.39) in reference to the works of Eugene Atget and Walker Evans. He negatively assessed Duncan’s work because (he assumed that) it exemplified a generalized idea of the Vietnam War, but positively assessed the work by Atget and Evans for apparently intending to show nothing more than what they—the photographers—saw through their camera.³⁰⁸ Nakahira was probably struck and inspired by the attitude displayed by Atget, who diligently documented the city of Paris through photographs that constituted Atget’s personal record of the French metropolis. Nakahira envisioned photography to be singular to each photographer’s experience of something; Nakahira thus

³⁰⁷ In the postscript of *Provoke 2*, Nakahira mentions that the members were troubled by the broad meaning of the word “Eros.”

³⁰⁸ Nakahira Takuma, “Shōko bukken” [Forensic evidence], *Design* (March 1969): 55.

sought to photograph witnessed scenes as though they constituted “forensic evidence,” a term borrowed from Benjamin’s discussion of Atget’s photography. In other words, what was critical to Nakahira’s conception of photography was each photographer’s subjective experience of being “true” to what was in front of the camera.

Nakahira’s engagement with photography became more and more specific as he developed his theory of documentary photography, as evidenced in the serialized article “Dōjidaiteki dearu toha nani ka?” [What is contemporaneity?], carried in *Design* from May to August 1969. In this four-part article, Nakahira presented his thoughts on contemporary photography, concluding that it was equivalent to literally living in the present moment. Just as Nakahira questioned the relationship of the photographer to history when he worked on “One Hundred Years of Photography,” he now considered the relationship of contemporary photographers to their own time.

In the first article of the series in the May issue, Nakahira harshly criticized contemporary journalistic photographers’ work on Okinawa, the student movement, and the Vietnam War, which he claimed were harmfully stereotypical and unreflective of the photographers’ own experiences. The contemporary journalistic photographers took photographs of their subjects after experiencing a strong sense of “social justice and objective truth” while remaining mere observers.³⁰⁹ (Moriyama criticized Domon for precisely this.) Nakahira thought that living in history and taking photographs are inseparable, and he urged photographers to be aware that they are a part of history; in other words, photographers should capture their own genuine experiences. Nakahira thus felt it urgent to redefine the word *kiroku*, or “record,” as a dialectical

³⁰⁹ Nakahira Takuma, “Dōjidaiteki de aru towa nanika? 1” [What is contemporaneity? 1], 69.

act of taking photographs while living in a specific moment of history.³¹⁰

In the second article, Nakahira criticized the general assumption of “meaning” behind photography. He urged photographers to abandon the preconception that photographic representation should have some meaning.³¹¹ Further, he demanded that photographers discard their intention of “expressing themselves” and, in so doing, take a necessary step toward reconstituting photography as “record.”³¹²

In the third article in the July issue, Nakahira supported his arguments with a few examples. The first is from Avedon’s series “Italian Experience,” included in his photobook *Observation*, showing a boy awkwardly standing in front of a tree in a highly out-of-focus photographic scene (Fig. 4.40). Another example, taken from *Asahi Graph* (March 7, 1969), shows the burnt skin of a student who suffered a gas attack by riot police during the Yasuda Hall incident (Fig. 4.41). The two photographs, while seemingly unrelated to each other, struck Nakahira with their notable lack of “photographers’ intention”: namely, the intention that photographers act on when they try to explain what is going on in the world and when they try to impose overarching ideas or moral values on the viewer.³¹³ In Nakahira’s opinion, these two photographs were “not ‘expression’ as such, but were underscored by a tremendous shock and

³¹⁰ Ibid., 70.

³¹¹ Nakahira Takuma, “Dōjidaiteki dearu towa nanika? 2” [What is contemporaneity? 2], *Design* (June 1969): 52-64.

³¹² Nakahira frequently used the term ‘expression’ to mean photographers’ attempted photographic visualization of their own ideas. He mentioned that this term was borrowed from Alain Jouffroy’s “L’abolition de l’art,” a part of which was translated and appeared in *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* no. 8 in 1969.

³¹³ Nakahira Takuma, “Dōjidaiteki de aru towa nanika? 3” [What is contemporaneity? 3], *Design* (July 1969): 63.

jolt felt by the photographer as a witness of the world.”³¹⁴

Toward its end, the third article makes a comparison between two anonymous press photographs snapped on Okinawa—one being of a B-52 flying in the sky and the other, of a crying girl on the ground—and the two aforementioned photographs by Avedon and an anonymous photographer. Noting a sharp contrast between the two groups, Nakahira observed these Okinawa photographs as being far from “real” because the photographer did not see Okinawa itself but only saw its political meaning.³¹⁵ Ultimately, the aim of *Provoke*, in his mind, was precisely the opposite of the aim of the aforementioned photograph.³¹⁶

The last article of the series, published in the August 1969 issue of *Design*, constituted his verbal manifesto in which he advocated the “documentary” approach. Admitting that photography, be it art photography or *hōdō shashin*, could not change the world, Nakahira was nonetheless committed to living his life by taking photographs that were inseparable from his experience of living in each moment of his life. Nakahira’s “documentary” was the “record,” or a “truly real photograph,” motivated by his inexplicable impulse to “...find and look as hard as possible at a ‘reality’ that inevitably spins out from the life I live as my own being.”³¹⁷ As he had already stated in his “Henshū kōki” [Editor’s note] in *Provoke 1*, photography meant to him this dialectical act of taking photographs and living in a particular moment of history. Combined,

³¹⁴ Ibid. “。。。いわゆる<表現>をねらったものではないということ、また世界とそれを目撃した人の驚きによって、その衝撃の強さによってこれらの写真が支えられているということである。”

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 64.

³¹⁷ Nakahira, Takuma, “Dōjidaiteki de aru towa nanika? 4” [What is contemporaneity? 4], *Design* (August 1969): 67. “。。。自らが生きる生の中から必然的にはじき出されてくる<現実>を発見しそれを凝視してゆく真にリアルな写真。。。” However, Nakahira already used the term ‘documentary’ in the previous article.

Nakahira's four articles are far less of an analysis than a record of his thought about photography's possibilities. As such, these articles reveal his conflicts, disappointments, and tenacity to live as a photographer.

d) Taki's "Photography, Expression, Idea, and Method" and *Provoke 3*

Taki's "Shashin, hyōgen, shisō, hōhō" [Photography, expression, idea, and method] in the September issue of *Design* gave a summation of the previous articles by Nakahira and Taki himself.³¹⁸ While Nakahira rejected the assumption that there must be some kind of meaning behind photography, Taki tried to expose the mechanism that generated such an assumption. At the bottom of the problem is the photographer's act of 'seeing.' In Taki's conception, 'seeing' is not limited to the photographer's retinal activity, but extended to his perception using his whole body.³¹⁹ Expanding on Nakahira's notion of "experience," Taki suggested that the act of taking photographs was particular to each photographer's physical experience. Taki eschewed the Cartesian subject-object relationship, wherein the subject sees the object in a one-way direction, and instead proposed a reciprocal relationship between photographers as subject and their objects. Although such a relationship would make it impossible for photographers to capture and convey this totality through their photographic images, Taki shifted the role of photography to a capturing of "evidence of the perpetual incompleteness of the world, the result of the body's act of aspiring for the unattainable yonder, and the excrement of such an act."³²⁰ For Taki, as for

³¹⁸ Taki revised this article and included the revision in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* as a means of concluding his argument on photography.

³¹⁹ Taki Kōji, "Shashin, hyōgen, shisō, hōhō" [Photography, expression, idea, and method], *Design* (September 1969): 83.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 84. "とすれば、写真はたえまない世界の不完全のあかしであり、ありえない彼岸をみざす肉体の行為の結果であり、排泄物なのである。"

Nakahira, living an everyday life was synonymous with being a photographer.

Provoke 3 was published in August 1969, the same month as the last installment of Nakahira's "What Is Contemporaneity?4" in *Design*.³²¹ Unlike *Provoke 1* and *Provoke 2*, *Provoke 3* lacked an overarching theme. The photographs are even more illegible than before, owing to their intensified *are-bure-boke* quality and the uncoordinated ordering of themes. The issue featured Taki's Xeroxed photographs amounting to an iconography of the human face (Fig. 4.42), Moriyama's Xeroxed photographs capturing the shelves at a supermarket near *Provoke*'s office (Fig. 4.43), Nakahira's photographs of street scenes (Fig. 4.44), and Takanashi's photographs of a Paco Rabanne fashion show (Fig. 4.45). Taki's headshots suggest that the photographer statically confronted the sitters. Through their photographs, Moriyama and Nakahira essentially recorded their own physical movements. Takanashi's photograph abruptly cuts the fashion model off at her thighs, and the unconventional composition signals the photographer's unprompted encounter with the model, an encounter that occurred while both Takanashi and the model are moving. The style of Takanashi's photographs in *Provoke 3* was distinct from the style of his photographs in *Provoke 1*, the latter seeming more static than the former. All the photographs described above seem to highlight how the four photographers captured the photographed scenes.

Provoke photographers' physical involvement in their subject informed their photographs—a relationship that precisely confirmed Taki's argument (in his "Photography, Expression, Idea, and Method") that photography is a product of each photographer's unique, physical engagement with his or her subject. Notably, *Provoke 3* contains only three texts: two pieces of poetry (one by Yoshimasu Gōzō and the other by Okada) and an "Editor's note" by

³²¹ See Appendix 5 and 6 for details and thumbnails of *Provoke 3*.

Nakahira. Within a mere three issues, *Provoke* had undergone a great deal of structural transformation. *Provoke 3* is more fragmented than the two previous issues, with the third issue's photographs and texts exhibiting little associative character.

e) “Incomplete Fragments”: *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* in 1970

Following the three issues of *Provoke*, the publication *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* epitomized the ideas that Taki and Nakahira had explored in their *Design* articles.³²² This concluding issue of *Provoke*, published in 1970, offered no comprehensive response to their investigation of photography. As the two photographers noted in their postscript to *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, the 1970 issue was indeed “an accumulation of incomplete fragments.”³²³ It comprises a collection of photographs and writings, more than half of which had already appeared in *Design* during the *Provoke* era.³²⁴

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the structure of the concluding issue is distinct from the structures characterizing the three issues of *Provoke* or other more ordinary photobooks at that time. Measuring approximately 7.40 inches by 5.12 inches, the concluding issue adopted the most commonly employed book format. The quality of the issue's photographic reproductions is consistent with mass-produced paperbacks from that period. The issue itself is divided into two

³²² See Appendix 7 and 8 for details and thumbnails.

³²³ Nakahira Takuma and Taki Kōji, “Atogaki” [Postscript] in *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language], ed. Nakahira Takuma and Taki Kōji (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1970), 339. “。。。未完の断片の集積となった。”

³²⁴ Nakahira's “Restoration of Reality” and “Forensic Evidence” were taken from the January and March 1969 issues of *Design* respectively. The dialogue between Nakahira and Moriyama appeared in the April 1969 issue. Although Taki did not indicate the original publications of his two essays, “What Can Photography Do?” and “Eye and What Is Not Eye,” part of the latter appeared in “Photography, Expression, Idea, and Method” in the September 1969 issue of *Design*.

parts: “Predict” (essays) and “Provoke” (photographs).³²⁵ “Predict” features writings by Taki, Nakahira, Okada, and Amano Michie, an *Asahi Journal* journalist, and a dialogue between Nakahira and Moriyama. “Provoke” consists of photographs by Nakahira, Moriyama, Takanashi, and Taki. (Moriyama and Taki jointly created “Provoke 5”.) The sections of “Predict” and “Provoke” would alternate between each other, so that a section of “Predict” would follow a section of “Provoke,” and so on.³²⁶

In this structure, texts do not describe or explain the meanings of the publications’ photographs. This absence of textual elucidation set *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* apart from ordinary photobooks at that time, which usually accompany supplementary texts to photographs. The title *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* points to *Provoke* members’ agenda, although the arbitrary arrangement of the texts and photographs in earlier issues of *Provoke* hinted at the members’ schizophrenic approaches. As Nakahira and Taki noted, “What’s presented here is no more than the traces drawn from the life lived and thought by each individual.”³²⁷ The sections’ titles of “Predict” suggest not so much a definitive answer as a still on-going quest for the truth of photography.

Taki’s writings in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* summed up his and Nakahira’s arguments (made in *Design*) that photographers must take a synthetic approach to their theory and practice of photography. In his first essay, “Shashin ni naniga kanō ka” [What can photography do?], Taki declared, “We may say this publication offers two kinds of code, ‘language’ and ‘photography’. But it is also true that the world reveals itself only through many

³²⁵ “Predict” and “Provoke” appear as English words in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*.

³²⁶ See Appendix 7 for the table of content.

³²⁷ Nakahira and Taki, “Atogaki” [Postscript], 339. “ここにあるのは各人が日々を生き、思考したその生の描く痕跡しかない。”

more diverse approaches, including physical matter itself.”³²⁸ In his declaration, Taki acknowledged that photographers’ perception (what they see and how they see it) must be incorporated into the explication of what a given photograph shows. His second essay, “Me to me narazaru mono” [Eye and what is not eye], combined two of his previous essays, one written in 1967 and the other in 1969 (the latter of which was published in *Design* as discussed above).³²⁹ His discussion centers on the methodology of photography that should underlie perception and that should involve links between photographers’ agency, circumstance, and photography.³³⁰ In other words, photography is more than a visualization of what photographers see and what is in front of their cameras; it should constitute some kind of residue of the relationships between photographers and their surroundings, along with any unfolding circumstances.³³¹ As I explained in Chapter Three, to achieve this goal, Taki constructed a phenomenology of perception regarding photography.

First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty also epitomized *Provoke*’s relationship to *hōdō shashin* by including writings by a journalist, Amano Michie. In the section “Predict 5: ‘Jijitsu’ to ‘eizō’,” [Predict 5: “Fact” and “image”], Amano offered a newly written essay divided into four sections, in addition to his four articles originally published in *Asahi Journal* from 1969

³²⁸ Taki Kōji, “Shashin ni nani ga kanō ka” [What can photography do?] in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, 6-7. “かりに本書では、「言語」と「写真」というふたつの記号が示されてはいるが、もっと多くの、物質それ自身まで含めた多様なアプローチのなかでしか、世界の全体は像をあらわさないことも事実である。”

³²⁹ They are Taki Kōji, “Shashin to kankyō no shisō” [The idea of photography and environment], *Design hihyō/ The Design Review* 3 (June 1967) and “Shashin, hyōgen, shisō, hōhō” [Photography, expression, idea, and method], *Design* (September 1969).

³³⁰ Taki Kōji, “Me to me narazaru mono” [Eye and what is not eye], in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, 195.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 203.

to 1970. In his essay, Amano attempted to clarify what is meant by the mechanism of journalism. In the first section of essay, “Nani ni tsuite no hōdō ka?” [What shall we report?], Amano asserted that we must be aware of both what is and what is not reported, because the latter exposes the politics behind news.³³² In the second section, “Iwayuru ‘jijitsu’ ni tsuite” [Regarding so-called fact], Amano reconsidered the notion of “fact” in news coverage. He argued that one should correctly locate the viewpoint of a given report in order to identify and understand the alleged truths on which the report rests.³³³ In the last section, “Analojī ni yoru eizō ron” [A theory of visual image by analogy], Amano proposed an analogy between photography and journalism, saying that both deal with immediate “facts.” Photography takes what is in front of a camera, and journalism amasses concrete information about news. He concluded that what is fascinating about both photography and journalism is their request that society and the self open themselves to new perspectives.³³⁴

While *Provoke* members tried to precisely define the nature of photography, Amano sketched out his analysis of journalism and the mass media. Indeed, Amano’s aggressive questioning of the mass media’s manipulation of fact resonated with Taki, Nakahira, and Moriyama, who attempted to make their photographs nothing but personal records. According to Amano, four articles included in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* reflected his basic thinking about journalism.³³⁵ Taki and Nakahira felt sympathy for Amano’s subjective journalism, pointing out that Amano emphasized the specific facts and the specific selves that

³³² Amano Michie, “Predict 5: ‘Jijitsu’ to ‘eizo,’” [Predict 5: “Fact” and “image”], in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, 254-258.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 258-263.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 263-266.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 266.

particularized coverage of a particular event or topic.³³⁶ They stated that “[Amano] abstracts ‘date’ and ‘self’ from [the world] and condemns the dateless abstraction and the selfless life.”³³⁷

Nakahira called this complex state of photography *hizuke to basho kara no hassō*, or “thinking in terms of date and place.”³³⁸ This idea expanded on his conviction that taking a photograph is a personal act, specific to the time and place of its occurrence, and is something irreducible to an abstract idea. In their dialogue on August 2, 1971, Nakahira and Moriyama further explained their rejection of *hōdō shashin* and social realism (as demonstrated above) in favor of photography as a personal act.³³⁹ Their photography must function as a catalyst for introspection that would avoid imposing their interpretations on viewers and that would, as a consequence, directly communicate with those viewers. If Natori emphasized the importance of date and place to make his story plausible, Nakahira and Taki revived this tradition to serve very different ends.

In conclusion, *Provoke* and the essays by Taki and Nakahira in *Design* went hand in hand with the development of their photography. The subtext was their rejection of *hōdō shashin*, which contradicted their commitment to living authentically in eschewal of the constructed newsworthy “reality.” Taki stated, “When we head toward the future from the present, even though our *das sein* intensely tries to head toward the history that is not yet in our interiority, we

³³⁶ Nakahira and Taki, “Atogaki” [Postscript], 340.

³³⁷ Ibid. “彼は「日付」と「私」をその中から抽出し、「日付」のない概念的思考と「私」の生の脱落した思想を糾弾する。”

³³⁸ Nakahira Takuma, “Hizuke to basho karano hassō” [Thinking in terms of date and place], *Nihon dokusho shinbun* [Japan book-readers newspaper] (July 26, 1971), 1.

³³⁹ Moriyama, “8 gatsu 2 ka Yamanoue hoteru ‘taidan’ Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō” [‘Dialogue’ Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō at the Yamanoue Hotel on August 2], 280, 286.

cannot justify making any ‘testimony’ from our exteriority.”³⁴⁰ By examining diverse examples of photography, Nakahira and Taki pushed photography beyond the established realm and, by doing so, tended to nullify the social and the political meanings in photography. Their own experience as press photographers, as well as the “curse” of *hōdō shashin* handed down from Natori’s generation, motivated them to conceptualize and produce photography serving a more personal end.

VI. Language and Photography for *Provoke*

As I discuss above, one of the achievements of the *Provoke* publications was to question the conventional relationship between language and photography—two elements whose respective meanings frequently fortify each other. Taki, Nakahira, and Okada especially found it problematic to assume that photography should convey some kind of message to viewers. This concern was naturally raised by the publications’ more literary-oriented members. In this section, I will examine Taki and Nakahira’s thoughts on the relationship between photography and language in order to elucidate the concept behind the *Provoke* publications and the ways in which it stemmed from their rebellion against *hōdō shashin*.

Roland Barthes’ “Message without Code”

What distinguishes the *Provoke* members from Natori, Domon, and Tōmatsu was Taki and Nakahira’s awareness of the structuralist approach to both photography and language. In particular, Taki was interested in analyzing the fundamental aspects of photography’s

³⁴⁰ Taki, “Shashin, shisō, hyōgen, hōhō” [Photography, idea, expression, and method], 82. “現在から未来へ向うとき、つまりわれわれの現存在はひたすらまだ自らのうちにはない歴史へ向うことは心がけてはいるが、外がわから「証言づくり」などにいそしむことは正当化できないのだ。”

relationship to language. Roland Barthes' semiotic reading of photography helps generally explain the *Provoke* members' thoughts on photography and language. Barthes had a particular influence on Taki, who read the first thirteen issues of *Communications* in the original French. The first issue of *Provoke* featured Barthes' "The Photographic Message," which Taki received by mail from an acquaintance in Paris and which became Taki's entry into semiotics and substantive intellectual pursuits.³⁴¹ Although the extent to which Barthes's essay actually influenced *Provoke* photographers remains open to speculation, Taki's and Nakahira's concerns clearly paralleled those of Barthes.

Barthes took up a structural analysis of photography itself by defining 'denotation' and 'connotation' as component parts of photography. Denotation can be understood as the characteristics of a given subject that photography can capture and present, whereas connotation is the latent meaning that is framed by social and historical contexts through photographers' use of elements such as trick effects, poses, objects, photogenia, aestheticism, and syntax.³⁴² According to Barthes, however, people perform literal (denotative) readings of photographs' representations even when the photographs bear connotative meanings. Barthes argued that press photography's denotative nature thus constitutes a "message without a code." This paradoxically induced a connotative (thus coded) message through the special techniques listed above, as well as through representational and circumstantial data such as textual information.³⁴³ Naturally, this structure of meaning relied heavily on the historical and cultural contexts in which a photograph

³⁴¹ Taki Kōji, *Zatsugakusha no yume* [Dream of an omnivorous student] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2004), 26.

³⁴² Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," in *Image-Music-Text*, essays selected by and trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 20-25.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 16-20.

was presented. As a result, the power of connotative meaning encompassed a broader spectrum than what is simply seen in a photograph. Barthes ultimately suggested that we can elucidate the structure of our society by analyzing the codes present in and surrounding press photography.

Barthes also elucidated the fluid interrelations between text and press photography through which (un)coded messages are generated. He noted that texts became an amplifier to images because the former bestow meaning on the latter, instead of the other way around.³⁴⁴ For example, a photograph of a weeping boy might convey a message about the tragedy of war by featuring the title “A Child in the Balkan Wars.” Such conveyances of messages take place because the text narrows the meaning, focusing it on war and on the Balkans conflict in particular, and supplements photography’s “exceptional power of denotation.”³⁴⁵

Language and Image in *Provoke’s* Manifesto

Taki and Nakahira were deeply engaged with the problems posed by the explanatory function of language, which added specific meanings to images and thus imposed those meanings on the viewer. Nakahira’s observation was straightforward: images are supplemental to language, as they ultimately support and even expand linguistic meaning.³⁴⁶ Taki observed that at the heart of photography is the paradox of the medium’s coexisting “denotative” and

³⁴⁴ Ibid., 25-26.

³⁴⁵ The quotation is from Barthes’ “Photographic Message” p. 21, and I paraphrase part of Barthes’ argument from pages 25 to 26 in the same article.

³⁴⁶ Nakahira Takuma, “Busshitsuteki kiban o ushinatta kotoba” [Language that has lost its material foundation], originally published in *Nihon dokusho shinbun* [Japan book-readers newspaper] (September 30, 1968); reprinted in *Naze shokubutsu zukan ka* [Why is an illustrated botanical encyclopedia?] (Tokyo: Shōbunsha, 1972); also reprinted in *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga...*, 37.

“connotative” natures.³⁴⁷ The first issue of *Provoke* featured Taki and Nakahira’s manifesto that unmistakably declared their determination to break free from the conundrum:

Visual images are not in and of themselves thought. Visual images cannot have a totality like ideas, nor are they an interchangeable code like language. Nevertheless, visual images’ irreversible materiality—reality cut out by the camera—resides in the reverse side of language, and it thus sometimes inspires the world of language and ideas. At that moment, language overcomes itself as a fixed concept and transforms itself into a new language, which is thus new thought. Today, language has lost its material base, in other words, its reality, and is floating in the air. What we photographers can do is to capture with our own eyes fragments of reality that cannot be grasped by any existing language and to actively offer materials to thought and language. This is why we assign “material to provoke thought” as a subtitle to *Provoke*, although we are somewhat embarrassed by it.³⁴⁸

The statement clearly exemplifies the members’ defiant stance toward Natori’s belief that each photograph was equivalent to a single word. The statement also exemplifies their rejection of language’s supplementary function relative to photography. In this light, none of the photographs were accompanied by titles or captions.

Chance Encounters and Random Operations for Provocative Photography

In addition to the relationship between text and photography, photographs in the *Provoke* publications showcase how *Provoke* photographers rejected, in practice, *hōdō shashin*. *Provoke*’s

³⁴⁷ Taki Kōji, “Eizō no gyakusetsu—Narahara Ikkō ron” [Paradox of imagery: Theory of Narahara Ikkō], *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* 4 (October 1967): 145.

³⁴⁸ Nakahira Takuma, Okada Takahiko, Takanashi Yutaka, and Taki Kōji, [manifesto], *Provoke 1* (November 1968): 2. The translation is by the author, with reference to the following six existing translations: the first is by Linda Hoaglund in the brochure issued by the Roth Horowitz Gallery, New York, 1999; the second is by Reiko Tomii and appears in *Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis*, ed. Iwona Blazwick (London: Tate Publishing, 2001): 205, 206; the third is by Sumiko Suga and Lynne E. Riggs in Yasumi Akihito, “Journey to the Limits of Photography: The Heyday of *Provoke*, 1964-1973” in *The Japanese Box* (Paris: Edition 7L and Göttingen: Steidl, 2001), 14; the fourth is by Nabuko Kobayashi in Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, eds., *Photobook: A History, Volume I* (London and New York: Phaidon, 2004), 270; the fifth is by Ivan Vartanian in Vartanian and Kaneko Ryūichi, eds., *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and 1970s* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2009), 17; and the sixth is by Fabienne Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty: Theory and Practice of the ‘Camera-generated’ Image in 1960s Japan” (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2009), 234.

signature approach, as embodied in *are-bure-boke*, physically eradicates what Barthes called *analogon*, or the analogy between representation and object in a photograph, because the blurriness of photographic representation would interrupt the connotations of a photograph.³⁴⁹ For example, Nakahira's photographs in *Provoke 2* (Fig. 4.46) show nighttime streets, taken from a flower shop near a café that Nakahira frequented.³⁵⁰ But readers of the issue would have hardly any clue as to the photographed object's identity owing to both the visual obscurity present in the photograph and the textual explanation absent from the photograph. The background (a street view) to the right is out of focus, with an almost unidentifiable object taking up more than two-thirds of the picture. The field of vision is blocked by this object, which may be a bouquet of flowers wrapped in a piece of plastic (perhaps a chrysanthemum is visible in the lower left). A puzzling sense of depth and a lack of tonal clarity further confound the viewer. With this ambiguity of the photographer's intentions and object, Nakahira's photograph defies the conventional approach to endowing meaning in a photograph because the fundamental nature of photography, "analogical perfection," is effectively cancelled out here.³⁵¹ Nakahira's refusal to offer a denotation constitutes the beginning of the end of the relationship between representation and its meaning.

So a question arises here: does the cancellation of *analogon* completely erase the connotative meaning from a photograph? This may sound too extreme because, according to Barthes, the erasure of the *analogon* itself might be read as a coded meaning. He stated that "the human interventions in the photograph (framing, range, light, focus, speed, etc.) all belong as a

³⁴⁹ *Are-bure-boke* is often abbreviated as *bure-boke*.

³⁵⁰ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

³⁵¹ Barthes, "The Photographic Message," 17.

matter of fact to the level of connotation.”³⁵² If we follow Barthes’s logic, *are-bure-boke* can be interpreted as the photographer’s individual attempt to capture [or produce] an unconventional “reality” as a connotative meaning.

However, the *are-bure-boke* photographs of the *Provoke* publications transcended any simple connotation because they were records of the *process* involved in producing what Barthes called “truly traumatic photographs” that defied conventional explanation.³⁵³ According to Barthes, traumatic photography (e.g., taken at the site of accidents) is “a pure denotation, *this-side of language*” and it cannot be easily understood within the established system that generated connotative meaning.³⁵⁴ I argue that the photographs in the *Provoke* publications successfully achieved the effect of “*this-side of language*” through chance encounters and random operations that would occur throughout the making of the publications, from the photographing to the editorial work. This assessment is possible, because one should not judge the *Provoke* publications on the basis solely of the final products: any judgment should account for the work that went into developing the publications, as this work is as important as the publications themselves regarding efforts to fully elucidate the publications’ significance.

Heavily dependent on chance encounters, accidents, and other happenings, Moriyama and Nakahira could capture such events through their spontaneous photography shoots on the streets and could then produce (i.e., develop) the images by performing manual labor in the

³⁵² Roland Barthes, “The Rhetoric of Image,” in *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art, and Representation*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 33.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 30.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.* The traumatic photograph, which is meant to have traumatic effects on readers through the deployment of connotative meanings is not the case in point here.

darkroom.³⁵⁵ The combination of an arbitrary incorporation of chance and a collaborative process was by no means Nakahira and Moriyama's "strategy," but the combination helped them conjure up unexpected photographic effects.

Their methodology also set them apart from Barthes' "trauma." Whereas Barthes referred to actual disasters and aftershocks, the *Provoke* members thought their everyday life was dramatic enough. Moriyama stated his aim in taking photographs: "As I intend it, I hold a camera in my hands as a means of constant self-recognition, a way to ask the question 'What is my life?' in the midst of all these *grotesque, scandalous, and extremely accidental* people and the world in which I exist and with which I am associated" [emphasis added].³⁵⁶

This point is saliently illustrated by one of Nakahira's photographs, which resulted from an accidental exposure of the film to light (Fig. 4.47). The exposed film presents an extremely dark room in a boxing gym in central Tokyo. However, the center of the image is whited out because he perhaps inadvertently opened his camera, thus exposing the film inside.³⁵⁷ Another example is Takanashi's photograph in *Provoke 3*, which reveals a double exposure that accidentally occurred while he was snapping photographs, the accident perhaps demonstrating his interest (shared with Nakahira and Moriyama) in drawing inspiration from coincidences and

³⁵⁵ These processes are not the same as the method of art making adopted by Surrealists, because the latter were aware of coincidence whereas *Provoke* members were not.

³⁵⁶ Moriyama Daidō, "Shukan teki Sunappu" [Subjective snapshot] in *Sunappu shashin: Asahi kamera kyōshitu 3* [Snapshot: Asahi lecture on photography, vol. 3], ed. The Asahi Shimbun Company (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1966), 79. "。。。僕自身が存在し、関係を持っているそうしたグロテスクで、スキャンダラスで、きわめてアクシデンタルな人間と世界のなかで、一体自分の生とは何か?といった絶え間のない自己確認の手段として、僕はカメラを持っているつもりなのだ。"

³⁵⁷ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

other unplanned happenings (Fig. 4.48).³⁵⁸ Rather than merely depict what was in front of the camera, their photographs encompassed the entire process and experience of actually producing the images.

Furthermore, the publications' size and layout had no coherent design concept in place.³⁵⁹ As mentioned in Chapter Two, the size of the journal varied throughout the span of its publication. The first issue was square in shape and measured approximately 8.27 by 8.27 inches, resulting in an oblong, almost cinematic, 1-by-2 page spread.³⁶⁰ Then, the size of journal changed in *Provoke 2* and *Provoke 3*. The dimensions of the former issue are 9.53 by 7.09 inches, and those of the latter are 9.41 by 7.28 inches.³⁶¹ *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* measures approximately 7.40 by 5.12 inches, dimensions that constitute one of the standard book-sizes in Japan. The sizes of photographs in this publication vary, and it seems that *Provoke* members exercised freedom rather liberally in their layouts.

The layout also incorporated random operations. Although the general assumption was that Taki was in charge of layout, others sometimes pitched in. The editor-in-chief of *Design* magazine, Okuda Akio, recalled that Taki had asked him to help with the layout when Okuda visited the *Provoke* office.³⁶² Likewise, when trying to determine which of his photographs should appear in *Provoke 2*, Moriyama gave Yanagimoto the final say in selecting them.³⁶³ The

³⁵⁸ Takanashi Yutaka, "Takanashi Yutaka: 'Shashin=dōgo hanpuku' eno iradachi/ Takanashi Yutaka, 'I was always irritated by photography being a tautology,'" interview, *Déjà-vu* 14 (October 1993): 65.

³⁵⁹ See Appendix 1, 3, 5, 7 for the details about the four *Provoke* publications.

³⁶⁰ *Provoke 1* is measured 210 by 210 millimeters.

³⁶¹ *Provoke 2* is measured 242 by 180 millimeters, and *Provoke 3* is measured 239 by 185 millimeters.

³⁶² Okuda Akio, interview by author, IC recording, Saitama, 27 October 2010.

³⁶³ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

members also held meetings to discuss the selection and cropping of photographs.³⁶⁴ Although the contents of meetings rarely concerned photography, according to Takanashi, Moriyama, and Yanagimoto,³⁶⁵ the process of making *Provoke* was as important as the manipulation of the photographs itself. Their discussion was a veritable experiment, which perhaps ended up negating the photographers' intentions and messages that would otherwise have been evident in the photographs. Nakahira admitted that his fellow members' opinions about his photographs had reminded him of the extent to which he, as a photographer, had still operated under preconceptions.³⁶⁶ In a roundtable discussion in 1968, Takanashi acknowledged that he had been following *Provoke* members' advice that he crop his photographs for *Provoke* (this was his first time cropping his own photographic work), stating that the cropping "would feel good, and would make me feel as though I could manage to make progress as a photographer."³⁶⁷ In other words, the journal was more than a site of publication; it was a site of creative photographic production.

At the same time, *Provoke* photographers did not shy away from a conscious manipulation of images. This manipulation started at the very moment the journal format took shape under the management of Taki and his assistant. The unusual format of *Provoke I* required the cropping of photographs' top and bottom edges at a minimum, as the film format of choice

³⁶⁴ Takanashi Yutaka, in Nakahira Takuma, Yokosuka Noriaki, and Nakahara Yūsuke, "Ima shashinka de aru koto" [On being photographers today], roundtable discussion, in *Shashin, ima kokoni* [Photography, here and now] (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1969), 200-201.

³⁶⁵ Yanagimoto Naomi, "90 pāsento ga seiji no hanashi data henshū kaigi/ Yanagimoto Naomi: 'Ninety percent of their talk was politics'," interview, *Déjà-vu* 14 (October 10, 1993): 70.

³⁶⁶ Nakahira, in "Ima Shashinka de aru koto" [On being photographers today], 187-188.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 200. "それをやっちゃったというのは非常にすがすがしくて、なんとかまた変れるんじゃないかという気がしますね。" Takanashi did not mention which issue he was referring to.

was 35 millimeters with the aspect ratio of 2 by 3. For example, a comparison of Nakahira's photograph in *Provoke I* on pages 56 and 57 (Fig. 4.25) with the unmanipulated print (Fig. 4.49) clarifies how he cropped his image on all four sides. By eliminating the illuminated buildings on the right and the left as well as the superfluous top and bottom sections, Nakahira may have zoomed in on the darkness occupying the center of the scene. The tilted horizon creates a sense of instability in his act of photographing. Another photograph by Nakahira on pages 52 and 53 of *Provoke I* (Fig. 4.23) also demonstrates a dramatic change from the original frame (Fig. 4.50). A drastic cropping demanded by the oblong format created, again, a sense of urgency and closing in. The manipulation in the two cases affected the perceived immediacy of the relationship between the photographer and his subjects (Nakahira's sister and wife). An examination of the photographers' layout manipulations during the publications' design, together with the darkroom manipulations of images during the development and printing stages, clarifies the intricate processes underlying the production of the journal. While questioning the meaning of 'reality' in their individual photographs, *Provoke* members extended their critical scrutiny to the collective presentation of their photographs in a series of publications.

The accidental quality of *Provoke* photographs and the random approach to layout in the context of the journal's austere design transformed the visual vocabularies of each image. Therefore, together with inconsistent manipulation, this randomness was a key element that helped to undermine the preexisting relationship between language and photography. The members of *Provoke* intended the publications' photographs to be neither a visual narrative, nor a supplement to writing, nor a "message without a code" in the mold of Barthes: the photographs were to speak their own incomprehensible language, as *are-bure-boke* indicates.

Provoke reexamined the arguments by Natori and Tōmatsu and devised a new view on

the relationship between language and photography. If Natori treated each photograph as a word that, in combination with other words, would form the syntax of a story, Tōmatsu differentiated photography from language, advocating the supplementary function of writing. In contrast, the *Provoke* photography was meant to generate its own language. Natori, Domon, and Tōmatsu felt themselves to be no more than the arbiters of photographic messages, whereas *Provoke* members let their photography speak for itself.

VII. Photographers' Agency

Provoke photographers also set themselves apart from their predecessors on the issue of photographers' agency. Natori believed that the photographer's task was to thoughtfully take photographs and select the ones best suited for presentation. Natori once explained, "One-third of the photographer's task is to think before taking photographs; the second-third is to take photographs; and the last-third is to select photographs he shot. Without these three capabilities, he cannot claim himself to be a photographer."³⁶⁸ However, assigned a specific theme in advance, photographers found their agency subsumed by the thematic bind. In contrast, Domon demanded that photographers' subjective voice present itself in the photographers' photographs, and at the same time, Domon insisted on his right of attribution. Tōmatsu also embraced photographers' agency to the fullest extent, as seen in his ownership of the whole process of making his own photobooks. Through his theory of *gun shashin*, Tōmatsu demonstrated that

³⁶⁸ Natori Yōnosuke, "Shashin gurafu no reiauto" [Layouts for photography magazines], undated lecture at the Japanese Society of Printing Science and Technology, originally published in *Insatsu zasshi* [Printing magazines] (January 1956); reprinted in *Insatsu zasshi to sono jidai: Jikkyō, insatsu no kingendaishi* [*Insatsu zasshi* and its era: Scenes from the modern and contemporary history of printing] (Tokyo: Insatsu Gakkai Shuppanbu, 2007), 521. "カメラマンのしごとは、うつす前に考えることが三分の一、うつすことが三分の一、うつしてから自分の作品を選ぶことが三分の一、この三つが揃わなければカメラマンの資格がない。"

photography is an opaque medium, the meaning of which must be controlled by the photographer's hand and mind.

Natori, Domon, and Tōmatsu believed that photographic communication begins at the moment viewers look at published photographs. This communication can be either one way or reciprocal. Nakahira, however, argued that photography was an “incomplete reference that sometimes connects the process of my own being and that of others,” because during the pre-publication phase photographs would undergo a number of selections by people other than the photographers.³⁶⁹ This means that the random process of selection and spontaneous communication could diminish photographers' agency.

For Taki, Moriyama, and Nakahira, photography was a dialectical, almost paradoxical process, because it was simultaneously mechanical and human. As discussed above, Nakahira and Taki advocated the mechanical function of the camera while conceptualizing photography as no more than personal events. In their dialogue in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, Moriyama and Nakahira agreed on the “anonymous” nature of photography, in that no matter who presses the shutter button, the camera will do its job.³⁷⁰ They were not concerned with the “authorship” of photography, because photography did not belong to anybody and it was attributable to no one. Most important, for them, photography should not be subject to such categorizations as *hōdō shashin* and art photography. Taki, Nakahira, and Moriyama considered photography to be extremely personal, and even considered the photographer to be self-absorbed

³⁶⁹ Nakahira, “Dōjidai de aru towa nanika? 4” [What is contemporaneity? 4], 67. “それは自ら生きてゆく生のプロセスと他者の生とを時としてつなぐ不完全極まる資料なのだ。”

³⁷⁰ Nakahira Takuma and Moriyama Daidō, “Shashin to iu kotoba o nakuse” [Eradicating the term ‘photography’], originally published in *Design* (April 1969); reprinted in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, 146-147. Nakahira also used the term “anonymous” in his article “Riaritī fukken” [Restoration of reality], *Design* (January 1969): 56.

because Taki, Nakahira, and Moriyama were concerned only with their own personal “reality.” Therefore, in contrast to Natori, Domon, and Tōmatsu, Taki, Nakahira, and Moriyama advocated the elimination of social consciousness from photography and relentlessly pursued their personal worldviews, even while acknowledging the camera’s autonomy. They deemed photography a fluid site for this inevitably personal yet anonymous process.

Nevertheless, how can *Provoke* photography simultaneously be personal and anonymous? This seemingly paradoxical definition can be explained by their two-step process, incorporating both the theoretical and physical engagement of the photographer. In the first step, pressing the shutter button can be considered an amalgam of the mechanical (anonymous) and the manual (personal). Even if a photographer decides when to take a photograph, the camera captures things he or she may not have even noticed. In the second step, when Nakahira and Moriyama developed their film, they incorporated into this development the “spontaneity” of photography by heavily depending on chances and coincidences in the darkroom. For example, Moriyama developed his film without watching the temperature of the chemicals,³⁷¹ and sometimes exposed the negatives to light during a certain period of time he was out of the room. The negatives needed longer exposure because the tonality of his film was too low.³⁷² As mentioned in Chapter Three, Nakahira and Moriyama developed their film with hot water in buckets, rather than meticulously treating the film with professional equipment.³⁷³ The violent, arbitrary manner of developing film and manipulating prints achieved results that were simultaneously anonymous and personal, because the photographers rendered the mechanical

³⁷¹ Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Takanashi, *Raika na me/ Like a Leica Eye*, 131.

processes themselves prone to accident and chance, thus allowing for randomness in the final product and incorporating personal decisions into the overall process.

This is entirely different from Natori, Domon, and Tōmatsu, all of whom maintained a sense of the photographer's control over the meaning of photographs. They shouldered a burden of communication that propelled them toward photographic professionalism. In *Nippon*, Natori was preoccupied with reporting on Japan to foreign audiences through the effective combination of photographs, Domon strived to convey the “reality” of the devastating state of a coalmining community, and Tōmatsu continued to view photography as a preferred medium for sending messages in combination with texts. In other words, the three pioneers treated photography as though it were an art for the transparent transmission of messages from the photographer to the audience.

Again, for Taki, Nakahira, and Moriyama, the photographer's agency resided neither behind the camera nor in the photographs, but in the act of producing photographic works by shooting and developing them. Taki states, “If I would add to Nakahira's comment that photography may be anonymous, I would propose that anonymity refers not to the absence of the photographer's agency, but to the presence of what photographers create beyond their subjective consciousness.”³⁷⁴ In Taki's view, photography is an autonomous entity rather than an object under the photographer's direct control. This duality of photography informed the *Provoke* publications' *are-bure-boke* photographs. In the end, the *Provoke* publications' innovation lies in their theoretical and practical treatment of photography as a site of negotiation between the personal and the impersonal.

³⁷⁴ Taki, “Dokumentō” [Document], 55. “写真はアノニマスであるかもしれないという中平の言葉を補足すれば、それはつくりだす主体の不在を意味するのではなくて、つくりだされたものが、主体の意識のかなたにあるという意味なのである。”

VIII. Conclusion

This chapter illuminated *Provoke*'s unique place within Japanese photography as shaped by Natori's, Domon's and Tōmatsu's direct and indirect impact on the journal. If Natori's *hōdō shashin* established a new type of photojournalism in Japan, it in turn encouraged Domon and Tōmatsu to go against the grain of Natori's photo-reportage. Although the notion of *hōdō shashin* has always been a dynamic one, Natori was the one who first offered the analogy between photography and language, profoundly prefiguring *Provoke*. In addition to this tradition, contemporary *hōdō shashin* at that time and Taki's and Nakahira's experience with the "One Hundred Years of Photography" led them to reexamine the web of relationships among photography, history, and their selves as photographers.

As a result, Nakahira and Taki developed their own concept of "documentary photography," separating themselves from *hōdō shashin*. This developmental process took place gradually throughout the period of *Provoke*'s publication. The influence of their predecessors is still evident in Taki's photographs in the first issue of *Provoke*. However, as they questioned the role of the photographer as narrator, the participants stopped assigning themes in *Provoke 3* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. Instead, they prioritized the mechanical function of the camera and embraced chance encounters when taking photographs and developing film in dark rooms. As a result, the photographs in the *Provoke* publications tend to appear incoherent and thus became records of what the photographers considered "fragments of reality."³⁷⁵

This constituted their rejection of both Natori's photographic language and Tōmatsu's combination of photography and writing. Photography, in other words, should be a generator of language, not a slave to it. In this regard, *are-bure-boke* emerged as a visual and methodological

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 53.

process that conveyed the dialectic between what is personal and what is anonymous. Taki's choice to use a journal format—rather than a photobook—to showcase photography reflected the open-ended nature of their experience. Similarly, the photographs in the *Provoke* publications suggest that the manipulation of images and indeterminate production process could possibly break the link connecting language and image. In the end, “message without a code” is valid only when *both* the photograph shows the object in a legible manner *and* the audience successfully recognizes the image as a photograph. Furthermore, the work of Barthes, an otherwise excellent observer of photography, fell short when it came to theorizing the *Provoke* photographers' dialectical actions of taking photographs and living life.

This chapter also sheds light on the issue of agency. In Natori's *hōdō shashin*, photographers' agency was firmly rooted in the themes decided jointly with editors. Domon's “direct connection between motif and camera” and his “absolute snapshot with absolutely no staging” give the impression that his agency as a photographer was subsumed under his subject; however, Damon's agency as a photographer was anchored in his social awareness and his will to change society. Tōmatsu controlled his photographs through book design, especially through the compositional arrangement of photographs, which he believed served a crucial role in conveying a photographer's message to viewers. However, as photographers, Nakahira's, Taki's, and Moriyama's agencies were fluctuating throughout the process of making photographs and the process of circulating them. The three photographers insisted that the act of taking photographs resulted in nothing more than a personal record of what is in front of the camera, with the mechanical process of photography remaining out of photographers' control. As a result, they ended up with a contradictory assessment of photography: personal yet anonymous. *Provoke* members fully acknowledged that living this contradiction was *the way* to practice

photography.

Chapter Five

Provoke in the Changing Landscapes

I. Introduction

What did Japan's physical landscapes look like in the heady years of the late 1960s? Were the material surroundings bright and shiny urbanscapes filled with new constructions that epitomized the country's rapid economic growth? Or did much of Japan look like a desolate construction site, despite a miraculous economic achievement? About one-third of the photographs in the *Provoke* publications center on landscape, representing a fundamental change in Japan's photographic engagement with this genre, a change inspired by the tumultuous social, cultural, and historic conditions of the time. Although the *Provoke* publications were not intended to reflect the political and social milieu of the late 1960s, the photographs daringly captured the locus of these changes in the urban environment.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate the *Provoke* photographers' innovative approaches to photography from an unprecedented perspective: a focus on landscape as the subject of both photography and discourse at the time in Japan. Particularly, I will analyze Taki's, Takanashi's, and Nakahira's perceptive ways of confronting changes in people's living circumstances. Their photographs were an amalgam of records of urbanscapes changing under rapid economic growth and each photographer's unique way of personally engaging with specific sites. Although the approaches they took varied, their photographs in *Provoke* and *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o suteru: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language] demonstrate that their concept of landscape photography was distinct from the conventional one found in Western painting and photography. Takanashi's landscape photography was unconventional for his choice of sites and his careful reframing of the

landscape. Taki's and Nakahira's landscape photography form a record of the photographers' physical association with their surroundings through the act of taking photographs. Thus, the photography in *Provoke* includes cityscapes, seascapes, and many other types of outside scenery.

In order to illuminate their unusual landscape photography, I explore three contexts from which the *Provoke* publications' landscape imagery emerged: the nation's newly instituted urban planning laws, the advancement of infrastructure that had taken place before the *Provoke* era, and the critical discourse on landscape at the time. First, Taki's photographs of the spaces between buildings and Takanashi's deadpan landscape photography show that their aesthetics were inflected by the changes in the urban environment as a result of the implementation of the New City Planning Law. Second, Takanashi, Taki, and Nakahira referenced both the construction of highways and the widespread use of automobiles. This change presents itself in a low or moving vantage point assumed by Taki, Nakahira, and Takanashi to depict automobiles or photographers' vehicular experiences. Third, while Nakahira's landscape photographs drew on the critical "landscape discourse" [*fūkei ron*], he embraced specific landscapes and his personal engagement with them. In these regards, the *Provoke* publications' landscape photography was notably devoid of didactic messages and this set it apart from usual landscape photography that concerned the creation of symbolic imagery.

In this chapter, the term 'landscape' is derived from the translation of *fūkei* [風景], which could be also translated as "scenery" (in fact, Nakahira's collection of photographs in the Autumn 1970 issue of *Shashin eizō/ The Photo Image* was given Japanese and English titles of *Fūkei* and "Scenery"). However, the Japanese word's translation into "landscape" is more appropriate in the current study, since the discussion of landscape prominently remains in the framework of film and photography, in which 'landscape film' and 'landscape photography' are

conventional terms. The current chapter deals mostly with photographs by Taki, Nakahira, and Takanashi.

II. Changing Landscapes in Postwar Japan and the Landscape Photographs by Taki and Takanashi

This section explores the specific context from which the *Provoke* publications' landscape imagery emerged: the nation's revised urban planning laws instituted around the time of the publications. In this context, Taki and Takanashi actively captured un-photogenic spaces and the chaotic state of Japan's developing cities. Their photographs clearly illustrate the different approaches to this issue taken by Taki and Takanashi. While Taki held photography to be incorporated into photographers' experience and environment, Takanashi took more creative liberties in his picture-making.

Social and Urban Conditions of Japan in the Late 1960s

The social and urban conditions of Japanese society in the late 1960s were highly problematic. After Japan's defeat at the end of the Second World War, the Japanese government made economic growth the first priority in its national policy.³⁷⁶ Under this policy, industrial production dramatically increased in the Pacific Belt Area, which linked the major cities of Tokyo, Osaka, and Fukuoka along the Edo-period expressway, Tōkaidō. The skyrocketing growth exacted a devastating environmental and societal price. By the late 1960s, major industrial cities faced serious environmental pollution, urban sprawl, residents' unfulfilled needs,

³⁷⁶ André Sorensen, *The Making of Urban Japan: Cities and Planning from Edo to the Twenty-first Century* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 168.

and the lack of a functional infrastructure.³⁷⁷

As citizens increasingly demanded a better quality of life toward the end of the 1960s, the national government responded, introducing the *shin toshi keikaku hō* [New City Planning Law] in June 1968, with the stated aim of creating suitable residential areas through the imposition of strict controls on areas slated for development. The law also shifted the decision-making power of urban planning from the state government to local governments, and was meant to resolve the problems that burdened the urban environment in a period of rapid growth. In his study *The Making of Urban Japan: Cities and Planning from Edo to the Twenty-first Century*, urban sociologist André Sorensen argues that “the main focus of the new system was the rapidly growing suburban fringes of the metropolitan areas where urban and industrial growth was concentrated, although several of the new measures were important more generally such as the new zoning system, and the devolution of planning powers.”³⁷⁸

Under the new law, metropolitan areas were divided into rigidly defined categories. For example, the new zoning system doubled the types of commercial, residential, and industrial zones from four to eight in order to regulate the construction of buildings and urban facilities.³⁷⁹ There were eight defined zones: “Category I” Exclusive Residential Districts, “Category II” Exclusive Residential Districts, Residential Districts, Neighborhood Commercial Districts, Commercial Districts, Light Industrial Districts, Industrial Districts, and Exclusive Industrial Districts. As Sorensen observes, in real-life situations, the only enforceable categories were the

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 168-188.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 223.

³⁷⁹ Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *City Planning of Tokyo* (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 1983), 47. According to Sorensen, the previous law had defined only four types of zones: Industrial, light industrial, commercial, and residential zones. Sorensen, *The Making of Urban Japan*, 220.

“Category I” Exclusive Residential Districts and the Exclusive Industrial Districts, the first and the last on this list.³⁸⁰ As a result, the distinctions among industrial, residential, and commercial areas were highly obscure, if not altogether absent.

Furthermore, legal loopholes made it difficult to enforce the law. Business interests seeking to develop real estate sometimes had to obtain permission from prefectural governors or mayors before embarking on their projects, but the government did not require permission for projects such as parking lots, scrap-metal yards, construction-material processing facilities, and industrial-waste processing facilities, because in effect, the government believed that those exemptions would not affect the categorization of districts.³⁸¹

Uncategorized Spaces in Taki’s Photographs

Many of the *Provoke* photographs reveal the after-effect of the unenforceable zone system and the hands-off regulation of small industrial and commercial facilities. The group’s final publication, *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, most saliently presents these characteristics. For example, Taki frequently captured in his images the gaps that existed between houses and that symbolically functioned as uncategorized spaces. These narrow gaps eluded classification under zoning law precisely because they functioned as borders that divided the zones. By taking photographs of these uncategorized spaces, Taki managed to analyze the city according to a combination of two approaches: physically associating the photographer’s body with the city and showing the structure of the city through photography. In a word, Taki’s phenomenological take on photography became a concrete form in his photography.

³⁸⁰ Sorensen, *The Making of Urban Japan*, 221.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 217-219.

For example, Figure 5.1 demonstrates Taki's physical engagement with a specific place in the city. Taki provides a close up of one small detail of the city, namely the gap between the buildings, instead of showing the landscape by capturing ground, buildings, and sky in a horizontal composition from a distance. So the photograph has neither foreground nor background, but is visually divided into three planes: a building's rising wall at the top of the photograph, another building's rising wall at the bottom of the photograph, and the dark sky in the middle of the two walls (and, therefore, in the middle of the photograph). Taking a closer look at this photograph, one observes miscellaneous pipes, ducts, and wires that are running up the walls, and these roughly vertical lines suck viewers' eye into the dark space in the middle of the photograph. The small opening of the night sky reminds viewers how cramped the space where Taki stood is. Perhaps Taki perceptually recognized the parameters of his location by noting his limited view and by feeling the presence of the walls before and behind him. This uncategorized space in the photograph is simultaneously a blank and a linkage in space. Taki physically placed himself in this blank, thereby filling it in with the goal of becoming a part of the linkage. As a result, the photograph testifies to his invisible presence in representations of space. In other words, Taki tried to use photography as a catalyst for physical engagement with the space.

Indeed, Taki conceptualized the way in which photographers should take photographs in his "Shashin to kankyō no shisō" [Thought on photography and the environment] in the June 1968 issue of *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* (Fig. 5.2). He urged readers to turn photography into a system of thought, and he saw this effort as part of a wider effort where humans would confront their own *kankyō*, or "environment": he defined *kankyō* as the relationship between subjects and sites with which "subjects associate remotely through vision and directly through

such relationships as action in which one simultaneously receives [the sites] as meaning and endows [the sites] with meaning.”³⁸² In other words, Taki regarded *kankyō* as the physical relationship of humans with their surroundings rather than merely a physical setting. Taki advocated photography that conceptually and visually linked *kankyō*, photographer, and imagery to one another. In his view, the photographer’s surroundings, his or her way of taking photographs, and the representation should be interwoven together.

In this light, it is only natural that Taki offered William Klein and Robert Frank as fine examples of successful directness. However, the examples of failure that Taki gave are more telling than those of success, at least regarding his ideas about landscape and photography. Taki harshly criticized the photography pages “Tokyo shin meisho” [New places of interest in Tokyo] in the May 1967 issue of the literary magazine *Chūō kōron* [Central public discourse], because they are mere illustrations of the places (Fig. 5.3).³⁸³ Another example is Ishimoto Yasuhiro’s “Hiroba” [Public square] in the April 1967 issue of *Camera Mainichi* (Fig. 5.4). Seven pages of this issue presented Ishimoto’s eloquently formal photographs of the newly completed plaza outside Shinjuku Station’s West Entrance. They were almost devoid of human presence, while the accompanying text satirized the dehumanization of mega-architecture and urban development that would drive humans into underground passages and plazas rather than encourage them to walk around at ground level. Taki denounced Ishimoto’s works for their obvious connection to

³⁸² Taki Kōji, “Shashin to kankyō no shisō” [Thought on photography and the environment], *Design Hihyō/ The Design Review* 3 (June 1967): 31. “環境とは主体が日常の次元で視覚という遠隔操作によってまじわり、行為という直接的な関係によってまじわり、また意味としてうけとり、意味をあたえるような。。。 ” At the same time, Taki developed his term ‘world,’ applying it to a somewhat metaphysical sphere. See his essay “Eye and what is not eye” in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*.

³⁸³ Ibid.

the photographer's criticism of urbanization.³⁸⁴ Eschewing efforts to visualize the physicality of urban construction and efforts to visualize meaning, Taki—through the act of taking photographs—tried to *be* the linkage between his subjectivity and his environment.

In order to achieve his goal, Taki employed semiotics, applying it to his discussion of the object in space. For example, Taki made an analogy between pieces of furniture in domestic spaces and *bunsetsu*, or a “segment,” in a text.³⁸⁵ In Japanese, *bunsetsu* can be explained as a minimal phrase in a sentence usually consisting of either a noun or a verb and a clitic.³⁸⁶ Using visual segments, Taki proposed to elucidate the mechanism of how the meaning of space was generated within a city. However, one should not mistake Taki's idea with Natori's analogy between each photograph and a single word. While Natori thought each photograph had a fixed, assigned meaning, Taki's photograph as a word did not constitute any meanings by itself. Taki's emphasis was, rather, on the materiality of photographs and the act of taking photographs, which constituted the photographs' meanings.

In his article “Han-toshi to shite no hyōgen” [Expression as anti-city], Taki used the term *kankyō* again in describing both his metaphysical attempt to take photographs and his effort to conduct a semiotic analysis of city-oriented photography. Published about a year after *Provoke* dissolved, the article presented Taki's argument that one's expression and behavior could construct the meaning of a city. For example, the Watts Riots in Los Angeles and the protests on

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁸⁵ Taki Kōji, “Atogaki” [Postscript], in *Kotoba no nai shikō* [Ideas without language] (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1972), 363. I should note that Taki wrote this two years after *Provoke*'s cessation.

³⁸⁶ Clitic is “a word that is treated in pronunciation as forming a part of a neighboring word and that is often unaccented or contracted.” “Clitic,” in *Merriam and Webster Online*, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/clitic> (accessed July 25, 2011).

Japanese university campuses were semantic constructions of urban settings that took hold in alignment with such city-based structural changes as people's unanticipated occupation of roads and other passageways. According to Taki, those movements were protests targeting authoritative power and were manifested efforts to collapse "homogeneous" cities struggling under the control of that power.³⁸⁷ It should be noted that in Taki's article, "homogeneous" means both the controls and the development that turned cities into structures resembling one another in appearance. Taki recalled that the *Provoke* members were interested in the notion of the city, and Taki himself observed that a resonance had emerged between cities and his expression of the cities through his visual perceptions.³⁸⁸ In other words, Taki saw a structural similarity between cities and photography insofar as fragments (i.e., a given architectural edifice or an individual photograph) would form a whole (i.e., a city or a body of photography). Thus, Taki proposed that the *Provoke* photographers had been constructing the meaning of cities by taking photographs.³⁸⁹

I argue that Taki's photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* literally reveal his "segmentalization" of the city by capturing the spatial "gaps" that, in the city, existed between buildings or between their exterior walls. More than half of his photographs concern the narrow spaces between buildings or between the exterior walls of architectural edifices. Taki photographed ambiguous spaces among such edifices from a variety of viewpoints: up, down, and from the side. In doing so, Taki meticulously inspected the least visible physical components of cities.

Figure 5.1 presents a photograph, taken by Taki, that describes a space in detail. The

³⁸⁷ Taki Kōji, "Han-toshi to shite no hyōgen" [Expression as anti-city], originally published in *Nihon dokusho shinbun* [Japan book-readers newspaper] (September 6, 1971); reprinted in *Kotoba no nai shikō* [Ideas without language], 97.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 94-95.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

photograph is relatively sharper in focus than his other photographs, and Taki probably used flash when he took this photograph. The light is stretching from the bottom of the photograph (from Taki's vantage point) upward, gradually diminishing as it distances itself from the ground. Because of the sharper focus and strong light near the ground level, viewers can see the pipes, ducts, wires, stain, dirt, and windows on the walls. These details reflect Taki's pursuit of photographic descriptions of the cityscape's uncategorized spaces. Taki used a flash to illuminate spatial details, as if articulating a "segment" of urban space.

Other photographs also show Taki's photographic description of uncategorized spaces in the city. A photograph of seemingly snowy roofs implies that Taki was gazing downward from a higher place (Fig. 5.5). The buildings seem to squeeze each other, and Taki again captured gaps among the buildings. Figures 5.6, and 5.7 also capture the literal gaps between buildings, as Taki placed himself in these transitional spaces, looking upward, at the sky. These two photographs also demonstrate how Taki positioned himself in the middle of architectural gaps. The miscellaneous tubes, cables, and wires are crawling on the walls in both the horizontal and the vertical directions. Placing himself among the tubes, cables, and wires, his body seems to be in a web connecting one place to another place. In particular, Taki must have taken a photograph of a gap (Figure 5.7), not by simply standing in the middle of it, but by physically pressing his body against the wall. Taken together, these photographs are the visual testimony of Taki's physical association with this architecture.

Taki also frontally shot the walls of buildings. Among the five photographs of walls, Figures 5.8 and 5.9 seem to have been taken in a similar place. With a camera in his hand, Taki faced a series of pipes and cables running up and down corrugated walls. The cables and pipes that are seen all over the two photographs, and the small square-shaped devices (gas or water

meters) on the left side of the two photographs, testify to the places' similarity. The flash that momentarily lit up the wall also illuminated Taki's body and the space around his camera by its reflection from the facing walls. Thus, Taki, the walls, and the spaces were linked through Taki's act of taking photographs.

In the end, one thing that Taki attempted to accomplish through photography was to demonstrate how this link between the *signifier* (gap) and the *signified* (unregulated places, the aftermaths of the New City Planning Law, etc.) had surfaced. However, in order for his attempt to be successful, the viewers must recognize that the photographs represent the gaps. In his photographs, Taki did not so much solidify the link between the two as reveal the semiotic structure of cities by highlighting unnamed urban places. Taki conceptualized photography as an active medium for the generation of meaning.

Uncategorized Spaces in Takanashi's Photographs

If Taki undertook a semiotic experiment in his landscape photographs, Takanashi attempted to re-articulate new landscapes in his. Takanashi's photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* highlight places in Tokyo after the enactment of the New City Planning Law. For example, Figures 5.10 and 5.11 show parking lots, and Figure 5.12 shows what seems to be an industrial junkyard. Takanashi also recorded the riverside in Nerima Ward, the north-westernmost part of the Tokyo metropolitan area, showing the unorganized space filled with debris (Fig. 5.13). The photographs are not captioned and are placed in an arbitrary order; these clueless images constitute "lost landscapes."³⁹⁰

³⁹⁰ The poet Suzuki Shiroyasu also observed that the landscapes in Takanashi's photographs are oftentimes isolated areas. Suzuki Shiroyasu, "Fūkei, henshin no eikyū undō: Nakahira Takuma to Takanashi Yutaka no fūkei shashin" [Landscape and the enduring movement of metamorphosis: The landscape photography of Nakahira Takuma and Takanashi Yutaka], *Kikan shashin eizō/ The Photo*

At the same time, those photographs serve as more than just records of the uncategorized sections of the city, because they are consciously composed by the photographer. If one were to consider the sign atop a structure under construction in the right-hand background, one could reasonably suggest that the parking lot (Fig. 5.10) was located in Shibuya in Tokyo. The photograph has an intriguing composition: a partial and exaggerated perspectival view of a sign in the photograph's bottom, right-hand side leads the viewer's eyes to the center of the photograph, where a sign features an arrow redirecting the gaze outside the picture frame. Figure 5.11 shows a parking lot whose second-level entrance is hard to locate, with a street light standing in the middle of the frame. This photograph gives one the puzzling impression that the whole space was designed for purposes other than for the parking of automobiles. The photograph of the junkyard (Fig. 5.12) was taken in Nerima Ward in Tokyo, and shows box-like things piling up on the ground on the left. The mound of discarded objects echoes the shape of the tree on the right. The photograph of a riverside (Fig. 5.13) indicates the photographer's sense of humor in observing the poster on the signpost (in the center of the photograph), which displays a human eye and the accompanying phrase, "We cannot leave it to you anymore." The contrast between the trash-filled riverside and the human eye on the serious, rather striking, poster creates or captures an almost surrealistic scene. The near-total lack of human figures in Takanashi's photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* also underscores the otherworldly atmosphere of his landscapes.

These characteristics of Takanashi's photographs are probably due to his training as a photographer. Unlike Taki and Nakahira, who were more involved in photojournalism than in commercial photography, Takanashi learned photography at Nihon University and at the Kuwasawa Design School under Ōtsuji Kiyoji, who was part of a vanguard experimental art

group called the Jikken Kōbō/ Experimental Workshop.³⁹¹ Ōtsuji associated with the art critic Takiguchi Shūzō, who introduced Surrealism to prewar Japan, and Ōtsuji's early photography exhibits the strong influence of that movement (Fig. 5.14). Anxious about the difficulty of assigning his photography to a specific genre, Takanashi was supported in his early years by Ōtsuji's words, "You must not be caught up by the established categories. You should indeed cherish uncategorized photography."³⁹² These words encouraged Takanashi to pursue his own style. In fact, he realized that his work resonated with Surrealism,³⁹³ asking Takiguchi to write a short essay to appear in a leaflet for the former's first solo show, which was entitled "Something Else" and was held in 1960 at Ginza Gallery. Takanashi departed from the shadow of Surrealism after his second solo show in 1962, but his awareness of capturing the composition, the unexpected, and the uncategorized continued to inform his work.

Takanashi was conscious that landscape photography was constructed by a photographer's act of taking a photograph. He later wrote, "What is left for the photographer to do is to encounter *landscape*, destroy *landscape*, build *landscape* again, and depart from *landscape*."³⁹⁴ In this passage, "encounter" means to take advantage of coincidental meetings

³⁹¹ For more about *Jikken Kōbō*, see Miwako Tezuka, "Jikken Kōbō (Experimental Workshop): Avant-garde Experiments in Japanese Art of the 1950s," PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2005. The Kuwasawa Design School was established according to Bauhaus principles.

³⁹² Takanashi Yutaka, "Sankaku bēsu no hajimari" [The beginning of a ball game], originally published in *Camera jidai* [Camera era] (June 1966): 44; reprinted in *Hikari no firudo nōto/ Takanashi Yutaka: Field Notes of Light*, exh. cat., (Tokyo: The National Museum of Modern Art, 2009). "既成の分類にこだわらないほうがいいでしょう。はみ出る写真こそ大切にすべきです。"

³⁹³ Takanashi Yutaka, "Shūrurealisumu tonō deai to 'watashi' no hakken" [Encounter with Surrealism and the discovery of the 'self'], originally published in *Geijutsu seikatsu* [Art life] (December 1975); reprinted in *Hikari no firudo nōto/ Takanashi Yutaka: Field Notes of Light*, 153-154.

³⁹⁴ Takanashi Yutaka, "Tachiagaru fūkei" [The 'landscape' appears], in *Shin oku no hosomichi, gendai Nihon shashin zenshū: Nihon no kokoro*, vol. 4 [New "Narrow Road to the Deep North" contemporary Japanese photography: Heart of Japan, vol. 4] (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1982), n.p. "写真家に残されたものは

with landscapes, “destroy” means to see landscapes from unexpected perspectives, “build” means to carefully compose and select a photograph, and “depart” means to let go of photographs by publishing or exhibiting them. Indeed, Takanashi stated that his image-making process involved two steps: he first witnessed the object with a “naked eye” in order to capture the unexpected; then he developed prints with care and deliberation.³⁹⁵ In other words, Takanashi dialectically produced his landscape photography according to a two-pronged approach: (1) he took photographs in places where the imagery was independent of his preconceptions; and (2) he thoughtfully selected his final images. Thus, the parking lots (Figs. 5.10 and 5.11) and the industrial junkyard (Fig. 5.12) were not just any banal spaces resulting from the new urban planning law; by virtue of his camera, he crystallized his encounters with these landscapes. Takanashi’s photographs can be read as a challenge to conventional landscape photography in that he selected unconventional venues and constructed landscapes out of them through his artistic decisions.

In summary, both Taki and Takanashi captured uncategorized places, but with different approaches. Taki emphasized his physical contact with cities and space as a way of taking photographs. He also observed the structural parallels among cities, languages, and photography, all of which consist of fragmented aspects, such as gaps in a city and words in a language, with each photograph comprising a segment of the entire realm of photography. Takanashi’s approach was more artistic than Taki’s. Takanashi mixed the *Provoke*-like spontaneous encounter with landscapes with carefully selected appealing compositions. He also turned to a city’s isolated

、「風景」に立ち会い、「風景」を壊し、再び「風景」を創り、「風景」から立ち去ることである。” The English title, “The ‘landscape’ appears,” is from Ivan Vartanian, Akihiro Hatanaka, and Yutaka Kambayashi, eds., *Setting Sun: Writings by Japanese Photographers* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2006), 46.

³⁹⁵ Takanashi Yutaka, *Raika na me/ Like a Leica Eye* (Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 2002), 98-99.

spaces or landscapes that would be synonymous with maintaining his “uncategorized photography.” In the mid-1980s, Takanashi stated that he would like to take landscape photographs that could not be applied to either the theory of landscape or the theory of cities.³⁹⁶ Rather than intellectualize photography and cities, Takanashi reconstructed his own landscapes through his encounters with photography.

III. Images on the Move

In this section, I will demonstrate the ways in which the transformation of urban infrastructure in late 1960s Japan and *Provoke* members’ fascination with vehicular transportation affected the aesthetic of *Provoke* photography. The Tokyo Olympics in 1964, the first Olympics held in Asia, was a major impetus for the changes in Japanese landscape. It was a perfect opportunity for Japan to showcase its return to the international community after World War II. The main projects included the construction of the bullet train between Tokyo and Osaka and a network of thirty radial and orbital roads.³⁹⁷ The most striking alteration made to the cityscape was the construction of an inter-city expressway system, the Metropolitan Expressways (Fig. 5.15). The five expressway routes, often built above the canals, literally obliterated the once-cherished traditional views of Edo seen in many woodblock prints (Fig. 5.16).

The wider construction of automobile-related infrastructure was also popular, as it helped meet widespread demand for cost-cutting and stable freight transportation.³⁹⁸ Upon receiving approximately one hundred million dollars from the World Bank in 1966, a government-owned

³⁹⁶ Takanashi Yutaka, “Ronkei no kanata e” [Towards the end of the “theorized-scape”], *Yuriika/ Eureka* 16 (April 1984): 57-61.

³⁹⁷ Sorensen, *The Making of Urban Japan*, 191-193.

³⁹⁸ Ikegami Masao, *Tōmei kōsoku dōro* [Tōmei expressway] (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1969), 5-7.

company proceeded with the construction of the Tōmei (Tokyo-Nagoya) Expressway, completed in 1969 to link Tokyo to Aichi prefecture, approximately two hundred-fifteen miles away. By now, a network of expressways had been constructed to connect every part of the country to every other part. These changes in infrastructure and transportation altered the way people moved from place to place, and the photographs in *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* unavoidably reflected this phenomenon as well.

The construction of an elaborate highway system also signaled that the automobile had become the customary means of transportation for the public. Indeed, cars were precisely the symbol of Japan's rapid economic growth in the latter half of the 1960s. As the economy's growth accelerated in 1966 with the government's first issuance of construction bonds, the economy mass-produced cars, air conditioners, and color TVs, all of which came to be called the "three sacred imperial treasures," an allusion to Japanese imperial mythology. *Provoke* members had a particular affinity for a specific manufactured item: automobiles (as well as for the activity of driving). Yanagimoto Naomi, an assistant to Taki, recalled that the *Provoke* members excitedly rode in Takanashi's new sports car.³⁹⁹ As a result, some *Provoke* photographs involve a low or moving vantage point, as though one is seeing the world from a car window.

Taki and Takanashi's Visual Response to a Car Ride

Provoke photographers' interest in the automobile was obvious in their photography, but their perspective on the automobile differed significantly from that of their predecessors'.

Takanashi's mentor, the photographer Ōtsuji, contributed celebratory photographs of the

³⁹⁹ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010. In fact, Takanashi got a driver's license in 1968. Takanashi Yutaka, "Intabyū: Pari biennāre de taishō o jushō shita Takanashi Yutaka" [Interview: Takanashi Yutaka who received the award of excellence at the *Biennale de Paris*], *Komāsharu foto/ Commercial Photography* (February 1968): 141.

Metropolitan Expressway to the renowned photography magazine *Taiyō* [The Sun] in December 1967, a year prior to *Provoke*'s inauguration. One such photograph (Fig. 5.17) is a striking image of a supporting beam of the highway, seen from below, with its sleek surface reflecting the bright sunlight—a view that emphasizes the monumentality of the urban construction. The photographs are accompanied by a poem by Murano Shirō, which lauds the formal beauty of this new construction.

Contrary to the fanfare of the newly launched expressways and the celebration of new transportation, Taki's photograph of a highway displays an ominous mood (Fig. 5.18). This photograph is believed to have been taken at some point on the Metropolitan expressway between Tokyo and Yokohama.⁴⁰⁰ Yanagimoto asserted that Taki, Moriyama, and Nakahira often shared a taxi ride westward to their homes along the expressways.⁴⁰¹ Regarding vantage point, the difference between Taki's aforementioned photograph and Ōtsuji's is obvious. Radically tilted and out of focus, Taki's photograph lacks a focal point that can attract the viewer's attention. Rather than capture the highway's strength from below as Ōtsuji did, Taki took a photograph from inside a car moving on the expressway,⁴⁰² emphasizing his idea of linking photographers, their immediate surroundings, and imagery. Taki's photograph also highlights both the spatial and temporal ambiguity of his continuous road trip without a destination.

Takanashi took a photograph from the car window literally while he was driving (Fig. 5.19).⁴⁰³ This particular photograph, which appeared in *Provoke I*, was snapped in Hokkaidō,

⁴⁰⁰ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, e-mail correspondence, April 4, 2011.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

⁴⁰³ Takanashi Yutaka, "Shihanseiki Tokyo o shageki suru: Takanashi Yutaka" [Shooting Tokyo for a quarter century: Takanashi Yutaka], interview, *Tokyo jin* [Tokyoite] 25 (October 1989): 26.

where he had gone on a commercial assignment. The horizontal landscape that reveals the right shoulder of the road is quite telling of Takanashi's drive-by shooting. Eye-catching billboards on the hilly slope advertised Suntory whisky and Tōshiba color TVs. In his dialogue with Okada in 1974, Takanashi mentioned that the tilted horizon seen in this photograph embodied a gesture stemming from his awareness that he was seizing the whole landscape in front of him. He also mentioned that the sense of movement had helped him avoid a direct perspective and that this avoidance disabled viewers' ability to penetrate the landscape.⁴⁰⁴ Takanashi was acutely conscious of his photographs' compositional effect on viewers, and in this regard, he tried to avoid taking conventional landscape pictures.

Yearning for a Ride: Nakahira's Case

In a roundtable discussion in 1968, Nakahira confessed his desire to take a car ride on the Tōmei Expressway,⁴⁰⁵ but his desire was more about romantic experience than a fact-finding mission. Together with Moriyama, he had a longing for aimless road trips, influenced by Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*.⁴⁰⁶ Nakahira gave a straightforward homage to the American poet by titling his photographic series "Rojō" [On the road] for the August 1967 issue of *Gendai no me*

⁴⁰⁴ Takanashi Yutaka, "Toshi e: Bunmei no fasādo o toru" [Towards the city: Taking photographs of civilization's façade], dialogue with Okada Takahiko, *Gendai shi techō* [Contemporary poetry notebook] 17 (September 1974): 56-57.

⁴⁰⁵ Nakahira Takuma, in Takanashi Yutaka, Yokosuka Noriaki, and Nakahara Yūsuke, "Ima shashinka de aru koto" [On being photographers today], roundtable discussion, in *Shashin, ima kokoni* [Photography, here and now] (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1969), 205.

⁴⁰⁶ Having borrowed Kerouac's book from Nakahira, Moriyama started to present a series of photographs, taken from a running car on the national routes and highways. For the details of this episode, see Moriyama Daidō, "Kokudō" [National routes], in *Inu no kioku: Shūshō* [Memories of a dog: Epilogue] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1999; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), 225-245. Moriyama's so-called "national route series" appeared in the December 1968 and October 1969 issues of *Camera Mainichi*.

[Contemporary eye] (Fig. 5.20). These photographs romantically express his longing to follow a kind of Route 66 on a trip tantamount to an existential search for the purpose of taking photographs.

However, most of the photographs Nakahira took of cars in the *Provoke* publications were more static than kinetic. For example, Nakahira's photograph in *Provoke 1* was taken from the inside of a car, evidenced by the appearance of a windshield wiper in the foreground (Fig. 5.21).⁴⁰⁷ Nakahira's nickname for the vehicle in the center, "Omatsuri basu" (festival bus),⁴⁰⁸ seems to imbue the photograph at once with gaiety and an emptiness in the apparently post-festival setting. Completely motionless, the photograph does not reveal whether it was taken on a street or in a parking lot.⁴⁰⁹ Similarly, fleeting cheerfulness turns into enduring darkness in his photograph of a truck's bulky bed in *Provoke 2* (Fig. 5.22). The photograph was taken at night in Heiwajima, a suburb of Tokyo, which the Metropolitan Expressway reached in 1967. The diagonal view of the truck not only underscores the monolithic structure but also suggests Nakahira's vantage point as being lower than the truck. Nakahira might have taken this photograph either from a standing position on the ground or from a car window.

In *Provoke 3*, among the three photographs that depict automobiles, two also indicate Nakahira's low vantage points in capturing the scenes. Figure 5.23 almost looks like it is of a car accident just as it is taking place. The two cars on the left page look as though they are stuck

⁴⁰⁷ Fabienne Adler, "First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty: Theory and Practice of the 'Camera-generated' Image in 1960s Japan" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2009), 235-236.

⁴⁰⁸ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

⁴⁰⁹ Adler speculates that this photograph was taken on a street because this inverted image suggests that both Nakahira's vehicle and the bus were on the left-hand side of the road, in accordance with Japan's "left-hand traffic" driving system (which is the opposite of the US "right-hand traffic" system). Adler, "First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty: Theory and Practice of the 'Camera-generated' Image in 1960s Japan," 235-236.

together, and the gaze of the man and woman on the right page directs the viewer's attention to the cars. The imbalance in the composition conveys a sense of urgency and of an unexpected occurrence. With the ground occupying almost half of the whole composition, Nakahira must have taken this photograph close to the ground. Figure 5.24 is a close-up of a motor vehicle with Yanagimoto occupying the back seat. Because of *are-bure-boke*, it is unclear whether the car is stopping or moving. Nakahira's eye was exactly level with the car in front of him.

Nakahira's photographs of automobiles can be seen as a counterpart to his photograph of the streetcar track, in effect signaling a substantial transition in transportation systems (Fig. 5.25). As cars came to be the prominent means of transportation, streetcars gradually disappeared from Tokyo. The first streetcar in Tokyo opened in 1903 and ran between Shinagawa and Shinbashi, linking the north and south sides of Tokyo to each other.⁴¹⁰ The number of lines had increased across Tokyo by the mid-1960s, as had the population, but the lines were gradually removed owing partly to the need to alleviate traffic jams and partly to offset financial woes.⁴¹¹ Between 1967 and 1972, Tokyo Metropolitan government abolished all lines except one (in Tokyo's northernmost ward) to create more space for automobile traffic.

Nakahira's photograph in *Provoke I* shows a streetcar track in Shinjuku, and exemplifies this transition from one mode of transportation to another (Fig. 5.25). The photograph captures the period during which the streetcar was being phased out in Tokyo; in Shinjuku, this process got underway in 1968 and was completed by 1970.⁴¹² The streetcar track in Nakahira's

⁴¹⁰ Bureau of Transportation, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, *Tokyo-to kōtsūkyoku 80 nenshi* [An 80-year history of the Bureau of Transportation, Tokyo Metropolitan Government] (Tokyo: Bureau of Transportation, Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 1992), 11.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 104-110.

⁴¹² Okuhara Tetsushi, "Shinjuku eki shūhen no romen densha rosenmō no hensen" [The transition from streetcar networks around Shinjuku station] in *Toramu to metoro* [Tram and Metro], exh. cat., ed.

photograph followed alongside the street, stretching eastward from the Shinjuku station. As with his photographs of automobiles, Nakahira took this photograph from a position close to the ground. Again, the tilt of the horizon implies Nakahira's spontaneous shooting.

In sum, the viewpoints of Taki's, Takanashi's, and Nakahira's photographs of and from automobiles inadvertently showcase Japan's changing urban landscape during the 1960s. This transformation occurred not only with the construction of highways, but also through changes in the vantage points from which one could see the landscape. These new vantage points are apparent in the cited photographers' photographs. Rather than static or remaining objects to be gazed upon from a train window, landscapes were passingly glimpsed from a fast moving automobile's low vantage point. In this sense, Taki's and Takanashi's *are-bure-boke* photographs taken from car windows emerged naturally in this ever-accelerating society. If their acts of taking photographs were directly linked with their experiences of going for automobile rides, then *are-bure-boke* could not be attributable solely to Taki's phenomenological practice of photography. What the photographs show is something beyond the physical changes of landscape. The photographers' production of photography was, itself, a catalyst for the photographers' encounters with those changes.

IV. Nakahira's Association with "Fūkei ron" [Landscape Discourse]

For Nakahira, landscape was more than a subject for photography; it was a subject for critical discourse, which he developed with his colleagues at *Hihyō sensen* [The critical front].⁴¹³

The Critical Front was a New Left group founded by the film critic Matsuda Masao, the

Shinjuku Historical Museum (Tokyo: Shinjuku City Board of Education, 1998), 45.

⁴¹³ Adler also discusses *fūkeiron* as a juncture of Nakahira and contemporary film directors. Adler, "First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty: Theory and Practice of the 'Camera-generated' Image in 1960s Japan."

underground filmmaker Adachi Masao, and others in the summer of 1969. The Critical Front's members characterized the Japanese landscape as a site in which the government exercised its exploitive authority. They claimed that Japan's rampant urbanization, fueled by powerful economic growth, had resulted in a uniformity of appearances throughout Japan's landscapes. This articulated concern about homogeneity was called "fūkei ron" [landscape discourse]. While engaging in this discourse, Matsuda and Nakahira nurtured sympathy for each other's related works.

In this section, I will outline Matsuda's landscape discourse and demonstrate the role it played in both one of his films and in Nakahira's photographs. I argue that Matsuda's landscape-discourse filmmaking resonates with Nakahira's photography in terms of not only their consideration of landscape as ideological expression, but also their questioning of the methodology and established genres of their respective media. Matsuda's film was an implicit critique of the existing genre of documentary film in his use of unconventional methods. Nakahira's photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* illustrate the cinema-like sequence that was a record of his endless solitary wandering, in which the photographer's perception is supposedly entwined with landscape. Nakahira's photographs defy the conventions of landscape photography to illustrate the physicality of outdoor scenery.

***Fūkei* in Matsuda's Film *Ryakushō, renzoku shasatsuma* [AKA: A Serial Killer]**

Matsuda observed that landscape is more than just a visualization of systems of economic power, noting that landscape could offer a theoretical foundation on which to build a call for action leading to a communist revolution. Matsuda came up with the term *fūkei* to replace a

frequently used term *jōkyō* [situation],⁴¹⁴ which originated in Sartre's *Situation*. In 1960s Japan, 'situation' described the political and social situations at the time. Matsuda saw in the uniformity of landscape a body of compelling evidence that the central government was exercising exploitive control over local governments (which generally had less financial power than the central government) and over provincial laborers (who were "deprived" of their homes by the central government).⁴¹⁵

It was ironic that, in terms of urban development, the New City Planning Law was meant to assign decision-making roles to both the central and local governments. Before the Second World War, the nation had monopolized this right, but the heads of prefectures, cities, and villages came to acquire the right in proportion to the geographic size of their urban developments.⁴¹⁶ Nevertheless, the law shifted the planning power from the central government, namely the Ministry of Construction, to the municipal and prefectural governments; according to Sorensen, the central government's dominance continued through "legal controls, financial controls, and personnel transfers."⁴¹⁷ David L. Callies, a legal scholar, has observed that

⁴¹⁴ Matsuda Masao, "Meiro no oku no konmyūn" [A commune at the end of the labyrinth] in *Fūkei no shimetsu* [The extinction of landscapes] (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1971), 193-194. *Jōkyō* wrote as 情況.

⁴¹⁵ Matsuda acknowledges that he used the term 'landscape' as the antithesis of the term 'situation.' He argued that 'situation' is a privileged term used by intellectuals whereas 'landscape' is a common term used everywhere. Matsuda Masao, "Doko ni demo aru fūkei o megutte" [About ubiquitous landscapes], *Art Theater* 78 (June 1970): 29. Art and design critic Takashima Naoyuki also observes that during the 1960s, the term 'landscape' underwent normalization while what it referred to grew obscure. Takashima Naoyuki and Hirasawa Gō, "Fūkei ron' wa nani o tou noka" [What "landscape discourse" questions], in *Nakahira Takuma: Kitaru beki shashinka* [Nakahira Takuma: A photographer to come] (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2009), 94.

⁴¹⁶ Miyazawa Michio, "Shin-toshi keikaku hō seitei" [Establishment of New City Planning Law], interview, in *Chihōjichitai o horu* [Scrutinizing local government], ed. The Tokyo Institute for Municipal Research (Tokyo: The Tokyo Institute for Municipal Research, 2009), 183-185.

⁴¹⁷ Sorensen, *The Making of Urban Japan*, 214.

decision-making was more top-down in Japan than in the United States,⁴¹⁸ thus requiring Japan's local governments to follow the legal codes set by the ministry. The local governments were also financially dependent on the central government since seventy percent of their income came as transfers from the national budget.⁴¹⁹ Another factor in the centralized power structure was the common practice of personnel loans [*shukkō*] from the central government to the local governments. This was a highly effective way to solidify the central government's administrative control.⁴²⁰ Ultimately, the local administrative power was undermined to such a degree that virtually no room was left for ordinary citizens to get involved in city planning.⁴²¹

With this convoluted system as a backdrop, Matsuda and Adachi created a film in 1969, *Ryakushō, renzoku shasatsuma* [AKA: A serial killer], which traces the journey of a nineteen-year-old man who randomly shoots four people to death along the way (Fig. 5.26).⁴²² Based on a true story, this film is very much a visual recreation of the man's attempted evasion of the authorities. During their filming, Matsuda and Adachi witnessed far-flung urban and rural landscapes that had been remade in the structural likeness of the capital, Tokyo.⁴²³ Matsuda

⁴¹⁸ David L. Callies, "Urban Land Use and Control in the Japanese City: A Case Study of Hiroshima, Osaka, and Kyoto," in *The Japanese City*, ed. P.P. Karan and Kristin Stapleton (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 134.

⁴¹⁹ Sorensen, *The Making of Urban Japan*, 215.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Carola Hein, "Change and Continuity in Postwar Urban Japan," in *Rebuilding Urban Japan After 1945*, ed., Carola Hein, Jeffrey M. Diefendorf, and Ishida Yorifusa (Hampshire, England and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 240-241.

⁴²² Crew members were Adachi Masao, Iwabuchi Susumu, Nonomura Masayuki, Yamazaki Yutaka, Sasaki Mamoru, and Matsuda Masao; with Aikura Hisato (music supervisor), Togashi Masahiko, Takagi Motoki (music players), and Yamada Sachiko and Ichimaru Fusako (editors). For more about *AKA: A Serial Killer*, see Adler's, "First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty: Theory and Practice of the 'Camera-generated' Image in 1960s Japan."

⁴²³ Matsuda Masao, "Fūkei to shite no toshi" [City as a landscape], *Gendai no me* [Contemporary eye] 11

construed that the film's protagonist, a poor laborer, killed four people because he was frustrated by his inability to find a comfortable home he could call his own, as the cities he wandered through all looked alike.⁴²⁴

In her "Returning to Actuality: Fūkeiron and the Landscape Film," Yuriko Furuhata discusses an oft-overlooked variable in Japanese film: theory. Considering the landscape discourse that was conjoined with the changing social milieu, she argues that static shots of the state-planned homogenized landscapes play a big role in so-called landscape films such as *AKA: A Serial Killer* and *Tokyo sensō sengo hiwa: Eiga de isho o nokoshite shinda otoko no hanashi* [The secret story of the post-Tokyo war: The story of a man who left his will on film], a 1968 film by Ōshima Nagisa.⁴²⁵

Furuhata further argues that these films both appropriated the method of actuality cinema dating from the late 1890s and indirectly criticized traditional documentaries, which would dramatize actual events.⁴²⁶ Actuality cinema refers to early silent films that usually show a series of scenes from a fixed vantage point. The two aforementioned films employed the static view of landscape as a main subject. Furuhata asserts that the two films show a series of eventless townscapes that shift the role of meaning-making from filmmaker to spectator. According to Furuhata, this shift likely resonated with the filmmakers' questioning of subjectivity and of

(April 1970): 128-129.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 129-131.

⁴²⁵ The translations of the movie titles are from Yuriko Furuhata's "Returning to Actuality: Fūkeiron and the Landscape Film," *Screen* 48:3 (Autumn 2007).

⁴²⁶ Yuriko Furuhata, "Returning to Actuality: Fūkeiron and the Landscape Film," *Screen* 48:3 (Autumn 2007): 347.

Japan's industrialized consumer society.⁴²⁷

Matsuda's *Fūkei* in Nakahira's Photographs

If Matsuda's film was, as Furuhashi argued, more than just social criticism, Nakahira's photography questions conventional landscape photography, the kind that merely illustrates outdoor scenery. Nakahira's indebtedness to Matsuda is undeniable. In 1970 during a roundtable discussion, Nakahira noted that his feelings about the relationship between power and landscape had found an articulate, thoughtful voice in Matsuda's writings.⁴²⁸ In 1971, Nakahira and Matsuda jointly presented a series of their photographic works and writings, entitled *Fūkei* [landscape] in the magazine *Eiga hihyō* [Film criticism] issued by the Critical Front (Fig. 5.27).⁴²⁹ This photograph is strikingly similar to the frontispiece of Nakahira's contribution to *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (Fig. 5.28). Later in 1971, Matsuda's book *Fūkei no shimetsu* [The extinction of landscapes], an anthology of his writings on landscape discourse, bore on its title page one of Nakahira's photographs from this series (Fig. 5.29).⁴³⁰ In 1974, Nakahira frankly recalled that, by taking photographs, he had put landscape discourse into practice on his own terms.⁴³¹

⁴²⁷ Ibid., 347-348.

⁴²⁸ Nakahira Takuma, in Akasegawa Genpei, Adachi Masao, Satō Makoto, Tone Yasunao, and Nakahara Yūsuke, "Fūkei o megutte," roundtable discussion, *Kikan shashin eizō/ The Photo Image* 6 (Autumn 1970): 119. It was moderated by Nakahara Yūsuke. Devoting several pages to the landscape theme, this issue featured Nakahira's "Scenery 9" and Takanashi's "Towards the City."

⁴²⁹ The series lasted six months, from January to June 1971.

⁴³⁰ The articles in this book were originally published in such art, culture, and opinion magazines as *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook], *Design*, *Kikan firumu* [Film quarterly], *Eiga hihyō* [Film criticism], *Kōhyō* [Public opinion], *Gendai no me* [Contemporary eye], *Asahi Journal*, *Kikan shashin eizō/ The Photo Image*, and *Kōzō* [Structure].

⁴³¹ Nakahira Takuma, "Anākisuto wa kenchikuka ni narieru ka?" [Can an anarchist be an architect?],

Matsuda's influence is most vividly evident in Nakahira's photographs of such urban settings as a street, a station, or an underground passageway. Examples of these types of photographs are "Fūkei 1" [Landscape 1] and "Fūkei 2" [Landscape 2] in the February and April 1970 issues of *Design* (Fig. 5.30). In "Landscape 2," a photograph from which also appear in *Provoke 3*, Nakahira wrote,

Men, women, cities, seas, and everything merely appear as "landscape" to me. This is unmistakably my misery. As Matsuda Masao rightfully points out, in order to rip this plain "landscape" painted by state power, all I would need is a single gunshot or the flash of a glinty knife. But to do so is possible only through a thorough transformation of my "self." For the moment, I continue to gaze at everything as a "landscape" that inimically confronts me. And I pause. Fire comes next!⁴³²

The statement reveals Nakahira's determination to confront his landscape through an individual act. It also suggests that Nakahira's take on landscape is far more inclusive than Matsuda's:

Nakahira addresses not only the surrounding environment but also the people in it.

Nakahira took photographs as he "breached" the landscape where he stood. This endeavor gave rise to Nakahira's photographs that appeared in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* and that demonstrate a filmic nuance.⁴³³ They also demonstrate how he dealt with an ideological landscape. Among them, some photographs appeared as "Landscape 1" in the February 1970 issue of *Design* and as "Landscape 2" in the April 1970 issue of *Design*,

Kindai kenchiku [Modern architecture] 28 (June 1974): 37.

⁴³² Nakahira Takuma "Fūkei 1" [Landscape 1], *Design* (February 1970): 77. "男が、女が、街が、海が、すべてがぼくには「風景」としてしか現前しないということ。それがまぎれもないぼくの不幸である。正しくも松田政男が指摘したように、この権力によって一様にぬりこめられた「風景」を切り裂くには一発の銃声、煌めくナイフの一閃（いっせん）があれば充分だ。しかしそれは自らの全き変身によってしか可能ではないのだ。だから今その来たるべき変身のために、ぼくは全てをまさしくぼくに敵対する「風景」としてみつづける。そしてぼくは待つ、次は火だ!"

⁴³³ See Appendix 8 for the sequence of Nakahira's photographs.

suggesting that these photographs were offshoots of Matsuda's landscape discourse. These photographs can give the impression that Nakahira was "dissecting" the landscape, and they even seem to be structured as a filmic sequence.⁴³⁴ In the context of Nakahira's photography, a filmic sequence refers to several photographs that, together, seem to form a coherently flowing series, much as movie images consist of individual stills.

For example, on pages 14 and 15, his photograph is of a view down a staircase (Fig. 5.31). Another photograph seems to be a view of the foot of the staircase (that is, Nakahira perhaps is "looking back" at the staircase he just descended) (Fig. 5.32). From this point, he appears to move onto a subway platform (Figs. 5.33 and 5.34). If the sequence of events is logical, he briefly boards a train (Fig. 5.35) and then, after disembarking, wanders through various underground passages (Figs. 5.36-5.40). He ascends some stairs⁴³⁵ (Fig. 5.41) and eventually returns to street-level surroundings, capturing a street's shining wet surface (Fig. 5.42), an unidentified (and perhaps even unidentifiable) object on the street (Fig. 5.43), and two encountered buildings (Figs. 5.44 and 5.45). The only photographs that do not readily or intuitively fit in the sequence are the ones on pages 24 and 25 (Fig. 5.46) and 38 and 39 (Fig. 5.47), which show unidentifiable objects in the dark (an electric fan?), a man standing next to cables that feed into what seems to be a circuit box on the left, and the inside of a train where a half-opened newspaper read by a passenger conceals his face and body. In light of Nakahira's passionate affinity for the films of Jean-Luc Godard, his seemingly intermissive photographs may remind one of Godard's famous "jump cuts."

⁴³⁴ Nakahira's abiding interest in film led him to write numerous reviews and to reference Nouvelle Vague films in his writings. In fact, Nakahira's initial interests were in filmmaking, but rather than work for film companies, he chose to be an editor at *Gendai no me* [Contemporary Eye] and to write about film. "Ima shashinka de aru koto" [On being photographers today], 183.

⁴³⁵ Nakahira seems to have taken three photographs (Figs. 4.27, 4.28, and 4.37) at the same site, as the shapes of the tunnel and the vinyl sheet-like object on the right-hand side indicate.

The location and time are unidentifiable in all photographs, but the layout of almost all the images suggests a temporal and spatial flow, functioning much as would scenes from a sporadically shot film. Nakahira's photographs remind one of still images illustrating an object, like Muybridge's chronophotography of a racing horse that creates a moving image. Nakahira's photographs in the aforementioned set present a temporal flow. Here, *are-bure-boke* functions not only as a trace of the photographer's movement, but also as a clue that viewers can use to construct a flowing narrative.

Whether Nakahira intended to make this set a filmic sequence is unclear, but the result strikingly resonates with Matsuda's conception of ideological landscapes. Nakahira's series of photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* almost echoes his article entitled "Fūkei" [Landscape] in his first photobook, *Kitaru beki kotoba no tame ni* [For a language to come], published in 1970. In the article, Nakahira states, "As a matter of fact, I am a wretched stray dog, sniffing around to seek a fragile ditch that may possibly cause a single fissure within this perfect 'landscape'."⁴³⁶ The statement is quite powerfully reminiscent of the nineteen-year-old described in *AKA: A Serial Killer*—a young man who, as Matsuda saw it, wandered around gunning people down in order to find his own voice.

The cinematic fluidity, the absence of temporal specificity, and the lack of a clear storyline in Nakahira's photographs could be read as his critique of both conventional landscape photography and his predecessors' photojournalism. As opposed to the static imagery of landscape photography, Nakahira's photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* represent the photographer *in* the landscape on his own terms. As Furuhashi explains, *AKA: A*

⁴³⁶ Nakahira Takuma, "Fūkei" [Landscape], in *Kitaru beki kotoba no tame ni* [For a language to come] (Tokyo: Fūdōsha, 1970), 184. "なにを隠そう、ぼくはこの完璧な「風景」にたった一条のひび割れの可能性をもった弱い溝でもありはしないかとかぎまわっている貧相な犬である。"

Serial Killer and *The Secret Story of the Post-Tokyo War: The Story of a Man Who Left His Will on Film* throw the spectator off balance because of the lack of storylines, shifting the subjectivity of these films from maker to spectator. And Nakahira did the same in his photographs. Walter Benjamin argued that filmgoers are put to the test when they see an actor in a movie, because they consequently identify themselves with the camera in order to immerse themselves in the story.⁴³⁷ In Nakahira's cinematic photographs, viewers also identify their vantage point with the camera, but it leads them on a journey whose destination is indefinite. In line with Matsuda's filmmaking, Nakahira thus threw an open-ended question to viewers rather than leading viewers to an ending satisfyingly closed to interpretation.

Most important, viewers would re-enact Nakahira's cinematic sequence while turning the pages of the book. The viewers control the pace at which they regard the photographic collection: they may look at his images in an arbitrary or logical order or go back and forth between the two approaches, as though forgetting the agency of Nakahira. This freedom is precisely what Nakahira intended to promote when he stated that his photographic works, at some point, cease to have anything to do with him. As I demonstrated in Chapter Four, this gap between the photographer and the photographs would contribute to the "anonymity" of the photographs' creator. What Matsuda (and the Critical Front group) and Nakahira (and *Provoke* members) did was to question the fundamental structure of film and photography respectively rather than present cinematic or photographic works as complete tableaux in and of themselves. Who is the image maker? Who is the receiver of images? And how does the receiver receive them? Ultimately, *Provoke* photographers and the Critical Front members fought against different enemies in the same battle.

⁴³⁷ Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. and with an introduction by Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 228.

Nakahira attempted to intervene in urban landscapes not only with his cinematic photographs, but also with his photograph of a monumental building (Fig. 5.45). This is the last photograph in his section in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. Rather than capture the literal “fissure,” as Taki did with his “gaps,” Nakahira captured the image of a monumental construction site that anticipated the chaotic building boom of high rises after the completion of the 36-story Kasumigaseki Building in 1968. The Kasumigaseki Building was the first high-rise built after the removal of height restrictions in Tokyo. In fact, the Guidelines for Urban Policy, supplementary to the New City Planning Law, first appeared in the same year and promoted the construction of high rises in urban areas for both residential and commercial uses.⁴³⁸ In this photograph, Nakahira seems almost awestruck by the building still under construction, thereby intensifying the viewer’s possible perception of the government’s controlling force at work in the city. Nakahira rarely took “bird’s-eye view” photographs throughout his years as a contributor to *Provoke*. He took almost all his photographs either on the ground or in underground passages, with the camera pointing ahead or upward.

This motif of a covered under-construction building, which frequently appeared in Nakahira’s photography, attracted Okada’s attention.⁴³⁹ He stated that “...you often see the vinyl surface in today’s city, ... in our image of a city, the surface is a kind of cloak”⁴⁴⁰ Okada sensed that the city’s structural superficiality was analogous to the city’s impenetrability. If Okada felt an existential uncertainty when considering the partly constructed building wrapped in a

⁴³⁸ P.P. Karan, “Introduction,” in *The Japanese City*, 7.

⁴³⁹ Other motifs such as wet road surfaces, underground passageways, construction sites, the horizon, and building walls frequently appeared in Nakahira’s photographs from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s.

⁴⁴⁰ Okada, “Toshi e: Bunmei no fasādo o toru,” 60. “。。。今の街というのはビニールみたいなものが表面に目につきますよね。”“。。。われわれの都市のイメージってのは表面で被われているところがありますね。”

protective material, Nakahira saw this image as a motif suggestive of disruption. In his article “Landscape,” Nakahira argued that the orderliness of landscapes should be disrupted in a way similar to Christo’s act of wrapping buildings as well as to student activists’ construction of barricades on the streets.⁴⁴¹ Nakahira’s adherence to this motif might have been related to his fascination with Christo’s act of covering things up; whatever the case, the photograph of a covered high-rise building was again informed by Nakahira’s act of taking photographs, an act of disrupting the “perfect” landscape.

V. *Provoke Photographers’ Individual Engagements with Landscape*

It should be noted that Nakahira in his practice went beyond Matsuda’s observations on landscape. If Matsuda argued that societal power had homogenized landscapes (particularly the landscapes available to the exploited), Nakahira argued that there was no universal landscape. As Nakahira demonstrated in his photographs grounded in his personal experiences, landscape organically responds to an individual’s being. Matsuda generalized landscape in the scheme of collective rebellion in order to present landscape as concrete, physical evidence of his theoretical argument. In contrast, Nakahira tried to comprehend landscape through his personal existence. In his article in *Tokyo dokusho shinbun* [Tokyo book-readers newspaper] in 1970, he argued that the politics of landscape would emerge only when one was aware of landscape.⁴⁴² For Nakahira, landscape is not only a set of ideas forming the environment, but also a site in which people

⁴⁴¹ Nakahira, “Landscape,” 183-184.

⁴⁴² Nakahira Takuma, “Fūkei wa kyōyū dekiruka? Mizukara no sei no jikaku to shite” [Can landscape be shared? Self-consciousness for existence], *Tokyo dokusho shinbun* [Tokyo book-readers newspaper] (July 6, 1970), 8. In the roundtable discussion among art critic Haryū Ichirō, architect Isozaki Arata, and Nakahira in “Toshi to fūkei” [City and landscape], *Dentō to gendai* [Tradition and our age] (March 1971), Nakahira admitted that he could not take photographs of what Matsuda called the discursive landscape created by the state authority.

function as part of it. Nakahira stated, “The point is ... this landscape—which has been underscored by history up to this point and, above all, by power itself—must be breached by my thorough, individual decisions.”⁴⁴³ Matsuda viewed landscape discourse in the light of collective revolutionary action, while Nakahira took advantage of landscape discourse to articulate the highly personal meaning of taking photographs.

Nakahira’s aforementioned position concerning his individual engagement with the political landscape was exemplified by the *Provoke* photographers. Their photographs taken in Shinjuku demonstrate an especially wide variety of subjects and formal qualities. Shinjuku was the locus of city planning and construction from 1964 to 1968, administered by a government corporation established in 1960.⁴⁴⁴ This means that, beginning in the 1960s, the Shinjuku section was also the focal point of conflict between the state power and the masses, a place where subculture and counterculture flourished and young people gathered. Each photographer cut out different aspects of Shinjuku, and their photographs revealed different ways of dealing with the landscapes in the same city.

Located on the northwest side of central Tokyo, Shinjuku started to take the form of a planned urban center within Tokyo in the mid-1960s. Shinjuku became the first target of development as a sub-center, the objective being to shift primary civil-organization functions and financial districts away from the areas of Tokyo station and the Imperial Palace—and to avoid excessive congestion in the area.⁴⁴⁵ This immense, comprehensive development involved the

⁴⁴³ Ibid. “問題は。。。そしてこの風景（それを支えるものはここまできてしまった歴史であり、なによりも権力そのものである）にみずからのまったき個人的な決断によってこの風景を引き裂くことであるはずだ。”

⁴⁴⁴ For more about Shinjuku as a site for cultural and artistic activities, see Kuro Dalai Jee’s *Nikutai no anākizumu: 1960 nendai nihon bijutsu ni okeru pafōmansu no chika suimyaku/ Anarchy of the Body: Undercurrents of Performance Art in 1960s Japan* (Tokyo: Grambooks, 2010).

transfer of an approximately 56-hectare water treatment plant to suburbia and the creation of a business district in the Westside of Shinjuku station. The project also called for a plaza on the west side of the station, underground passages for pedestrians, upgraded roads around the station, the construction of Shinjuku Central Park, and new residential areas (Fig. 5.48).⁴⁴⁶

Shinjuku frequently appeared in the photographs of *Provoke* photographers because it was their regular destination.⁴⁴⁷ For example, Nakahira often went to Café Bon on West Shinjuku's Central Street, which was frequented by editors for business meetings. Nakahira's three photographs in *Provoke 2* show flowers at the flower shop next to the café (Figs. 5.49-5.51). Figure 5.49 shows a bunch of flowers upside-down in an extreme close up; Figure 5.50 presents some flowers that are resting on the ground and are lit from above; Figure 5.51 displays some flowers showcased on two shelves. Nakahira's emphasis on flowers instead of the scenery of Shinjuku at night highlights the specificity of the places he knew. Therefore, the photographs in *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* do not necessarily represent an anti-establishment sentiment alone; they reflect a practical choice of location.

Shinjuku Landscapes in *Provoke*: Takanashi's and Nakahira's Photographs

The photographs by Takanashi and Nakahira indicate both the transformation of

⁴⁴⁵ Shinjuku Ward Office, ed., *Shinjuku-ku shi* [A history of Shinjuku Ward] (Tokyo: Shinjuku Ward Office, 1988), 125.

⁴⁴⁶ Okamoto Shōichirō, ed., *Nishi Shinjuku monogatari: Yodobashi jōsuijō kara saikaihatsu jigyō made* [The story of West Shinjuku: From the Yodobashi water treatment plant to the redevelopment project] (Tokyo: Nihon Suidō Shinbunsha, 1997), 198.

⁴⁴⁷ Interestingly, Moriyama did not present any of his photographs of Shinjuku in either *Provoke 2* or *Provoke 3*, even though Moriyama's association with this section of Tokyo is the best known of any such associations involving *Provoke* members. However, the location of many of Moriyama's photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* has not been identified yet, and further research is required.

Shinjuku, especially West Shinjuku, and the landscape's instability due to human intervention. Their photographs depict two different aspects of West Shinjuku: the one, captured by Takanashi, is a site of modernist construction undertaken by the government and big corporations,⁴⁴⁸ and the other, shot by Nakahira, is a place of mass political protests.

Around the time Takanashi and Nakahira took their photographs, symbolic and fundamental changes in Shinjuku's landscape had occurred: in late 1966, construction was completed on the two-level plaza and an underground garage proposed by Odakyū Electric Railway Company (a project that had been initially planned in 1952 and officially included in the governmental development project in 1960).⁴⁴⁹ A prominent architect in Japan, Sakakura Junzō, produced a comprehensive master plan for the Odakyū project, including the garage, the station building, and the two-level plaza above ground and underground (Fig. 5.48). Having studied architecture and city planning under Le Corbusier, Sakakura created a grandiose landmark in Shinjuku.

Takanashi's photographs saliently capture the modernist structure of Shinjuku. His frontispiece to his section in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* presents West Shinjuku Plaza in a somber atmosphere (Fig. 5.52). The scene shows a multilevel parking garage—believed to be the first of this kind in the world at the time of completion—that was

⁴⁴⁸ According to architect Aoi Akihito, commercial developers and construction companies had undertaken most of the urban development after 1969. Aoi Akihito, "Nanba, Shibuya, Shinjuku: Sengo toshi to Sakakura Junzō no taminaru purojekuto gun" [Nanba, Shibuya, and Shinjuku: Postwar cities and Sakakura Junzō's terminal projects], in *Kenchikuka Sakakura Junzō: Modanizumu o ikiru, ningen, toshi, kūkan* [Architect Sakakura Junzō: Living in the era of modernism—humans, cities, and space] (Tokyo: Archimedia, Inc., 2009), 177.

⁴⁴⁹ Katō Asuka and Ōkawa Mitsuo, "Shinjuku eki nishiguchi hiroba oyobi chikachūshajō (1966) no sekkei keii ni tsuite/ The Design Details of the Plaza and the Basement Car Park in the West Gate at Shinjuku Station" in *Nihon kenchiku gakkai taikai gakujuuto kouen kōgaishū/ Summaries of Technical Papers of Annual Meeting, Architectural Institute of Japan* (Tokyo: Architectural Institute of Japan, 2005), 333; at the website of Scholarly and Academic Information Navigator, hosted by The National Institute of Informatics, <http://ci.nii.ac.jp> (accessed August 16, 2010).

newly built in conjunction with the development project in West Shinjuku. In Figure 5.52, a car is seemingly sucked into the underground level along the winding ramp, with the open mouth of a cylindrical ventilation tower visible to the right of the car. The curvy outline of the ramp and the tower has a layered effect that represents Sakakura's innovative design for the parking garage. Takanashi neither emphasized the garage's eloquent shapes nor satirically critiqued the development; however, as Taki saw in Ishimoto's photograph of the same subject (Fig. 5.4), his cool gaze on the structure was steady and non-celebratory.

Takanashi's photograph (Fig. 5.52) contrasts strikingly with two photographs of the plaza by Nakahira in *Provoke 3* (Fig. 5.53). Nakahira's photographs seem to express the essence of the city, almost to the point of turning Shinjuku itself into an uncategorized, raw section of Tokyo. Shinjuku West Plaza was built inside Shinjuku Station, which spread out centrifugally from the railway entry to the multi-level parking garage. Nakahira took these photographs on October 21, 1968, the day of the International Antiwar Protest.⁴⁵⁰ The photograph on the left shows the demonstrating crowd in the underground plaza, and the photograph on the right presents hardly anything recognizable, other than what might be a flag. The sense of movement in the photographs attests to the fact that Nakahira was in the crowd and was experiencing the excitement of the gathering, instead of observing it. Takanashi's photograph of the multi-level garage (Fig. 5.52) conveys the formal quality of new construction, whereas Nakahira's photograph of the plaza conveys the excitement of people's protests.

Nakahira was distributing a flyer for the Council of Struggling Journalists when he took this photograph (Fig. 5.54). Moriyama was also with them, but he only took photographs and did not distribute the flyer. Indeed, Nakahira once stated that he rarely shot demonstrations, except

⁴⁵⁰ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, e-mail correspondence, April 4, 2011.

the ones he actually joined.⁴⁵¹ This practice was informed by his distaste for being part of authority; he even considered removing his press credentials from his arm, because they signified his affiliation with the power structure.⁴⁵² All in all, Nakahira's Shinjuku photograph signified his personal act of engaging in a political landscape. In the postscript to *Provoke I*, Nakahira noted that the journal separated photography from politics; nonetheless, the photograph attests to the dialectical state of Nakahira's acts as a photographer and as a political being.

The nature of Shinjuku West Plaza went through a dramatic change after antiwar incidents in 1968. In February 1969, the youths of the Japanese activist group Beheiren started to gather to sing antiwar folk songs, attracting attention from passersby. Nishinari Norihisa, a scholar of city planning, observed that the plaza's function as a site for gatherings reflected a sizable public backlash against the government's control of urban spaces.⁴⁵³ These gatherings became a disruptive spectacle, and on May 14, riot police were mobilized. Despite the police intervention, as many as six thousand people ended up joining the gathering at its peak. Finally, a clash took place between the youths and the riot police on June 28 and, again, on July 5 and 12. After these incidents, the Tokyo Metropolitan Police changed the name of the plaza to Shinjuku West Passageway. The plaza signs were changed overnight on July 18, and the police banned people from gathering or even from momentarily standing at the site, because the space—now officially bequeathed a “passageway”—would function only as a site for passersby. After the

⁴⁵¹ Nakahira Takuma, in Konagai Yoshihiro, Oda Minoru, and Mutō Ichiyō, “Jigoku no habohō” [Subversive Activities Prevention Act from hell], roundtable discussion, *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* 10 (October 1969): 93.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 94.

⁴⁵³ Nishinari Norihisa, “Shinjuku nishiguchi hiroba no seiritsu to hiroba ishiki: Nishiguchi hiroba kara nishiguchi tsūro e no meishō henkō mondai o tsūjite/ The Realization of Shinjuku West Plaza and the Concept of Plaza: The Conceptual Transition from ‘West Plaza’ to ‘West Aisle’,” *Nihon toshi keikaku gakkai toshikeikaku ronbunshū/ Journal of the City Planning Institute of Japan* 40 (October 2005): 246.

name change, a number of police officers were mobilized around the “passageway” to keep people from standing still. Photographers were no exception.

Nakahira took photographs of the youths’ gathering on June 15, 1969, and the photographs appeared in the August 1 issue of *Asahi Graph* in the same year (Fig. 5.55). On this particular day, the youths were commemorating the former student of the University of Tokyo who had died during the protests against the renewal of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in 1960. Accompanying Nakahira’s photographs was an essay written by novelist and activist Oda Makoto, describing both the people who had participated in the gathering and the authorities’ oppression of them. One of Nakahira’s *are-bure-boke* photographs (Fig. 5.55) conveys the rampant atmosphere of conflict between the gatherers and the police force. Nakahira mentioned that gatherings were akin to individuals’ taking possession of a place because, according to his impressions, the steps that people take at a site inscribe their movements on the site’s grounds.⁴⁵⁴ Nakahira recalled his actions on June 15, 1969: “The riot police were being quite aggressive. They would just come at you. I could barely take photographs at Shinjuku West Plaza. I had a camera in my hand, and they completely surrounded me and said, ‘Go home! Go home!’”⁴⁵⁵ What he tried to do, in addition to playing a part in illustrating the demonstration, was to take ownership of the moment—through his engagement with circumstances. In this way, Nakahira’s commitment to political landscapes continued after October 21, 1968.

Two different modes of photography—one attributable to Takanashi and the other to

⁴⁵⁴ Nakahira Takuma, in Awazu Kiyoshi, Kimura Tsunehisa, and Hara Kōji, “Ware ware wa nani ni mukatte jiyū nanoka” [What are we freed from?], roundtable discussion, *Dezain Hihyō/ The Design Review* 12 (November 1970): 37.

⁴⁵⁵ Nakahira in “Jigoku no habōhō” [Subversive Activities Prevention Act from hell], 101. “機動隊のやり口は、相当すごい。とびかかってくる。西口広場なんかではもうほとんど撮影できなかった。カメラもってると、ぐるりとりまいて、帰れ帰れというわけです。”

Nakahira—captured the evolving conditions of newly created spaces. These evolving conditions were intimately entwined with people’s associations with landscapes, associations that were exemplified by the fact that a plaza could be transformed into a passageway literally overnight, compelling people to behave accordingly. The different styles deployed by the two photographers probably derived from their diametrically opposite manners of engagement with landscape.

The Landscape of Shinjuku in *Provoke*: Taki’s Photographs

In comparison to Takanashi’s and Nakahira’s photographs of Shinjuku, Taki’s photographs of Shinjuku were imbued with his personal pleasure. Some of his photographs in *Provoke 2* were taken in the pleasure district of Shinjuku, the so-called Shinjuku 2-chōme, which also appeared in Nakahira’s photographs. Members of *Provoke* often spent time in this district to take photographs of street corners and of women in “nude studios.” In those studios, people paid a “model” to take her clothes off layer by layer, so that the customer could take photographs of her in the nude.⁴⁵⁶ Taki’s photographs of women in *Provoke 2* were taken at some of Shinjuku’s nude studios and are clearly not landscape photographs as such, but they are of a “landscape” in Nakahira’s sense, a sense which Taki also espoused.⁴⁵⁷

In all his photographs of women, Taki obscured the identity of the subject either by cropping the figure at the neck or printing the image in an *are-bure-boke* manner. For example, a woman zipping up her boots on the first page of his section is cropped in the middle of her face (Fig. 5.56), and another photograph shows a headless squatting woman captured from a low

⁴⁵⁶ Moriyama also took up this subject, and the photographs are included in *Nippon gekijō shashinchō* [Japan: A photo theater] (1968), which was coauthored by a poet, Terayama Shūji.

⁴⁵⁷ Taki, “Han-toshi to shite no hyōgen” [Expression as an anti-city], 94.

vantage point (Fig. 5.57). A two-page spread of the headshot of a woman is so rough and out of focus that her identity is obscured (Fig. 5.58). Another squatting woman looks downward, (Fig. 5.59). A photograph captures yet another woman, starting at one of her breasts and continuing upward, one of her hands covering her face (Fig. 5.60). Taki especially loved the photograph of a woman's nude torso that he nicknamed "white whale" (Fig. 5.61).⁴⁵⁸ Those women in Taki's photographs, reduced to mere flesh with their personality or identity completely erased, were presented under the theme of "Eros" in *Provoke 2*. One of Nakahira's photographs in *Provoke 1* also shows a street scene from Shinjuku 2-chōme: a woman is soliciting a customer (Fig. 5.62). The gaze of Taki and Nakahira objectified these women, while also making them part of the city's landscape.

As a whole, the landscape photographs of Shinjuku in *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* reflect both the *Provoke* members' personal take on landscape and the symbolic rise of the city. In a state of fluctuation, the landscapes were influenced by both the collective activities and the personal activities of human beings, and the different tones in the photographs by Takanashi, Nakahira, and Taki corresponded to their personal landscapes. Whether capturing the glamour of a multilevel parking garage, the political activism in Shinjuku West Plaza, Nakahira's daily activities on Shinjuku's westside, or the pleasure districts in Shinjuku 2-chōme, the *Provoke* images form a response to the sterilized, homogenized landscapes controlled by social and state power structures.

VI. Conclusion

After the devastation of the Second World War, Japan strove to regain economic power by intensifying its industrial development in the Pacific Belt. As a result, social and political

⁴⁵⁸ Yanagimoto Naomi, interview by author, IC recording, Kamakura, July 9, 2010.

problems arose and jeopardized the quality of citizens' lives in many of the major industrial cities. *Provoke* played a significant role in the tumultuous sixties, not only as a receptor but also as an active interpreter of the physical changes in society.

For example, both Taki and Takanashi captured the uncategorized sections of the city right after the New City Planning Law took effect. Taki devised an innovative semiotic approach to the city as he used photography to explore the formation of the city's meanings. He advocated the idea of a photographer who would actively engage with a city in order to reveal it piece by piece. Taki's intellectual observations of the relationships between photography and cities contrasted with Takanashi's more artistic rearticulation of landscape. Takanashi's careful compositions, inspired by Surrealism, strongly suggest his desire to attain a unique style of photography—"uncategorized" in the words of Ōtsuji.

Changes in Japan's modes of transportation also affected the aesthetics of the *Provoke* photographs. The photographs present observations of highways under construction and Japan's increasing numbers of automobiles. Taki, Takanashi, and Nakahira responded to these changes by shooting from the interior of a moving car. Nakahira was fascinated by the idea of purposeless car rides, frequently snapping photos of cars and oversized motor vehicles. Both his low vantage point of the landscape and the *are-bure-boke* quality in his photographs suggest that the development of construction and transportation was in progress at the time.

The physical changes in the landscape prompted a new theoretical examination of state power. Matsuda's landscape discourse resonated with Nakahira's photographs, especially those in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. Nakahira's photographs and Matsuda's *AKA: A Serial Killer* rendered a critique of the established genres of landscape photography and documentary film by resting on unconventional methodologies: while Nakahira presented a kind

of cinematic movement in each photograph, Matsuda presented a static landscape in the moving images of film. The two refused to offer a clear destination in their narrative, throwing the audience off and making them question the distinction between different genres.

At the same time, *Provoke* photographers' approaches to the city were built upon Matsuda's landscape discourse. Ultimately, the *Provoke* photographers engaged with landscape more individualistically than collectively. A diverse body of Shinjuku photographs by Nakahira, Takanashi, and Taki defied the homogenized landscape that Matsuda observed. Their photographs reflected a range of personal perspectives on landscapes that were irreducible to mere symbols of state power.

Chapter Six

Provoke and Contemporary Cultures

I. Introduction

In this chapter, I will examine *Provoke* members' individual projects that illuminate the works' contemporaneity relative to other genres. *Provoke* members' versatility has been one of the most fascinating aspects of their work. Design, art, fashion, literature, and film were their primary sources of inspiration, and members actively took up these contemporary subjects. Therefore, it is important to assess each *Provoke* photographer's body of work in terms of his association with other genres in the humanities. Specifically, I will evaluate the achievements of Takanashi's project in *Provoke 2* (Fig. 6.1), the works by Moriyama in *Provoke 3* (Fig. 6.2), and Nakahira's works for the *Biennale de Paris: Manifestation Internationale des Jeunes Artistes (Biennale de Paris)* in 1969 and 1971 (Figs. 6.3 and 6.4). Nakahira's works in the 1969 *Biennale de Paris* also appeared in *Provoke 2*. The works above illustrate both differences among the photographers' practices and the photographers' independent spirits. While the sections on Takanashi and Moriyama deal with these two photographers' contemporaneous association with creative activities outside photography, the section on Nakahira emphasizes his and *Provoke's* influence on a later generation, particularly on the notable artist Enokura Kōji.

In the first section, I reveal Takanashi's peculiar position among other *Provoke* photographers, a position that was due to his presentation of unconventional fashion photography in *Provoke*. Throughout the three issues of *Provoke*, Takanashi was the only *Provoke* photographer who took up fashion as his subject. Unlike conventional fashion photography, which displays trendy clothes, Takanashi's photography was much imbued with his experimental spirit, which entailed the presence of *are-bure-boke* and obvious artifice in his photographs.

Takanashi's interrogative attitude toward photography resonated with other *Provoke* members' attempts to question photography, but his project remained highly compositional and thoughtful, thus permitting multiple readings of his photographs.

The second section examines the works by Moriyama in *Provoke 3*. My goal is to demonstrate that Moriyama's works, although similar to Warhol's art, are more than mere imitations of it. On the formal level, Moriyama did take advantage of the visual likeness of his works to those of Warhol, thereby attempting to eliminate moralistic meanings from his own work. However I argue that Moriyama's work additionally interrogated the notion of photography itself by presenting an equivalency between the photographic print, the photocopied image, the journal, and the objects to be photographed. Moriyama's highly stylized works also present a host of tenets applying to print as well as photographic work. These equivalencies were deeply informed by both Moriyama's personal preferences and the photographic practices of late-1960s Japan. I use Rosalind E. Krauss's idea of photography to demonstrate the necessity of assessing Moriyama's works within a specific cultural framework.

The third section evaluates Nakahira's works presented at the *Biennale de Paris* in 1969 and 1971 in relation to the *Provoke* photographers' and Japanese artists' treatment of photography as a contemporary art medium. I will also briefly mention Takanashi's works in the 1967 *Biennale de Paris*. During the 1960s, photography globally came to be an eligible artistic medium harnessed not only by photographers but also by artists. Nakahira and some Japanese artists took up this negotiation of art and photography. Compared with Takanashi's conventional framed-photography works shown in Paris in 1967, Nakahira's Biennale works in 1969 and 1971 reveal certain substantial, performative dimensions of photography. In this regard, Nakahira stated about his work at the 1971 *Biennale de Paris*: "I am beginning to feel, though slightly, that

what I say and what I do are somewhat coming together as one.”⁴⁵⁹ In other words, Nakahira’s endeavors in *Provoke* appeared to culminate in this fruitful combination of intention and outcome.

As for the issue of *Provoke*’s influence, its *are-bure-boke* photography inspired a new generation of photographers such as Araki Nobuyoshi to emerge. However, in contrast to the widely discussed effects of *Provoke* on Japanese photography, its effects on Japanese art have not been critically examined. I propose to begin this process in this chapter by focusing on the artist Enokura, who exhibited works under Nakahira’s influence. Enokura borrowed from *Provoke*’s photography, from Nakahira’s works at the 1971 *Biennale de Paris*, and he even referenced the landscape discourse.⁴⁶⁰ The effects of these influences can be observed in Enokura’s outdoor works and his photography. The two men, Nakahira and Enokura, both distrusted the dominant cultural institutions: while Nakahira was highly suspicious of Japan’s central government, Enokura was equally suspicious of information overload. Likewise, the two men’s efforts to photograph their surroundings constituted separate but similar ontological investigations into “being in the world.” In particular, Enokura’s use of photography was a vivid response to the seemingly unaesthetic photography of *Provoke*. Enokura’s case demonstrates that *Provoke*’s influence has exerted itself in multi-faceted areas, ranging from photography to art, and his works demonstrate that *Provoke* had a strong influence on the artist’s idea of photography.

II. Takanashi’s Fashion Photography

⁴⁵⁹ Nakahira Takuma, “Shashin, ichinichi kagiri no akuchuaritī” [Photography and actuality of the day], *Asahi Camera* (February 1972): 286. “だが今ぼくは、この仕事を通じて、少しだけ自分のいうこととやることが一致し始めたことをかすかに感じはじめています。”

⁴⁶⁰ See Chapter Four for a detailed explanation about landscape discourse.

From the beginning of the journal's history, Takanashi's profile as a photographer was distinctive among the *Provoke* photographers. Being part of a prestigious commercial advertising company (Nihon Dezain Sentā, also known as the Nippon Design Center), Takanashi was a rising star of commercial photography when *Provoke* was launched. His photographs embellished advertisements for diverse products, ranging from beverages to camera equipment. Takanashi also worked for fashion magazines such as *Hai fasshion/ High Fashion* (Fig. 6.5), which was designed for readers who were interested in fashion trends.⁴⁶¹ Takanashi has mentioned that, having been part of the establishment, he had been unable to immediately jump on the bandwagon following Nakahira's recruitment of him for *Provoke*.⁴⁶²

Takanashi's objectives were also different from those of other *Provoke* members. Feeling that Taki likely considered fashion photography to be "weak-kneed" or "too soft," Takanashi decided to prove that fashion was a legitimate culture.⁴⁶³ To that end, Takanashi transformed fashion photography into critical components of *Provoke*, and presented such photographs in all *Provoke* issues except *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: thought on photography and language]. Some of his fashion photography is quite unconventional in terms of showcasing both *are-bure-boke* and his clear artifices (i.e., layout, manipulation, sequence of photographs) in what is ultimately a scrutinization of the nature of photography itself. Together with his focus on somber landscape photography in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, Takanashi's fashion photography clearly distinguished him from the rest of the *Provoke* photographers.

⁴⁶¹ Not only fashion critics, but also cultural practitioners such as Nakahira Yūsuke, Okada Takahiko, and Yoshiyuki Rie (novelist) contributed their writings to the magazine.

⁴⁶² Takanashi Yutaka, *Raika na me/ Like a Leica Eye* (Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 2002), 70-71.

⁴⁶³ Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

Takanashi's Fashion-related Photographs in *Provoke 1, 2, and 3*

In *Provoke 1*, Takanashi presented some photographs taken at fashion shows or during shoots for a fashion-related project. For example, a photograph of a fashion show illustrates a glamorous aspect of the industry (Fig. 6.6). Although Takanashi captured perhaps a flamboyant moment in the show, the resulting image is so blurry as to obscure the model's clothes and facial features. The blurriness also transforms the audience into ghost-like figures. Other photographs suggest Takanashi's background in commercial photography. A woman is fixing her hair or make-up (Fig. 6.7); a model and a make-up artist are walking together (Fig. 6.8); and a model seems to be submitting to a make-up artist's touch ups (Fig. 6.9). These photographs offer glimpses of the fashion industry, and showcase Takanashi's cool observations of the scene. The somberness of the photographs stems probably from the low tonal gradation and an avoidance of the models' direct eye contact with the camera. Figure 6.8 looks as though it was taken in a highly staged fashion production. However, when the photograph is combined with the other two photographs (Figs. 6.7 and 6.9), the overall degree of randomness (as demonstrated in Chapter Four) and the obscurity of Takanashi's intended staging are greater than any clear articulation of specific meanings.

In *Provoke 2*, Takanashi created an open-ended narrative with a set of ordered photographs (following this order are Figures 6.1, 6.10-6.19).⁴⁶⁴ These photographs showcase renowned fashion model Oka Hiromi, who was his lover at the time. The photographs can be divided into two groups according to their initial purposes: photographs taken for *Provoke* (all but Figure 6.13) and ones that had already appeared in *High Fashion* (Fig. 6.13). Within the first

⁴⁶⁴ See Appendix 4 for the sequence of Takanashi's photographs.

group, five photographs look like casual snapshots capturing a fashion model's wanderings in a desolate landscape, where her figure almost blends into the sunlight (Figs. 6.1, 6.12, 6.15, 6.16, and 6.19).⁴⁶⁵ Although her outfits, such as a miniskirt and flared pants, convey the fashion trends of the times, the outfits appear relaxed and unpretentious. Likewise, her facial expression is natural and her make-up is sober in these five photographs. The other five photographs within the first group are intimate portraits of Oka in unidentified settings. The extreme close-up of her eyes suggests the unconscious captured in an unguarded moment (Fig. 6.10); another close-up shows her eyes wide open (Fig. 6.14); a blurry photograph obscures her gesture of raising her arms behind her head (Fig. 6.18); a tie patterned with the U.S. flag flanks Oka's face (Fig. 6.17); the semi-nude portrait of Oka presents her as almost melting into the light (Fig. 6.11). The ten photographs above can be seen as both casual fashion photography and snapshots of Takanashi's and Oka's private moments together.

The second group (Fig. 6.13), however, sets a tone different from that of the first group. Among the portraits of Oka in *Provoke 2*, Takanashi inserted two photographs that he had shot for the fashion magazine *High Fashion*. The photograph on the left originally appeared in the December 1968 issue (Fig. 6.20), and the photograph on the right appeared in the April 1968 issue (Fig. 6.21). In the next section, I will further examine Takanashi's set of photographs in *Provoke 2*.

In *Provoke 3*, Takanashi's photographs from the fashion shows of Courrèges and Paco Rabanne in 1969 indicate both his agenda of illuminating fashion as a culture and *Provoke's* unconventional image making. Takanashi took two photographs of Courrèges's epoch-making miniskirts in an extremely remote manner, stressing their informality (Figs. 6.22 and 6.23).

⁴⁶⁵ Takanashi took photographs of Figures. 5.1, 5.12, 5.15, and 5.19 at the Kōbe port in the western part of Japan. The port houses Japan's first freightliner terminal, which was completed in 1967.

These two photographs seem to present the backstage of a fashion show, because the models appear to be standing in unchoreographed poses and are specifically in front of a black door that is, perhaps, the entrance to the stage. Takanashi thus captured an unfashionable incident during a fashion show, yet the alien-like costumes certainly evoke the radical ideas of a young designer.

With his *are-bure-boke* photographs, Takanashi captured the essence of an innovative Paco Rabanne wire-mesh dress. All of the photographs appear to have been taken in the dark and so do not, at first sight, convey the details of the dress. However, one of the photographs (Fig. 6.24) shows the dress's gleaming small dots, suggesting that the outfit was made of some light-emitting or light-reflecting materials. Takanashi presented the reverse print of the photograph (Fig. 6.25) in *Provoke 3* in order to "create a visual rhythm in [his] section."⁴⁶⁶

Two other photographs also document the Paco Rabanne show (Figs. 6.26 and 6.27). In Figure 6.27, viewers witness what appear to be two figures, one on the right page and one on the left page in the two-page spread. The blurred outlines of the figures suggest the trajectory of their motion. As a result, the model on the right page appears to be simultaneously facing the front and the side. The same photograph appeared in the July 1969 issue of *High Fashion* (Fig. 6.28). Compared to the photographs that another photographer, Masubuchi Tatsuo, took of a model in a Paco Rabanne dress (Fig. 6.29), Takanashi's is far more radical for its degree of movement and spontaneity. In fact, the title of the article that accompanies Takanashi's photograph is "Watashi tachi no mirai gaku" [Our futurology], and the title implies a tone of advancement in both Takanashi's radical photography and Paco Rabanne's use of innovative materials.

Figure 6.27 shows only a model's legs and their reflection on a highly polished stage floor. The mesh-like dress worn by the model strongly suggests that the photographed image is from the Paco Rabanne show. A low vantage point, and an unidentifiable white object on the

⁴⁶⁶ Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

right, work to mask the subject (i.e., the fashion model) and obscure the purpose of this photograph. Like other issues of *Provoke*, *Provoke 3* provides neither a caption nor an explanation of any kind accompanying its photographs, so the viewer must struggle to figure out what the photograph is depicting. The two fashion shows are believed to be the designers' debut in Japan. Thus, Takanashi's photographs for *Provoke 3* celebrate emerging designers in Japan while incorporating *Provoke's* radical characteristics of *are-bure-boke* (although some photographs show only *bure-boke*).

Overall, Takanashi's photographs in *Provoke 1*, *2*, and *3* are not conventional fashion photography. In almost all of his photographs, as they appear in the printed journal, there is little evidence that Takanashi paid attention to the gutter (i.e., to two-page spreads' central vertical margins that meet at the binding).⁴⁶⁷ For example, the models in Figures 6.14, 6.16-6.19 appear in the gutters, and some of them are slightly distorted. This unconventionality is also observable in Takanashi's presentation of unflattering daily fashion-industry work, as seen in Figure 6.7.

In his conveyance of newness in fashion, Takanashi captured the essence of design (i.e., the medium of the Paco Rabanne dress) rather than displaying its details. Just like other *Provoke* photographers' challenges to the established genres of photography, Takanashi took up fashion as his subject to generate unique images. Thus, Takanashi's photographs in *Provoke* present fashion as a serious subject for photography, in opposition to Taki's views on permissible subjects for this medium.

Takanashi's Project in *Provoke 2*: Mixing His Commercial and Personal Photographs

⁴⁶⁷ According to editor Ivan Vartanian, it is evident that *Provoke* photographers highlighted the substance of photographs rather than emphasize the photographs' representativeness. Vartanian, "The Japanese Photobook: Toward an Immediate Media," in *Japanese Photobooks of the 1960s and '70s* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2009), 17.

Of all Takanashi's works in *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, those in *Provoke 2* most explicitly demonstrate his distinctive way of digesting *Provoke's* manifesto. I would argue that Takanashi's various kinds of photographs in *Provoke 2* effectively shake up viewers' thoughts on photography. The twelve photographs show more than just the intricate balance between fashion photography and personal records of everyday life: the photographs reveal photography's multiple stages and such aspects therein as the time differences between the moment a scene is snapped and the moment the film is developed. These photographs, through their revelatory function, encourage viewers to look *at* the photographs rather than *into* them. What I mean by 'look into' is a mode of reading that focuses on what photographs depict, while 'look at' refers to the act of grasping photographs for themselves and within a larger context. For example, people who are aware that a Takanashi photograph is a component of *Provoke 2* are looking *at* the photograph, whereas people who focus on what the photograph represents are looking *into* the photograph. In other words, the two different groups of photographs prevent viewers from "reading" Takanashi's photographs in any simple way, so that the difference between these groups makes viewers think about photography in general. Takanashi closely aligned himself with fashion photography while employing different modes of photography (chiefly personal photography and commercial photography). This served *Provoke's* manifesto in a unique way even while being notably different from the approaches adopted by other *Provoke* members.

As mentioned above, Takanashi inserted two photographs in *Provoke 2*, having initially taken them for *High Fashion*. The photograph on the left page in *Provoke 2* (Fig. 6.13) is derived from the article in the December 1968 issue of *High Fashion*, which concerns the special topic

“Renaissance,” and features outerwear designed by Japanese designers (Fig. 6.20).⁴⁶⁸ Figure 6.20 shows Oka, who is striking poses against the rough surface of a rocky wall. An accompanying text describes the A-line shape of Oka’s coat, which corresponds to Oka’s exaggerated triangular pose. Takanashi probably used a wide-angle lens to distort Oka’s natural proportions. The photograph on the right page in *Provoke 2* is derived from the article in the April 1968 issue of *High Fashion*, which concerns the special topic “Flashback to the Thirties,” and showcases the suits and skirts that were inspired by women’s fashion in the 1930s (Fig. 6.21). Oka is standing in front of a sleek imported car in the photograph. As with the previous photograph, this photograph is coupled with an explanatory text about the clothing.

These two photographs in *High Fashion* (Figs. 6.20 and 6.21) look far different from the corresponding photographs in *Provoke 2* (Fig. 6.13). This difference stems from two characteristics; the size of the photographs relative to the size of the page and Takanashi’s manipulation of photographs in and of themselves. First, the photographs in *Provoke 2* are much smaller than the photographs in *High Fashion*. The two photographs in *Provoke 2* appear in the center of the page, as if the photographs are works of art hung on a museum wall. In contrast, Figures 6.20 and 6.21 in *High Fashion* are equivalent in size to the magazine’s overall size (i.e., the photographs are almost full-page spreads), and are embellished with texts and typography. Second, Takanashi most likely manipulated the photograph on the left page of *Provoke 2* (Fig. 6.13). The tonality is darker around the frame of the photograph, probably owing to a dodging technique (Takanashi loosely covered up Oka, thereby both preventing her figure’s exposure to light during the printing process and making the background—by comparison—slightly darker than her). The two photographs in question, through their transfer from a fashion magazine to a

⁴⁶⁸ Okada contributed a short essay to the first page of “Renaissance.”

photography journal, evolved from being commercial photographs to becoming “the artist’s creation.”

These characteristics bring into view the differences between Figure 6.13 and the rest of the photographs in *Provoke 2* (Figs. 6.1, 6.10-6.12, 6.14-6.19). While Figure 6.13 is Takanashi’s creation, which looks like a work of art, the remaining photographs are all two-page spreads and less pretentious in their mode of presentation. The degree of difference between the two groups of photographs is so large that readers would realize that they are looking at two different kinds of photographs. At the moment of this realization, readers would switch their mode of seeing the photographs from looking *into* to looking *at*. The two groups of photographs, in relation to each other, reveal that Takanashi’s photographs are not windows on reality, but are expressive of differences within photography. Therefore, the mixing of photographs from Takanashi’s personal project with ones taken for commercial purposes turn them all into critical components of *Provoke* photography.

Takanashi’s Project in *Provoke 2*: Using Black Frames and Forming a Narrative

Takanashi’s section in *Provoke 2* does more than just present a personal project’s photographs (Figs. 6.1, 6.10-6.12, 6.14-6.19) and mix them with photographs taken for commercial projects (Fig. 6.13). Takanashi also forms a narrative and enhances the visual experience of viewers. He does so by relying on three tactics: (1) a stylistic treatment of photography, (2) an effective use of props, (3) and a specific sequenced presentation of his photographs. These tactics further complicate the effects of his photographs, and promote the oscillation between viewers’ looking *into* and viewers’ looking *at* the photographs. Indeed, the renowned photography critic Shigemori Kōen highly praised Takanashi’s ability to form a

narrative with a series of photographs (Shigemori used the term ‘photo-essay’) in the roundtable discussion in 1968.⁴⁶⁹

For example, the first and last photographs of Takanashi’s section in *Provoke 2* (Figs. 6.1 and 6.19) are circumscribed with black frames. These frames are additional factors working to blur the boundary between photography as depiction and photography as material object. Creating the black frame was a technical matter requiring the use of a crafted film carrier with which to print the photographs; the photographer would manually scrape the window of the film carrier with an abrasive material, and the window of the film carrier would be slightly larger than the size of the negative. In this way, the gap between the window and the whole negative turned out to be a black frame. According to Takanashi, he occasionally used those frames to show the viewer that the photographs had undergone no cropping.⁴⁷⁰ So the black frames seem to enhance the straightforwardness of the two photographs (Figs. 6.1 and 6.19), a characteristic that is not nearly as present—if at all—in Figure 6.13, which displays the world of fashion with an emphasis on fictitiousness.

At the same time, one should note that the black frames are direct references to the shape of the film carrier. In the photographs with black frames, both the photographs and the frames are pointers that help shape people’s perceptions of the photographs’ meanings: the photographs themselves most directly suggest Oka, who was in front of the camera at the time of the shooting; the black frames most directly suggest Takanashi’s manual work during the printing

⁴⁶⁹ Shigemori Kōen, in Nakai Kōichi, Nakamura Makoto, and Mukai Hideo, “Tokushū/’67=’68 no kōkoku shashinka o erabu: Kōkoku shashin no genjō to kadai—11 nin no senkō katei ni miru konnichi no mondai ten” [Special topic: Selecting 11 commercial photographers from the years 1967 and 1968: The conditions and the assignments of commercial photography—Today’s issues arising from selection processes as used by eleven photographers], roundtable discussion, *Komāsharu foto/ Commercial photography* 50 (February 1968): 58, 61.

⁴⁷⁰ Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

process. Thus, two temporal stages in a photograph's development can become visible in these two photographs: the first temporal stage being the time of shooting, and the second temporal stage being the time of printing.

Second, Takanashi further complicates the different components of photography by the effective use of props. For example, the very first photograph in Takanashi's section in *Provoke 2* (Fig. 6.1) is of Oka holding a brochure about director William Klein's black-and-white movie *Qui êtes-vous, Polly Maggoo?*⁴⁷¹ This, the first feature film Klein directed, satirizes the vanity of the fashion world and mass media. Two parallel stories unfold in the movie: a French TV crew creates a documentary series about fashion model Polly Maggoo, with whom a fictional country's prince (Prince Igor) falls in love, although the relationship does not come to anything by the end of the movie. In the movie, Klein mixes multiple layers of fiction and reality. For example, Dorothy MacGowan, who played the role of Polly Maggoo, was a fashion model in real life; in fact, parts of MacGowan's biography served as Polly's biography in the movie. The documentary TV show about Polly and a TV commercial she was in are also part of the movie; thus, Klein imposes another fiction (a fake TV show and commercial) on his own fiction (the movie itself). Furthermore, Klein filmed props such as paper cutouts and photo-montages in ways that never materialize in real life, thus emphasizing the magnitude of the movie's artifice. Despite this exaggerated non-realism, Klein interlaced hyper-realistic footage of unidentified mass demonstrations and accurately realistic footage of a royal family's procession through a city.

In the photograph referencing this movie (Fig. 6.1), Polly Maggoo's face on the brochure covers Oka's face, and the cover-up further complicates the photograph's perceivable message.

⁴⁷¹ Takanashi obtained this brochure when the production company invited him to attend an informal party during a stay in Paris. Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

Polly's face literally masks Oka's identity. One possible interpretation is that the photograph is pointing out a resemblance between MacGowan/Polly and Oka, because both of them are fashion models in the visual media. Another possible interpretation is that Oka's private self is masked by her public self as a fashion model.

The black frame's enclosure of the photographs, indicating the printing process, merits further attention. The viewer would perhaps have difficulty grasping what they are looking at: whether the photograph depicting a woman holding a brochure is about the analogy between MacGowan/Polly and Oka, or is the symbolic representation of Oka as private and public selves or is about the material state of photography, which is an arrangement of light-sensitive chemicals on paper.

Third, the order of the photographs within Takanashi's section forms a narrative that helps enhance readers' awareness of the material state of his photographs. None of the photographs in Takanashi's section in *Provoke 2* extend to the edges of the journal's pages. The smaller size of photographs is in fact another distinctive characteristic of Takanashi's photographs in *Provoke 2*, because all his photographs in *Provoke 1* and *Provoke 3* bleed all the way out to the edges of each page. Takanashi's section begins and ends with black-framed photographs (Figs. 6.1 and 6.19). Binding all the section's other photographs together in the middle, the first and last photographs signal the beginning and the end of the narrative. Apparently, Takanashi used the same photo carrier when he printed these two photographs, and the slight deformation of the black frame in the exact same areas (Figs. 6.30 and 6.31) proves the accuracy of this assertion. The presence of a single photo carrier would further strengthen the proposal that the black frames in the two photographs are equivalent to each other and that they can function as filmic cues in the narrative.

However, Takanashi's project in *Provoke 2* counters Natori Yōnosuke's use of photography as a story-telling device, because what Takanashi's project demonstrates is more a questioning of an established narrative form of photography than a story about Oka. Takanashi's chosen form creates incoherency and opacity of storyline. In contrast, Natori's *kumi shashin* features a narrative form that could effectively convey the content of a story. In an interview in 1968, Takanashi clearly stated that he did not form narratives following a pattern similar to *kumi shashin*, which (Takanashi thought) has a climax in its narrative structure, and he added that he did not hierarchically align his photographs⁴⁷²; in other words, the form of Takanashi's photographs in *Provoke 2* runs counter to the very purpose of narrative.

A set of Takanashi's stylish photographs in *Provoke 2* is reminiscent of Nakahira's sequential photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (as described in the previous chapter), but the incoherence of Takanashi's photographs tends to disrupt the flow. By inserting both fashion photographs from *High Fashion* and black-framed photographs into *Provoke 2*, he created a presentation where a viewer of the journal would "jump in" to consider an individual photograph and would then "jump out" to consider the larger context of the photographs as an assemblage. By this and other means, he demonstrated fashion's ability to serve the task of critical reading in photography.

III. Moriyama versus Warhol

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, Moriyama's works in *Provoke 3* are unmistakably Warholian. However, Moriyama's and Warhol's intentions, as well as the outcomes of their intentions, are very different from each other. Moriyama focused on producing his works

⁴⁷² Takanashi Yutaka, "Chansu no yokogami o toraeru" [Catching the hair on the side of personification of chance], interview by Nakahara Yūsuke, *Tenbō* [Horizon] 116 (August 1968): 163.

through multiple printed media such as photography, photocopies, and journals, whereas Warhol created one-and-only original paintings by using such methods of reproduction as photography and silkscreen printing. This section explores the fundamental difference between Moriyama's *Provoke 3* works and Warhol's works. I argue that Moriyama sought reality in photography in his own terms and eliminated moralistic messages from his photography under the influence of Warhol. I also argue that Moriyama's works ultimately ask the question, what makes photography photography?

Resonance between Moriyama's *Provoke 3* Works and Warhol's Works

First, let us see how Moriyama's works remind viewers of Warhol's works. Thirty pages of Moriyama's section in *Provoke 3* are devoted solely to the merchandise display at a *Yours* supermarket near *Provoke*'s office in Aoyama. Almost all the works exhibit U.S. brand-name commodities such as Campbell's soup (Fig. 6.32) and Coca-Cola (Fig. 6.33), both of which remind informed viewers of Andy Warhol's renowned works such as *200 Campbell's Soup Cans* (1962) (Fig. 6.34) and *Green Coca-Cola Bottles* (1962) (Fig. 6.35). Other photographs present familiar U.S. brand names: Green Giant (Fig. 6.36), V8 (Fig. 6.2), and Gerber (Fig. 6.37). In the aisles, Moriyama captured other miscellaneous commodities from bars of soap (Fig. 6.38), laundry detergent (Fig. 6.39), unidentifiable canned food (Fig. 6.40), and canned corned-beef (Fig. 6.41) to cartons of juice (Fig. 6.42) and toiletry articles (Fig. 6.43), as well as several unidentifiable items (Fig. 6.44). Other works focus on the aisles of the supermarket (Figs. 6.45-6.47), and demonstrate Moriyama's rough manner of taking photographs. Moriyama photocopied all his photographs for this issue as a way of preparing them for publication. Moriyama's playful approach to editing the photographs extended from novel forms of image making (i.e., his

spontaneous shooting style and slapdash manner of developing his negatives and prints) to obvious forms of manipulation (i.e., photocopying). Capturing the U.S. brand-name commodities and using his own method of reproduction for his works, Moriyama created images that instantly remind one of Warhol's iconic works.

Just as Moriyama's works are reminiscent of Warhol's, Taki frankly admitted his indebtedness to Warhol's repetitive images for Taki's *Provoke 3* contributions.⁴⁷³ Taki created a series of twenty-seven photocopied photographs of close-up facial portraits over thirteen spreads. The subjects were thirteen people who had visited the *Provoke* office.⁴⁷⁴ All of the faces except for three are repeated two or more times (Figs. 6.48-6.57). Among them, Moriyama's face is repeated four times in the four-page fold-out spread (Fig. 6.57).⁴⁷⁵ Only figures 6.58, 6.59, and 6.60 are singular images. These unflattering portraits of unidentified people looming out of the darkness are invigorating. Some of the photographs are quite confrontational, with the photographed subject gazing back at viewers, almost shattering the viewers' own gaze. For example, in the three-page fold-out spread of a man sticking out his tongue (Fig. 6.49), his faces seem to jump out of the page. (This occurs also because the bound pages are too stiff to open flat.) Moriyama and Taki exercised mechanical manipulation in processing the photographs, and the outcome of this manipulation became integral to the photographic works, giving them an unmistakable resonance with Warhol's works.

Nevertheless, this section focuses just on Moriyama's works in *Provoke 3*. The reason for

⁴⁷³ Taki Kōji, in Taki Kōji, Ōshima Hiroshi, Iizawa Kōtarō, and Yasumi Akihito, "Shinpojiumu: Gendai shashin no isō—Purovōku ikō/ 'Provoke' and After," panel discussion, *Déjà vu* 14 (October 1993), 39.

⁴⁷⁴ Moriyama Daidō, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 8, 2010.

⁴⁷⁵ Moriyama did not know how the photograph would turn out when Taki took the photograph of him at the office. Moriyama, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 8, 2010.

this one-sided focus is that Taki's opinions about Warhol at the time were—and remain—rather obscure while Moriyama has been vocal about Warhol's influence on him since the time of *Provoke 3*. During an interview conducted in the 1990s, Taki declared that a primary inspiration for his works in *Provoke 3* had been Warhol; however, Taki did not mention Warhol in his writings either in *Provoke* or in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*.⁴⁷⁶ For this reason, the approaches one uses to examine Taki's works should differ from those used to examine Moriyama's. To treat Moriyama's and Taki's works in the same vein would be to risk oversimplifying them; to avoid such an outcome, the current discussion refrains from exploring the differences between Taki's works and Warhol's (Taki emphasizes reproduction against Warhol's repetition), although the topic merits attention in future research.

Commonalities between Moriyama's Background in Design and Warhol's

A key factor in the development of Moriyama's works was his association with other disciplines, namely design and art. In particular, Moriyama once wanted to be a painter, studied graphic design at high school, and worked as a graphic designer before becoming a photographer. These facts partly explain the parallel between Moriyama and Warhol. Only a handful of professional photographers had familiarity with disciplines outside photography around the time of *Provoke*, Moriyama being among the few.⁴⁷⁷ Moriyama's association with the field of design affected—and was reflected in—the making of *Provoke*. In 1975, after *Provoke* had folded, his active involvement in the field of graphic design took the form of contributions to

⁴⁷⁶ Taki, "Shinpojiumu: Gendai shashin no isō—Purovōku ikō/ 'Provoke' and After," 39.

⁴⁷⁷ Among the established photographers, Ōtsuji Kiyoji was active in the field of art, and Hosoe Eikoh collaborated with various artists and cultural practitioners in his works. Hosoe is also known for his portraits of the novelist Mishima Yukio from the 1963 photobook *Killed by Roses*. Another group of photographers (including Anzai Shigeo and Hirata Minoru) recorded artists' works.

the magazine *Dezain/ Design*, which had been launched in October 1959 by the prominent art publisher Bijutsu Shuppansha. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the editor-in-chief of *Design*, Okuda Akio, paid considerable attention to photography, and his magazine introduced the public to the literary and photographic works of *Provoke* members.

From around 1968, Okuda presented *Provoke* members' photography and writings in an attempt to promote experimental photographers, because he felt that powerful editors such as Yamagishi Shōji, the editor-in-chief of *Camera Mainichi*, monopolized the majority of established photographers.⁴⁷⁸ In this context, Takanashi was the first *Provoke* photographer to be engaged by Okuda: in the November 1968 issue of *Design*, Takanashi's interview was in a serialized monthly feature showcasing designers and their works.⁴⁷⁹ As discussed in Chapter Four, Taki and Nakahira alternately contributed their writings on photography throughout 1969. And Moriyama presented his silkscreen works in the April 1975 issue of *Design* (Fig. 6.61). The colorful background of these silkscreen works are reverse prints of blossoming cherry trees, whose flower petals open in black.

In addition to *Design*, *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* played a pivotal role in supporting Moriyama's artistic activities.⁴⁸⁰ This journal was founded in 1966 by Awazu Kiyoshi, a prominent graphic designer who aimed to establish a discursive forum for graphic design and, more generally, for discussion about current politics. Moriyama presented a graphic work entitled “♀♂” for the October 1969 issue of *The Design Review* (Fig. 6.62). The work was

⁴⁷⁸ Okuda Akio, interview by author, IC recording, Urawa, Saitama, October 27, 2010.

⁴⁷⁹ Before this issue, Takanashi's photograph had appeared in the July 1961 issue of *Design*, but its chief function was to present the design of household products, not the merits of his photography as photography.

⁴⁸⁰ In English, *Dezain hihyō* literally means “design criticism,” but the English title given to the magazine was *The Design Review*.

based on a Cornell University scientific report on bathroom usages, which Moriyama found at Taki's office and photocopied.⁴⁸¹ A striking feature of this work was that Moriyama presented the printed material on another printed media (i.e., a journal) instead of blowing up the original into the oversize painting or poster. Moreover, it was rare that such design work would be created by a photographer, not by a graphic designer. Moriyama's keen interest in mechanical reproduction is on display in this work as well as in his works in *Provoke 3*.

Are Moriyama's Works "False Copies"?

Rosalind E. Krauss's interpretation of photography as "false copy" in her "A Note on Photography and the Simulacral" addresses the notion of originals and copies, helping to illuminate the difference between the handling of this topic in the West and in Japan. The notion of originals and copies is important to my research, because Moriyama's works in *Provoke 3* address that same notion through their multiple processes of production, namely photography, photocopy, photomechanical reproduction and book binding. Krauss's argument reveals that one needs to assess Moriyama's works in the context of Japanese photography practices, even if Warhol's influence on Moriyama's works may seem straightforward to U.S. readers.

Firmly grounded in the Western art discourse, Krauss found photography's uniqueness to lie in its multiplicity, a characteristic that obscures the issue of originality as an aesthetic criterion.⁴⁸² Drawing on Deleuze's reading of simulacra, in which the original cedes place to a quasi-original, Krauss goes one step further, identifying photography as a "false copy" that

⁴⁸¹ Moriyama Daidō, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 8, 2010.

⁴⁸² Rosalind E. Krauss, "A Note on Photography and the Simulacral," *October* 31 (Winter 1984): 58-59.

points only to the referent of the original, not to the original itself.⁴⁸³

In her effort to help establish a discourse proper to photography, Krauss examines Cindy Sherman's and Irving Penn's photography. Krauss negatively assesses Penn's artistic photographs of still life arrangements and his advertisement photographs, both of which reflect his attempt to present objects as they are in themselves. Krauss observes that Penn's attempt owes much to the Western artistic tradition of presenting objects as entities existing independent of perception (as originals). According to her, Penn tries to resurrect the same value in photography. As a result, Penn aestheticizes photography and his photographs are nothing more than simulations of art (Krauss calls this the *reality effect*).⁴⁸⁴ However, according to Krauss, Sherman successfully evokes the critical thinking associated with photography by taking both objective and subjective positions in her works.⁴⁸⁵ Sherman presents herself as a stereotype (as opposed to the typical "creative artist") in the multiplicitous medium of photography. Krauss argues that the confusion of subject and object leads viewers to question the very notion of originals and copies. Krauss argues that Sherman's photographs exhibit and promote structural analyses of photography rather than present themselves simply as works of "art photography."

Nevertheless, Krauss's idea of "false copy," which collapses the dichotomous notion of originals and copies, does not apply to the culture of photography in 1960s Japan.⁴⁸⁶ In the context of photographers presenting their personal works, photography prints were merely "production art" for publications, and were sometimes thrown away after the works were printed

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 62.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 63-68.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., 59-62.

⁴⁸⁶ I exclude the cases in which photographs are used only for illustration purposes, such as those typical of newspapers and medical research.

in a publication.⁴⁸⁷ In turn, the final printed product became the original instead of a copy (or to be exact, the printed product became the final original copy of the previously original copy of an original). Therefore, the most problematic part of Krauss's argument is that she does not designate exactly when a photograph is going to be acknowledged as a work of art in the photograph's production process. As mentioned above, there is a difference between this timing in the contemporary West and this timing in late-1960s Japan.

Krauss's argument in Moriyama's case, however, is partially true. Like any other photographs, Moriyama's *Provoke 3* works are multiples, not uniquely singular. In this respect, each of his photographs can be considered a "false copy" that "takes the idea of difference or nonresemblance and internalizes it, setting it up within the given object as its very condition of being."⁴⁸⁸ In other words, Moriyama's *Provoke 3* works establish themselves as their own beings. So Krauss's idea of "false copy" is applicable to Moriyama's *Provoke 3* works insofar as they blur the distinctions between originals and copies.

However, Moriyama's *Provoke 3* works involve two other sources: his own photographs and his photocopied production art, both of which served as the originals for Moriyama's work. That is to say, the source photographs and the photocopied production art can be simultaneously the original and the false copy. In this regard, Moriyama's source photographs, photocopied production art, and *Provoke 3* works are all paradoxically the originals in a conceptual sense and false copies in a physical sense. This blurring of the divide between original and copy was culturally specific and not pursued for aesthetic objectives. As I have explained, in Japanese photographic practices, the notion of original has not had a status superior to copies.

⁴⁸⁷ Nishii Kazuo, *Shashin henshūsha: Yamagishi Shōji e no omāju* [The editors for photography: An homage to Yamagishi Shōji] (Tokyo: Madosha, 2002), 48-49.

⁴⁸⁸ Krauss, "A Note on Photography and the Simulacral," 62.

Krauss draws chiefly on Western art traditions in her attempt to help establish a new discourse of photography, and this dependency ironically demonstrates that her argument is a by-product of those traditions—traditions that were never at the core of Moriyama’s work. The conditions of photographic reproduction differ from one another by country, and these differences entail research on individual countries’ works. Therefore, one needs to assess Moriyama’s works within the context of Japanese cultural conventions and photographic practices.

Differences between Moriyama’s Works and Warhol’s

Moriyama’s works are fundamentally different from Warhol’s works in terms of (1) methods of production, (2) media, and (3) the meaning of its subjects. First and foremost, the production method of photocopying differentiates Moriyama from Warhol, because Warhol did not use this medium for his art until the 1970s.⁴⁸⁹ Speaking solely of techniques, Moriyama was rather closer to the New York-based gallerist Seth Siegelau and artists like Mel Bochner than to Warhol, because Siegelau and Bochner employed photocopying for their exhibitions and works in the late 1960s.⁴⁹⁰

One effect of photocopying is to emphasize the impersonal and personal aspects of

⁴⁸⁹ Marco Livingstone, “Do It Yourself: Notes on Warhol’s Technique,” in *Andy Warhol: A Retrospective*, ed. Kynaston McShine, exh. cat., (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1989), 74.

⁴⁹⁰ In 1968, Siegelau and John Wendler held an exhibition that was within the exhibition catalogue and that was entitled *Xerox Book*. The participants were Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, and Lawrence Weiner. Mizunuma Hirokazu, “Fuyō ni nattara suterareru āto—Nyū yōku no konsepuchuaru āto to efemera” [Art that will be discarded after use: Conceptual art and ephemera in New York] in *Zerogurafi to 70 nendai/ Xerography and `70s* [sic], ed. Tokyo Publishing House, exh. cat., (Tokyo: Fuji Xerox Co., Ltd, 2005), 14. *Zerogurafi to 70 nendai/ Xerography and `70s* [sic], checklist of exhibition, ed. Tokyo Publishing House (Tokyo: Fuji Xerox Co., Ltd., 2005), n.p.

photography. As demonstrated in Chapter Four, *Provoke* photographers (especially Moriyama, Taki, and Nakahira) concerned themselves, as photographers, with the mechanical functions of cameras and with the self's agency. By being photocopied, Moriyama's photographs went through three mechanistic stages—the camera stage, the photocopying stage, and the book-printing stage; this tripartite process diluted photographers' conscious decisions in the photographic process.

At the same time, photocopying catered to Moriyama's personal interest in "flatness." Moriyama dared to photocopy the photographs he had taken, even though the photographs required no copying according to conventional photographic practices. The photocopying of photographs is, obviously, a conscious decision on the part of photographers. In fact, Moriyama was personally fascinated by the two-dimensional nature of both photography and graphic design. His affinity for graphic design first took shape when he saw Western magazines such as *LIFE* and *Playboy* while working as an apprentice for photographer Iwamiya Takeji.⁴⁹¹ Rather than read the content of those magazines in the United States, Moriyama zeroed in on the visual pattern. This experience created a basis for Moriyama's photography. He described his desire to "flatten" the world through photography: "when I get high, I just want to photograph completely flat surfaces of the city like dried sardines."⁴⁹² Then, he concluded, "My flattening is probably a way to turn every phenomenon I see into a pattern and design."⁴⁹³ Thus, photocopying was the

⁴⁹¹ Moriyama Daidō, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 8, 2010.

⁴⁹² Suzuki Hitoshi, "Zettai heimen toshi: Sugomi no aru furatto sa e mukete," [An absolutely flat city: Toward a fierce flatness], interview, *d/SIGN* 10 (April 2005): 48. "。。。自分がトリップ状態にハマってしまったときは限りなく街の表面だけをペラペラに撮りたい、タタミイワシのように撮りたいってね。"

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.* "ぼくの平面化というのは、視界に映るあらゆる事象をデザインに、パターンにしたいんでしょね、きっと。"

perfect means for Moriyama to transform his photographs into flattened patterns.

Second, *Provoke 3* was printed on cheap paper using a relatively inexpensive printing method because of budget shortages. *Provoke* members used a printing method involving a zinc plate called *jinku ban insatsu* [zinc-plate printing]. The paper's coarse texture further pushed photography into the realm of print art, and the pitch-black ink emphasizes the flatness of images. For example, Figure 6.33 combines the attributes of photography with those of print art. The image shows a supermarket aisle with dozens of beverage cases. The image on the left-hand page retains a higher degree of truthfulness than does the photographic work on the right-hand page, in which the image appears in reverse. On the right page, the reversed logotypes of such beverages as Coca-Cola, 7-UP, and Pepsi are evidence of Moriyama's craft. By using this approach, Moriyama transformed the descriptive power of photography and the logotypes of beverages into novel, distinct graphic patterns. This effect and the lack of a sense of depth (stemming especially from the blacked-out recessions between the cases) make the medium of this work incomprehensible. Moriyama's works tested the boundaries between printmaking and photography: are these photographs? Or print works? Or both at the same time? Thus, Moriyama attempted to create "material to provoke thought" from his cross-disciplinary approach.

Inexpensive approaches to production demonstrate that Moriyama's works were always free from the rigid dichotomy between originals and copies because the works are simultaneously photographs, print works, and journal material, and all of the works are "inherently multiple" from the start. In contrast, most of Warhol's paintings are larger-than-life sizes and were painted on linen or canvas, which are traditional media in Western art. Warhol used multiplicity—mass-production commodities and photography—to disrupt paintings' status as artists' original work. This multiplicity ironically makes Warhol's works both iconic and

subject to his creation. Warhol's blurring of "highbrow" and "lowbrow" cultures is underscored by what Krauss refers to as the combination of painting and photography.

The third difference between Moriyama's and Warhol's works concerns the meaning of Moriyama's subject. Moriyama's photographic treatment of U.S. consumer products yields connotations that are far different from those in Warhol's case. Warhol chose Campbell's soup cans, according to him, because they had contained his lunch for decades.⁴⁹⁴ This extreme banality had been his life. In contrast, the U.S. products had been a delicacy when Moriyama was a child, and they still were in the late 1960s, when the currency exchange rate of the US dollar and the Japanese yen was more than three times higher than today (i.e., 2011). If chocolate and chewing gum symbolized liberation and defeat for the Japanese in the aftermath of the Second World War, Campbell's soup and V8 would have been fancy products for trend-savvy Japanese consumers around the time of *Provoke* (Aoyama, which boasted both a supermarket and the *Provoke* office, was transforming into a fashionable district of Tokyo during the time). In fact, Moriyama recalled that, in 1968, he had felt chilled by the sterilized and cheerful atmosphere of the *Yours* supermarket, which contrasted with the clamor caused by the concurrent student demonstrations outside the store.⁴⁹⁵ Thus, the subject of Moriyama's photographic works is neither unfettered celebrations of particular commodities nor the incorporation of "lowbrow" into his works. Moriyama felt ambivalent (sometimes ironic) affinity for the subject against the historical and social backdrop of Japan.

⁴⁹⁴ G.R.S. Swenson, "What Is Pop Art? Answers from 8 Painters, Part I," *Artnews* 62 (November 1963): 26; reprinted in "Warhol in His Own Words," selected by Neil Printz, in *Andy Warhol: A Retrospective* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1989), 460.

⁴⁹⁵ Moriyama Daidō, *Inu no kioku* [Memories of a dog] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1984; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), 68.

Moriyama's View of Warhol: 1. His Public Persona

Moriyama's view of Warhol was both culturally and personally specific. I raise two aspects of Warhol that Moriyama adopted: one is Warhol's public persona and the other is Warhol's style of exhibition catalogue. First, Moriyama observed Warhol's lack of principle in making films and, with a tone of admiration, referred to him as an "embodiment of irresponsibility."⁴⁹⁶ Warhol's creative "irresponsibility" (such as his abrupt changes to a project's subject and his atypical methods of film making) and the artist's own utterances about the shallowness of his works, attracted Moriyama, who was fed up with honorable, didactic photography.

Indeed, journalist Obigane Akio states that, when the Japanese media first introduced Warhol's works to the Japanese public, Japanese critics and periodicals paid attention mostly to Warhol's films, overlooking his paintings.⁴⁹⁷ According to Obigane, the Japanese translation of Henry Geldzahler's essay on *Sleep* in the August 1966 issue of *Eiga hyōron* [Film criticism] was the first major article on Warhol in Japan.⁴⁹⁸ Having examined numerous essays on Warhol's films, Obigane argues that Japan in the mid-1960s received Warhol more as a cult figure of underground culture than as a Pop artist.⁴⁹⁹ Obigane observes that, although Japanese mass

⁴⁹⁶ Moriyama Daidō, "8 gatsu 2 ka Yamanoue hoteru 'taidan' Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō" ['Dialogue' Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō at the Yamanoue Hotel on August 2] in *Shashin yo sayōnara* [Farewell photography] (Tokyo: Shashin Hyōronsha, 1972), 287.

⁴⁹⁷ In the context of Japanese fine art, the first major essay on Warhol, "Jitsuzai e no fukki" [Returning to existence] by art critic Ishizaki Kōichirō, appeared in the May 1967 issue of *Gendai Bijutsu* [Contemporary art]. Art critic Tōno Yoshiaki is also known as a prominent figure who introduced Warhol's art works to Japan. Warhol visited Japan twice, in 1956 and 1974.

⁴⁹⁸ Obigane Akio, "Myths and Criticism: The History of Warhol's Reception in Japan" in *Andī uōhoru: 1956-86 jidai no kagami/ Andy Warhol 1956-86: Mirror of His Time*, ed. Hashimoto Keiko, et al (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun and Pittsburgh: the Andy Warhol Museum, 1996), 247.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid.

media's mystification of Warhol started in the 1970s, most Japanese writings about Warhol concerned his enigmatic existence, not his place in the context of U.S. art history: in Japan, "Warhol perfectly became pure media."⁵⁰⁰

This "irresponsibility of Warhol" meshed simultaneously with the consumption (appropriation) and the production of Moriyama's works. That is, in appropriating Warhol, Moriyama sought to stop viewers from reading further into his photographic works. And his attempt was successful. In his article "Sekai o tōkachi ni miru" [Behold the world as an equivalent], art critic Fujieda Teruo harshly criticized Moriyama's works in *Provoke 3*, declaring that they "betrayed" Moriyama as a photographer because of his straightforward adoption of Warhol's art.⁵⁰¹ Fujieda contrasted the works in *Provoke 3* to Moriyama's photographs entitled "Keishichō kōtsū anzen postā yori, jiko/ Smash-up" from the series "Akushidento/ Prepared or Not" in the June 1969 issue of *Asahi Camera* (Fig. 6.63).⁵⁰² For this work, Moriyama photographed a poster, issued by a police department in Japan, that depicted the aftermath of a car accident. It is easy to see that Moriyama's photographs unmistakably echoed—and still do—one of Warhol's works in his *Disaster* series (Fig. 6.64). However, Fujieda argued that while

⁵⁰⁰ Obigane Akio, "Shinwa to hihyō: Nihon ni okeru uōhoru jyuyōshi" [Myths and Criticism: The History of Warhol's Reception in Japan] in *Andī uōhoru: 1956-86 jidai no kagami/ Andy Warhol 1956-86: Mirror of His Time*, exh. cat., (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun and Pittsburgh: the Andy Warhol Museum, 1996), 244. 「。。。日本でまさしくより純粋なメディアとして完璧なウォーホルとなった」 This quote is from Japanese version of Obigane's text.

⁵⁰¹ Fujieda Teruo, "Sekai o tōkachi ni miru/ Behold the world as an equivalent," originally published in *Kikan shashin eizō/ The Photo Image* (March 1969); reprinted in *Moriyama Daidō to sono jidai* [Moriyama Daidō and his era], ed. Seikyūsha (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2007), 43-44.

⁵⁰² The given Japanese title "Keishichō kōtsū anzen postā yori, jiko" is translated as "From the poster for road safety, issued by the police department: Accident," but the Moriyama photographs' given English title is "Smash-up." Likewise, the series "Akushidento" is translated as "accident," but its given English title is "Prepared or Not." For more about Moriyama's "Prepared or Not: Smash-up," see Kai Yoshiaki's "Akushidento' no shōgeki imada nao" [The enduring impact of "Accident"] in Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, *Moriyama Daidō ron* [Theory on Moriyama Daidō] (Tokyo: Tankōsha, 2008).

Warhol used his work to explore the factors transforming his work into art, Moriyama explored the differences between living reality and photography-based reality, specifically in his “Prepared or Not, no. 6: Smash-up.”⁵⁰³ As much as the car accident in the poster had occurred in real life, Moriyama’s experience of seeing the poster was his reality, and Fujieda argued that Moriyama’s photography functioned as a connection linking the photographer’s reality to the reality of the car accident.⁵⁰⁴

In contrast to Fujieda’s extensive argument about “Prepared or Not, no. 6: Smash-up,” he rejected Moriyama’s art in *Provoke 3* in a single sentence. Fujieda stated that Moriyama’s works in *Provoke 3* were a “degradation” in their presentation of photography and that their quality as art was nil.⁵⁰⁵ Fujieda condemned Moriyama’s works as a mere parody of Warhol, because Fujieda did not see the meaning in this appropriation.⁵⁰⁶ Fujieda’s harsh criticism precisely reveals his failure to see the highly complicated nature of Moriyama’s contribution to *Provoke 3*.

In summary, Moriyama’s appropriation of Warhol’s “irresponsible” attitude was partly cultural and partly personal, and contributed to his political act of eliminating significant meanings from his photography. It might be said that Moriyama’s attempt was “successfully” received by Fujieda, who condemned Moriyama’s works for their shallowness.

Moriyama’s View of Warhol: 2. Warhol’s Exhibition Catalogue

⁵⁰³ Fujieda, “Sekai o tōkachi ni miru/ Behold the world as an equivalent,” 33-43.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., 41.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 43, 44.

⁵⁰⁶ Moriyama also presented photographs that were part of the above-mentioned series and that he had photographed TV screens and magazine articles. These photographs appeared in the January and August issues of *Camera Mainichi*.

While Moriyama eschewed the moralistic meanings frequently assigned to photography, his works in *Provoke 3* successfully prompted a fundamental question about photography: what is photography? And Moriyama obtained a hint of how to do so from one of Warhol's exhibition catalogues, which the Moderna Museet of Stockholm had published in 1968. In fact, according to Moriyama himself, he had never seen Warhol's works in person by the time of *Provoke's* publication.⁵⁰⁷ This means that Moriyama referenced the *reproduction* of Warhol's work, not the *actual* works by Warhol. Moriyama confessed that the exhibition catalogue, when he saw it, had completely overwhelmed him (Fig. 6.65).⁵⁰⁸ Edited by Warhol and others, the catalogue is unconventional in its absence of essays or, indeed, of any writing, other than some of Warhol's quotes at the beginning.⁵⁰⁹ The catalogue is divided into three parts (reproductions of his works, photos of the Factory by Billy Name, and photography by Stephen Eric Shore), and there is no structural hierarchy among them.

What is striking is that the entire catalogue—even the works like the *Campbell's Soup Cans* series and *Green Disaster*—are printed in black and white. Small dots appear in the gradation, indicating that the printing method was probably half tone. The paper is thin and coarsely textured, and tiny white spots are observable in the areas printed in black. Moriyama thought “this is *the* photography [italics mine]”⁵¹⁰ when he first viewed this striking mass of images, images that did not carry the weight of loaded meaning. Indeed, Warhol's casual presentation of photography was remarkably in sync with Moriyama's works such as his

⁵⁰⁷ Moriyama Daidō, Interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 8, 2010.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁹ Entitled *Andy Warhol*, the catalogue was edited by Andy Warhol, Kasper König, Pontus Hultén, and Olle Granath.

⁵¹⁰ Moriyama Daidō, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 8, 2010.

“Prepared or Not, no. 6: Smash-up.”

By looking at Warhol’s catalogue, Moriyama would have also found out that the degree of reality in photography was not determined by the mode of its presentation. Warhol’s works in the catalogue were, for Moriyama, his experience of reality, and to see copies of Warhol’s works was in no way less direct than to see the originals. In his dialogue with Nakahira in 1969, Moriyama acknowledged that a woman in printed materials would sometimes give him the impression of being more real than an actual woman.⁵¹¹ Likewise, Moriyama’s works in *Provoke 3* are hardcopies that are no less valuable than any other kind of printed material, including “false copies” and posters. As mentioned above, the notion of “vintage print” was virtually nonexistent in photographic practices in 1960s Japan, and the final form of production was usually the publication. This condition—a near lack of hierarchy between vintage prints and photography in print—would have further galvanized Moriyama’s belief that his works in *Provoke 3*, photocopied production art, the source photographs, and the objects that were photographed were all equally real.

Moriyama was preoccupied with the notion of reality in photography, and this preoccupation was given concrete form in his *Provoke 3* works, through which Moriyama inquired into the definitive nature of photography. Moriyama rejected what Walter Benjamin called the “cult value” of photography in order to pursue what Moriyama called the “resuscitation of reality” in his photography.⁵¹² According to Moriyama, “resuscitation of reality”

⁵¹¹ Moriyama Daidō and Nakahira Takuma, “Shashin to iu kotoba o nakuse” [Eradicating the term ‘photography’], originally published in *Design* (April 1969); reprinted in *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o suteru: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language] (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1970), 149.

⁵¹² Moriyama, “8 gatsu 2 ka Yamanoue hoteru ‘taidan’ Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō” [August 2 at Yamanoue Hotel, ‘dialogue’ Nakahira Takuma+Moriyama Daidō], 277, 305.

in photography refers to the release of photography from, for example, scientific or commercial genres.⁵¹³ Moriyama's assertion is even more distinctive when applied to his photographs in *Provoke 3*. Moriyama's "Prepared or Not, no. 6: Smash-up" in *Asahi Camera* and "♀♂" in *The Design Review* were credited as "duplication and composition by Moriyama Daidō." On the other hand, as mentioned elsewhere in this dissertation, this credit is absent from Moriyama's *Provoke 3* works. There are no explanatory texts accompanying Moriyama's works in *Provoke 3* even though the nature of these works is plainly different from the nature of Nakahira's and Takanashi's photographs in the same issue. Moriyama did not offer a definition of his works either as photography or as art.

IV. Nakahira and Contemporary Art

This section will highlight the *Provoke* photographers' relationship to Japanese contemporary art from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. As has been discussed, *Provoke* members interacted with contemporary artists and were quite active in genres outside photography. For example, Taki and Okada wrote numerous art-critical texts; Moriyama was an acquaintance of the prominent graphic designer Yokoo Tadanori, and collaborated with the poet-dramatist Terayama Shūji; Takanashi hung out with the former members of the avant-garde artist group Hi Red Center, Akasegawa Genpei, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, and Takamatsu Jirō⁵¹⁴; and Nakahira and Akasegawa of Hi Red Center collaborated with each other for the film magazine *Eiga hihyō* [Film criticism].⁵¹⁵

⁵¹³ Ibid., 305.

⁵¹⁴ Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

⁵¹⁵ Nakahira and Akasegawa jointly ran the series entitled "Akama ga mitari" [A red horse witnesses] in *Eiga hihyō* from the July 1971 to December 1971 issues. The series combined photography and cartoons

These associations indicate a multitude of possible cross-fertilizations between art and photography in Japan at the time. Although the boundary between photography and art had previously been rather clear in Japan, from the late 1960s onward, contemporary artists began to deploy photography in their artwork. At the same time, photography was beginning to acquire the status of “art,” as photography exhibitions became more prevalent in the 1970s. The time of *Provoke* was precisely a moment of transition, during which Nakahira had to negotiate his way through his two Biennale participations. Therefore, it is an urgent task to investigate the relationship between *Provoke* photography and contemporary art. If successful, the investigation should enrich the historical discourse on Japanese photography and art of the 1960s and 1970s. Selecting from all the possible cross-fertilizations, I will present two aspects, focusing on Nakahira’s works. First, the case of Nakahira’s (and Takanashi’s) participation in the *Biennale de Paris*, which placed *Provoke*’s photography in the context of international contemporary art. The *Biennale de Paris* was also critical as the main turning point in Nakahira’s quest to conceptualize photography. After the Biennale, Nakahira turned his back on spontaneous shooting, and started to confront objects more statically. Second, I will examine the case of Nakahira’s and *Provoke*’s influences on the artist Enokura Kōji.

I begin this section with a brief assessment of the place of Japanese photography in the world of contemporary art. This will be followed by an examination of Nakahira’s and Takanashi’s works at the *Biennale de Paris* to illustrate two important points: the differences between these two bodies of work regarding the photographers’ approach to photography, and how their different approaches paralleled photography’s place in fine art at the time. The section concludes with a close examination of Enokura’s various works to establish the influence that

for social satire. “Red horse” is the combination of the characters *aka* (赤) and *ma* (馬) in the names of “Aka”segawa and Taku“ma.”

both *Provoke*'s photography and the landscape discourse had on this artist.

Photography in the Context of Japanese Art

In Japan, photography had long formed a world separate from fine art, at least until the late 1960s, when photography began to receive more attention from neighboring critics. Photographer Satō Tokihiro has observed that the government's official policies on art education had historically shaped the discourse of Japanese photography.⁵¹⁶ A department of photography was established at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō; now the Tokyo University of the Arts) in 1915, and was eventually transferred to the Tokyo High School of Crafts (Tokyo Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō) in 1926, because photography was considered an inappropriate medium for art.

For years thereafter, a rigid divide emerged between exhibition sites for “art” and those for photography. Whereas accepted works of art were usually exhibited on the walls of galleries and museums, the output of professional photographers appeared mainly in printed materials. Before the 1970s, virtually no galleries or museums specialized in photography, and no established market existed for individual photographers.⁵¹⁷ So commercial photographers usually sought to have their finer photography published in photography magazines such as *Camera Mainichi*, whose readership consisted chiefly of amateur photographers.

⁵¹⁶ Satō Tokihiro, “‘Shashin,’ mieru mono/ mienai mono” [Photography: Visible/ invisible] in “*Shashin*,” *mieru mono/ mienai mono* [Photography: Visible/ invisible], exh. cat., (Tokyo: “Shashin” ten Jikkō Iin Kai, 2007), 7.

⁵¹⁷ Nishii Kazuo, “Shashin ga shashin ni natta hi” [The day photography became photography], in *20 Seiki shashin ron, shūshō: Muruiha sengen* [The epilogue of 20th-century photography theory: A manifesto of being an independent] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2001), 123. Galleries and museums devoted solely to photography were virtually absent until the 1970s. Zeit-Foto Salon, a gallery that has specialized in photography, opened in 1978. Finally, the Metropolitan Museum of Photography, the first museum of photography in Asia, was established in 1989.

Photobooks were another possible production site for photographers. Photobooks were ranked higher on the ladder of success than magazines, and the photographers who became regular contributors to photography magazines could eventually publish their own photobooks. If photography magazines have been the bridge between professional and amateur photographers, photobooks have often been the crystallization of photographers' personal statements or projects for non-profit organizations and companies. As a result, the exchange between art and photography in Japan failed to emerge until the late 1960s with the flourishing of Conceptual and Pop art.⁵¹⁸

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, two exhibitions organized by the Mainichi newspaper company in Tokyo marked the presence of photography in the world of contemporary art: *Tokyo Biennale '70: Between Man and Matter* (also known as *The 10th International Art Exhibition of Japan*) in 1970 and *The 10th Contemporary Art Exhibition of Japan 1971*. The two events signaled the emergence in Japan of young artists, many of who had been working in the vein of Minimal and Conceptual art and had been employing such raw materials as stone, glass, and earth placed on flat, ground-level surfaces (their work would be labeled "Mono-ha"). These artists tended to prioritize the process rather than the end result.

Tokyo Biennale was particularly groundbreaking because it featured on-site productions by both domestic and international artists.⁵¹⁹ The commissioner and art critic Nakahara Yūsuke

⁵¹⁸ Nakahara Yūsuke, "Shashin to bijutsu no tatakai, arui wa taiwa" [Battle between photography and art, or dialogue between them], *Geijutsu shinchō* [New currents in fine art] (August 1977): 30-31.

⁵¹⁹ According to art critic Haryū Ichirō, this exhibition was also innovative in employing a commissioner system. This tendency surfaced around 1969. Before then, large-scale international exhibitions customarily had featured the jury system and the award system, with the exhibited works selected at each participating country's discretion. Haryū Ichirō, "Gendaiten no rekishi to kadai" [The assignments and the history of contemporary art exhibitions], in *Dai 11 kai gendai nihon bijutsu ten/ The 11th Contemporary Art Exhibition of Japan*, exh. cat., (Tokyo: The Mainichi Newspapers, 1975), n.p. For more about *Tokyo*

stated that “the totality of the mutual relations of matter and its relations with man must be what we call works of art,” and he argued that contemporary art should explore spatial and temporal aspects of existence, rather than rely on traditional materials for manifesting the ideas of artists.⁵²⁰ Nakahara argued that the work in *Tokyo Biennale* expressed the values of “condition, position, place, layout, process, and time,” which fundamentally questioned both traditional art works as the only legitimate forms of art and museums as the only appropriate depositories of art. Together with the exhibitions “Anti-illusion: Procedures/ Materials” (1969) at the Whitney Museum of American Art and “When Attitudes Become Form (Works-Concepts-Processes-Situations-Information)” (1969) at Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland, *Tokyo Biennale* confirmed the tendency of art to lean towards conceptual aesthetics in Japan.⁵²¹

Photography had a major presence at the *Tokyo Biennale*. Above all, the 1970 exhibition marked the first time that a photograph graced the cover of an exhibition catalogue in the history of this biannual program (Fig. 6.66). In addition, Nakahira’s photographs were used for the exhibition ephemera, including a poster (Fig. 6.67), admission tickets, and a flier. Some 2,000 copies of Nakahira’s posters were distributed domestically, and 150 of them were sent to international museums and galleries.⁵²² One of the participants in the show, Nomura Hitoshi,

Biennale, see Reiko Tomii, “Toward *Tokyo Biennale 1970*: Shapes of the International in the Age of ‘International Contemporaneity,’” in *Osaka World Expo `70*, guest ed. Midori Yoshimoto, vol. 23 of *Review of Japanese culture and society* (Tokyo: Jōsai University, December 2011).

⁵²⁰ Nakahara Yūsuke, “Between Man and Matter” in *The 10th Annual International Art Exhibition of Japan: Between Man and Matter*, exh. cat., (Tokyo: The Mainichi Newspapers, 1970), n.p. Seventeen artists came to Japan from abroad to create their site-specific works for this exhibition.

⁵²¹ Another example is *1970 nen 8 gatsu—gendai bijutsu no ichidanpen/ August 1970—Aspects of New Japanese Art*, which was a show at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, organized by art critic Tōno Yoshiaki in 1970. It highlighted the relationships among objects, viewers, and sites.

⁵²² Secretariat, The International Art Exhibition of Japan, “What Is Tokyo Biennale, 1970? [sic]” in *The 10th Annual International Art Exhibition of Japan: Between Man and Matter*, exh. cat., (Tokyo: The Mainichi Newspapers, 1970), n.p.

remembered his shock at witnessing such an unconventional photograph in an exhibition poster.⁵²³ Haryū Ichirō and Miki Tamon, the co-commissioners of the *1971 Contemporary Art Exhibition of Japan*, followed Nakahara's suit by gracing their catalogue cover with a photograph by Taki (Fig. 6.68). Photographic works by Moriyama, Takanashi, and others were also shown in this later exhibition.⁵²⁴ These two exhibitions were the first significant exposure of the *Provoke* photographers' photographs in the Japanese contemporary art context, although that exposure seems to have expanded considerably in the early 1970s.⁵²⁵

Artists who employed photography as their primary means of expression were one of the major focuses of the *Tokyo Biennale*.⁵²⁶ Jan Dibetts submitted three photographic works that addressed the effects that distance and time can have on one's perceptions (Fig. 6.69).⁵²⁷ In his *Land and Sea* (1970), Kawaguchi Tatsuo exhibited twenty-six photographic panels that showed four wooden plates on the edge of the surf at different times during the day (Fig. 6.70). The work indicates the temporal flow of the tide and the ambiguity surrounding the spatial distinctions between land and sea. Nomura Hitoshi's *Dryice* (1970) and *Iodine* (1970) presented twenty-four and twelve photographic panels respectively (Figs. 6.71 and 6.72): gradually diminishing dry ice

⁵²³ Nomura Hitoshi, interview by author, IC recording, Osaka, October 22, 2010.

⁵²⁴ They are included in the section "Jōhō: Atarashii kotoba to shite no shizen" [Information: Nature as a new language], in which photographers such as Araki Nobuyoshi, Naitō Masatoshi, and Tamura Shigeru also participated.

⁵²⁵ *Provoke* photographers had not participated in the *Tokyo Biennale* before 1970.

⁵²⁶ *Tokyo Biennale* was controversial for its avant-garde nature. Many art critics and writers discussed the Biennale in magazine and newspaper articles. Two notable criticisms of the Biennale are Ōoka Makoto's "Tokyo Biennale o tou" [Questioning *The Tokyo Biennale*] in *Geijutsu shinchō* [New currents in fine art] (July 1970) and Ogawa Masataka's "Doko e iku gendai bijutsu" [Where is contemporary art heading?] in the evening edition of *Asahi shimbun* (May 21, 1970).

⁵²⁷ They are *The Perspective Corrections: Horizontal/ Vertical/ Cross* (1968), *The Shadow in My Studio* (1969), and *Project for Tokyo Biennale 1970* (1969).

and iodine served as ephemeral sculptures documented by the artist himself. All in all, these artists used photography to document the processes of their changing subjects.

As appearances of Nakahira's photographs on the exhibition poster, admission ticket, and flier imply, the show's concept was consistent with the tenets of *Provoke's* photography. As mentioned in Chapter Three, *Provoke* photographers photographed their relations to their surroundings in ways that would constitute literal chronicles of their physical movement, as seen in their *are-bure-boke* vision. These photographs' dual emphasis on the act of taking photographs and the artists' interactions with their environment parallels the relationships between the artists who participated the Biennale and their surroundings.

The two exhibitions demonstrated that photography was then becoming a vital part of the contemporary art world in both Japan and abroad. As performance art and conceptual art became more prevalent in the early 1970s, photography became a critical medium for recording ephemeral or time-based works. Masuda Rei, a curator at the Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, pointed out that, in the wake of Pop art, photographers explored hyperrealism, optical effects, and painting, among other strategies and tools.⁵²⁸ It is notable that the *Provoke* photographers thus made a vivid mark at a critical juncture in the history of art and photography in Japan.

Nakahira and Takanashi at the *Biennale de Paris*

Against this backdrop, Takanashi's participation in the 1967 *Biennale de Paris* and Nakahira's participation in two consecutive *Biennales de Paris* (1969 and 1971) are of critical importance in examining the relationship between art and photography in Japan. This is the case

⁵²⁸ Masuda Rei, "Bunmyaku o torae naosu: 1960 nendai matsu kara 1970 nendai shotō no bijutsu to shashin ni tsuite" [Reconsidering the context: Regarding the photography and art from the late 1960s to the early 1970s] in *Seeing: Rokunin no sakka ni yoru shashin hyōgen/Seeing: Photography in 1970s by Six Artists* [sic], ed. Tokyo Publishing House (Tokyo: Fuji Xerox Co., Ltd, 2010), 9.

for three reasons. First, the *Biennale de Paris* constituted a forum for the *Provoke* members and sympathetic art critics. When the art critics served as Biennale commissioners, they were entitled to select participating artists. For the Biennale in 1967, the commissioner was Nakahara, who selected Takanashi for the photography section on the basis of his reputation.⁵²⁹ In 1969, art critic Tōno Yoshiaki selected Nakahira on the basis of Okada's recommendation.⁵³⁰ In 1971, Okada himself selected Nakahira. Although *Provoke* photographers might have been rarely discussed in the contemporary art context, they had a web of connections with art critics.

Second, the occasions of the Biennale in 1969 and 1971 offered Nakahira an opportunity to confront the mechanism of exhibition—hanging viewable objects on walls as is done with paintings, as in a ‘*taburō*-style.’ Derived from the French word *tableau(x)*, *taburō* in the Japanese art lexicon signifies “[framed] paintings”; for photographers, it thus meant presenting photographs like paintings. In the case of Takanashi, he simply assumed that his photographs would be conventionally presented, whereas Nakahira attempted in 1969 to show his photographs as photographs, not as quasi-paintings. As will be discussed, Nakahira devised a performative display for his photographs in 1971.

Third, in 1971, Nakahira and Enokura were fellow participants in the *Biennale de Paris* in 1971 and spent some time together in Paris.⁵³¹ Their interactions opened Enokura's eyes to the camera's capacity to mediate between the photographer and his surroundings. Taken together, the *Biennales de Paris* of 1967, 1969, and 1971, therefore, mark a period of transition during which

⁵²⁹ Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

⁵³⁰ Tōno Yoshiaki, “Honnendo no pari seinen biennāre ten” [This year's Paris Biennale], *Kokusai bunka* [International culture] 180 (June 1969): 12.

⁵³¹ Artist Lee Ufan also spent some time with Nakahira in the same year. Lee Ufan, “Nakahira Takuma wa sangyō shakai no anchi to shite mono o miidashita” [Nakahira Takuma foresees the ‘thing’ antithetical to industrial society], interview, *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] 833 (April 2003): 133.

Japanese photography had to negotiate with the environment and with ideas about art; not limited to *Provoke* or Japan, the phenomenon was surfacing in many places around the world.

The *Biennale de Paris* was initiated in 1959 by André Malraux, then the French Minister of Cultural Affairs. The goal was to promote international cultural exchange. The Biennale would present experimental works of art (in various media ranging from paintings to architecture) created by emerging artists between 20 and 35 years old. Japan's official participation began in 1967, when Takanashi was the first photographer to exhibit his photography in the Biennale's photography section.

The fifth Biennale, in 1967, was held at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, and fifty-four countries participated.⁵³² Takanashi presented six photographs taken during the early 1960s in Tokyo and New York. These photographs were exhibited under the category of "fantasie," which in fact was the overarching theme for the whole exhibition. Takanashi received an award of excellence in photography; so did Miki Tomio in sculpture and Takamatsu Jirō in painting.

What Takanashi exhibited at the Biennale had already appeared in *Camera Mainichi* as "Tomorrow" in the May 1963 issue (Figs. 6.73 and 6.74), "Tokyoite" in the January 1966 issue, (Fig. 6.75), and "New York" in the February 1967 issue (Figs. 6.76, 6.77, and 6.78). In Paris, Figures 6.73, 6.74, and 6.75 were entitled *Oeuvre (Tokyo)*, and Figures 6.76, 6.77, and 6.78 were entitled *Oeuvre (New York)*. Why Nakahara selected Takanashi was not entirely clear, but Takanashi recalled a telephone conversation with Nakahara, in which the critic mentioned that the photographer came highly recommended by "everyone."⁵³³ In fact, in the mid-1960s,

⁵³² The Japan Cultural Society sent works created by eleven artists to the Biennale for the following categories: painting, sculpture, printing, photography, and stage setting.

⁵³³ Takanashi Yutaka, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, March 25, 2010.

Takanashi received an emphatic promotion from an editor-in-chief of *Camera Mainichi*, Yamagishi Shōji, who presented Takanashi's forty-three photographs in thirty-six pages under the title "Tokyoite" in a single issue of the magazine. Takanashi was also recognized in the field of commercial photography, subsequently receiving three awards from the Art Directors Club in Tokyo.

Although his works touch on three different themes, "Tokyoite," "Tomorrow," and "New York," all of the works expressed a mood of isolation. Even the photograph of a gymnasium (Fig. 6.78) presents three men exercising separately. Instead of a run-down atmosphere typical of a crime-ridden city corner at the time, the photograph of Times Square (Fig. 6.77) has a surrealistic feel, presenting a gigantic billboard of a floating gin bottle and steam rising from the ground. Rather than visualize the specificity of places, Takanashi captured the specificity of his momentary encounters with those places.

All of the photographs are black-and-white and measure approximately ten and a half by sixteen inches (40 by 26.5 centimeters), regardless of their horizontal and vertical formats. (Takanashi did not go to Paris, but sent the works from Tokyo.) Although no installation view is available, one can speculate that his photographs were conventionally hung on the exhibition wall in the *taburō*-style; this speculation is especially reasonable because no articles about the Biennale noted how the exhibit was presenting Takanashi's works.⁵³⁴

The sixth Biennale, in 1969, was held at the same venue as the 1967 exhibition, and

⁵³⁴ Some of the major articles are Okada Takahiko, "Dai 5 kai pari seinen biennāre ni shuppin suru Takanashi Yutaka no shashin" [Takanashi Yutaka's photography for exhibit in the fifth *Biennale de Paris*], *Space Design* 33 (August 1967): 106-107, Nakahara Yūsuke, "Konton o kuguri nukete: Pari biennāre zuisō" [Sneaking through the chaos: Essay on the *Biennale de Paris*], *Kokusai bunka* [International culture] 163 (January 1968): 5-9, Anonymous, "Bijutsu" [Art], *Geijutsu shinchō* [New currents in art], (June 1967): 22, and Anonymous, "Bijutsu" [Art], *Geijutsu shinchō* [New currents in art], (December 1967): 18.

lasted for a month, beginning on October 2. Nakahira decided to present six images bearing the title *La Nuit* [The night]. Five of them had already appeared in *Provoke 1* and *2*: *Provoke 1* featured *La Nuit 1* (Fig. 6.3) and *Provoke 2* featured *La Nuit 2, 3, 4, and 6* (Figs. 6.79, 6.80, 6.81, and 6.83).⁵³⁵ Only *La Nuit 5* (Fig. 6.82) had not appeared in *Provoke*. Nakahira prepared for the exhibition by printing more than one set of these six images.⁵³⁶ They are all extremely dark with a hint of light in the background, fully demonstrating his signature style of capturing the lyricism of a city at night.

A striking aspect of Nakahira's biennale work is his conception of photography as mere physical objects, not as works of art. True to this attitude, Nakahira accordingly gave his prints a very physical treatment. They were executed as photogravure prints on "art paper," instead of photographic paper. This production method transformed Nakahira's non-magazine works into an extension of magazine works, because the photogravure method and "art paper" were routinely used to produce "gravure [*gurabia*] pages" devoted to photography in Japanese magazines. However, in contrast to magazine pages' small formats, his test prints measured approximately twenty-two by thirty-three inches (sixty by eighty centimeters), twice as large on each edge as Takanashi's biennale prints.⁵³⁷ Furthermore, he attempted to exhibit them in a style similar to the one governing the appearance of posters on streets, where passers-by barely notice

⁵³⁵ In fact, *La Nuit 1, 3, 5, and 6* also appeared in the September 1969 issue of *Design*, entitled "Yoru" [The night], prior to the Biennale.

⁵³⁶ Although the exact number of sets Nakahira created was unclear, at least one extra set was made, which is now in the collection of the San Francisco Museum of Art. The prints in this set slightly differ from one another in their sizes, ranging from 46.6 by 84.8 centimeters (*La Nuit 1*) to 58.2 by 83.4 centimeters (*La Nuit 5*).

⁵³⁷ These dimensions are based on the set of *La Nuit* at the San Francisco Museum of Fine Art. Nevertheless, there is a possibility that Nakahira made the prints even larger. The list of works for the Biennale indicates the size as approximately 31.5 by 31.5 inches (80 by 80 centimeters). Biennale de Paris: Manifestation Internationale des Jeunes Artistes, May 30, 1969, Papers, Archives de la critique d'art, Rennes, France.

the printed material. In this way, he hoped, exhibition goers would barely see them as works of art.⁵³⁸ The photogravure prints he had made had mat surfaces, which would probably also have reinforced the works' appearance as printed matter or ephemera. Nakahira chose these printing and display methods because he thought that "photograph had to be a fragment as if an anonymous eye tore it from reality."⁵³⁹ For this reason, Nakahira hated to exhibit his photographs framed in the *taburō*-style.⁵⁴⁰ He prepared the photogravure prints that were pasted on the panels for the Biennale.⁵⁴¹

After the Biennale, Nakahira made use of his *La Nuit* prints from 1969. They functioned almost as an elaborate promotion for *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. While visiting Paris in 1971, Nakahira brought his *La Nuit* set with him in order to publicize his work, along with his first photobook, *Kitarubeki kotoba no tameni* [For a language to come] and the *Greater Japan Zero-Yen Note* series⁵⁴² (Fig. 6.84) by his artist peer Akasegawa Genpei. A photograph by an unidentified photographer shows Nakahira lounging on his hotel bed with his

⁵³⁸ Tōno Yoshiaki, "Hyōshi kaisetsu" [A note on the magazine cover], *Kokusai bunka* [International culture] 180 (June 1969): back cover (n.p.).

⁵³⁹ Tōno, "Honnendo no pari seinen biennāre ten" [This year's *Biennale de Paris*], 14. "。。。写真は本来、無名な目が世界からひきちぎった断片であるべきだ。。。"

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁴¹ Biennale de Paris: Manifestation Internationale des Jeunes Artistes, May 30, 1969, Papers, Archives de la critique d'art, Rennes, France. A document issued by the Biennale office and signed by Tōno identifies the method underlying Nakahira's works as "Photogravure pasted on the panels." Nevertheless, it is important to note that the ways in which Nakahira exhibited his works is not entirely evident at this point. The Biennale office changed its preparation policy and issued a new set of instructions to the participating photographers: they had to send not prints but slides of their work in the shape of squares whose sides measured one and a half inches each (four centimeters). Tōno Yoshiaki, "Pari seinen bienāre: Chinretsu soudou ki" [The *Biennale de Paris*: A note on the trouble over installation], *Kokusai bunka* [International culture] 186 (December 1969): 18. Therefore, it is not clear whether the Biennale office made Nakahira's photographic works from the slides or exhibited the prints that Nakahira had already sent.

⁵⁴² Catherine and Jacques Pineau, interview by author, IC recording, Pau, France, November 17, 2010.

first photobook and the rolled-up *La Nuit* prints next to him (Fig. 6.85).

The version of *La Nuit* exhibited at the 1969 Biennale has not survived; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art owns an original set of *La Nuit 1-6* that Nakahira made in 1969. The museum purchased its set of *La Nuit* from Nakahira's friends Jacques and Catherine Pineau, who now own *La Nuit 4-6*, also from the 1969 printing. Today, almost all prints reveal either pinholes or traces of tape or glue, demonstrating that Nakahira (or others) put his prints directly on the wall without frames. Nakahira treated his photographs as objects, and they had been kept as memorial objects by the Pineaus.

Interestingly, Nakahira's efforts to keep photography from being received as "art photography" paralleled the efforts of contemporary artists who eschewed salon-style photography. As early as 1969, when the artist Nomura Hitoshi created his photo-based works (such as *Dryice 1969*, which he showed at the 1970 Kyoto Independent Exhibition), he printed on the least expensive paper available and made the photographic images as close in size to the actual objects he worked with as possible.⁵⁴³ Furthermore, he daringly opted to present his prints unframed to avoid the typical look of framed art photography. Nomura's presentations suggest that, by avoiding framing, he sought (1) to prevent viewers from seeing his photographs as art photography that must be shown at a photography exhibition, and (2) to promote viewers' perception of his photographs as works of contemporary art that could be found at an art exhibition.

Needless to say, what Nomura photographed was the essence of his artistic expression. In *Dryice 1969*, he placed six blocks of dry ice on a strip of black rubber mat to show the process of their evaporation. In the ten photographs displayed side by side, the dry ice blocks are shown

⁵⁴³ Nomura Hitoshi, interview by author, IC recording, Osaka, October 22, 2010.

receding into the background as Nomura both moved them and systematically inscribed on the mats the times of his actions.⁵⁴⁴ The work as a whole, with all twenty-four images, constitutes a record of his experiment, rather than photographic visual effects.

For Nomura, a critical aspect of his photography was the impossibility of shuffling the moments when frames were exposed during the developing process; the sequence of each shot in the negative followed the actual elapse of time. Nomura had them printed on a roll of paper to ensure that there was no manipulation of temporal flow.⁵⁴⁵ I argue that photography was the best medium with which Nomura could record both time and his ephemeral experiments, and he presented a conceptual bent in his photographic works by taking advantage of the mechanical function of photography. Therefore, both Nakahira and Nomura tried to stay away from *taburō*-style salon photography, but for different reasons. While Nakahira used photogravure on art paper to present his work as photography in a contemporary-art context, Nomura used a roll of printing paper and no photo frames to transform his photographs into an authentic work of art.

Nakahira's *La Nuit* at the 1969 *Biennale de Paris* presents an interesting case of negotiation that photography seemed destined to enter into in the context of contemporary art. In his next biennale presentation (in 1971), he created *Circulation—Date, Place, Events* as an amalgam of his daily life and photography, rather than represent his daily life through photography (Fig. 6.4). Okada, who was the Biennale commissioner in 1971, selected Nakahira and Enokura, who were included in the section called “Intervention.”⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴⁴ Martha Buskirk, “Marking Time” in Martha Buskirk and Reiko Tomii, *Hitoshi Nomura: Early Works—Sculpture, Photography, Film, Sound*, exh. cat., (New York: McCaffrey Fine Art, 2010), 34. Buskirk states that, depending on the day, the mats are made of such materials as rubber, corrugated cardboard, and canvas.

⁵⁴⁵ Nomura Hitoshi, interview by author, IC recording, Osaka, October 22, 2010.

⁵⁴⁶ Other sections of this Biennale were Hyper-realism, mail art, conceptual art, and the so-called “fourth

For the 1971 event, the Biennale venue was moved from the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, a gigantic indoor venue in the city, to several outdoor and indoor venues within the Parc Floral in the Bois de Vincennes, on the edge of Paris. Nakahira created what can be called an “on-site work” that incorporated the city.

On September 28, four days after the Biennale opened its doors to the public, Nakahira arrived at the event's exhibition hall.⁵⁴⁷ However it was only on October 10 that he finally managed to secure a darkroom.⁵⁴⁸ Everyday thereafter, he shot the city, making “records” of his life there, and developed negatives to create his work *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*. He then pasted the photographs that he had freshly taken, developed, and printed (some were still wet) on the approximately fifty-foot wide wall he had been assigned to in an exhibition hall. Nakahira daily produced some two hundred prints, each eight by ten inches. His output eventually reached one-thousand, five-hundred photographs.⁵⁴⁹ When the wall was completely covered with his photographs, he would remove the old photographs and put up new ones, piling the old ones on the floor beside the wall (Fig. 6.4). In the exhibition hall, his assigned area was closest to the entrance, so the piled up photos, or his “records,” seemed to be on the verge of spilling out into the exhibition hall. It was almost as though these photographs served to close the gap between life and photography.

option,” which accommodated other works that did not fit into these categories.

⁵⁴⁷ Nakahira Takuma, “Gendai geijutsu no hihei: Dai 7 kai pari seinen biennāre ni sankā shite,” [The Exhaustion of Contemporary Art], originally published in *Asahi Journal* (December 10, 1971): 42; reprinted in *Naze shokubutsu zukan ka* [Why an Illustrated Botanical Encyclopedia?] (Tokyo: Shōbunsha, 1973); also reprinted in *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga...: Hihyō shūsei 1965-1977* [Fire at the limits of my perpetual gaze: Collected essays of Nakahira Takuma 1965-1977], ed. Yasumi Akihito and Ishizuka Masato (Tokyo: Osiris, 2007).

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁵⁴⁹ Nakahira, “Shashin, ichinichi kagiri no akuchuaritī” [Photography as ephemeral actuality], 286.

The photographs that were taken by Nakahira during his stay in Paris demonstrated his keen interest in graphic effects and motion.⁵⁵⁰ Some of them show cut outs from printed matter such as comic books (Fig. 6.86) and newspaper advertisements (Fig. 6.87). Much as Moriyama was preoccupied with repetition and copying, Nakahira copied ready-made images with his camera. Some photographs were taken consecutively so that they would show short lapses of time (Figs. 6.88 and 6.89). The arbitrary placement of photographs created fragmented rhythms attuned to the photographs' visual language, attracting viewers' eyes here and there, and all over the wall.

What Nakahira attempted to realize through his work was well articulated in his article “Hizuke to basho kara no hassō” [Thinking in terms of date and place], which appeared in *Nihon dokusho shinbun* [Japan book-readers newspaper] on July 21, 1971, published two months prior to the *Biennale de Paris*. Nakahira clarified his views on photography, and did so as a photographer who, he asserted, engaged in “the moment.” Nakahira criticized the idealism and the conventional “-ism’s” in journalism, and claimed to embrace specificity and individuality—namely, time and place—in the practice of photography. Drawing on the example of Zenkyōtō’s staging of protests for mundane reasons (such as tuition hikes), Nakahira insisted that one should take photographs not for idealism or any other lofty goals, but for one’s individual and particular reasons.⁵⁵¹ For Nakahira, his expression through photography was synonymous with living and

⁵⁵⁰ It is not clear whether the photographs (Fig. 6.86-89) were actually exhibited at the venue. *Nakahira Takuma: Degree Zero—Yokohama* (Tokyo: Osiris Co., Ltd, 2003), 179.

⁵⁵¹ Nakahira Takuma, “Hizuke to basho kara no hassō” [Thinking in terms of date and place], originally published in *Nihon dokusho shinbun* [Japan book-readers newspaper] (July 21, 1971); reprinted in *Mitsuzukeru hate ni hi ga...: Hihyō shūsei 1965-1977* [Fire at the limits of my perpetual gaze: Collected essays of Nakahira Takuma 1965-1977], 182-183.

could not be separated from the specificity of each individual's life.⁵⁵² Nakahira declared, "What is important is only the process of going from here [behind the camera] to there [in front of the camera], and the photographs left behind merely retain a dying heat of embers."⁵⁵³ Nakahira argued that real expression was not the completed work itself but the process of creating the work (e.g., taking a photograph).

Nakahira felt that his photographs in *Provoke* had been distilled to the finest point of spontaneity in his *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*.⁵⁵⁴ In this work, Nakahira cared less about the reality *in* his photographs than about conjuring up reality through the connections among his photographs, his photographic practices, and the viewers of his photographs. In other words, Nakahira created links among the three variables by helping create a situation where people could view the processes underlying Nakahira's photographs (but not their development).

Nakahira stated, "I refused to externalize my 'idea' or ideal as a work. In fact, I was fascinated by the shock of reality and I was also fascinated by the fact that the shock transforms and shakes up my daily life."⁵⁵⁵ Nakahira's reality refers not only to taking photographs, but also to the whole process of creating them. Thus, among his exhibited photographs, Nakahira included photographs that picture him working on this project and that were taken by an unidentified

⁵⁵² Nakahira found the term "document" more appropriate than "expression" for photography, and he based this preference on his experience of the photography exhibition "A Hundred Years of Photography." However, he reconsidered the term "expression" in his article about his participation in the Biennale.

⁵⁵³ Nakahira, "Hizuke to basho kara no hassō" [Thinking in terms of date and place], 185. "。。。大切なのはこちら側からあちら側へむかうそのプロセスだけなのであり、残された写真の山などはしよせん残り火の熱さ位しかたたえてはいないのだから。"

⁵⁵⁴ Nakahira, "Shashin, ichinichi kagiri no akuchuariti" [Photography and the actualities of the day], 286.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 285. "ぼくは自身の<思想>なりイデーなりを、作品という形で外化するのを拒否し、逆に現実がぼくの<思想>やイデーに与えてくる衝撃、そしてそれがぼくにもたらす日々の変身とその振幅により強く惹かれた。"

photographer(s) (Fig. 6.90).⁵⁵⁶

Nakahira's work possesses strong conceptual and performative aspects, and in this regard, his treatment of each photograph emphasizes the material aspects of photography. Each of his photographs has less to do with works of art than with pieces of paper—"residuum," so to speak. Indeed, Nakahira crudely glued his prints on the wall, sometimes even signing them upside down (Fig. 6.91). Day after day, Nakahira peeled his photographs off the wall in order to make room for new photographs, with the wall showing the residue of photographic paper. These traces became indexes of photographs that had once been glued to the exhibition wall (instead of an index of what the exhibited photographs were referring to), and the piled up photographs under the wall represented the accumulation of time (Fig. 6.4).

The meaning of Nakahira's work was reinforced by controversy surrounding the Biennale. In his article "Gendai geijutsu no hihei: Dai 7 kai pari seinen biennāre ni sankā shite" [Exhaustion of contemporary art: On participating in the 7th *Biennale de Paris*], Nakahira wrote about the friction between him and the Biennale office, harshly criticized the politics surrounding the exhibition, and expressed his disappointment in the capitalist system of art.⁵⁵⁷ The French government ordered the exhibition to remove a painting by French artist Mathelin because the work seemed to insult the French government. The Biennale office and participating artists, including Nakahira, furiously protested this censorship. According to Nakahira, the Biennale office decided that Mathelin's painting, along with a letter of protest, should appear in Nakahira's

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., 286.

⁵⁵⁷ Nakahira, "Gendai geijutsu no hihei: Dai 7 kai pari seinen biennāre ni sankā shite" [Exhaustion of Contemporary Art], 42-47. One of the participants, Lee Ufan, viewed this event differently, stating that Nakahira's works must have been garnering a negative reception because they were neither "beautiful" nor decisive. Lee, "Nakahira Takuma wa sangyō shakai no anchi to shite mono o miidashita" [Nakahira Takuma foresees the 'thing' antithetical to industrial society], 133.

allotted exhibition space; to this end, they asked him to remove some of his photographs.⁵⁵⁸

Nakahira refused to take down his photographs, so somebody else removed them from his exhibition space. Nakahira received a letter from the director, Georges Boudaille, in response to Nakahira's protests, but could not accept Boudaille's "bureaucratic attitude."⁵⁵⁹

What outraged Nakahira was not only the removal of his photographs without his permission, and the bureaucratic convolutions, but also the official decision—as Nakahira saw it—to display Mathelin's painting in the exhibition hall's most visible spot (Nakahira's wall) for the sake of advertising the Biennale itself. Nakahira observed that the Biennale office had attempted to divert public attention from some harsh exhibition reviews of the Biennale in various media, by capitalizing on the fuss over Mathelin's painting, essentially turning it into a spectacle.⁵⁶⁰ To object to such opportunism, Nakahira withdrew from the Biennale on October 30, removing all of his photographs himself, two days before the exhibition's closing (Figure 6.92).⁵⁶¹

The Mathelin affair, which demonstrates Nakahira's spirit of institutional critique and his use of happenstance, reveals his conception of photography. The happenstance, in this case, involved the Biennale visitors, who would become a dynamic ingredient in Nakahira's work. To facilitate the realization of this possibility, he tried to avoid the typical scenario in which the final and static work would serve to communicate a certain message from him to the audience. Exhibiting his work, refusing to remove any of his photographs from the wall, protesting Boudaille, and unilaterally removing all of his photographs from the exhibit were all integral to

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., 45-46.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., 47.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 46-47.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 47.

his production of *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*. In a way, the Mathelin affair may have been an interruption to the Biennale, but never interrupted Nakahira's production, although his withdrawal was another interruption to the Biennale. This affair reinforced his concept of photography: the unexpected—the shock of an event that changed the course of his production—helped viewers witness or even involve themselves in the process. Nakahira's artist-peer and fellow participant in the Biennale, Jacques Pineau, translated Nakahira's letter to Boudaille into French. In the end, an amalgam of audience members, Nakahira's photographs, and individual and collective actions formed an “event” that constituted his *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*.

Three consecutive Biennales demonstrated the changes that the *Provoke* photographers' treatment of photography had undergone in a particular context of contemporary art. The photographic works by Takanashi at the *Biennale de Paris* of 1967 and those of Nakahira at the Biennale of 1969 exemplify the shift in the photographers' conceptualization of photography from the *taburō* to the artistic medium. In particular, the shift away from the presentation of photography as art to the presentation of photography as a medium paralleled tendencies among contemporary artists, such as Nomura, who used the least expensive and large photographic paper to mark the timeline of dry ice's evaporation. Nakahira's treatment of photography at the *Biennale de Paris* in 1971 clearly reveals that, regarding photography, he emphasized both its spontaneity and its material aspects.

***Provoke's* and Nakahira's Influence: A Case Study of Enokura Kōji**

Enokura Kōji was born in 1942 in Tokyo and passed away in 1995. After graduating from the prestigious Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (now Tokyo University of the Arts), Enokura both created art and taught in the field at his alma mater. Enokura's oeuvre

demonstrates his adaptability, which ranged from photography, drawing, and installation to sculpture and performance. He exhibited his works at a number of domestic venues as well as abroad, including at the *Sydney Biennale* of 1976 and the *Venice Biennale* of 1978 and 1980. Many critiques of his work have situated it within the context of the previously mentioned school of Japanese art known as *Mono-ha*, which deals extensively with raw materials in nature.⁵⁶² However, my examination sheds light on his work from a different perspective, detailing, as it does, Enokura's artistic inspiration from, and contemporaneity with, *Provoke* and Nakahira.

In the following sections, I will examine Enokura's outdoor works and his photography in general. Although the concepts that underlie various disciplines' works differ from one another, Enokura's selected works suggest *Provoke's* and Nakahira's undeniable influence on this artist. Enokura's two works at the Biennale stemmed from his early outdoor projects that were based on landscape discourse. In terms of his photography, Enokura used it to associate with the world and, thereby, to understand himself. With the *Provoke* photographers, Enokura shared his views on the autonomy of cameras and his reverence for the act of taking photographs. In his photography, Enokura also attempted to capture objects in ways that went beyond conventional terms. Enokura's photography reflects the *Provoke* members' thirst for a tangible reality, in which both Enokura and the *Provoke* photographers engaged through the act of taking photographs.

a) *Space Totsuka '70* and Landscape Discourse

⁵⁶² Enokura's works are included in numerous Mono-ha exhibition catalogues such as *1970 nen: Busshitsu to chikaku: Mono-ha to kongen o tou sakka tachi/ Matter and Perception 1970: Mono-ha and the Search for Fundamentals*, ed. Okada Kiyoshi and Hiroe Yasutaka (The Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu) (Tokyo: The Yomiuri Shimbun and the Japan Association of Art Museums, 1995), and *Monoha: Saikō [Reconsidering Mono-ha]* (Tokyo: The National Museum of Art, Osaka, 2005).

Enokura's two works, *Wall* (Fig. 6.93) and *Quality of Dampness* (Fig. 6.94), at the 1971 *Biennale de Paris* were based on his works in the outdoor project called *Space Totsuka '70*.⁵⁶³ Enokura's works in *Space Totsuka '70* reflect the leftist spirit of *Provoke* and the landscape discourse. In a roundtable discussion with other artists in 1994, Enokura admitted that *Provoke*'s concern with landscape pushed him to realize this project.⁵⁶⁴ Therefore, Enokura's works in *Space Totsuka '70* demonstrate that *Provoke*'s influence had reached the realm of art. In this section, I will explain how Enokura's works in *Space Totsuka '70* related to *Provoke* and to the landscape discourse, in which Nakahira also engaged.

In the aftermath of the social turmoil of the 1960s, Enokura started questioning the fundamental notions of material, circumstance, and the self's being in the world. Enokura mentioned, "I had also become highly suspicious of the reasons for being and the relative value of the objects and space surrounding me."⁵⁶⁵ This reciprocal relationship with his physical environment stemmed, in part, from his sense of loss after the struggle over the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty failed to achieve its ends in 1970.

In this context of suspicion, Enokura and his artist peers carried out the project called *Space Totsuka '70*. Four artists—Takayama Noboru, Habu Shin, Fujii Hiroshi, and Enokura—exhibited their works in a rather plain landscape in Totsuka, a city about an hour's train ride from

⁵⁶³ All English translations of Enokura's art works are from Enokura's solo exhibition catalogue in 2005 unless otherwise noted. Enokura Kōji, *Enokura Kōji ten/ Enokura Kōji: A Retrospective* (Tokyo: Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, 2005). I use this catalogue because it is from the most recent Enokura retrospective show. However, *Quality of Dampness* is the author's translation.

⁵⁶⁴ Enokura Kōji, in Yoshida Katsurō and Lee Ufan, "Roundtable Discussion about Mono-ha, October 14, 1994" in *Mono ha katarogu/ MONO-ha Catalogue*, exh. cat., (Tokyo: Kamakura Gallery, 1995), 56.

⁵⁶⁵ Enokura Kōji, "Thoughts at the issuing of a catalogue" in *Enokura Kōji sakuhin shū/ The Works of Enokura Kōji*, trans. Stanly N. Anderson and Charles S. Worthen (Niigata: Hakushindo Co., Ltd., 1989), 3.

Tokyo station. Enokura created three installation works, presented two events, and participated in a Butoh-inspired performance at the site. Enokura's three installation works, all entitled *Quality of Dampness*, dissociated the environment from its original context.⁵⁶⁶ For Figures 6.95 and 6.96, Enokura poured discarded oil onto two concrete walls that stood on the south and north edges of a field. For Figure 6.97, Enokura buried pieces of concrete and a vinyl sheet underneath filtered soil. The concrete blocks and the vinyl sheet prevented moisture in the topsoil from seeping downward, and the surface of the work therefore retained a moister texture than did other parts of the site. Enokura tried to recreate this work at the 1971 *Biennale de Paris*, but the Biennale office ruled against the plan.⁵⁶⁷

Enokura and his peers saw this project as firmly rooted in their sense of crisis about contemporary society. Okada Kiyoshi, who was a curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu, referred to Enokura as an artist who investigated the relationship between his circumstances and himself and to Enokura's art-making as strengthened by his doubts about society, which the artist considered a repository of mis-information. Okada stated, "They [Enokura's early works] were a search, amid lives filled with rules and regulations, for an 'indefinite' realm without constraints, and for a way to cope with the deluge of information by neutralizing it and deliberately being slow to respond."⁵⁶⁸ In other words, Enokura and the artists tried to grip actual materials rather

⁵⁶⁶ Enokura presented three works for this project. Different names have been attached to the works. In one case, all three works were referred to by the single name *Quality of Dampness*. In another case, three names were applied to the three works (*Quality of Soil*, *Quality of Dampness*, and *Object of Quality*) without specifying which titles correspond to which works. According to the exhibition catalogue, *Shashin de miru Space Totsuka '70 ten* [Space Totsuka '70 through photography] (Tokyo: Space 23°, 2006), all three works were entitled *Quality of Dampness*, and for the current study, I have followed the catalogue's naming. This is the most recent resource on *Space Totsuka '70*, and was published by the gallery that Enokura's widow owns.

⁵⁶⁷ Okada Takahiko, "Atarashii busshitsu kan no taidō o kanjita" [I felt the burgeoning activity arising from a new conception of things], *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (December 1971): 146-147.

⁵⁶⁸ Okada Kiyoshi, "The Challenge to Contemporary Art: The Search from Materials and the Mono-ha" in

than absorb virtual information. In fact, Enokura's and his peers' laborious efforts in creating this artwork were extremely time consuming (it took a month to prepare the land), and the artists physically grappled with the environment while conditioning the ground, digging the holes, burying the materials in the ground, pouring oil on walls, and so forth.

Through this project, Enokura tried to re-invigorate the tactile reality between himself and his environment. He and his peers thought the project had to be executed in a space the artists saw as neutral. Enokura recalled his state of mind during this project;

I had to start by relating to the landscape at a minimal level. All I could do was to align my flesh with the landscape, listen to its voice, smell it, react to it, and learn from it. They were terribly simple tasks, but very fascinating. I wanted those tasks to show me where I was located because only through that kind of relationship could I confront the primordial landscape.⁵⁶⁹

The project took place in an unused space in front of Takayama's apartment, and it was a perfect fit for the artists who searched for a living space but not systematized places like a public road or park.⁵⁷⁰ Takayama stated that they were interested in how the structure of a living space could

1970 nen: Busshitsu to chikaku: Mono-ha to kongen o tou sakka tachi/ Matter and Perception 1970: Mono-ha and the Search for Fundamentals, ed. Okada Kiyoshi and Hiroe Yasutaka (The Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu), exh. cat., (Tokyo: The Yomiuri Shimbun and the Japan Association of Art Museums, 1995), VII.

⁵⁶⁹ Enokura Kōji, "Watashi no 70 nendai bijutsu: 'Genfūkei tonō deai'" [My art during the 1970s: 'Encountering primordial landscapes'], originally published in *Bijutsukan nyūsu* [Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum news], October 1984; reprinted in *Monoha: Saikō* [Reconsidering Mono-ha] (Tokyo: The National Museum of Art, Osaka, 2005), 124. "私は、まず最小限に風景と関係することから出発しなければならなかった。それは、肉体を風景に添わせる、そして声を聞き、匂いを嗅ぎ、感応し、学びとる、それしかできなかった。それは、恐ろしく単純な作業であったが、非常に魅惑的であった。それによって私は、自分の位置を知りたかったし、またその関係でしか、原風景と対することができなかった。"

⁵⁷⁰ Masaki Motoki, "Takayama Noboru intabyū 'Space Totsuka '70 no koto'" [Takayama Noboru interview: About Space Totsuka '70] in *Shashin de miru Space Totsuka '70 ten* [Space Totsuka '70 through photography], exh. cat., (Tokyo: Space 23°, 2006), 3.

possibly be inscribed with the surrounding society and nation state.⁵⁷¹ In this way, they confronted the “primordial landscape” of Totsuka, where there was no trace of art and institutional contexts.

Enokura’s selection of an unspecified space helped contextualize the landscape within an encompassing set of historical and social ideas, and helped confirm the physicality of the environment—outcomes that certainly evoke landscape discourse, which I discussed in Chapter Five. Just as Nakahira had done, Enokura stated that he had to analyze the components of landscape in order to configure himself in the world.⁵⁷² Matsuda stated that landscape discourse had emerged as a reaction to intellectuals’ ontological discussions about political situations. What attracted Nakahira and Matsuda was that landscape was visible in contrast to the abstractness of political discussion. In much the same way, Enokura tried to find answers to his questions by searching in actual places where he might find himself.

Furthermore, Enokura fully acknowledged Nakahira’s and Matsuda’s obsession with landscapes as a visible form of authority, and suggested that the landscape in Totsuka, the exhibition venue of *Space Totsuka`70*, was reminiscent of both a burned field right after the Second World War and Enokura’s feelings of emptiness brought to the surface by his visual consideration of Nakahira’s photograph on the cover of the 1970 *Tokyo Biennale* catalogue.⁵⁷³ Enokura analyzed the relationship between *Provoke* and landscape discourse, noting that *Provoke* photographers confronted landscapes by probing the tricky balance between the mechanical autonomy of the camera and the active gesture of pressing the shutter button.

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

⁵⁷² Enokura in “Roundtable Discussion about Mono-ha, October 14, 1994,” 56.

⁵⁷³ Enokura, “Watashi no 70 nendai bijutsu: ‘genfūkei tonodeai’” [My art during the 1970s: ‘Encountering primordial landscapes’], 125.

Enokura observed that their experimentation was geared toward both illuminating the physical activity of taking photographs and acknowledging the physicality of the world.⁵⁷⁴

Therefore, Enokura's works in *Space Totsuka '70* were strongly influenced by both the landscape discourse and by *Provoke's* photography. Moreover, both *Provoke* and Enokura produced their works on the strong suspicion that information generated by mass media circulating throughout society was highly disposable. In *Provoke*, this search for reality through tactile engagement came to manifest itself quite strongly in photography. This was the case for Enokura too, both in his environmental works and in his photography.

b) *Provoke's* Influence: (1) The Substance of Objects

Enokura started to take photographs around 1968 as a record of his works in other media.⁵⁷⁵ In addition to citing a practical need to take photographs, Enokura openly stated that his "initial interest in photography actually stemmed from *Provoke*."⁵⁷⁶ In fact, Enokura is believed to have officially begun presenting his photographic works in 1972, about a year after his participation in the 1971 *Biennale de Paris*.

For his solo exhibition in 1994, devoted solely to his photographic works, Enokura mentioned that the works fall into three categories: those that show the materiality of objects,

⁵⁷⁴ Enokura Kōji, "Shashin de kataru III o kaisai suru ni atatte" [On the opening of the exhibition "Talking through photography III"] in *Shashin de kataru III* [Talking with photography], exh. cat., (Tokyo: Tokyo University of the Arts, 1993), n.p.

⁵⁷⁵ Enokura Kōji, "Watashi no shashin no shigoto ni tsuite" [Regarding my photographic works] in *Koji Enokura: Works of Photography, 1972-1994*, exh. cat., (Saitama: Saito Memorial Kawaguchi Museum of Contemporary Art, 1994), 4.

⁵⁷⁶ Kamakura Gallery, *MONO-ha catalogue*, 56. I slightly modified the English translation of the discussion record in order to avoid interpreting *Provoke* as simply a movement. The literal translation indicated in the catalogue is as follows: "...my starting point of interest towards photography is in fact his 'PROVOKE' movement."

those that reflect his concept of relationships, and those that are intended to convey a story through the unexpected combination of paired photographs.⁵⁷⁷ Among them, the first and the second categories clearly mirror themes in *Provoke*'s photography. The first-category photographs and the photographs in *Provoke* would capture a thing in ways that go beyond conventional recognition. The second-category photographs exhibit a similarity to the photographs in *Provoke* insofar as they express the value of the act of photographing. Again, as he himself admitted, Enokura's concern was to sense the relationships between himself and not only the object being photographed but also the site in which the object resided. This was because he wished to bypass contemporary society's stultifying fictional information that obscured his interactions with things around him. In other words, Enokura sensed a crisis surrounding the pseudo-understanding of "facts" that people had been acquiring through virtual reality (e.g., people's "understanding" of the Vietnam War through media coverage), so he clung to objects and his surroundings, both of which were personally tangible. Therefore, Enokura cherished the act of taking photographs in and of itself as a powerful way in which he could sense his interactions with what was in front of the camera lens.

The first category of Enokura's photography, which shows the materiality of objects, rested on his discovery that photography could, in ways almost invisible to the human eye, capture the substance of objects. In this sense, Enokura observed that *Provoke* had contributed a new take on photography. He stated, "The structure of their [*Provoke* photographers'] photographs was an evolution in image-making activity from 'taking photographs' to the physical state of 'taken photographs'."⁵⁷⁸ *Provoke*'s photography showed Enokura that

⁵⁷⁷ Enokura, "Watashi no shashin no shigoto ni tsuite" [Regarding my photographic works], 4.

⁵⁷⁸ Enokura, "Watashi no shashin no shigoto ni tsuite" [Regarding my photographic works], 4. "彼らの写真の構造は、「写真を写す」というイメージの世界から「写真が写る」という即物的な世界へ

photography was the output of cameras rather than of photographers. And the object in front of the camera exhibited its being, free from the photographer's interfering interpretations of the object. Rather than capture the object so that it would be his own expression, Enokura let the object stand in front of the camera and let the camera do its job. *Provoke's* photography encouraged Enokura to take photographs that could convey the state of an object.

Enokura had come across the idea for photography's depiction of objects' substance by consulting the same source as Okada and Nakahira. All of them had referred to a work by Swiss psychologist Marguerite Sechehaye, *Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl* (1955), which describes a person's struggle with symptoms of a mental crisis. In his interview, Enokura noted Sechehaye's comment that we could live our lives with ease because we did not dare to think about the names of the things that surround us. Enokura stated, "In my case, I would like to relate to things by dissolving their names, not relating to their names. In other words, I am interested in the world formed through the relationships between human flesh and [non-human] matter when the names of that matter have been dissolved."⁵⁷⁹

Likewise, Nakahira quoted Sechehaye's *Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl* as early as the December 1966 issue of *Gendai no me* [Contemporary Eye], for which he photographed the mental hospital in Chiba Prefecture. The photographs capture people suffering from schizophrenia, and the quote expresses their agony (Fig. 6.98). Okada also quoted the same source for his "Kikan ni hatarakikake, uttaeru kotoba" [Language that works and appeals to

の展開であった。”

⁵⁷⁹ Ikeda Ichirō, "“Han”: Enokura Kōji intabyū" ["Print": Enokura Kōji interview] in *Enokura Kōji ten "han"/Kōji Enokura: New Woks "Print"* [sic], interview, exh. cat., (Tokyo: Gallery Ikeda-Bijutsu, 1993), 3. "ぼくの場合、モノの名称性を前提として関係するんじゃなく、むしろ名称性をくずしていくことで関係していきたい。つまり、事物の名称性が解体したときの、物質と人間の肉体との関係のなかで生まれる世界に興味があるんです。"

organs] in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, in which Okada—borrowing liberally from Antonin Artaud’s thoughts on theater—lamented that language had become merely a fixed concept.⁵⁸⁰ For example, Okada quoted the section from *Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl* in which the girl comes face to face with the materiality of things and could not identify the things by their conventional names.⁵⁸¹ A chair and water jug lost their functions, and their vivid material existences agonized the girl. In this experience, words such as ‘chair’ and ‘water jug’ were inapplicable to the objects before her. If Okada advocated resuscitating the power of language as his way of living, Enokura questioned his life by scrutinizing the objects that surrounded him.

Enokura’s approach to detaching names from their referents amounted to a process of dissolving the line between the function of a thing and the materiality of the thing. As Enokura’s references to Sechehaye’s writing indicate, he was more interested in the substance that formed things than in identifying the object according to received names. For example, Enokura noted that, were he to come across a glass ashtray, he would like to see it as an “existence of transparency” instead of as an “ashtray.”⁵⁸²

This act of illuminating the materiality of an object and of thereby canceling the thing’s function was evident in his early photographs. His *P.W.-No. 29* (1972) shows a concrete road with a wet surface (Fig. 6.99). (P.W. is the abbreviation of “photo work.”) The shininess is projected through a monochrome gradation from gray to white, and the wetness illuminates the

⁵⁸⁰ Okada Takahiko, “Kikan ni hatarakikake, uttaeru kotoba” [The language which appeals to and calls for my organ] in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, 59-64.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 62-63.

⁵⁸² Enokura Kōji, in Nakanishi Natsuyuki and Takayama Noboru, *Kūhaku no ryūshi no naka e kizashi miru* [An attempt to germinate something from nothing], roundtable discussion, exh. cat., (Tokyo: Gallery 21, 1983), n.p.

texture of the concrete in detail. What Enokura captured in this photograph was the state of the road in its shininess and wetness rather than a visual explanation of the state of the road's symbolic representativeness. As exemplified by Enokura's description of the glass ashtray, his taking the photograph of the road was to show the concrete surface purely at the level of its substance.

Two years later, Enokura questioned the materiality of objects from a different perspective. *P.W.-No. 58* (1974) shows a mirror in the corner of a room, and clay—molded by hand—has apparently been abruptly attached to the surface of the mirror (Fig. 6.100). Likewise, clay is on a window's surface in *Symptom-Clay, Window (P.W.-No. 49)* (1974), as if the clay is floating in the air (Fig. 6.101). The unexpected encounter between clay and the surface of the glass highlights the difference in texture between the earthy clay with its traces of Enokura's fingers and the reflective, shiny surface of the window and mirror. The two aforementioned works suggest a degree of experimentation that Enokura undertook by positioning himself in the physical world. The organic material of manually molded clay, with traces of Enokura's hands visible against the hard-edged materials in the interior space, is analogous to the artist's confrontation with a space that he is unable to access.

Enokura's and the *Provoke* members' use of photography has served to reveal the “naked” world, but in different ways. Enokura shed light on the substance of objects to question the established functions of things, whereas the *Provoke* members did so with their spontaneous shooting.

c) ***Provoke's* Influence: (2) Sensing the Self Through Photography**

Nakahira's observable influence on Enokura is most salient in the way Enokura

associated with the landscape through photography, a theme corresponding to the second category of Enokura's photography. Enokura gained inspiration from works by Nakahira while helping him at the 1971 *Biennale de Paris*.⁵⁸³ Enokura stated that he had been greatly influenced by, in his words, "the relationship between act and site."⁵⁸⁴ Rather than simply finding a photogenic scene, Nakahira took photographs spontaneously during random encounters. Nakahira's treatment of landscape resonated with Enokura, who confessed that he had been mulling over Nakahira's photography ever since first seeing it.⁵⁸⁵ I argue that Nakahira's active engagement with landscape through the act of taking photographs struck a chord with Enokura, who, in this way, cultivated his own approach to the creative relationship between photography and landscape. Thus, Nakahira's major influence on Enokura can be observed in the latter's attempt to sense the self through the act of taking photographs.

Enokura's photographs that reflect his concept of relationships—especially his *Symptom* series—powerfully display his encounters with the sites where he is taking those photographs. In those works, Enokura's attempt to recognize the object from a fresh perspective relies on his perception. Art critic Tani Arata mentioned that the parallel existence of man and matter in Enokura's works came to be reconciled in the keyword 'tracing'.⁵⁸⁶ In his preparations for photographing *Symptom-Sea, Body (P.W.-No. 40)* (1972) (Fig. 6.102) and *Symptom-Column, Flesh (P.W.-No. 46)* (1972) (Fig. 6.103), Enokura crouched on a floor for the first work and on a

⁵⁸³ Takashima Naoyuki, "Utsusu, utsusu, utsusu" [Transfer, project, and copy], *Hangwa geijutsu* [Print art] 95 (March 1997): 115.

⁵⁸⁴ Anonymous, "Shin sakka e no dōhyō" [A new guidepost for artists], *Gallery* 115 (November 1994): 34.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁶ Tani Arata, "Chikaku to busshitsu no kōsaku" [Intersection of perception and substance], *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (April 1976): 146.

beach for the second work in order to sense the environment in a horizontal position. The two photographs capture moments where Enokura encountered his surroundings; indeed, taking photographs became a sensory action for him.

Enokura's conception of the works above also stemmed from the influx of excessive information that threatened to overwhelm all photographers. In his 1974 article "Jyōhō to seitai no setten" [The interface between information and living subjects], Enokura referred to Erich Seligmann Fromm's theory of necrophilia to urge readers to recognize the gap between the virtual reality created by information and the actuality that surrounds them. According to Enokura, the word 'symptom' in the titles of the above-mentioned works signifies his pessimistic view of a society that is becoming numb to an information overload and that was, consequently, cascading toward metaphorical necrophilia. Enokura's idea clearly overlaps with *Provoke* photographers' opposition to *hōdō shashin* and their pursuit of a living and tangible reality.

However, Enokura's approach to taking photographs differed from that of *Provoke* photographers. While *Provoke* photographers spontaneously took photographs, Enokura waited until he felt a connection between his physical self and the sites. For example, Enokura often stayed at a site for a long time to get a sense of his body's blending into the surroundings. To match this experience, he took photographs with long exposures.⁵⁸⁷ *P.W.-No. 29* was taken in this manner (Fig. 6.99).⁵⁸⁸ Enokura was also preoccupied with pressing the shutter button precisely when two or more perceived objects would touch each other, resulting in a tension of sorts. Enokura stated that he would like to press the shutter button at the precise moment at which he would feel tactile engagement with the circumstance. Reflecting the given theme of art and

⁵⁸⁷ Kumagai Isako, "1970 nen dai no Enokura Kōji no shashin sakuhin" [Enokura Kōji's photographic works during the 1970s] in *Seeing: The Photography in 1970s by Six Artists* [sic], 30.

⁵⁸⁸ Masuda Rei, lecture at Fuji Xerox Art Space, Yokohama, December 8, 2010.

photography in the art journal *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook], Enokura states,

From my vantage point, taking photographs means fully sensing the tension between matter and myself through an optical device. Therefore, I would like to depress the shutter button in the midst of that tension and to follow the nature of the camera, not to use photography as a confirming device or to take photographs impulsively.⁵⁸⁹

As the *Provoke* members cherished the mechanical function of cameras, Enokura followed “the nature of cameras,” surrendering himself to the given site. One can observe this approach in Enokura’s aforementioned works *Symptom-Sea, Body* (P.W.-No. 40) (1972) (Fig. 6.102) and *Symptom-Column, Flesh* (P.W.-No. 46) (1972) (Fig. 6.103).⁵⁹⁰ In short, he statically linked himself with his surroundings. Enokura’s *Symptom-Floor, Hand* (P.W.-No. 51) (1974) (Fig. 6.104) is another realization of the aforementioned principle, but suggests a more intense manner of approach than do the other photographs. This one shows Enokura’s hand just as it was about to touch a floor.

In general, Enokura’s photography conveys the momentum of either his touching of the environment or objects in the midst of their movement—two characteristics that are quite the opposite of his actual body being the object in motion. For Enokura, taking photographs was an activation of the self relative to the surrounding circumstances.

⁵⁸⁹ Enokura Kōji, “Naniga kamera ni utsuru ka: Toriaezu sonokoto ga mondai” [What the camera sees is the matter in the moment], *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (June 1972): 91. “わたしが、写真を撮るといことは、事物とわたしとの緊張感をカメラという光学機械を間にして味わうことができるからにほかならない。だからシャッターを切るということも、ある種の認識手段とか、衝動にかられて切るのではなく、なるべくカメラの機構にそうということと、事物とわたしとの間の緊張感のなかでシャッターを切りたいと思っている。”

⁵⁹⁰ The way Enokura pressed the shutter button in these works is not entirely clear and merits further research. His widow suggested the possibility that Enokura had used the remote control or that someone accompanying Enokura had taken the photographs for him. Enokura Mitsuyo, interview by author, IC recording, Tokyo, December 7, 2010.

V. Conclusion

The photographs by each *Provoke* photographer show that contemporary visual cultures informed the works in the *Provoke* publications. *Provoke* photographers gave voice to their unique attitudes toward photography, modes of work, and methods of production. Despite being different from one another, the photographers were strongly political, and this trait was true even for Moriyama and Takanashi, who acquired a reputation for being relatively apolitical among *Provoke* members.

Takanashi used commercial photography, especially fashion photography, to manifest *Provoke*'s manifesto in his own terms. Although Takanashi was much inspired by other photographers' spontaneous shooting style, he embraced his profession and method by demonstrating that fashion could undertake a serious role in photography and make a significant contribution to culture. With various methods, styles, and layouts, Takanashi demonstrated the different modes of looking *into* and *at* photographs, by which he addressed the larger context of photography and demonstrated the complex layers of photography's visual effects.

Moriyama played active roles in the fields of graphic art and design, and his familiarity with those disciplines and particularly with Warhol generated the works in *Provoke 3*. The alleged "mimicry of Warhol" in Moriyama's works constituted Moriyama's attempt to gain freedom from didactic photography and to avoid viewers' careful readings of his works. However, as Krauss's argument reveals, the cultural differences between Japan and the United States had framed a complex structure of superficiality in which Moriyama would work, so one should evaluate Moriyama's work accordingly. What Moriyama's work ultimately demonstrates is an underlying value-based equivalency among actual objects, photographs, production art, and printed media: there is no elevation of a commodity's status to highbrow fine art, as was the case

with Warhol's works. In this context, Moriyama posed the question "What is photography?" through his cross-disciplinary works in *Provoke 3*.

The *Provoke* photographers' association with Japanese fine art is another topic that merits in-depth examination. Photography began to merge with the contemporary art scene during the 1960s, and Nakahira and Nomura made a similar effort to avoid *taburō*-style photography, though for varying reasons. By questioning how photography served art and vice versa, works by such Japanese artists as Enokura, Nomura, and Kawaguchi in that era negotiated, (1) the dichotomy between photography and art, and (2), the dichotomy between photography and representation. Against this backdrop, Nakahira tried to present his photography as photography by treating it as a material object or an event, all in the context of contemporary art.

Enokura was one of the artists vividly influenced by *Provoke*'s photographers, especially by Nakahira, in response to whom Enokura's concept of photography went beyond simply the trope of representation. Enokura's preoccupation with tangible reality took shape in both his outdoor works and his photography. *Provoke*'s and Nakahira's anti-aesthetic photography opened up Enokura's eye to new ways of using photography; it was a way to sense the substance of objects, to feel oneself within the surrounding environment by taking photographs. Therefore, *Provoke* helped Enokura to treat photography from an unprecedented perspective and to make use of photography in his art making.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This dissertation has examined the four *Provoke* publications, a multi-functional medium that served simultaneously as a journal of photography, an artists' book, a photobook, an art work, and “material to provoke thought.”⁵⁹¹ The fourth of these publications, *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language], is also a book-type anthology. *Provoke*'s austere design, experimental sizes and layout, provocative texts and highly abstract photographs enable readers to see the publications simultaneously as works of art and as photobooks. At the same time, the four *Provoke* publications' philosophical interrogation of the relationship between photography and language makes them radical contributions to photographic discourse. By taking the forms of journals and books, *Provoke* experimented not only with photography, but also with different possible forms of presentation. In short, the *Provoke* publications demonstrated that photography was a medium that could exhibit itself in a variety of ways.

Evaluations of the four *Provoke* publications have rightly designated them as richly paradoxical and unique experimental production sites for cultural practitioners. *Provoke* was a site that hosted negotiations such as those between predecessors' photography and members' photography, image and language, coincidence and manipulation, and subject and object. For example, Taki attempted to generate unconventional photographs of coalminers and activists in his challenge to *hōdō shashin*. In spite of his highly political subjects, Taki—unlike Domon and Tōmatsu—refused to use photography as a way to raise political awareness. With his essays and poetry, Okada advocated a new language that would provoke viewers. *Provoke* members, especially Taki, saw the structural similarity between language and photography, but they did not

⁵⁹¹ Nakahira Takuma, Okada Takahiko, Takanashi Yutaka, and Taki Kōji [manifesto], *Provoke 1* (November 1968): 2.

believe that individual photographs are, like words, chained to preconceived meanings. *Provoke* photographers were not hesitant to manipulate their prints (as exemplified by Taki's and Moriyama's photocopied photographs), and cherished coincidence in taking photographs (as seen in Takanashi's double-exposure photography). *Provoke* members' photographs consist of "personal" views of the world and the uncontrollable, "impersonal" nature of the camera.⁵⁹² The four *Provoke* publications' refusal to be put into a single category of media and the abovementioned negotiations endow the publications with a unique value.

This dissertation has also examined the contents of the four *Provoke* publications, which were informed by different disciplines. *Provoke* members actively drew on philosophy, art, design, literature, fashion, and film. For example, Taki conceptualized photography by borrowing ideas from semiotics and phenomenology. Okada used Artaud's ideas to offer an analogy between image and language. Nakahira's cinematic photography in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* reflects the inspiration that he got from film and landscape discourse. Moriyama's works in *Provoke 3* show equivalency among photocopied photographs, print works, and journals. Underscored by fashion photography, Takanashi's project in *Provoke 2* presents some of the complicated visual effects of photography. Therefore, *Provoke* photographers were active agents who created interdisciplinary bodies of work.

As a result of members' cross-boundary experiments, Japanese-language text became less and less prominent on the printed page of *Provoke* over the course of the publication's three-issue run, suggesting that the function of texts in *Provoke* gradually shifted from the transmission of arguments to the visual effect of design. Likewise, photographs in the four *Provoke* publications tended to grow more and more abstract, to a point where readers would be unsure

⁵⁹² As explained in Chapter Five, these "personal" and "impersonal" aspects of photography changed Enokura Kōji's views on photography.

whether or not the visuals were photographs. As much as the four *Provoke* publications challenged the categorization of media, *Provoke* photography successfully defied the preconceived genres of photography, such as photojournalism and art photography, and explored photography from unprecedented perspectives.

One of the most important achievements of the four *Provoke* publications, in addition to the points above, is their stress on the physical actions of photographers. As early as 1972, photographer and writer Kuronuma Kōichi argued that the legacy of *Provoke* lies in the four publications' successful conveyance of photography as a process-based action rather than as an end result.⁵⁹³

Kuronuma's view supports what I have demonstrated in my dissertation: by embracing the act of taking photographs and embodying this act in photographic works, *Provoke* members expanded people's understanding of Japanese photography. For example, the photographs in the publications present the photographers' movements (walking, running, and riding in a vehicle), and these movements constitute behavior in which the photographers engaged in the present context while taking photographs. These photographers' spontaneous shooting styles and abrasive manner in developing their negatives and prints expanded *Provoke* photography from a static and transparent medium to a kinetic and opaque one. Indeed, Enokura Kōji was very much inspired by Nakahira's *Circulation—Date, Place, Events* for its direct association between the acts of the photographer and the given site in which the photographs had been taken and exhibited. *Provoke*'s editorial meetings sometimes bore unexpected results for the members' works, and the members embraced this randomness. Taki's and Moriyama's photographic works in *Provoke 3* suggest a continuation of the reproduction (i.e., photocopying) of reproductions

⁵⁹³ Kuronuma Kōichi, "Shashinka e no ajitēshon" [Agitation for photographers], *Bijutsu techō* [Art notebook] (June 1972): 108.

(i.e., photography), in which the production process itself is a critical part of their work. Therefore, in addition to the act of taking photographs, the darkroom labor, editorial meetings, photocopying, and any other miscellaneous tasks that went into making the four *Provoke* publications are as important as the outcome of the process. *Provoke* and *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* represented a fundamental shift in how photography is understood as a medium in the history of Japanese photography.

Provoke members' emphasis on the production process of photography resulted in manifestations of *are-bure-boke*, grainy, blurry, and out-of-focus qualities, and this dissertation has reevaluated these qualities. As I mentioned in the Introduction, photographers and photography critics have stated that *are-bure-boke* was either a trend or a means and a purpose of *Provoke* photography—or all three. However, as I have demonstrated, *are-bure-boke* was also about the attitudes and unavoidable consequences of *Provoke* photographers' engagement with photography and their immediate surroundings. This engagement was driven by both internal factors, such as a rejection of conventional photography, and external factors, such as changing societal patterns in late-1960s Japan. For example, *bure-boke* (minus *are*) was an outcome of taking photographs from a moving car, a practice that paralleled the transformation of contemporary transportation systems; and *are* stemmed from the *Provoke* members' rejection of conventional ways of developing negatives and film. Therefore, *are-bure-boke* is the photographic state of cancellation, denial, a sense of motion, coincidence, manipulation, intervention, and *Provoke* photographers' unconscious and conscious political gestures.

As the four *Provoke* publications' photographs emphasize process and *are-bure-boke*, I describe the nature of the publications as incomplete manifestations of what the members sought, not as the end product or the visual pinnacle of the photographers' received ideas. Araki already

acknowledged these process-oriented and epistemological characteristics of *Provoke* in 1993. He stated, “What is good about *Provoke* is that it says, ‘This is not a complete work’.”⁵⁹⁴ Indeed, the structural development of the four *Provoke* publications demonstrates Araki’s point. In particular, *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* is a collection of “fragments of reality,” a corpus of uncoordinated photographs and writings.

In the end, the four *Provoke* publications demonstrated a wealth of possibilities in discussions about photography. *Provoke* members’ interrogation of established photography-related ideas and the members’ audacious quest for new photography from unprecedented perspectives continues to inspire and challenge photographers and photography critics to this day.

After Provoke and First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty

Provoke disbanded in 1970 with the publication of *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*. After the cessation of publications, some ex-members had difficulty re-conceptualizing their photographic work. Nakahira experienced diminished productivity after he published *Naze shokubutsu zukan ka* [Why an illustrated botanical encyclopedia?] in 1973. No new photobook by Nakahira appeared on bookstores’ shelves until 1983, when his work *Aratanaru gyōshi* [A new gaze] was published. Prior to that time, he had been recovering from a long episode of amnesia caused by acute alcoholism. Moriyama published six photobooks during the 1970s, but stated that he had endured a great sense of loss after the disbandment and that he had finally become productive again only after the 1982 publication of the photobook *Hikari to kage* [Light

⁵⁹⁴ Araki Nobuyoshi, “Araki Nobuyoshi: ‘purovōku’ ni shigeki sareta ‘hitoridake no 70 nen anpo’/ Araki Nobuyoshi, ‘I was alone with my private protest’,” interview, *Déjà vu* (October 1993): 86. “これが完結した作品じゃないよって言っているところが「プロヴォーク」のいいところなんだよ。”

and shadow].⁵⁹⁵ After *Provoke*'s disbandment, Taki stopped producing photography as a personal project. He taught at universities and kept contributing to numerous publications on photography, art, design, war, and sports until his passing in 2011. Takanashi, after wrapping up his work for *Provoke*, published his first photobook, *Toshi e* [Towards the city], in 1974. Since then, Takanashi has been mostly taking photographs of urban settings and working in the field of portraiture. Okada published nine poetry anthologies beginning in the 1970s and died in 1997. Okada and Takanashi collaborated on a photobook entitled *Toshi wa yume mizu* [The city does not dream] in 1974.

As much as the four *Provoke* publications influenced young photographers, ex-members' post-publication activities inspired subsequent generations. After *Provoke* disbanded, Taki, Takanashi, and Okada taught at universities, whereas Moriyama's activities took place mainly outside of academia. In 1974, Tōmatsu Shōmei proposed a photography workshop straightforwardly entitled WORKSHOP, and Moriyama, Araki, Hosoe Eikoh, and others served as lecturers. Now renowned, up-and-coming photographers such as Kitajima Keizō and Kurata Seiji emerged from Moriyama's classes. In 1976, Moriyama and a group of his students, including Kitajima and Kurata, launched a Tokyo-based office-gallery-studio, called CAMP, where young photographers would have opportunities to exhibit their work.

My Dissertation's Contribution to Various Disciplines

In practical terms, my dissertation contributes to both Western and Japanese scholarship on photobooks and specifically on the *Provoke* publications. As a first monograph on *Provoke* in English, my dissertation has made esoteric writings by the *Provoke* members accessible to

⁵⁹⁵ Moriyama Daidō, in *Inu no kioku* [Memories of a dog] (Tokyo: The Asahi Shimbun Company, 1984; repr., Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 2001), 254, 260.

readers whose first language is not Japanese. I have also examined the photographs in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, which is often overlooked in the existing literature.

My dissertation has identified new approaches to discussing the four *Provoke* publications in the context of the history of Japanese photography. I have examined the publications from the perspective of their contemporary cultural context—a research approach that has seldom surfaced in the history of postwar Japanese photography. In this sense, my dissertation has opened up the discussion of whether some *Provoke* photographs (and poems) are works of art rather than simply works of photography, and has showed the necessity of contextualizing them in the history of art.

In expanding the current discourse on Japanese photography, I have elaborated on the genealogy of Japanese photographers (i.e., identifying Tōmatsu Shōmei as a predecessor and Araki as a successor of *Provoke*) by incorporating the pre-War photography of Natori into my analysis. To this end, I have built on significant ideas proposed by photography critic Iizawa Kōtarō. To illuminate the complexity of influences, I have also taken up the prominent themes (i.e., *hōdō shashin*, landscape discourse, and art) that run through the examined publications.

Regarding its contribution to the history of photography, my dissertation has emphasized the processes that underlie photography. Studies of the history of modern Western photography have rarely focused on the steps that a photographer follows, beginning with snapping a photograph and following through to its development in a darkroom, and the paucity of research on the process probably stems from dichotomies (such as painting versus photography, originals versus copies, and modernism versus postmodernism) that have been major issues within the discourse of Western photography. Rather than emphasize photography as merely an end-product and representation of objective reality, this dissertation has established the importance of holistic

approaches. Photographs, the environment in which photographers take photographs, photographers' acts of taking photographs, and photographers' development of film are inseparable from any rigorously comprehensive discussion of the four *Provoke* publications.

My dissertation has opened up another novel approach to area studies in the history of photography: the importance of unveiling the specificity in the conceptual development of photography within Japan. For example, I have traced the trajectory of *hōdō shashin* and demonstrated how future generations adopted this approach and used it as a springboard. Although *hōdō shashin* was a German import, its post-import development was a truly unique Japanese experience. Therefore, future studies on Japanese photography practitioners' efforts to adopt and to develop new or existing concepts from outside Japan would strengthen area studies in photography. My research sheds light only on a few of the many important aspects of this theme, and related research that is more comprehensive (e.g., studies on photobooks and photography magazines) would be greatly welcomed.

The Scope of Future Research

Future research in this area should consider undertaking five important tasks. One is to offer more visual analysis of each photograph in the *Provoke* publications. Owing to the publications' theoretical and philosophical nature, I have emphasized the elucidation of concepts. Therefore, further examinations of each photograph would permit deeper analyses of the publications.

The second task is to explore further cross-pollination, so to speak, between Japanese photography and art. As I mentioned in Chapter Six, photography became an eligible medium in the context of contemporary art in the late 1960s. Of particular importance to researchers is the

topic of how art affected the aesthetics of Japanese photography at that time. I used works by Enokura and Nakahira as content for a case study of photography's influence on contemporary art, but long overdue is a far more exhaustive investigation into the inspirational effects that Japanese art or art of other countries had on Japanese photography around the time of *Provoke*.

The third task worth undertaking is critical: further examinations of literary works in the four *Provoke* publications. Deserving of more scholarly attention are poems written by Okada and another poet, Yoshimasu Gōzō. Language was one of the most important themes of the four *Provoke* publications, and the analysis of related literary works would facilitate the comprehensive understanding of the publications. Okada's contributions to the four *Provoke* publications, especially the contribution that Okada's knowledge of Surrealism made to *Provoke*'s idea of coincidence, would constitute a fruitful topic of study.

Fourth, comparison of the four *Provoke* publications with works in other genres such as design and architecture would further flesh out the four publications. Various cultural practitioners fundamentally questioned their disciplines and media around the time of *Provoke*. For example, the designer Awazu Kiyoshi launched the design magazine *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* in 1966 in order to ruminate on the role of design in society. Just as Taki wrote the essay "Shashin ni nani ga kanou ka" [What can photography do?], which appeared in *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty*, architect Hara Kōji published the essay *Kenchiku ni nani ga kanou ka* [What can architecture do?] in 1967. As I discussed in Chapter Five, filmmaker Matsuda Masao created a radical movie that put into question existing documentary films. As *Provoke* members were much informed by and sensitized by the rebellious atmosphere of the late 1960s, one could assess the four *Provoke* publications in relation to like-minded movements in order to further articulate any uniqueness attributable to the publications.

The fifth task would be to use a feminist perspective in analyzing *Provoke* so that research avoids treating the four *Provoke* publications as gender-neutral photography productions. Feminist viewpoints on Japanese photography, whether in Japan or the United States, remain scarce, and the politicization of Japanese photography is necessary if a fuller understanding of the subject is to be achieved. Feminist concerns about *Provoke* might center, not so much on the fact that all the *Provoke* photographers were men, as on the fact that no published research has ever questioned why there was this imbalance. It would be beneficial to illuminate the considerable relevance of postwar Japanese photography's patriarchal nature to the context from which *Provoke* emerged.

In conclusion, the four *Provoke* publications are distinctive in terms of their emphasis on taking and making photographs and their multi-faceted nature as publications. *Provoke* members challenged both the notion of photography and photography's relationship to language from unusual perspectives, resulting in such breakthroughs as *are-bure-boke*. Their radical photography and the development of their publications not only defies the view of photography as a mere instance of visual representation, but also demonstrates that photography can be commensurate with photographers' living processes. For all these reasons, the *Provoke* publications continue to challenge our ideas about photography to this day.

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Figure 1.1
Provoke 1 (November 1968), cover

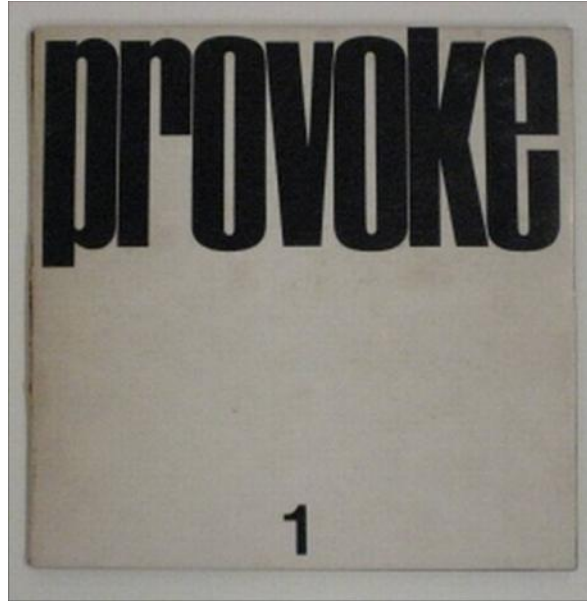


Figure 1.2
Provoke 2 (March 1969), cover

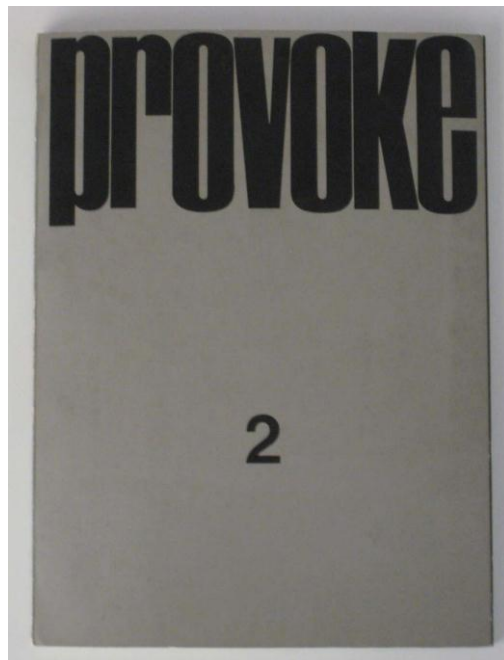


Figure 1.3
Provoke 3 (August 1969), cover

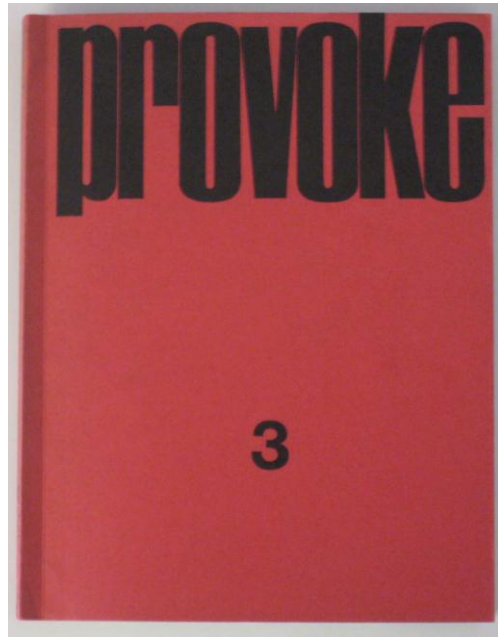


Figure 1.4
 Taki Kōji and Nakahira Takuma, eds. *Mazu tashika rashisa no sekai o sutero: Shashin to gengo no shisō* [First, abandon the world of pseudo-certainty: Thought on photography and language] (1970), cover



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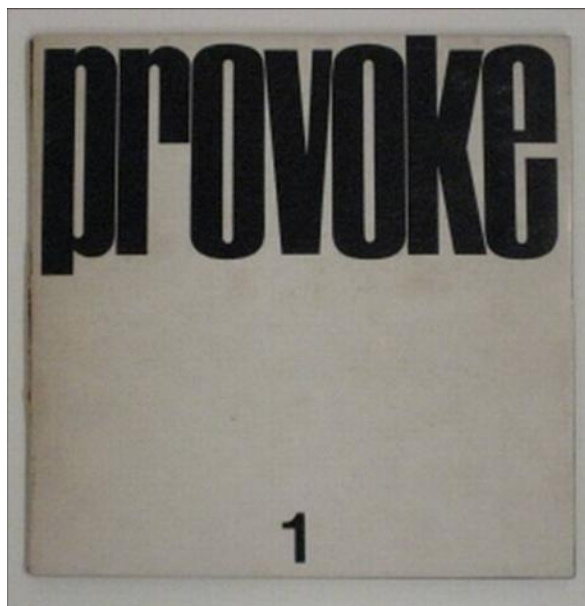


Figure 2.2
Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 1* (November 1968)

Figure 2.3

Takanashi Yutaka, *Untitled* from *Provoke 1* (November 1968)

Figure 2.4

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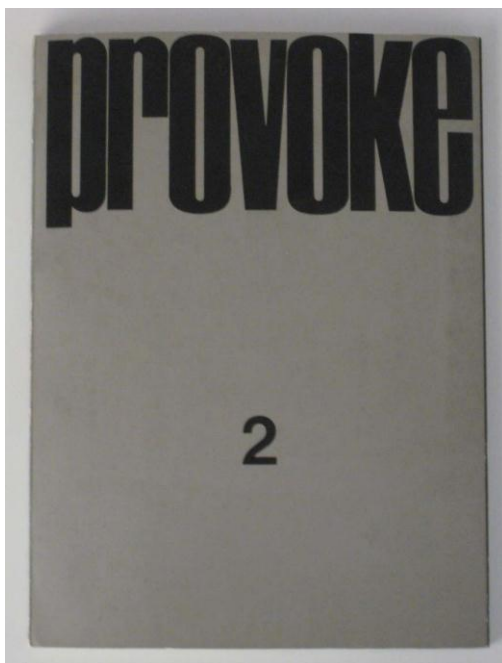


Figure 2.5

Okada Takahiko, “Oomata biraki ni taete samayoe” [Withstand the wide-spread legs and wander], *Provoke 2* (March 1969)

Figure 2.6

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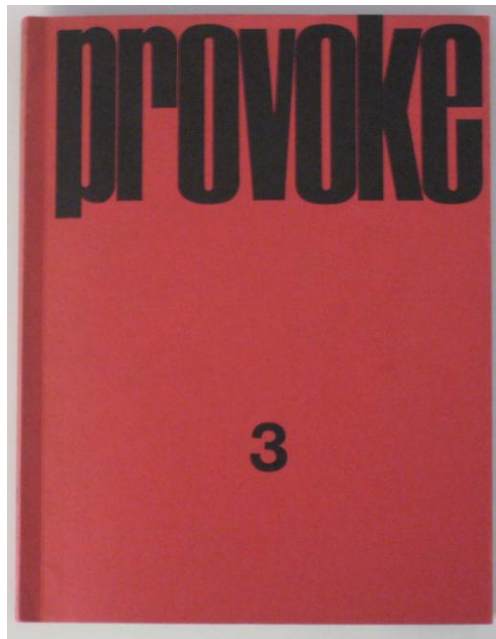


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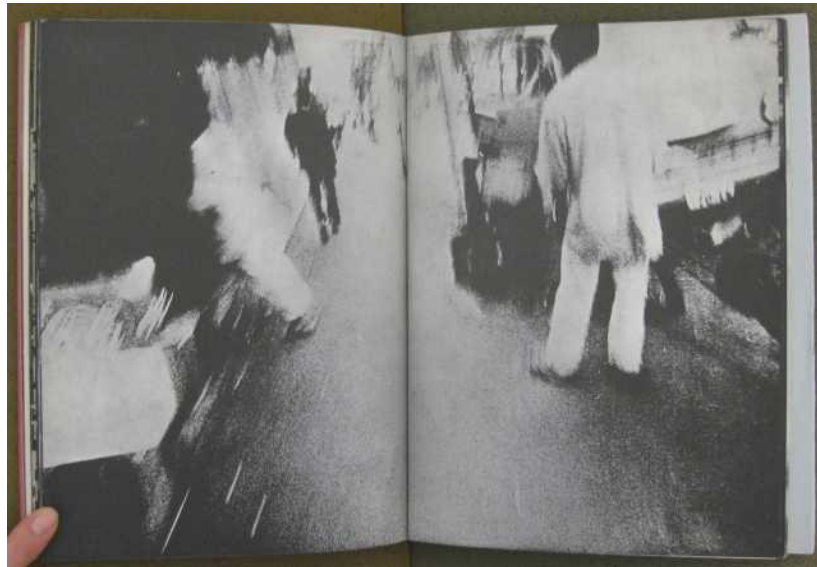


Figure 2.13

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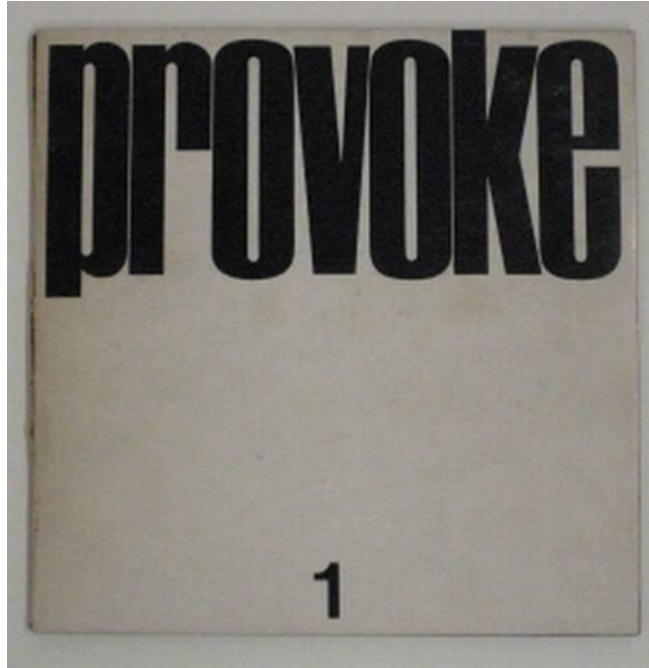


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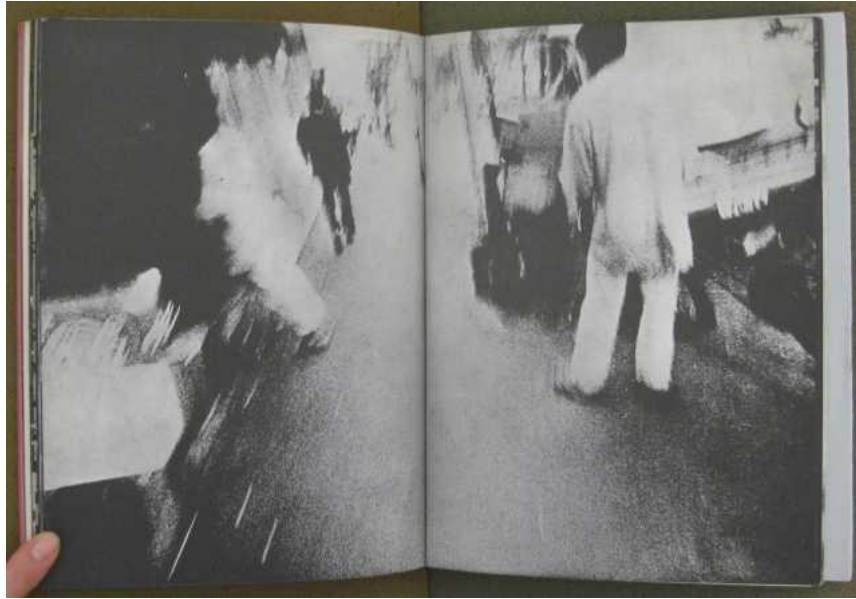


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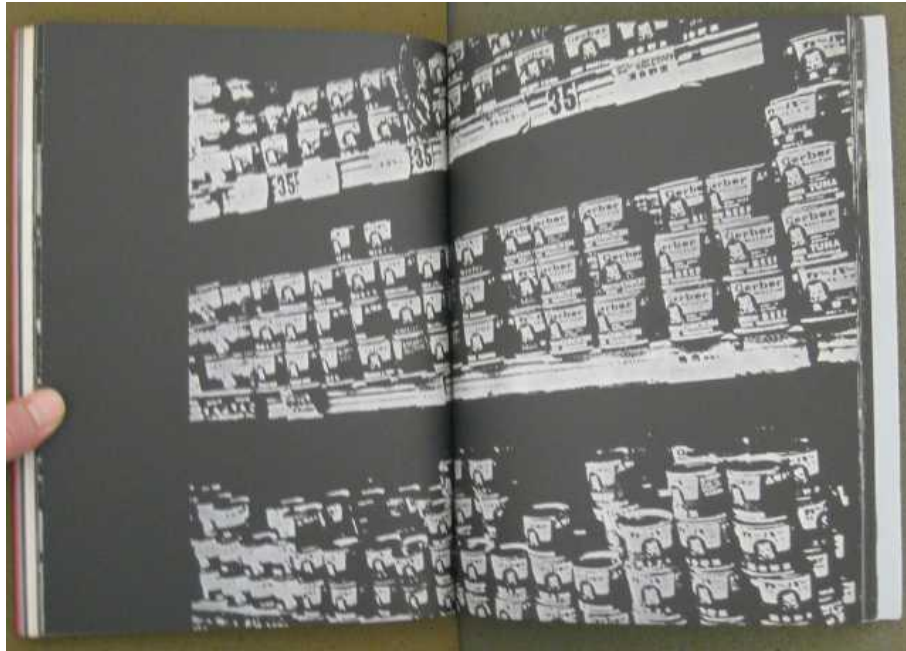


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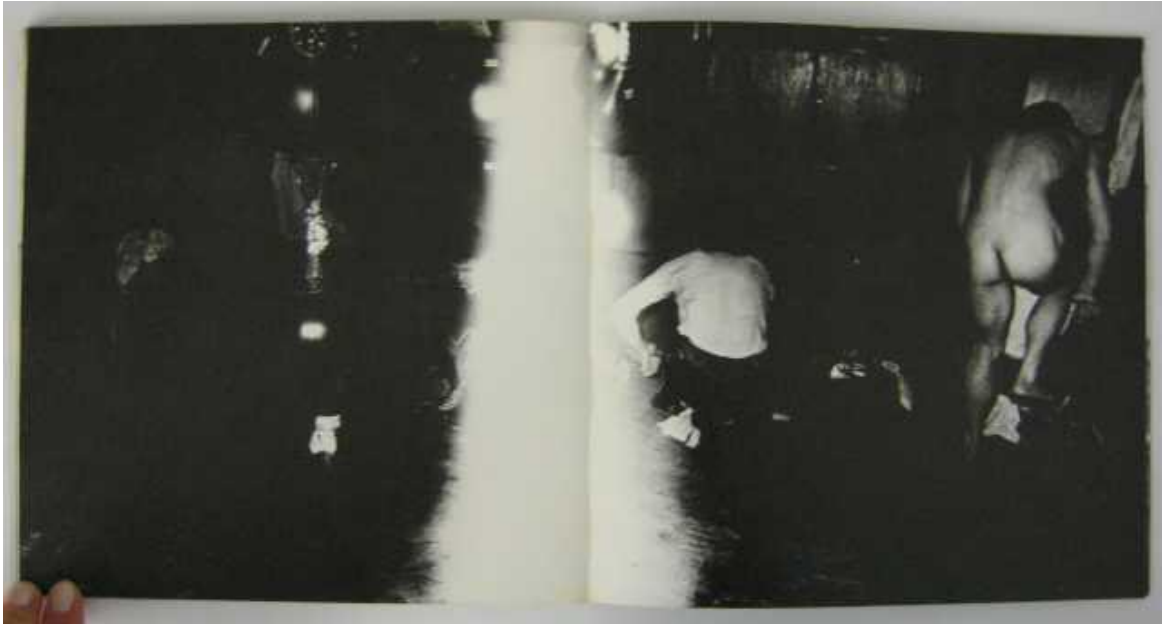


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A map of the present-day Tokyo Metropolitan Expressway, from Wikipedia Commons

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Figure 5.23
Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)



Figure 5.24
Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

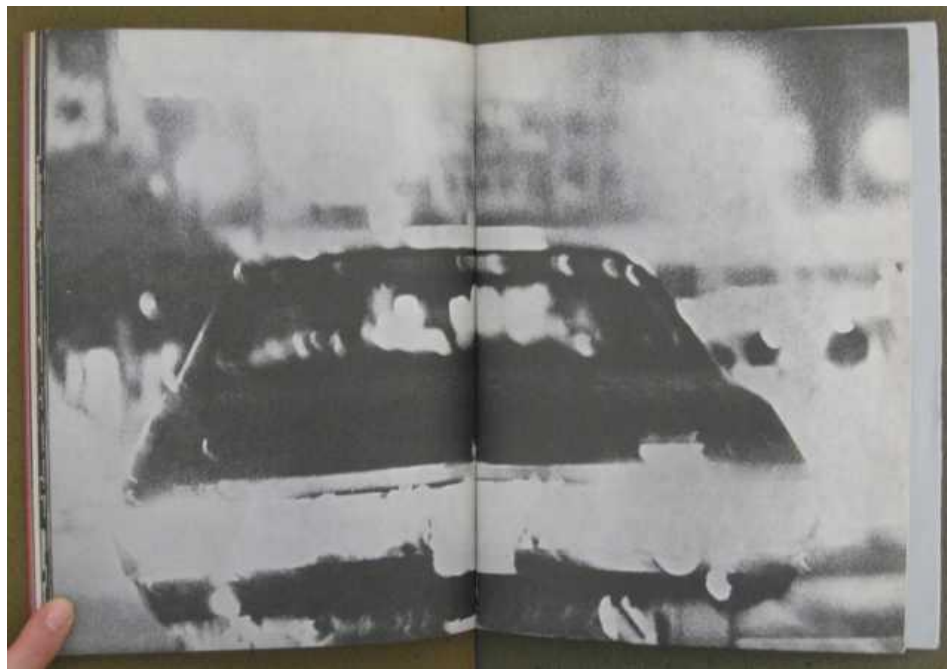


Figure 5.25
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Nakahira Takuma, photograph for Nakahira and Matsuda Masao, “Fūkei” [Landscape], *Eiga hihyō* [Film criticism] (February 1971)



Figure 5.28

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled from First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

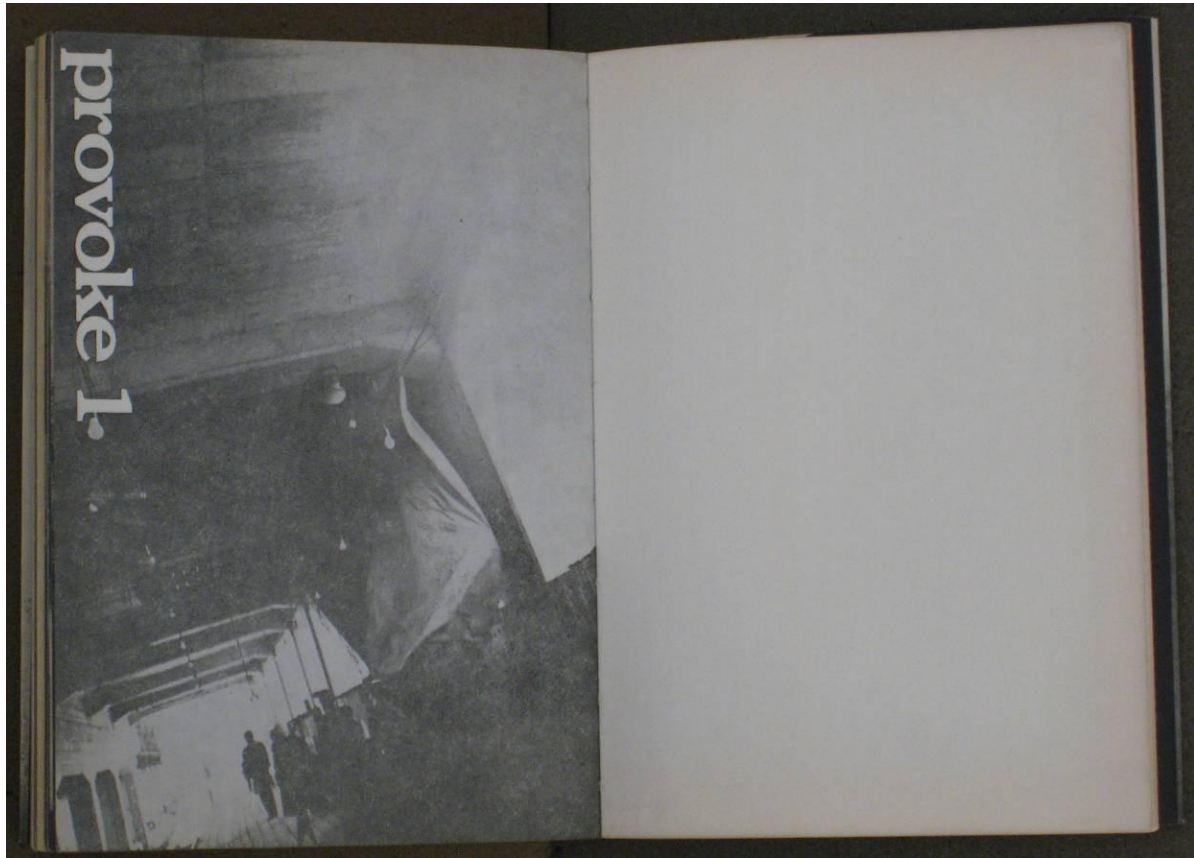


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Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

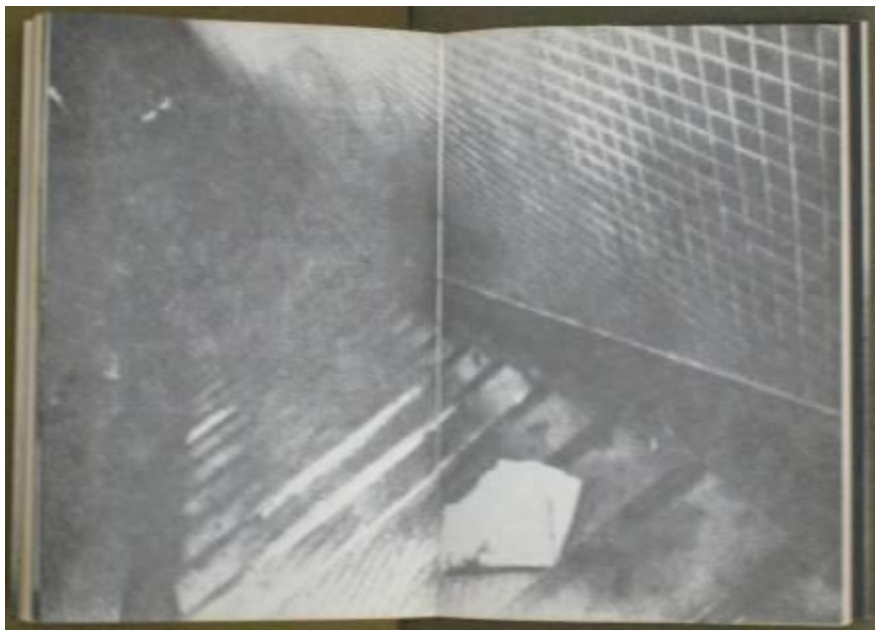


Figure 5.32

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

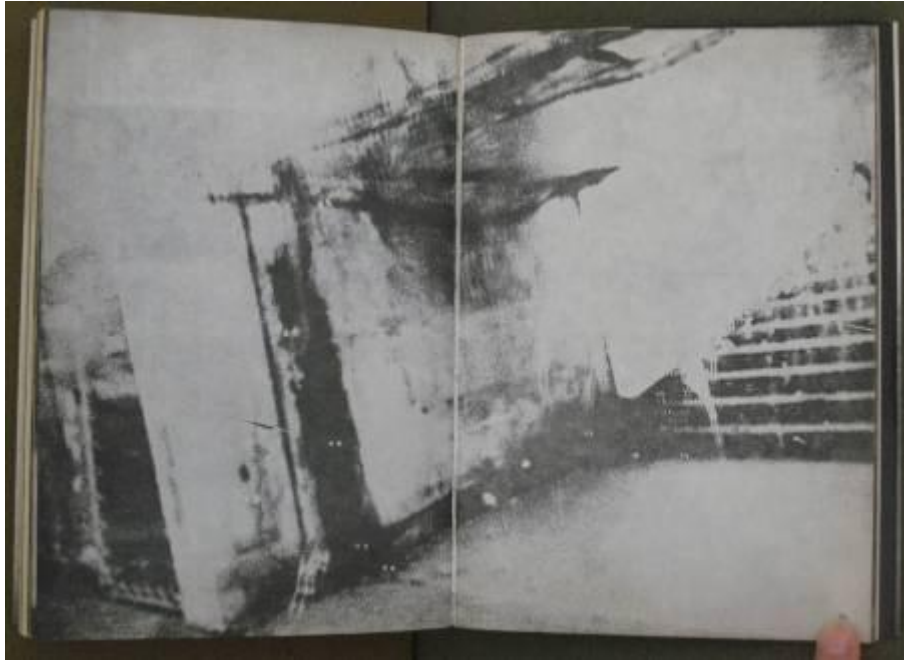


Figure 5.33

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.34

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.35

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.36

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

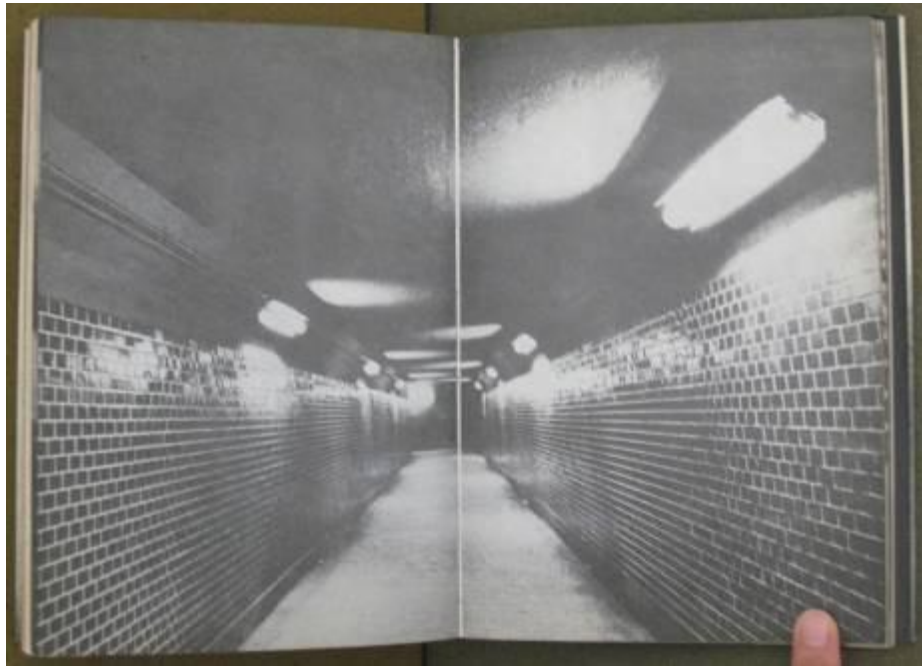


Figure 5.37

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.38

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

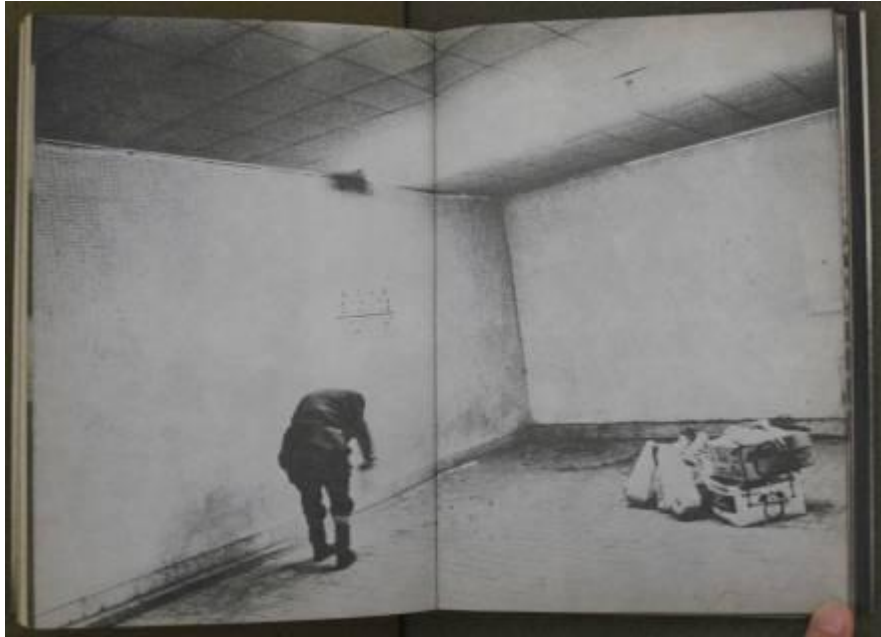


Figure 5.39

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

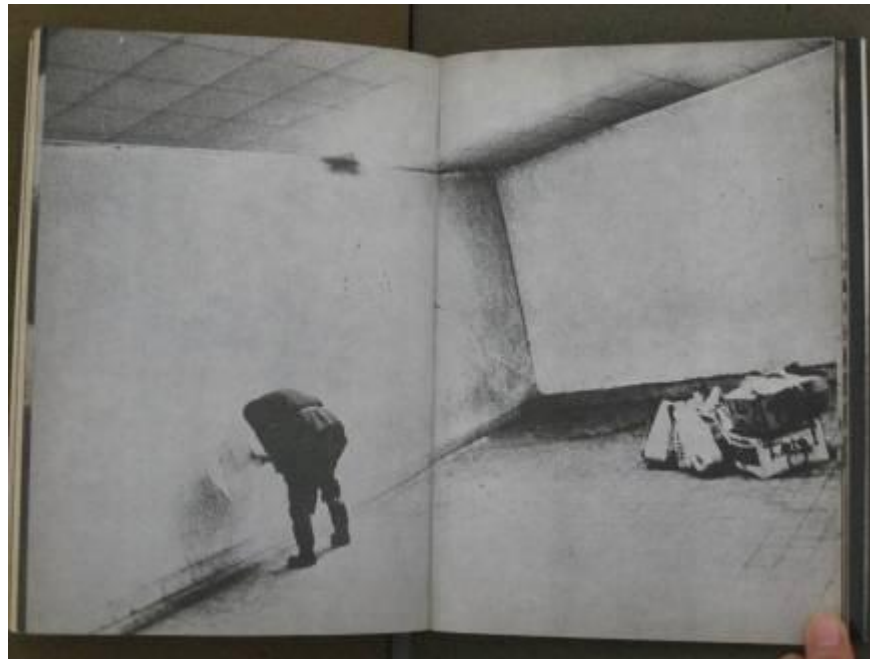


Figure 5.40

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled from First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

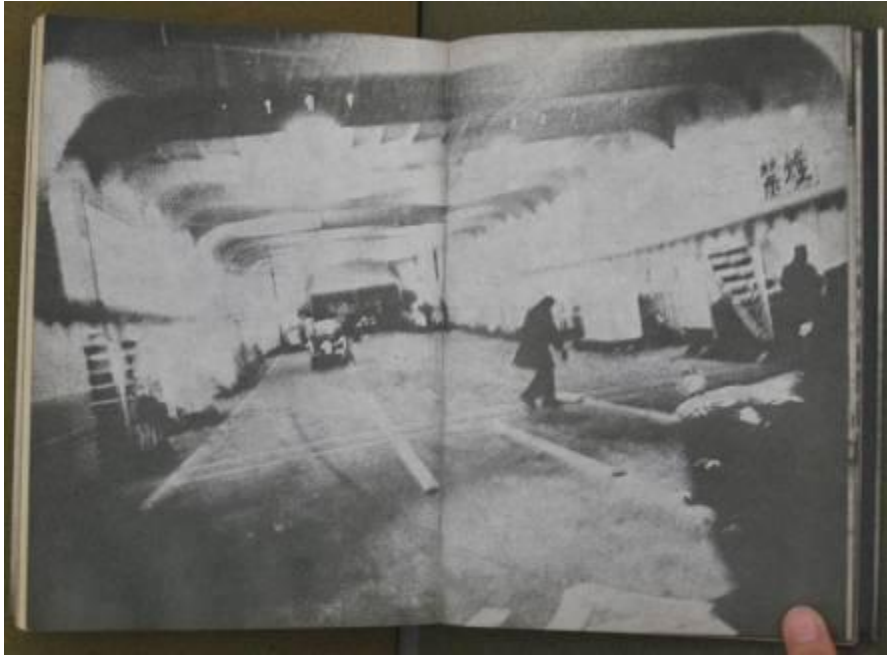


Figure 5.41

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled from First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

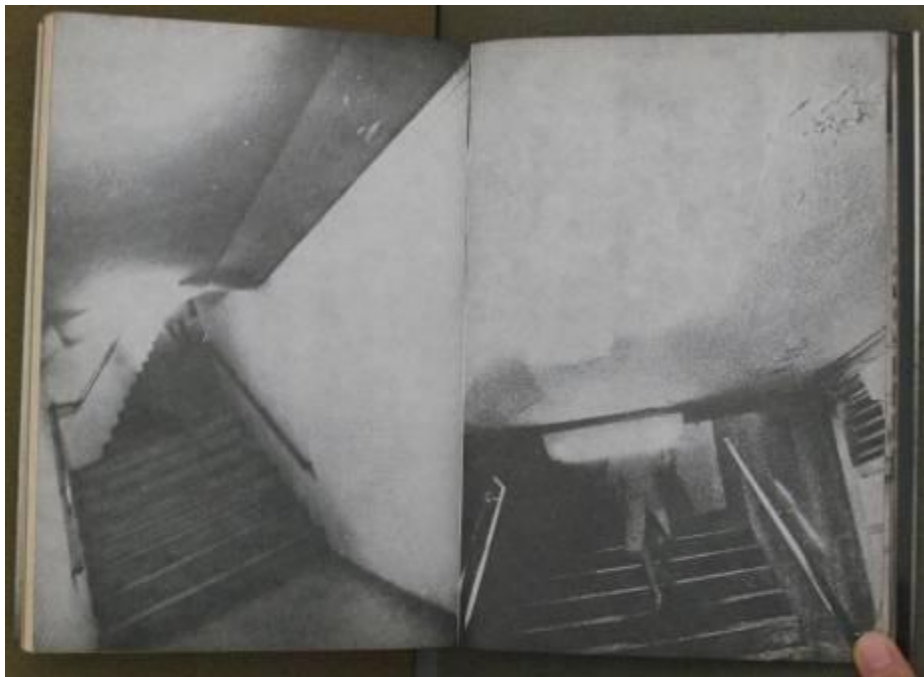


Figure 5.42

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

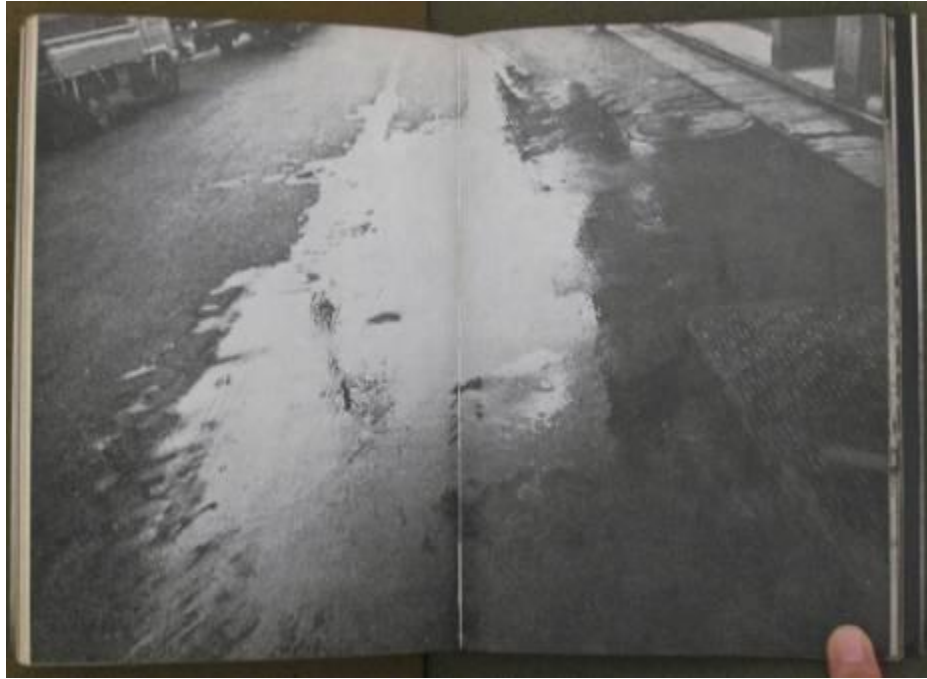


Figure 5.43

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.44

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled from First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.45

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled from First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

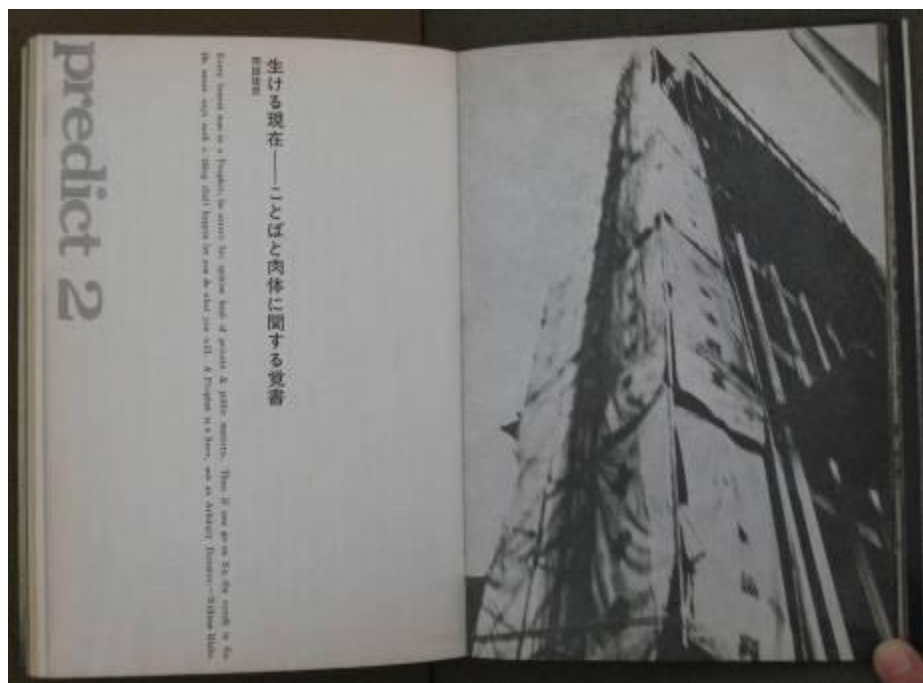


Figure 5.46

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.47

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)



Figure 5.48

Photographs of the parking garage and the underground plaza at Shinjuku Station West Entrance, “Shinjuku nishiguchi hiroba and chika chūshajō” [Shinjuku station west entrance, plaza, and underground parking garage], *Shin kenchiku* [New architecture] (March 1967)

Figure 5.49
Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)



Figure 5.50
Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)

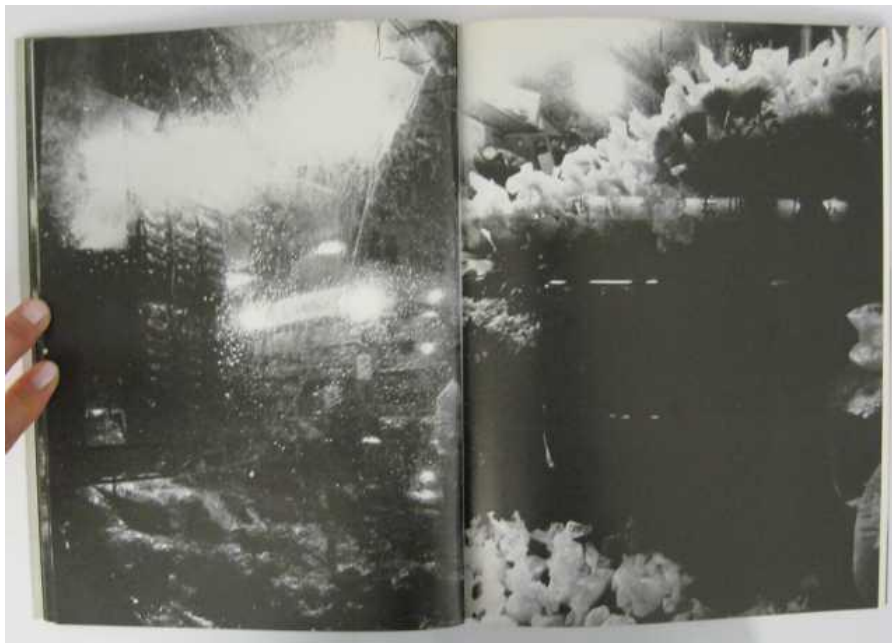


Figure 5.51
Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)



Figure 5.52
Takanashi Yutaka, *Untitled* from *First, Abandon the World of Pseudo-certainty* (1970)

Figure 5.53
Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)



Figure 5.54

Flyer distributed by the members of *Tatakau jyānarisuto no renraku kaigi* [Council of Struggling Journalists] (1968)

Figure 5.55

“Jiritsu suru shimin 8 ‘fōku gerira’ to shimin tachi: ‘6.15 genshō,’ gitā, hitobito” [Citizens who become independent, no. 8, “Folk guerrilla” and the citizenry: The “6.15 phenomenon,” guitars, and the masses], *Asahi Graph* (August 1, 1969), photograph by Nakahira Takuma

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Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)

Figure 5.57

Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)

Figure 5.58

Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)

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Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)

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Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled* from *Provoke 1* (November 1968)



Chapter Six: Illustrations

Figure 6.1
Takanashi Yutaka, *Untitled* from *Provoke 2* (March 1969)

Figure 6.2
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

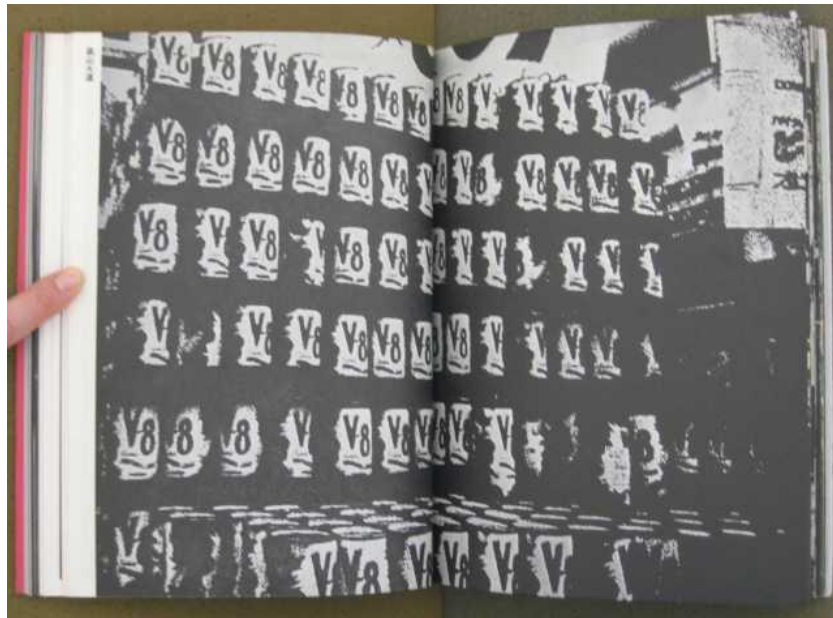


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Nakahira Takuma, *La Nuit 1*, ca. 1968, collection of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art



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Figure 6.36
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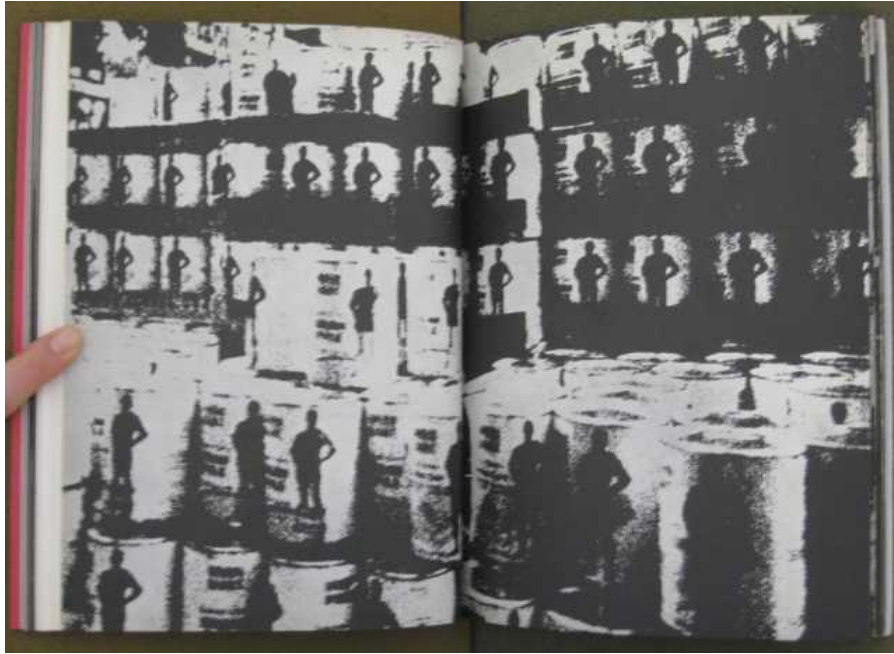


Figure 6.37
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

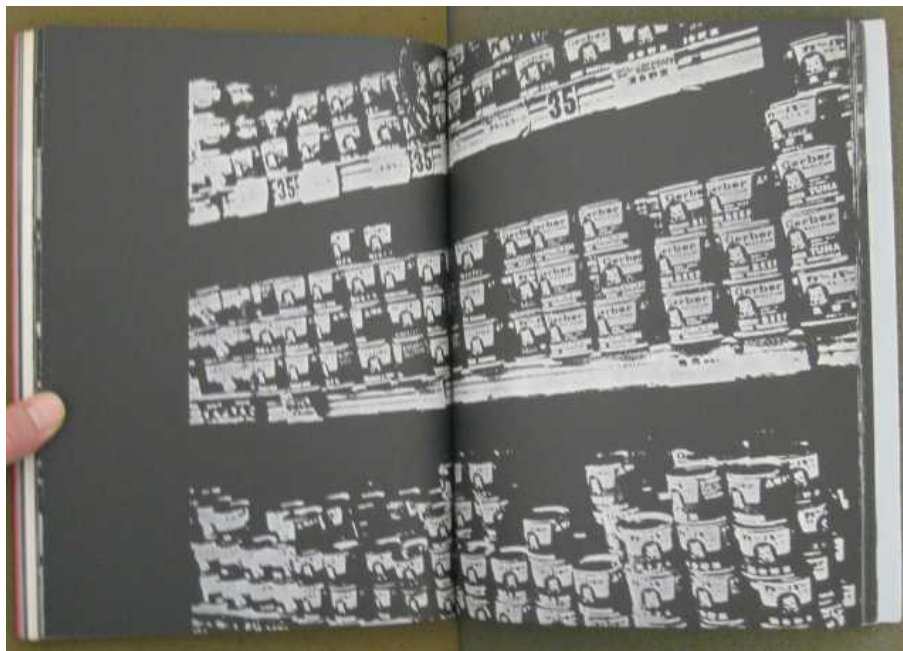


Figure 6.38
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

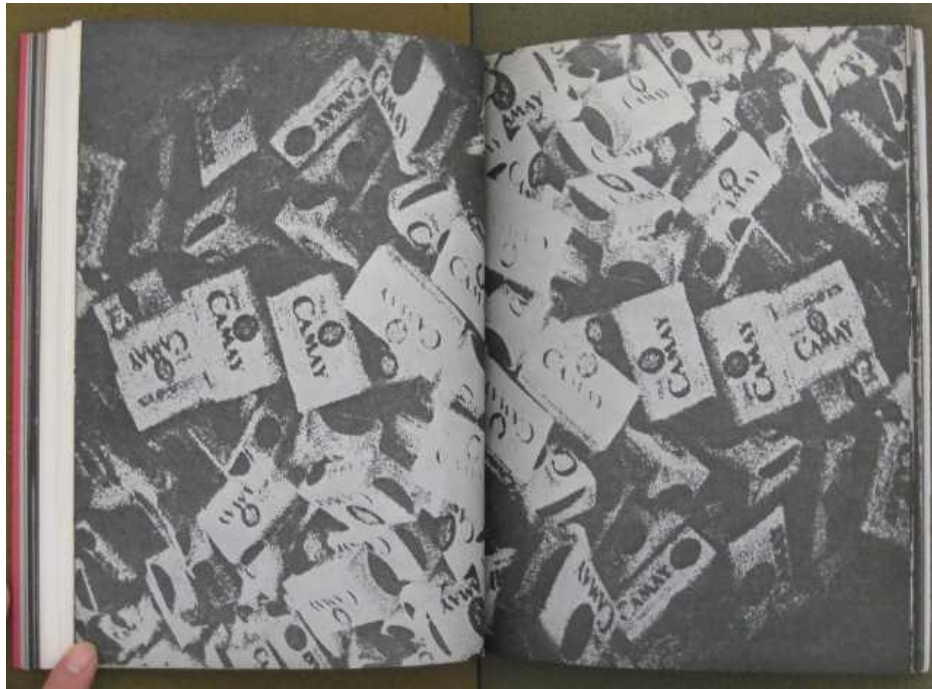


Figure 6.39
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)



Figure 6.40
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

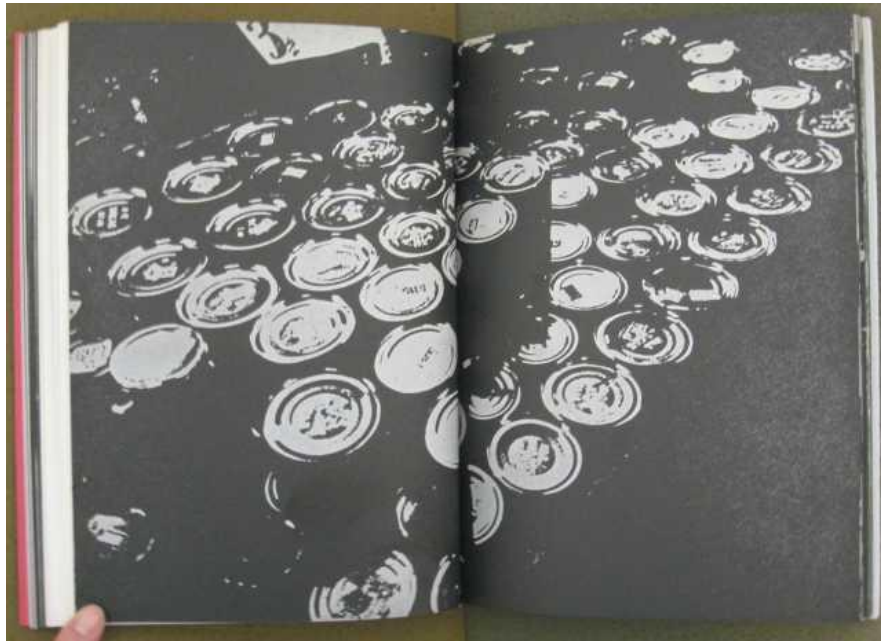


Figure 6.41
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)



Figure 6.42
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

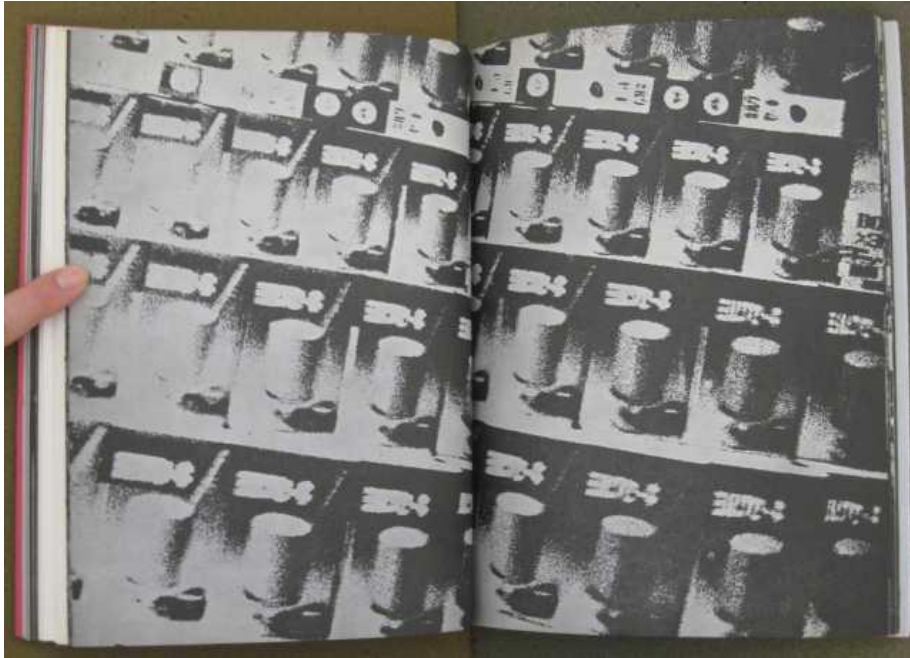


Figure 6.43
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)



Figure 6.44
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

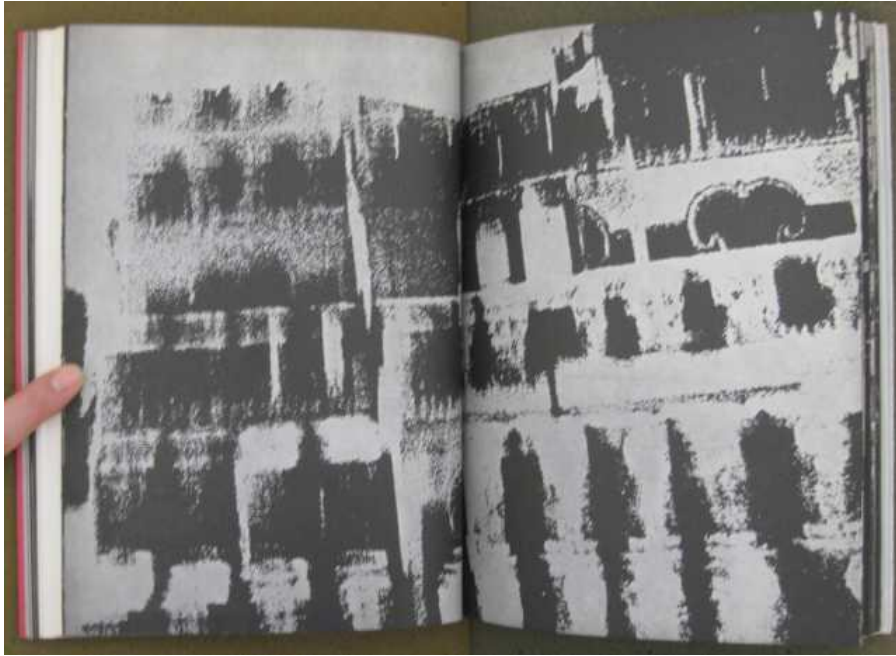


Figure 6.45
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)



Figure 6.46
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

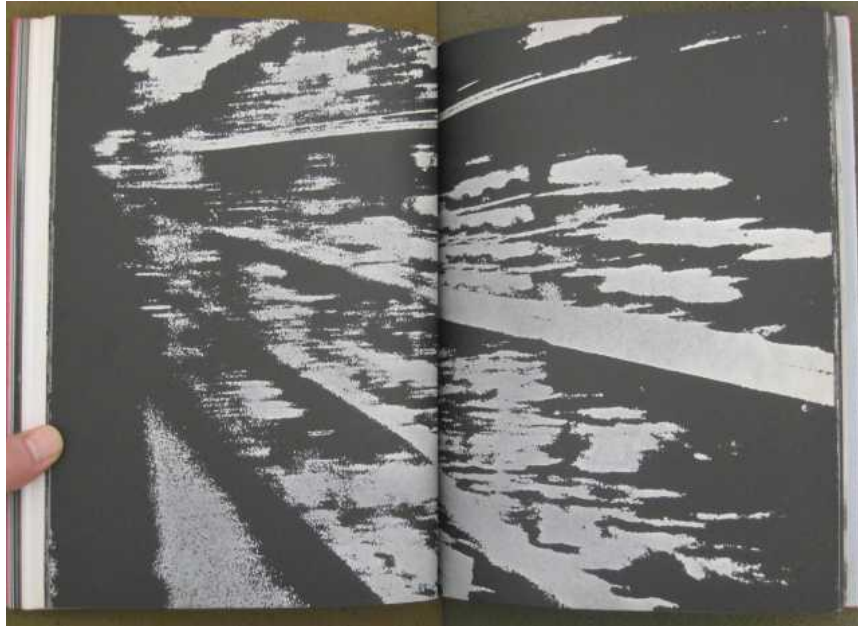


Figure 6.47
Moriyama Daidō, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)



Figure 6.48
Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

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Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

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Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

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Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

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Taki Kōji, *Untitled* from *Provoke 3* (August 1969)

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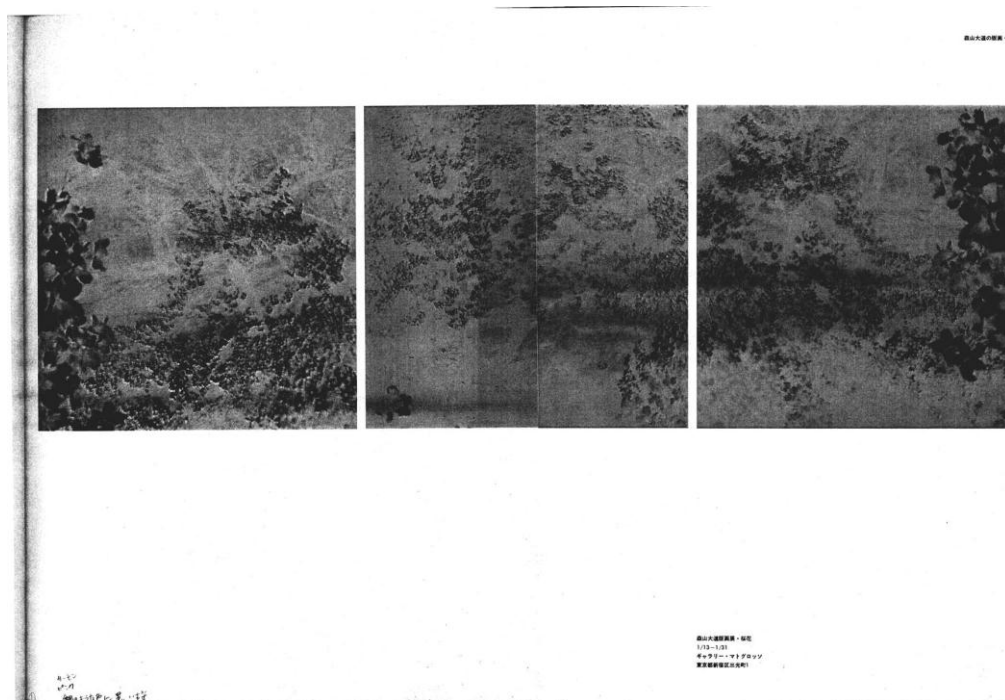


Figure 6.62

Moriyama Daidō, “♀♂” from *Dezain hihyō/ The Design Review* (October 1969)

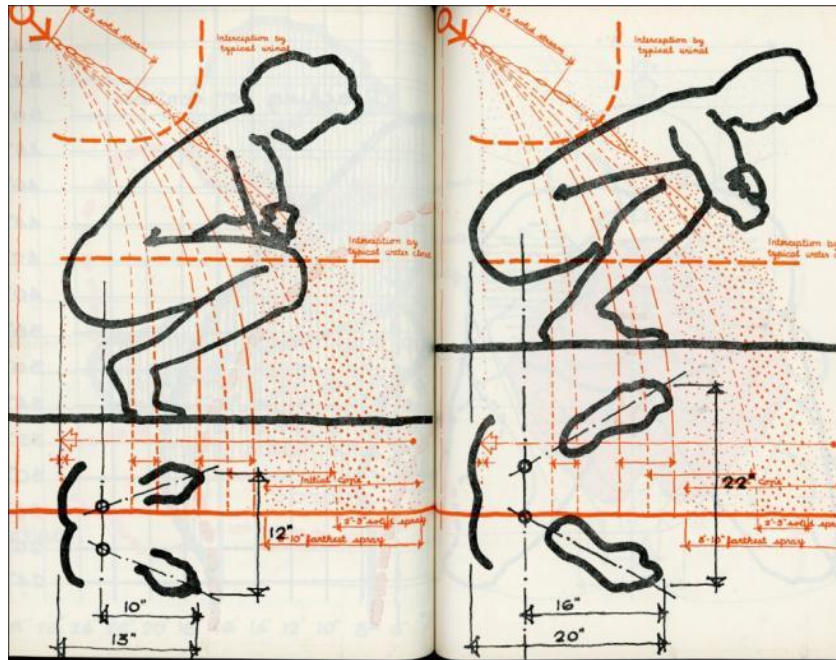


Figure 6.63

Moriyama Daidō, “Akushidento 6: Keishichō kōtsū anzen postā yori, jiko” [Prepared or Not 6: Smash-up] (English title) from *Asahi Camera* (June 1969)

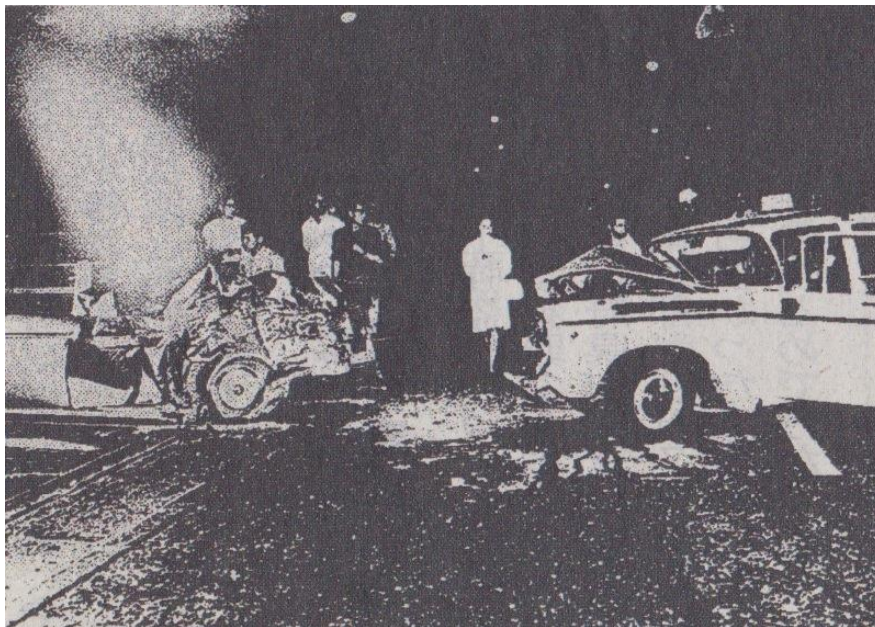


Figure 6.64
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Figure 6.66
Nakahira Takuma, *Tokyo Biennale (1970)*, catalogue cover



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Nakahira Takuma, *Tokyo Biennale: Between Man and Matter*, 1970, poster

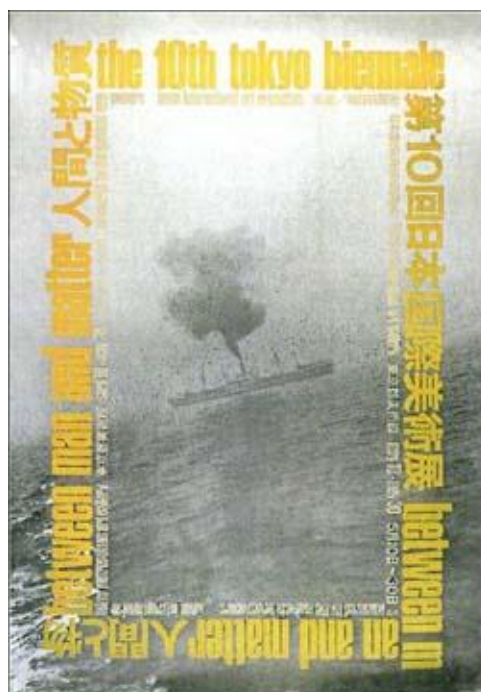


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Takanashi Yutaka, *Untitled* from “Tomorrow,” 1963/ 1967

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Figure 6.79
Nakahira Takuma, *La Nuit 2*, ca. 1968, collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

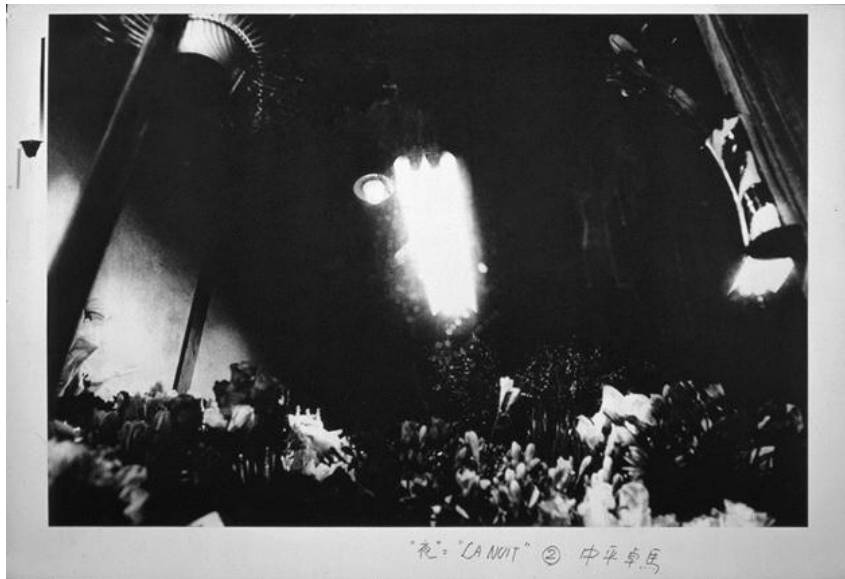


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Nakahira Takuma, *La Nuit 3*, ca. 1968, collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art



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Nakahira Takuma, *La Nuit 4*, ca. 1968, collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art



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Nakahira Takuma, *La Nuit 5*, ca. 1968, collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art



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Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled*, for *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*, 1971, detail



Figure 6.88

Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled*, for *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*, 1971, detail



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Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled*, for *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*, 1971, detail



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Nakahira Takuma, *Untitled*, from *Circulation—Date, Place, Events*, 1971, detail



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