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MONEY, TRAINS, AND GUILLOTINES

ASIA-PACIFIC: CULTURE, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY

Editors: Rey Chow, Michael Dutton, H. D. Harootunian, and Rosalind C. Morris

MONEY, TRAINS, AND GUILLOTINES

ART AND REVOLUTION IN 1960S JAPAN

WILLIAM MAROTTI

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For my parents

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CHRONOLOGY OF SELECT EVENTS

PRE–SECOND WORLD WAR

1895 Law Controlling the Imitation of Currency and Securities established, including provision for prosecuting *mozō* (creating something confusable with currency).

1907 Criminal Code established, including provision for prosecuting counterfeiting offense of *gizō*.

1918 Great Court of Cassation defines *obscenity* as "a writing, picture, or anything else which tends to stimulate and excite sexual desire or satisfy the same . . . such that it causes man to engender feelings of shame and loathsomeness."

1940S

1945 **OCTOBER:** Staff at *Yomiuri Shinbun* organize a union and strike in response to owner Shōriki Matsutarō's refusal to make changes to edito-

rial policies. They continue to print the newspaper, thus instituting the first instance of "production control" as part of labor protests in the postwar period.

1946 **NOVEMBER:** Matsushima Matsutarō, originally charged with lèse-majesté for creating and wearing a placard accusing the emperor of callous indifference to the plight of Japanese in the early years of the Allied Occupation, is convicted of libel.

Postwar Japanese Constitution promulgated.

1947 **OCTOBER:** Partial amendment of the Criminal Code removes lèse-majesté provisions.

DECEMBER: The Japan Fine Art Association holds its first *Nihon Indépendant* at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum.

1948 **OCTOBER:** The *Yomiuri Shinbun* announces plans to hold a *Nihon Indépendant*, prompting protest by the Japan Fine Art Association.

NOVEMBER: The Japan Fine Art Association holds its second *Nihon Indépendant*.

1949 **FEBRUARY:** *Nihon Indépendant*, sponsored by the *Yomiuri Shinbun*, first held at Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in Ueno Park. Later designated *Yomiuri Indépendant* by participants and, finally, the sponsor.

MAY: In *Takahashi v. Japan* the Supreme Court Grand Bench rules that the state can criminalize political speech "in the interest of public welfare," which in turn is defined by the state.

1950s

1950 **FEBRUARY:** The Japan Fine Art Association holds its third *Nihon Indépendant*, which repeats yearly without interruption thereafter. The *Yomiuri's* second *Nihon Indépendant* follows in the same venue the very next day, February 18.

1951 **AUGUST:** The Supreme Court Grand Bench upholds the conviction of a Communist Party member for giving a handbill to a Muroran police officer urging police slowdown, arguing that "acts which instigate the non-performance of important obligations legally imposed upon the people are injurious to the public welfare and go beyond the limits of the freedom of speech."

1957 **JANUARY:** Akasegawa Genpei first enters work in the *Nihon Indépendant*.

FEBRUARY: The *Yomiuri Indépendant* begins to take on a new identity with the participation of a new generation of artists.

MARCH: Decision made in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* obscenity case; the Court asserts the state's right to criminalize artistic expression in spite of its protection under Article 21 of the Constitution.

1958 **MARCH:** Akasegawa Genpei first enters work in the *Yomiuri Indépendant*; final year that he enters work in the *Nihon Indépendant*.

APRIL: The first Kyushu *Indépendant* is held.

JUNE: Tone Yasunao invited by Mizuno Shūkō and Kosugi Takehisa to participate in experimental improvisational sessions. Shiomi Chieko, Tsuge Gen'ichi, and Tojima Mikio also join the collective. The group is influenced by the Geidai ethnomusicologist Koizumi Fumio, who introduces them to ethnomusicology and the department's collection of instruments.

1959 **FEBRUARY:** The eleventh *Yomiuri Indépendant* is held; submissions include works by Kudō, Akasegawa, Arakawa Shūsaku, Shinohara, Yoshimura, and Itoi Kanji.

MAY: The second Kyushu *Indépendant* is held.

1960s

1960 **MARCH:** At the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, one of Kudō Tetsumi's entries, *Proliferation Chain Reaction "B,"* is prominently featured in Tōno Yoshiaki's article on junk anti-art at the exhibition. Kudō's series continues in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* the following year. Itoi Kanji's "little shrine" work debuts.

The Neo-Dada Group organizes its first exhibition soon after the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. The group had existed for a little more than a year and included Akasegawa Genpei, Arakawa Shūsaku, Ariyoshi Arata, Ishibashi Betsujin, Iwasaki Kunihiko, Ueda Jun, Kazakura Shō, Kishimoto Sayoko, Kinoshita Shin, Shinohara Ushio, Tanaka Shintarō, Tanabe Santarō, Toyoshima Sōroku, Hiraoka Hiroko, Masuzawa Kinpei, Yoshino Tatsumi, and Yoshimura Masunobu, with Miki Tomio and Kudō Tetsumi as associates. Participants in the group's activities also included Hijikata Tatsumi and Isozaki Arata.

APRIL: Opposition to the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, signed in 1959, erupts in a series of protests targeting the Diet and other political institutions by spring 1960. Several members of the Neo-Dada Group participate in the protests during the following months, including Yoshimura Masunobu, Shinohara Ushio, Arakawa Shūsaku, Yoshino Tatsumi, and Tanabe Santarō.

Tone Yasunao, Kosugi Takehisa, Mizuno Shūkō, and other musicians participate in the protests by driving in a light van and conducting improvised tailgate performances in different locations.

MAY: Tone Yasunao, Kosugi Takehisa, Mizuno Shūkō, and others participating in experimental music sessions have a pivotal session, producing "an absolutely new music . . . an improvisational work of *musique concrète* done collectively." At Tone's suggestion, they adopt a group name to mark their achievement and theoretical aspirations: the Music group.

Riot police clear Socialist Party members from the Lower House of the Diet, which then approves the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty.

JUNE: Kanba Michiko, a student, is killed during fights between demonstrators and riot police in the incursion into the Diet compound. The U.S.-Japan Security Treaty is approved automatically by the Upper House of the Diet. Prime Minister Kishi resigns.

Nakanishi Natsuyuki exhibits paintings in his series *Rhyme* at the Kunugi Gallery.

The Neo-Dada Group engages in a party and performance inside, outside, and on top of Yoshimura Masunobu's atelier, to "commemorate" the signing of the security treaty that signified the failure of the Anpo protests.

JULY: Yoshino Tatsumi ignites his work *Danger* inside Yoshimura's atelier, Shinjuku, during the Neo-Dada Group's July exhibition.

Ikeda Hayato forms his cabinet as prime minister.

SEPTEMBER: The Music group debuts at the Kuni Chiya Dance Institute, Komaba, Tokyo, as part of "Music and Dance: Their Improvisational Combination," featuring Tsuda Nobutoshi, Wakamatsu Miki, and members of Kuni Chiya's troupe. The Music group is introduced in an accompanying issue of *Twentieth Century Dance*.

The third Neo-Dada Group exhibition is held at the Hibiya Gallery and nearby Hibiya Park, with street performances by Shinohara, Yoshimura, and Masuzawa.

The Bizarre Assembly by Neo-Dada features dangerous outdoor destructive performances at Yoshimura's atelier, Shinjuku.

OCTOBER: The Socialist Party chairman Asanuma Inejirō is fatally stabbed on stage at Hibiya Hall by a rightist assassin.

DECEMBER: Prime Minister Ikeda announces an "income doubling" plan. Fukuzawa Shichirō publishes the short story "Furyū Mutan" (Tale of the Elegant Dream) in the magazine *Chūō Kōron*.

1961 **FEBRUARY:** The short story's perceived lèse-majesté leads a rightist assassin to go to the home of the magazine's publisher, Shimanaka Hōji; finding Shimanaka absent, the assassin fatally stabs a maid and wounds Shimanaka's wife. Shimanaka apologizes; Fukuzawa goes into hiding.

MARCH: The thirteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant* is held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum. Akasegawa Genpei enters the first in his *Vagina Sheets* series; Toyoshima Sōroku, *Dinner of the Soul*; Yoshimura Masunobu enters the installation work *Mr. Sadada's Reception Room*. Itoi Kanji presents his "shrine" again. Kudō continues his proliferation series with *Proliferating Punch Reaction in "H" Style Basic Substance*.

APRIL: Imaizumi Yoshihiko makes his "dejected" visit to the Imperial Palace.

1962 **MARCH:** The fourteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant* is held. Submissions include Kudō Tetsumi's *Distribution Map of Impotence and Outbreak from the Protective Dome at Its Saturation Point*, Tone Yasunao's *Tape Recorder*, Kazakura's *Siren*, and Toyoshima Sōroku's *Yet Another Work Presented to You by Mr. Impotence*.

Imaizumi Yoshihiko publishes "Equipment Plan" in the fifth issue of *Image* under the pseudonym Nagara Tō, in which he proposes an art event involving a guillotine placed in the courtyard of the Imperial Palace, which played on the then well-known imagery of Fukuzawa Shichirō's story. During a symposium held later that year, co-planner Nakanishi Natsuyuki criticizes "Equipment Plan" as a failure because it was not actualized.

OCTOBER: Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Takamatsu Jirō, Kawani Hiroshi, Murata Kiichi, and Kubota Noboru organize the Yamanote event, in which they perform art "actions" along the Yamanote train line. An invitation announcing this event was mailed to seven hundred people, including artists, poets, and people randomly chosen from the phonebook, and was signed "Urobon K., J. Takamatsu, N. Nakanishi, K. Murata." The invitation was also handed out to people on the trains on the day of the event. The participants, wearing everyday clothing, boarded the train at Shinagawa, put on white face paint, and improvised performances with *objets* in the trains and station platforms. A separate simultaneous action is begun by Kosugi Takehisa and Tone Yasunao.

DECEMBER: Imaizumi Yoshihiko and Kawani Hiroshi, editors of *Image*, organize a symposium of young artists to discuss their recent performance-related art actions, including the Yamanote event. The resulting discussion is published in issues 7 and 8 of the magazine under the title "Signs of Discourse on Direct Action—Concerning One Event."

The event is held at Kawani's apartment in Ōmori, and participants include Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Takamatsu Jirō, Akasegawa Genpei, and Kinoshita Shin. The symposium is instrumental in the artists' theorization and reconception of their work.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Museum, the site of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* (and *Nitten*), issues new regulations, many of which appear to be a direct reaction to the types of work that had recently been entered into the *Yomiuri Indépendant*.

1963 **JANUARY:** Akasegawa Genpei orders and receives three hundred life-size monochrome prints of the 1,000-yen B-series bill at the Sankei Print Shop.

MARCH: The fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant* is held. Akasegawa Genpei enters two *Wrapped* canvases and *The Morphology of Revenge: Take a Close Look at the Opponent Before You Kill Him*. His first 1,000-yen note work, a two-hundred-times magnification of the note, is exhibited while still in progress, with portions, including the Prince Shōtoku portrait, still missing. Other submissions include Nakanishi Natsuyuki's *Clothespins Assert Agitating Action* (and Nakanishi himself appears in the gallery with his face and body covered with clothespins, and he affixes additional clothespins to the clothing of passersby); Tone Yasunao's *Something Happened*; Toyoshima Sōroku's *I to YOU no toraburu* (The Trouble with Me and You); and Takamatsu Jirō's *On the Anti-reality of the Curtain*, a work that spills out of the museum, extending all the way to nearby Ueno Station. Kosugi Takehisa enters and performs "Chamber Music / Anima 2" inside his *Cheironomy / Instrument* submission. Kazakura Shō, instead of entering a work, enters himself as the artwork in his performance piece *Stuff Comes from Somewhere and Goes Somewhere*. Nagano Shōzō, along with other members of the Time Group—Nakazawa Ushio, Dōi Mikio, and Tanaka Fuji—enter *Jikan* (Time) and other works in which spectators participate in an interactive and creative role. Protests outside the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum by Itoi Kanji and Nakajima Yoshio, artists whose works had been summarily removed the previous year from the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, are broken up by police for "assembling without a permit."

Group Zero Dimension performs a daily happening within Kato Yoshihiro's multi-exhibit installation *Mandala*, reclining atop the work to carry out mysterious rituals.

Imaizumi paints a huge *shisu* on the banner for the fifteenth *Yomiuri Exhibition* hanging outside the museum, thereby announcing to visitors the next day the "death of the Fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*." Kawani Hiroshi and Endō Akira of *Image* act as lookouts.

Akasegawa, Kazakura Shō, Shinohara Ushio, Kojima Nobuaki, Kinoshita Shin, Miki Tomio, and Tanaka Shintarō organize the first Group Sweet exhibition at the Kawasumi Gallery.

APRIL: Akasegawa Genpei first shows his wrapped *objets* at the second Group Sweet exhibition at the Shinjuku Dai-ichi Gallery. Other participants include Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Toyoshima Sōroku, Shinohara Ushio, Tanaka Shintarō, Yoshino Tatsumi, Ishizaki Kōichirō, Kojima Nobuaki, and Miki Tomio.

MAY: The art group Hi-Red Center is founded. Principals include Akasegawa Genpei, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, and Takamatsu Jirō.

Akasegawa exhibits *Enlarged 1,000-Yen* from May 7 to 12 at the Shinjuku Dai-ichi Gallery as part of Hi-Red Center's first group exhibition, the Fifth Mixer Plan. By this time, Prince Shōtoku's face and parts of his robes, as well as other details, have been added to the work.

During Hi-Red Center's *Sixth Mixer Plan* exhibition, May 28–29, Akasegawa places one of his wrapped *objets* outside, on the platform of the Shinbashi train station, as part of the group's experiments with everyday interactions.

JUNE: Akasegawa Genpei publishes his short story "Spy Rules" in the eighth issue of *Image*. The story is also known by the title of the poem contained within it, "The Ambiguous Ocean."

JULY: Akasegawa Genpei, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, and Takamatsu Jirō contribute installation works to the exhibition *Room in Alibi* at the Naiqua Gallery, July 15–27. Other artists include Shimizu Akira, Ochi Osamu, Tanaka Shintarō, Tateishi Kōichi, Yoshinaka Taizō, Suga Keisuke, and Fukuoka Michio.

AUGUST: The League of Criminals (featuring Hiraoka Masaaki and Miyahara Yasuharu) publishes *The Red Balloon, or Night of the She-Wolf*, including contributions from the artists Akasegawa Genpei, Takamatsu Jirō, Kosugi Takehisa, Itoi Kanji, Yoshioka Yasuhiro, and others.

NOVEMBER: A Waseda University student is arrested for shoplifting; his copy of the book by the League of Criminals prompts police to search Miyahara Yasuharu's apartment and leads to the discovery of Akasegawa Genpei's 1,000-yen works.

1964 **JANUARY:** The Third Investigative Section of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police questions Akasegawa Genpei regarding his 1,000-yen series. He is also questioned on January 31 and February 8. Interrogations are recorded by Assistant Police Inspector Furuishi Kiyoshi.

The *Asahi Shinbun* publishes an article, "Artist Forges Old-Series 1,000-Yen Notes; Gets Three Merchants to Make Them; Monochrome, Finely Detailed; Distributed at an Exhibition 'These Are Works'; *Chi*-37 Connection Pursued," which describes Akasegawa's works as criminal duplication and intimates that police are seeking a direct connection between Akasegawa and the notorious *Chi*-37 counterfeiting incidents of the early 1960s.

The *Yomiuri Shinbun* announces the cancellation of the upcoming sixteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition. The decision is made at a level above that of the exhibition patron Kaidō Hideo and takes him by surprise.

FEBRUARY: Akasegawa Genpei confronts his accusers, including the authors of the *Asahi Shinbun* article, in a long article in *Dokusho Shinbun* titled "Theses on 'Capitalist Realism.'"

The *Asahi Shinbun* publishes a subsequent article in which it retracts its earlier insinuation that Akasegawa is connected to the *Chi*-37 group but maintains a tone similar to that of the earlier article in all other aspects of the case.

1965 **JANUARY:** Akasegawa Genpei is questioned by Prosecutor Okamura Yasutaka and is questioned again on February 2. Some thirty artworks made with the 1,000-yen notes are also impounded.

OCTOBER: Akasegawa Genpei is called in to make another statement before a new prosecutor, Tobita Kiyohiro.

NOVEMBER: Akasegawa Genpei and two printers are formally indicted for criminal violation of the 1895 Law Controlling the Imitation of Currency and Securities. The indictment is delivered by a messenger wearing a combination of *wafuku* (traditional Japanese clothes) and a sports cap.

Kawani Hiroshi, the editor of *Organ* (formerly *Image*), is selected to head the 1,000-yen Incident Discussion Group. It meets for the first time on January 10, 1966.

Hijikata Tatsumi's Antoku Butoh Group performs *Rose-Colored Dance*. Akasegawa contributes stage art.

DECEMBER: Akasegawa Genpei is introduced to the attorney Sugimoto Masazumi by Kawani Hiroshi. Both Kawani and Imaizumi Yoshihiko go with Akasegawa for his first case conference with Sugimoto. Akasegawa is given two choices: to have faith in the rightness of his actions, defy the court with silent nonrecognition, and perhaps go to jail, or to put on an art trial and defend his acts as such. Akasegawa selects the second option.

1966 **JANUARY:** Akasegawa Genpei publishes an article attacking the state's actions titled "The Intent of the Act Based on the Intent of the Act—Before Passing through the Courtroom" in a special issue of *Organ* devoted to his case.

1967 **JULY:** Akasegawa Genpei appeals his conviction before the Tokyo High Court.

AUGUST: *Unfreedom of Expression Exhibition*, 1000-yen Incident Discussion Group, Muramatsu Gallery.

OCTOBER: The first Haneda Incident occurs. Three-Faction Alliance (Sanpa) students attempt to stop Prime Minister Satō's departure to Saigon and Southeast Asia by force. Akasegawa responds with "The *Objet* after Stalin" essay.

1968 **NOVEMBER:** The Tokyo High Court upholds the original court's ruling convicting Akasegawa of violating the *mozō* law.

1969 **JANUARY:** Akasegawa Genpei appeals the Tokyo High Court's ruling before the Supreme Court. On April 24, 1970, the Supreme Court upholds the original conviction and sentence.

OCTOBER: A decision is made in Shibusawa Tatsuhiko's obscenity case regarding his abridged translation of de Sade; similar to the *Chatterley* case, the court asserts the state's right to criminalize artistic expression if it is found to be injurious to public welfare.

1970s

1979 **SEPTEMBER:** Akasegawa Genpei is awarded the new fiction writer prize from the popular magazine *Chūō Kōron* for his short story "Hada zawari" (Touching the Skin). He used his pen name, Otsuji Katsuhiko, for the piece.

What is deadly about the interpretation of art, moreover, even philosophically responsible interpretation, is that in the process of conceptualization it is forced to express what is strange and surprising in terms of what is already familiar and thereby to explain away the only thing that would need explanation.

—THEODOR W. ADORNO, "Looking Back on Surrealism"

Everyday life, policed and mystified by every means, is a sort of reservation for good natives who keep modern society running without understanding it.

—GUY DEBORD, "Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life"

The basic substance of art has become the protracted discourse in words and material, echoed back and forth from artist to artist, work to work, art movement to art movement, on all aspects of contemporary civilization and of the place of creation and of the individual in it. . . . In a word, art has become the study and practice of culture in its active day-to-day life.

—HAROLD ROSENBERG, "Educating Artists"

INTRODUCTION

Artists are incorrigible. If it isn't magnificently splendid, we don't like it. According to my plan, *that thing* would have been at least five meters high; it would have had to be tempered glass, as lovely as the Crystal Palace. Moreover, at the very moment of its operation it would fragment into splinters. . . . But I was ill, weak, and with no status commanding that kind of money. It was rather like an ill person's delusion. There was no way I could make some tempered glass thing five meters high and two meters in length. And as far as fooling a glass shop into thinking I was rich, there was no way that anyone was going to buy it, since I'd be requesting illegal delivery to the [Imperial] plaza. I was racking my brains over this. . . . There was nothing I could do, alas, so the next day, the night on the eve of emperor's birthday, I sat down in a daze at the moat by Nijūbashi. Mercury lights dimly lit the fog. Right-wing students roved about, looking to be the first arrivals for the celebratory palace visit. I was utterly exhausted. Aimlessly casting my eyes over the students, I noticed that in the darkness, their outfits stood out like black mourning garments.

THE ARTIST, CRITIC, AND EDITOR IMAIZUMI YOSHIHIKO THUS recorded his dejected visit to the Imperial Palace on the night of April 28, 1961, mourning his inability to install a giant glass guillotine in the adjacent Outer Garden (Kōkyo-gaien). His dream reenvisioned the classic anarchist direct action of regicide in the form of a fantastic artwork adequate to the epochal task of executing the now symbolic emperor—a symbolic execution, in fact, that might sever the supracorporeal connections of the emperor system after the Second World War.[1]

Less than two years later, the artist Akasegawa Genpei would embark upon a more effective attack on symbolic authority, with his monochrome, single-sided photomechanical reproductions of the B-series 1,000-yen note. The work would arise amid enthusiastic discussions of the possibility of direct action through art—the possibility that practices emerging from art might contribute to or achieve revolutionary results. Discovered in a police surveillance of a Waseda University student group, the League of Criminals, Akasegawa's works would land him in Tokyo District Courtroom 701 in 1966, a venue for prosecutions of corrupt prime ministers, Red Army members, and the like. He was prosecuted under an 1895 statute against "currency imitation" (*mozō*), and his conviction in 1967 relied on obscenity-related case law allowing the state to freely criminalize expression. Appeals to the High and Supreme Courts affirmed the lower court's ruling and the state's duty to interpret—and correct—"commonly held social ideas," *shakai tsūnen*, in the interest of social hygiene.

The gap between artists' investigations, and dreams of revolution, and the state's policing of art and thought, reveals the politics of culture as confrontation. Such conflicts provide the opportunity to understand commonly separated phenomena, institutions, and experiences at a different level of analysis, viewing them through their complex interrelations as revealed in the events, without reducing them to this dimension alone or to anticipations of events to come. In this I follow Kristin Ross's observation that to reinscribe the activism of the 1960s into conventional sociological categories is to elide the very politics of that activism, which specifically targeted the maintenance of those separations.[2]

This book is an investigation of the politics of culture and the everyday in postwar Japan, viewed through an analysis centered on transformations in avant-garde artistic production and performance. Around 1960, revolutionary forms of activism and critique emerged to challenge official forms of politics and daily life. In Japan, despite massive strikes and widespread

protest, the ruling party used a Diet majority and riot police to renew the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. After this display of force, the ruling party sought a new legitimacy and a means to assuage and co-opt the defeated opposition by promoting a depoliticized everyday world of high growth and consumption and a dehistoricized national image in preparation for the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

Among those activists who emerged to contest this new politics, a diverse group of young artists worked to repoliticize daily life through interventionist art practices. Their critical focus and organizational strategies anticipated many of the more commonly known practices of activists in the late 1960s, both in Japan and around the globe. At the same time, their practices appear to have arisen out of a particular local, playful art practice that engaged with the takeoff point for Japan's high-growth economics at the level of daily life. I examine the advent of this art-based activism in Japan in the late 1950s and early 1960s in its complex relation to an internationalized art world, mass culture, domestic protest movements, and evolving forms of state practice and surveillance. I then reflect upon the significance of this history for understanding the 1960s as a global moment and the particular role of art and performance in these transformations.

In this book I provide a broadly historicized reading of these artistic practices and the processes within which they are bound. Examining the path to these moments of conflict reveals a wider politics of culture in Japan after the Second World War, embedded in a larger set of social practices and political confrontations. Such complexities were recognized by the participants in the events, who—in the paradigmatic activist experience during the global moment of the 1960s—found their daily lives bound up with issues of political protest and violence, law and the Constitution, state authority and legitimacy, the cold war, American hegemony, neoimperialism, and Fordist capitalism. Much like Henri Lefebvre and the Situationists, who identified an ongoing "colonization of daily life," artists in Japan discovered hidden forms of domination in the everyday world and imagined ways in which their own practices might reveal, or even transform, such systems at their point of articulation in people's daily existence.[3] Also like the Situationists, artists in Japan were among the earliest to identify this central arena for criticism and struggle in the 1960s.[4]

Such activism arose in its particular form and time from a remarkable confluence of circumstances, hopes, and playful experimentation vividly enacted in a yearly, unjuried art exhibition in Tokyo, the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. Described by a participant as a "crucible" for artistic activity of a "white hot

intensity," the exhibition became the center for a freely experimental art that increasingly focused on the signs and fragments of daily existence as it transformed in the late 1950s and early 1960s, while simultaneously expanding and exploring the potential of art itself.[5] A predilection for art incorporating junk or transforming junk into increasingly enigmatic *objets* drew artists' attention to the daily world—through its discards—as a vast network of activity, destruction, and proliferation. While this opened an immense and little-explored arena for further investigation, play, and ultimately critique, its attractiveness paralleled the contemporaneous, weighty investments by the state in promoting a depoliticized everyday world as the grounding for political legitimacy and as an inoculation against dissent. The stage was set for conflict between an insurgent cultural production and the defenders of an official, quiescent everyday.

The confrontations within which the everyday was embedded, however, simultaneously hearkened back to an earlier moment of conflict and political disidentification during the early years of the Allied (and predominantly American) Occupation of Japan, one that conditioned the later context and yielded, as one of its fraught products, the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition. A surge of labor activism and peaceful political protest on the verge of democratically transforming the political landscape was curtailed by Occupation authorities, preserving an old guard and permitting a reassertion of familiar forms of power and authority. Detailing these connections, I consider both moments as contestations over the very apportionments of speech and authority, the "order of the visible and sayable" that Jacques Rancière terms "the police." This wider perspective provides the context for examining the politics of culture as a venue for contestation between this police and a politics which, in Rancière's terminology, seeks to change these apportionments and "make heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise."[6] It also connects the politics of the 1960s to an earlier moment of nascent cold war politics in which the terrain of political contestation within Japan and East Asia resolved in the form of the postwar Japanese state and its linkage to an American strategic posture yielding two large Asian wars. Immediate strategic needs trumped professed political goals and gave shape to the peculiarly attenuated cold war definition of democracy and its acceptable forms. Ultimately both moments—the Occupation and the 1960s—are connected by a demand for equality and real, instead of ersatz, popular sovereignty.

Given that this political contestation addressed a present marked by multiple engagements with such historical legacies and conflicts, I have struc-

tured this book to bring out the many levels operant in this historical conjuncture. I have thus foregone a more conventional chronological narrative in favor of a thematic exposition, in which I make occasional horizontal forays to the broader political field and consider earlier historical moments at length to reveal the potent combination of conflicting legacies and interests within which these historical actors moved and the full range of heterological possibilities with which they engaged. This approach, I contend, better reflects the actuality of this historical experience than that presented by the over-tidy separations inherent in simple linear narration, since historical actors themselves experience the past as "a dimension of the present."[7]

This book is divided into three parts, each unified within a particular analytical focus. The three chapters of part I, "Art against the Police: Akasegawa Genpei's 1,000-Yen Prints, the State, and the Borders of the Everyday," explore the prosecution of the artist Akasegawa for his single-sided, monochrome prints of the 1,000-yen note. In chapter 1, "The Vision of the Police," I illuminate the prosecution's grounding in both a late nineteenth-century ordinance against the "imitation of currency" and case law on obscenity that authorized "clinical" state interventions irrespective of constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech (Article 21). Both were grounded in a revised notion of extralegal, imperial state authority. The negotiated origins of such authority are the subject of chapter 2, "The Occupation, the New Emperor System, and the Figure of Japan," which examines the centrality of the imperial figure within struggles during the Occupation over constitutional law, state power, and *Realpolitik*, shedding new light on the turning point in the politics of protest and democracy in mid-1946. Chapter 3, "The Process of Art," details the specifics of Akasegawa's confrontation with the state: the confiscations inflicted upon his critical art by the judicial process and his own indirect route to investigating currency as an outpost for hidden forms of domination. An inquiry into printed money as a strange object, set against ideas of artistic originality and mechanical reproduction, soon expanded into a criticism that identified currency with unconscious domination underwritten by state authority and based on the imposed identification of state-printed currency as "real."

The two chapters of part II, "Artistic Practice Finds Its Object: The Avant-Garde and the *Yomiuri Indépendant*," trace the crucible for Akasegawa's and others' critical art in the yearly exhibition. Chapter 4, "The *Yomiuri Indépendant*: Making and Displacing History," locates the exhibition within two critical moments for the politics of culture and protest in postwar Japan. First was its genesis in Occupied Japan as the product of a key labor struggle

within a newspaper corporation, tied into a general pattern of cultural promotion for distraction and historical amnesia. Second, the exhibition's heyday in the late 1950s and early 1960s coincided with what I term the "Monty Hall moment" of postwar Japanese politics, when thwarted demands for democratic participation were traded away for fabulous prizes—the moment when the state took advantage of the economic expansion under way to position itself as the beneficent guarantor of welfare and economic prosperity. While mainstream protest was effectively disrupted by these tactics, a group of artists associated with the *Yomiuri Indépendant* developed an explosive art of *objets*, installations, and performance—the subject of chapter 5, "The *Yomiuri Anpan*." Brought together by the exhibition, artists engaged in an anarchic, playfully competitive art of provocation and formal experimentation. They displayed a wide range of perspectives, concerns, and proclivities but nonetheless developed a shared formal vocabulary that increasingly cast a critical light upon the everyday world. This focus on the everyday world, as well as a developing consideration of the relation of art and politics and the possibilities for *action*, brought them into confrontation with museum officials, their sponsor, and—for some—the state.

The three chapters of part III, "Theorizing Art and Revolution," shift the analysis to the development of an overtly political practice of artistic direct action among a small group of artists, through the artists' own theorizations of their practices during several key moments. Chapter 6, "Beyond the Guillotine: Speaking of Art / Art Speaking," details a moment in late 1962 to early 1963 when artists experimented with public agitation on trains and debated a failed plan for erecting a giant guillotine in the Imperial Plaza. Reacting to the startling disappearance of mass activism after the Anpo demonstrations in 1960, the artists considered the prospects for artistic agitation and revolution and attempted to formulate a conceptual discourse adequate to reorient their transforming practices toward a form of direct action. Chapter 7, "Naming the Real," examines Akasegawa's reply to his first police interrogations and a distorting newspaper article in his "Theses on 'Capitalist Realism'" of February 1964. Declaring his own commitment to the scientific observation of the everyday world, Akasegawa articulated a complex critique of the pseudo-reality of money, identifying it as an agent of hidden forms of domination supported by state authority and by the policing of commonsense understandings of crime, of art, and of currency's reality. The chapter then identifies the origins of many of these insights in the practices of Akasegawa and his compatriots during the prior year, including their formation of the ambiguously conspiratorial art group, Hi-Red Center. Chap-

ter 8, "The Moment of the Avant-Garde," details Akasegawa's response to his indictment on November 1, 1965: rejecting reductive characterizations of his act as either conventional art or crime, he affirmed the potential of a radical art to create "moments" disclosing the "dictatorial system of 'everydayness,'" loosening the grasp of a naturalized capitalist world of "real things," and allowing its transformation to become conceivable.

While readers are likely (and welcome) to make use of separate sections of the book, the order and structure are additive, each part contributing to build a fuller understanding of this history. Part I's introduction to Akasegawa's confrontation with the policing operation of the postwar state unfolds the historic background to this Kafkaesque court encounter in an examination of the state's constitutional self-authorization of extralegal intervention into the everyday world. The retention of the "symbolic emperor" legitimized and enabled such actions (by a set of political actors and a previously imperial bureaucracy surprisingly little altered by defeat and occupation) by maintaining the image of the familial, paternalistic state, in effect conflating the Meiji and postwar Constitutions. The stakes for Akasegawa's intervention and the state's suppressive efforts are revealed to hinge upon the mundane, policed borders of the conventional categories and practices of the everyday world—an essential background for understanding the artist and state actions considered in the rest of the book.

Part II focuses on the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibitions, which concentrated and nurtured this political art, and on the many overlapping routes to engagement in its distinctive forms of play. Here too the narrative returns to an earlier moment, locating the origins of the exhibition within an Occupation-era politics of culture in which war and postdefeat labor suppressions were concealed by art sponsorship. This history prefigures and was directly at issue in the Anpo confrontations of 1960 and the subsequent state tactic of using the promise of an improving daily life for both depoliticization and political legitimacy. Against this background, part II charts the unforeseen emergence of a critical artistic practice focused on this everyday world, locating Akasegawa's art within this broader productivity and setting the stage for part III's examination of these artists' serial attempts to theorize forms of direct action out of their evolving practice. Part III's detailed examination of the artists' own words (particularly those of Akasegawa in the face of increasing state intervention) relies upon the prior explications of state practice and political investments in the policing of the everyday world, while giving specificity to these distinctive, remarkable voices of dissent.

The critical art activism that is the subject of my study charted and challenged the contemporary transformations of the everyday world as an arena of unexamined effects and underexplored political investments. By tracing the course of this art activism, my work analyzes the sources, terms, and objects of these critical practices in their grasp of this world, revealing their contestation of an everyday life that displaced and undergirded the renewal of state power. Following the seemingly peripheral actions of this group of artists thus demonstrates the power of this kind of historical analysis not only to illuminate the central political issues and struggles of postwar Japan but also to bring out unfamiliar dimensions and interrelations within this history, demonstrating the concrete details of such relations at the level of daily experience and consciousness.

Artists dreaming of revolution, the state prosecuting art and policing thought: these are all moments in which the politics of culture emerges as confrontation.

PART

ART AGAINST THE POLICE

Akasegawa Genpei's 1,000-Yen Prints, the State, and the Borders of the Everyday

No, they cannot touch me for coining;
I am the king himself. . . .
Nature's above art in that respect.

—SHAKESPEARE, *King Lear*

With regard to the Emperor's portrait (the same holds true with the Imperial Rescript), the idea or feelings entertained heretofore by the Ministry of Education and the Japanese people in general should be corrected or changed. I think that we should in future regard the personal portrait of the Emperor as that of the head of State we most respect, instead of revering it as one of a god, as we did heretofore. Accordingly, I think it desirable that we should face it with an attitude of recognizing in it the amiable figure of the Emperor we see daily, instead of facing it in an awed manner, as we did before.

—TANAKA KŌTARŌ, Minister of Education (and later Chief Justice), speaking to the Committee on Revision, House of Representatives, July 18, 1946

The artist is the secret criminal in our midst. He is the agent of progress against authority.

—TOM STOPPARD, *The Invention of Love*

Is it not a shame to present in an intellectually attractive light a type of policeman, *always a policeman*, to bestow upon the world a police *method*? Let us, in passing, spit on Edgar Poe.

—ANDRÉ BRETON, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism"

THE PROSECUTION OF THE ARTIST AKASEGAWA GENPEI in 1966–67 for the crime of money imitation staged a public confrontation between the Japanese state and a young member of a wide-ranging and insurgent community of artists and performers. Held in Courtroom 701 of the Tokyo District Court, the trial's confrontation between state and artist concretized for many their sense of a generalized cultural policing in progress since the early 1960s. In the three chapters of part I, the indictment and trial of Akasegawa serve as a starting point for an inquiry both into policing and legal and constitutional practice in Japan in the 1960s and into this avant-gardism, by posing two seemingly simple questions: Why, and under what terms, did the agents of the state choose to prosecute Akasegawa? And why was this artist engaged in printing several thousand monochrome copies of the B-series 1,000-yen note?

Chapter 1 begins with Akasegawa's indictment under an 1895 law forbidding the imitation of currency and unfolds the process by which his works attracted and held police and prosecutor interest. His simulacra of money,

imperfect copies, were discovered as part of an investigation into the League of Criminals group. Such play with signs of criminality and the near heresy of an inquiry into the status of money itself typified an art actively engaged in transgressing boundaries of thought and social practice and made it a suitable target for a prosecution intent upon policing such boundaries. Examining the resultant Kafkaesque trial process locates the state's authorization for such intellectual hygiene in obscenity case law, grounded in a constitutional legal practice that permitted the criminalization of provocative expression in the name of public welfare.

Chapter 2 traces the origins of this curious constitutional arrangement back to the political struggles during the early years of the Allied Occupation of Japan after the Second World War and the negotiations over the revised postwar Constitution. The shielding of the emperor and the retention of the imperial institution as "symbol of the state and of the unity of the people" provided the means for the postwar state to retain authority granted by the emperor-bestowed Meiji Imperial Constitution. The emperor's preservation and incorporation within the postwar order provided the apparent, crucially visible guarantee of imperial reign as a nucleus mediating between nation and governance and furnished an alibi for American infringements of sovereignty. Conversely the supposed affective relations obtaining between emperor and people supplied the alibi for encroachments upon popular sovereignty and individual rights by a state acting out of allegedly paternal concerns—such as in the enshrinement of the principle of public welfare as a kind of proxy imperial paternalistic concern for the governed. In this way, postwar courts affirmed the state's legislative and judicial power to abridge rights in its role as the paternalistic arbiter of national interest and spiritual health—a stance that also facilitated maintaining a variety of legal practices from before 1946.

Chapter 3 returns to Akasegawa's case to examine the details and effects of the resultant trial process, contrasting its distortions with the actuality of his artistic practice. Rulings on expression based on obscenity law entrusted the court to determine, maintain, and clinically intervene to correct prevailing common sense; such authority also allowed it latitude to apply vaguely worded law by intuiting (and effectively promulgating) its commonsensical interpretation. In Akasegawa's case, the court did both through its defense of "society's faith and credit in currency" and its elision of Akasegawa's questioning of currency's representational status. The trial process furthermore forced Akasegawa to present his work according to a reductive notion of art as expression (to assert constitutional protection), opposing the prosecu-

tion's equally reductive characterization of the work as unproblematically criminal. The chapter contrasts this with the actual, immediate context for Akasegawa's 1,000-yen project, explored through his artistic and literary output at the moment of his preparation of the first 1,000-yen prints. An examination of his project alongside his strange short story, "Spy Rules," a poem titled "The Ambiguous Ocean," and a series of collage works reveal the 1,000-yen works' involvement in broad concerns over a system of domination that encompasses the body and the possibility of its subversion by "spies." It reveals an artist reprising the aspiration of the historical avant-garde: of instigating revolution through art.

CHAPTER 1

THE VISION OF THE POLICE

On November 1, 1965, the artist Akasegawa Genpei, along with two printers whom he had never met, were indicted for criminal violation of the 1895 Law Controlling the Imitation of Currency and Securities (*tsūka oyobi shōken mozō torishimari hō*).[1] Akasegawa had ordered some three thousand monochrome prints of the 1,000-yen bill from the print shops in the first four months of 1963 (figs. 1.1a and 1.1b). Following a prolonged, though fitful, police inquiry beginning in January 1964, his indictment closed this first phase of investigation, while commencing the trial and appeal process that would occupy him for the remainder of the decade. The terms of this prosecution open a window onto the nature of the contestation between insurgent artists and the state and the wider politics of culture.

INDICTMENT:

1. Defendants Akasegawa and Itō, on the basis of a conspiracy to make life-size prints of the face of the 1,000-yen bill, did near the end of January, 1963, at the aforementioned Sankei Print Shop, using a life-size cop-

1.1a and 1.1b
Akasegawa Genpei, *One Thousand-Yen Note Trial Catalogue of Seized Works*, 1967 (front and reverse) displaying impounded items with evidence tags, and on reverse, a chronology of events leading to the trial. Poster, double-sided. 59.0 × 43.3 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.





per plate made of the face of the 1,000-yen bill prepared by defendant Akasegawa using photo engraving, cause the employee of the print shop, Kojima Yasuo, to print in monochrome a life-size obverse of the 1,000-yen bill on the face of cream-colored high-grade paper in green ink, and to print on the reverse information as to a painting exhibition by defendant Akasegawa, and in so doing, manufacturing 300 prints having an exterior confusable with a life-size 1,000-yen bill, and

2. Defendants Akasegawa and Yasumasa, on the basis of a conspiracy to make life-size prints of the face of the 1,000-yen bill, did on three occasions between the middle of March and mid-May of the same year . . . , all at the Yasumasa Print Shop, using the previously noted copper plate, either cause the employee of the print shop, Akiyama Kihei, to print in monochrome a life-size obverse of the 1,000-yen bill on the face of paper, or defendant Yasumasa did print in monochrome a life-size obverse of the 1,000-yen bill on the face of paper, and in so doing, manufactured 2,700 prints having an exterior confusable with a life-size 1,000-yen bill. [These actions are] punishable under Articles 1 and 2 of the *tsūka oyobi shōken mozō torishimari hō*, and article 60 of the Criminal Code.[2]

Mozō, the "imitation" of currency criminalized by the 1895 law, is distinguished from *gizō*, the crime of counterfeiting currency. Counterfeiting occurs when the resemblance "is to the extent that it gives the impression of being the genuine thing; when it does not rise to this point, it is called *mozō*," a lesser offense.[3] This legal distinction came about historically; it was not set forth as such from the beginning. The law against *mozō* was enacted a bare six years after the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution of 1889, under which all branches of government were subsumed under imperial sovereignty. It prohibited the imitation of currency and securities, defined as "the manufacture or sale of things with an exterior confusable" with them ("seifu hakkō shihei, ginkō shihei . . . ni magirawashiki gaikan wo yūsuru mono wo seizō shi mata wa hanbai suru koto"). It is the adjective *magirawashiki* (confusable) upon which the definition turns; it usually refers to something difficult to distinguish from something else, that is, a very close resemblance. Punishment for this offense under the law ranged from one month to three years imprisonment at hard labor, plus a fine of between 5 and 50 yen. This was the first attempt by the Meiji state to fix penalties for the forgery and counterfeiting of currency and securities.

With the promulgation of the Criminal Code in 1907, which included a specific counterfeiting offense called *gizō*, the opportunity for a two-tiered

system of punishment for money resemblance was established in legal practice. The Criminal Code, through all of its many subsequent revisions, did not supersede or repeal the previous patchwork of individually promulgated criminal laws, unless a provision of the Code directly specified this effect. Neither were those laws struck from the books when the new postwar Constitution was adopted. Thus from 1907 onward, when faced with a case of money resemblance, prosecutors could at their discretion indict under either law. At some point common prosecutorial practice articulated the distinction between the more specific crime of *gizō*, counterfeiting or forgery, and the broader category of *mozō* reported in the legal reference works. Legal practice thus understood the *mozō* law's criminalization of items "confusable" (*magirawashiki*) with currency and securities as some sort of resemblance short of "giving the impression of being the genuine article"; the exact meaning of "confusable" is left open, broadly criminalizing potentially *all* resemblance short of outright counterfeiting. The reach of this law is further extended by the fact that, unlike the *gizō* offense, the *mozō* law did not require any intent to use the item in question as money.[4]

Many of the Meiji criminal laws and codes were directly modeled on similar provisions from European court systems; most likely the *mozō* statute of 1895 was derived from one of these.[5] The later positioning of the law in practice as criminalizing resemblance itself instantiated another feature of the Meiji Constitution, under which the law was promulgated: the figure and prerogatives of the emperor, in whose name the state acted.[6] Under the two-tier penalty system of *gizō-mozō*, the law reserved broad powers to defend the state's and the emperor's right to monopolize the printing of money and define its reality, its genuineness. The two statutes thus defend officially "real" money from two different sorts of challenges. *Gizō* becomes the crime of simulating money, making items which are intended to pass for currency, while *mozō* criminalizes items that, regardless of intent, resemble but are distinguishable from currency—in other words, identifiable simulacra of currency. The meaning of the latter is altered through this practice: *magirawashiki gaikan*, "confusable exterior," becomes "confus*ing* exterior"; the criminalized item is no longer something likely to pass for currency but rather something that initially looks like currency but on second glance is obviously not and that thereby *confuses* the everyday, uncritical perception of the *genuine* article.

Akasegawa was well aware of the difference between simulations and simulacra and their relative critical potentials.[7] It is the recognizable simu-

lacrum, the imperfect copy, which raises expectations and excites desire only to disappoint, that points to the constructedness of the genuine status of actual government-printed currency. It does not demystify in itself; rather it disrupts the everyday, uncritical perceptions of the reality of money, all through near resemblance. Consequently the prosecution of Akasegawa for currency imitation, *mozō*, defended the official reality of money against his exploration of its nature. The state reserved and defended its prerogative of fixing this reality and maintaining belief in it through Meiji-era criminal statutes, established under the expansive authority of the imperial state. By the terms of this state authority, Akasegawa's crime of *mozō* amounted to a kind of blasphemy, or better, lèse-majesté, an affront to the emperor's prerogatives as exercised by the state as his instrument. Hovering behind the prosecution in 1964 using the law of 1895 was the phantom of the prewar state, the Meiji Constitution, a Doppelgänger of the postwar Constitution, an old order whose expansive authority was incorporated within the postwar Constitution during and after the Occupation.

In the three chapters of part I, I discuss how a young artist came to identify and confront this extraconstitutional state authority, as a window onto both a wider art activism and the nature of postwar state legitimacy, law, and policing. I explore the form of this authority's exercise in Akasegawa's criminal prosecution and the artistic practice that yielded a work deemed threatening enough to merit that exercise. In so doing I trace the key terrain of radical struggles in the 1960s: the "flight from social determinations" and the explosive reconstitution of political subjectivities against what Rancière has called the "police."[8]

Defending Reality—The Police: I

As might be expected, prosecutions for attempts at counterfeiting (*gizō*) greatly outnumbered those for *mozō*; the outright forgery of money was rather more prevalent than instances of its critique. In both 1967 and 1968, for example, there were only three prosecutions in all of Japan under the *mozō* law.[9] With lighter penalties than outright counterfeiting, the law could function as a lesser offense. Yet as examples of the exercise of a particular sort of state authority and defenses of a specific form of reality, the retention and continued use of this conveniently ambiguous criminal statute possesses a significance disproportionate to their number. Moreover both laws together defend a particular, official reality and form of authority: the reality



1.2 Akasegawa's 1,000-yen illustration from *Akai fūsen arui wa mesu ōkami no yoru* (The Red Balloon, or the Night of the She-Wolf), 1963, part of an untitled, seven-page graphic sequence, each signed with Hi-Red Center's distinctive red exclamation point.

of money and the state's monopoly over its production. It was in fact a much publicized outbreak of *gizō* offenses that attracted both Akasegawa's interest in the project and subsequent state interest in Akasegawa.

The decision of whether or not to invoke the *mozō* law against Akasegawa (and instantiate state power in the form entailed by the law) was made on several levels. The initial decision to gather information pursuant to a charge rested with the police; they made the initial investigations and, upon identifying a possible violation of a law, could invite a suspect to make a "voluntary" statement. According to the statement at trial of Akasegawa's lawyer, Sugimoto Masazumi, police interest in Akasegawa's work arose out of a series of investigations into another provocative art and performance group, the League of Criminals (Hanzaisha dōmei)—a name guaranteed to attract police interest.[10] One of its members, a Waseda University student (humorously referred to in Sugimoto's statement as "Mr. W[aseda]"), purportedly shoplifted a copy of the *Autobiography of the Marquis de Sade* (*Sado no jiden*) from a bookstore near Takadanobaba Station in the presence of an

officer. When arrested, the student was found also to have a copy of a banned book printed by the League of Criminals titled *The Red Balloon, or the Night of the She-Wolf* (*Akai fūsen arui wa mesu ōkami no yoru*), to which Akasegawa had contributed a monochrome print of half of the obverse of a B-series 1,000-yen note, marked with the signature red diagonal exclamation point of the recently formed quasi-conspiratorial group Hi-Red Center (featuring the artists Akasegawa, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, and Takamatsu Jirō).[11] Police were likely attracted both to the finely detailed photo of an actual note, combined with the ambiguous attention and leftist urgency suggested by the unattributed Hi-Red Center graphical mark (fig. 1.2), and of course its equally suspicious location within a text published by the League of Criminals (on August 15, 1963—the anniversary of defeat in the Second World War).[12]

Akasegawa's production of notes and note-related artworks coincided with the ongoing replacement of the old B-series notes. The 1,000-yen note in particular had been the subject of a flood of counterfeit notes between 1961 and 1963, most notably from the *Chi*-37 incident, a major counterfeiting scandal in which extremely high-quality counterfeit notes were discovered throughout the country. The notes were of a quality such that only Bank of Japan officials and others with particular information as to their defects were able to spot them, revealing that counterfeiters possessed the ability to virtually mint their own money. Article after article in the newspapers tracked the ongoing discoveries of different versions of the bills; in each case, newspapers publicized the serial numbers of the bills in question—virtually the only way for a layman to recognize these counterfeits. People's daily interaction with 1,000-yen notes was thus marked with this unusual climate of suspicion and scrutiny, a situation of interest to Akasegawa.

Government efforts to stop this crime were both extensive and ineffectual. Although over 150,000 investigators were mobilized across the country, the perpetrators were never caught.[13] Ultimately these high-quality counterfeits prompted the government to introduce the new, C-series 1,000-yen note in January 1963, just as Akasegawa first began his own printing project (figs. 1.3a and 1.3b).[14] It was in this charged atmosphere that police discovered this artist's particular interest in the 1,000-yen note.

The police searched Miyahara Yasuharu's apartment (referred to by Sugimoto as the "office" of the League of Criminals) and found the plate used to prepare Akasegawa's print for the book; the books and the plate were then seized.[15] According to the *Supōtsu Taimuzu* (*Sports Times*), as quoted by Sugimoto, the matter was referred to the Third Investigative Section of the Tokyo Metropolitan Police, a special unit concerned with counterfeiting



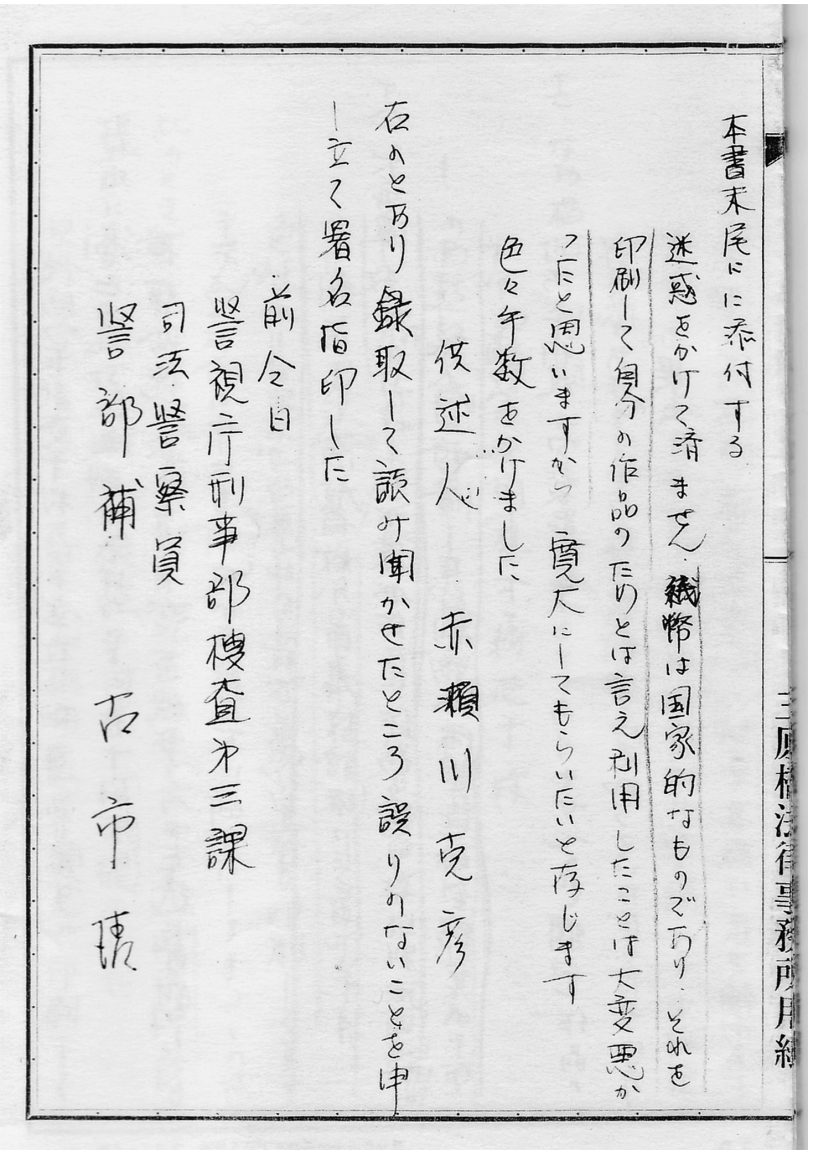
1.3a and 1.3b An example from Akasegawa's third (above, printed three to a page) and fourth (below) sets of 1,000-yen prints. 1963. III: Printed matter, blue ink, craft paper, 29.3 × 19.3 cm. IV: Printed matter, black ink, craft paper, 7.4 × 16.1 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.



and the locus of the *Chi*-37 investigation. According to Sugimoto, they recognized immediately that Akasegawa's work was not that of the *Chi*-37 criminal. With the release of the new series of 1,000-yen notes and a recent sharp decrease in discoveries of counterfeits, however, their workload had been dwindling; they therefore decided to take a look at Akasegawa's work purportedly on the chance that "one member of the *Chi*-37 counterfeiting group might be caught up in the creation process of this counterfeit bill."[16] This statement seems more an excuse than a reason; as for the real motive, one might theorize (as hinted at in the newspaper report) some sort of bureaucratic conservativism, with the police acting out of a desire to exercise and thus perhaps preserve their administrative unit. But moreover, this squad in particular might well have been acutely attuned to the stakes for maintaining the status of genuine, real currency and were sensitive to any transgressions of that authority. In any event, two inspectors were dispatched to Akasegawa's tiny apartment.

The inspectors were not in uniform when they arrived and did not identify themselves; Akasegawa initially thought they might be art collectors and only slowly realized who they were. According to Akasegawa's later reflections, they were at first a bit tentative, but upon noticing one of his larger works incorporating 1,000-yen prints hanging on the wall, seemed to take heart.[17] Akasegawa was subsequently summoned to the station for questioning on January 9, 31, and February 8, 1964; notes of his responses were taken by Furuishi Kiyoshi, an assistant police inspector in the Third Investigative Section and one of the two visitors to Akasegawa's home. Akasegawa described Furuishi as a neatly dressed but rather frightening figure, apparently ready to erupt at the first sign of resistance.[18]

The prefaces to Akasegawa's statements (fig. 1.4; *kyōjutsu chōsho*, shorthand notes taken by officials to record the suspect's responses to questioning, which the suspect is then urged to sign—thus amounting nearly to a confession) indicate that he was suspected of violating the *mozō* law, not the *gizō* statute, further evidence that the Third Investigative Section was interested in the broad issues of authority entailed by this law and not in counterfeiting per se.[19] After the last of these interrogations, Akasegawa was reassured by the chief inspector that the case would likely not result in his criminal indictment, although the police would pass their information to the prosecutor's office as a matter of course; an article on February 17, 1964, in the *Supōtsu Taimuzu* similarly reported the impending end of the incident.[20] Apparently the Third Investigative Section did not feel that Akasegawa's minor "circulation" of his works posed enough of a threat to merit


本書末尾に添付する
迷惑をかけて済まぬ。紙幣は国家的なものであり、それを
印刷して自分の作品のたねとは言え利用したことは大変悪か
ったと思いますから寛大にしてもらいたいと存じます
色々手数をかけました
供述人　赤瀬川克彦
右のとおり録取して読み聞かせたところ誤りのないことを申
し立て署名指印した
前令日
警視庁刑事部捜査第三課
司法警察員
警部補　古市康
三原橋法律事務所用紙

1.4 The end of one of the *kyōjutsu chōsho* taken by Police Inspector Furuishi, in which Akasegawa pleads for forgiveness for having printed and used currency, a "thing of the nation," for his own works, 1964. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Sugimoto Masuzumi.

actual prosecution; alternatively they may have felt that police intervention was punishment enough.

The next and most important level of decision-making authority over invoking the *mozō* law and its attendant state authority took place at the prosecutor's office. Prosecutors in Japan enjoy wide discretionary latitude; they are not bound to prosecute all offenses and may choose not to pursue a violation based on their appraisal of the circumstances and the offender. They also decide which criminal law may be invoked for a given offense.[21] The chief inspector seems to have anticipated that discretion not to prosecute would be exercised, and initially Prosecutor Okamura Yasutaka, the first prosecutor to take charge of the police referral, also seemed to be following this course. After questioning Akasegawa on January 25 and February 2, 1965, he informed Akasegawa that this would conclude the affair, admonishing him to watch himself in the future.[22] Okamura thus perhaps contemplated using his discretion not to pursue a prosecution against Akasegawa for *mozō*; alternatively he might have been reluctant to invoke the broad provisions of the seventy-year-old law. In any event, there was an interim between February 2, the date of Akasegawa's last interview with Okamura, and October 27, when he was suddenly called to appear before a new prosecutor, Tobita Kiyohiro, during which it appeared that there would be no formal prosecution.[23]

There is nothing to suggest that new information was forthcoming during this time to trigger renewed prosecutorial interest; indeed Tobita's interrogation of Akasegawa in October seems mainly to have concerned Akasegawa's representations to his friend, Sugita Fusae, about whether or not the police had somehow authorized or approved the printing of the notes. (Akasegawa had somewhat falsely reassured her in order to gain her assistance in producing more notes.)[24] The interrogation suggests that Tobita had already decided to go forward with prosecuting Akasegawa and was contemplating action against Sugita as a co-conspirator—though ultimately only the two print shop proprietors were named along with Akasegawa in the indictment of January 1966. The statement taken by Tobita contrasts sharply in its focus from those of Okamura: Okamura's questions were largely directed at specifying the various uses of the notes by Akasegawa in his art and the decisions behind each work's creation. Taken together with the delay in further action, it suggests that Okamura was satisfied with the matter and was exercising his discretion not to prosecute, based on an evaluation of the facts of the case and, in particular, the intentions of the offender. By

contrast, Tobita's sole focus on Sugita's involvement reads as a gathering of further evidence for a prosecution that had already been decided upon. Tobita's questions amount either to an attempt to identify co-conspirators or to eliciting Akasegawa's possibly criminal intent as revealed in his willful deception of Sugita. As a matter of law, Sugita's belief in the legality of her actions would have been immaterial in determining her criminal intent in assisting in the production of the notes, regardless of Akasegawa's representations to her.[25] Tobita nevertheless appears to have exercised discretion in her favor, perhaps due to her being an employee of Yūhikaku, the major law book publisher.

Defending Reality—The Police: II

Moving through the different levels of state involvement in Akasegawa's art—from its initial discovery, through police and prosecutor interrogations, indictment, a long court trial, and subsequent affirmations of his conviction all the way up the appellate process to the Supreme Court—we can discern the outlines of a broad defense of official representation and authority that intensifies with repeated examinations of his art.

Akasegawa's money works came to the attention of state agents through their inadvertent discovery in the course of an investigation into the League of Criminals: the excuse of the misdemeanor offense by Mr. W(aseda) conveniently observed by a policeman, the examination of the other books in the student's possession, and the subsequent raid on the group's headquarters and the discovery of Akasegawa's printing plate. This alone points to ongoing official interest in forms of organization and action that blended the categories of the criminal, the political, and the artistic. This broad state surveillance unearthed a series of works by the impoverished young artist Akasegawa Genpei and targeted him for subsequent official action.

Counterfeiting is a form of theft, a crime that, on a mass scale, might ultimately have a profoundly disruptive effect on social order—hence the formidable mobilization against the *Chi*-37 perpetrators. It may also incidentally raise questions concerning the status of real currency, but only by extension, since it affirmatively seeks to participate in that reality. Akasegawa's works—monochrome, single-sided, prepared on a range of qualities of paper—could hardly have been intended to pass as currency, a fact immediately obvious to the professionals in the Third Investigative Section. Akasegawa's prints, in contrast to counterfeits, transgress in the realm of

thought and authority: they explore the very status of money as a reproduced original, as pieces of paper produced under state monopoly, bearing a curious form of fictive reality. The terms of Akasegawa's prosecution reveal the legal and political investments of the state in forcibly protecting this reality from questioning. At the same time they reveal the scope of the state's assertion of its right and duty to intervene in the realm of thought as an exercise of a broadly construed, extraconstitutional authority. I wish to explore both the state's arrogation of authority to itself in defense of a particular version of reality and the status of that reality.

The fact that such authority is mobilized in a defense of the reality of currency points to money's overdetermined role as economic instrument, manifestation of state authority, and ubiquitous presence in and facilitator of daily life. It thus appears at the intersection of the state and social practice, or what Rancière describes as "the police." Rancière distinguishes the latter from the "petty police," the forces of law and order to whom the term typically refers; he follows Foucault's investigation into its broader seventeenth- and eighteenth-century meaning to apply it to "the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectivities is achieved, the organization of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimizing this distribution."[26] As Kristin Ross has pointed out, this "police" is about the control of the perceptible, "what can or cannot be seen, dividing what can be heard from what cannot." Ross calls it a "logic of the social: the logic that assigns people to their places and their social identities, that makes them identical to their functions."[27]

For Rancière, "police" refers chiefly to the perception of legitimate actors within a distributed order. Politics then emerges as the practice which disrupts this order with reconfigurations of the social, to articulate it with new actors, and new voices: "Political activity is always a mode of expression that undoes the perceptible divisions of the police order by implementing a basically heterogenous assumption, that of a part of those who have no part, an assumption that, at the end of the day, itself demonstrates the sheer contingency of that order, the equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being."[28] In Ross's account of May 1968 in France, events and eventfulness are an intimate part of this contestation over the visible and the emergence of political subjectification.[29] I have extended this terrain to encompass nonhuman elements active in the symbolic order, inasmuch as the inanimate might be recognized as bound tightly to these distributions—as in the case of money.

As discussed earlier, Ross's work on May 1968 in France identifies conflict against this "police," the "refusal" of sociological categories and the "flight from social determinations," as the very core of activism in France in the 1960s.[30] Akasegawa's case takes us directly into an underexamined aspect of this struggle in Japan: young artists focusing their practice on the unconscious forms of domination in the everyday world and the possibilities for radical transformation, and the "police" defense against such activism.

Rancière's "police" pertains to "the symbolic constitution of the social" within categories of political subjectivity and legitimacy.[31] In his usage, the meaning of "police" oscillates between these symbolic categories and the practices by means of which those categories are defended—that is, policed. The terms of Akasegawa's prosecution alert us to the particular nature of the Japanese state's defense of the police order of the visible against this emergent form of artistic activism. An especially potent example of this political practice, Akasegawa's work manifested a powerful critique, one to which the state could have no *direct* rebuttal. The apparent anomaly of his Tokyo District Court trial in Courtroom 701 (a venue for the most serious criminal cases), and the appeals up to the Second Petty Bench of the Supreme Court, all testify to the weight placed on this contest.[32] Concealed within the official, juridical deployment of state authority lies a defense of currency as a key form of representational fixity, bound up in the state's reserving to itself this particular, exclusive right *to* represent: the printing of currency.

Obscenity, Public Welfare, and the Constitutional State

The courts' language in rendering their verdicts and their silence on many issues raised by Akasegawa's legal defense reveal a wealth of ongoing, complex negotiations with law and the Constitution in the state's juridical enforcement of its police order. The legal issues raised, and avoided, point to the role of law as self-justification for the exercise of paternalistic state power, to the particular history by which the postwar state was equipped to mobilize prewar, imperial authority, and to the Kafkaesque effects of legal process. Exploring these connections reveals both the justification for the prosecution of this artist and the specific history and form of the state authority that Akasegawa, and all other activists, confronted.

Though the state's interest in trying Akasegawa for his 1,000-yen works derived from a desire to suppress this emergent politics, this action required legitimation within a legal and constitutional regime that putatively guaranteed freedom of expression. As opposed to the exact duplication aimed

at in counterfeiting, the *near resemblance* of Akasegawa's works to currency could involve a degree of interpretation, a duplication +α, and hence a trace of artistic originality and expression as commonly conceived. To be legitimately criminalized, then, this work needed to be distinguished from protected expression and located within a commonly understood category of dangerous, aberrant action. Not surprisingly, the case law articulating these distinctions was not to be found in prosecutions for money works but rather in a body of law commonly employed in many countries against a particular kind of often politically charged expression: obscenity (see plate 2).

As defined in Japanese case law, obscenity was particularly well suited for prosecuting expression whose politics involved the violation of norms, as the very category was constituted in law as an exception to constitutional protections and grounded in ideas of normality, public welfare, and social hygiene.[33] The excitation of desire in violation of social norms made a work obscene, and once material was found to be obscene, it was criminal, regardless of the merits or artistry of the contents. Thus, following this case law, the District Court and subsequent higher court rulings all found that Akasegawa's 1,000-yen works were both artistic expression *and* criminal activity. These decisions cited Supreme Court precedent in several obscenity cases involving literary translations, including the case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1957 and again in 1969 in a case concerning Shibusawa Tatsuhiko's abridged translation of the Marquis de Sade's *Histoire de Juliette ou les prospérités du vice* (hereafter referred to as *Chatterley* and *de Sade*, respectively).[34] These Supreme Court cases asserted the state's right to criminalize artistic expression in spite of its protection under Article 21 of the Constitution.[35] The court determined that a work may be found to be both art and obscenity, that is, criminal. *Chatterley* held that

> art and obscenity are concepts which belong to two separate, distinct dimensions; and it cannot be said that they cannot exist side by side. . . . Even the finest piece of artistic product can be evaluated as being obscene from the ethical and legal point of view. Such a conclusion is not impossible because art, law and morality can exist in entirely different dimensions. We cannot give our support to the principle of "art-for-art's-sake" which places emphasis only upon the artistic quality of production and denies criticism from the moral and legal points of view. No matter how supreme the quality of art, it does not necessarily wipe out the stigma of obscenity. Art, even art, does not have the special privilege of presenting obscene matters to the public.[36]

The decisions contemplated no sort of balancing test between obscenity and literary or artistic value: they affirmed the state's right to criminalize provocative expression in the name of public welfare and explicitly denied the presence of any constitutional barrier to this.[37]

One commentator on Akasegawa's case in the weeklies in fact noted an interesting convergence between the effects of this art and obscenity in its play on desire. An artist quoted as "Mr. H" in an article in the *Shūkan Manga Times* described the sensation he had upon the receipt of one of Akasegawa's notes as almost lewd: "At first, a registered envelope for cash came in the mail from Akasegawa, and looking inside, there was a 1,000-yen note. For an instant my heart skipped a beat, but I soon noticed that the back was an invitation to his exhibition. Even though my reaction had been for just a moment, I was still embarrassed by it." Mr. H goes on to compare it to the feeling of being caught drooling at a striptease bar. He suggests, tongue in cheek, that, if anything, Akasegawa's work should be directly prosecuted as obscenity (*waisetsu*); that is, because obscene materials are prosecuted for stimulating carnal desires, and because Akasegawa's work stimulates worldly desires, perhaps it too is obscene.[38] Given the use of obscenity case law in the judicial decisions later rendered in Akasegawa's case, his remark was uncannily prescient. The courts' expressed commitment to policing healthy desires in the social body in both cases points to a recognition within state practice of a convergence between the politics of Akasegawa's money works and a wider discourse on Eros and liberation that involved the contemporaneous efforts to translate and investigate explicit materials, including *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and works by de Sade.[39]

The precedents cited in both *Chatterley* and *de Sade* originated, in fact, out of a *prewar* Court of Cassation ruling on obscenity from 1918, which specified a definition of obscenity later adopted by the postwar Supreme Court.[40] The prewar case's definition contemplated obscenity under the Meiji Constitution's guarantee of freedom of expression, Article 29, which held that "Japanese subjects shall, *within the limits of law*, enjoy the liberty of speech, writing, publication, public meetings and associations."[41] This provision, like so many others, followed the Meiji Constitution's pattern of providing constitutional protections of rights only with the expressed caveat that the state could limit them by law as it saw fit.[42] This accorded with the Meiji Constitution's formulation of state authority, in which it (and the Constitution itself) derived ultimately from the benevolent grant of imperial authority that itself exceeded all positive strictures. The Meiji Constitution enshrined

a paternalistic state authority embodied in the emperor through imperial benevolence seen as flowing from the emperor to his subjects in his grant of the Constitution, government, rights, and duties to the people.[43]

The Great Court of Cassation's decision in 1918 accordingly did not consider recognizing any sort of right to free expression that might limit the state's authority to criminalize and punish that expression; it merely concerned itself with specifying "obscenity" (defined as "a writing, picture, or anything else which tends to stimulate and excite sexual desire or satisfy the same; and consequently, to be an obscene matter, it must be such that it causes man to engender feelings of shame and loathsomeness").[44] By following this line of reasoning, in which the mere finding of obscenity obviated the need to consider the material as protected expression, the postwar courts adopted a prewar precedent imbued with the values of the earlier constitutional legal regime. In so doing they effectively conflated Article 21 of the revised, postwar Constitution, which states, in seemingly *unambiguous* unqualified terms, that "freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression are guaranteed" in Article 29 of the Imperial Constitution of 1889 (offering its guarantees "within the limits of law"). By extending this line of reasoning outside of obscenity issues to cases such as Akasegawa's, the state furthermore claimed the right to criminalize any sort of expression that it saw fit, unlimited by constitutional restrictions.[45] It thus reserved to itself extensive, paternalistic authority to intervene against challenges to the "police" order.

Such a move had been forecast long ago, in a sense, during the meetings on March 4–5, 1946, between members of the Government Section of MacArthur's General Headquarters / Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ / SCAP) and the representatives of the Japanese government. Conflict arose concerning their respective drafts of the Constitution. Satō Tatsuo, deputy director of the Cabinet Legislative Bureau and the drafter of chapter 3 ("Rights and Duties of the People"),[46] had rewritten the GHQ draft's Article 20 (later Article 21) on the freedoms of speech, press, and assembly into language akin to that of the Meiji Constitution. Satō's version qualified the absolute guarantees in the GHQ draft to provide that the right to speech, writing, publication, assembly, and association existed only "within limits not prejudicial to peace and order." The abolition of censorship in the GHQ draft, "No censorship shall be maintained," was rewritten by Satō into the tautological and nearly meaningless guarantee, "No censorship shall be maintained except as specifically provided for by law."[47] These and similar

modifications prompted the GHQ representatives to reject Satō's chapter 3 draft completely.[48]

In later accounts of these negotiations, both Satō and Col. Charles L. Kades, deputy chief of Government Section and the principal negotiator for GHQ / SCAP during the "marathon drafting session" that night, recalled specific attempts by the Japanese negotiators to justify language allowing legal restrictions on speech with an argument about the necessity to control obscenity.[49] Satō remembered asserting, "We think it is necessary to recognize an exception in law *for obscene pictures* and so forth," and that this argument was rejected by SCAP officials for fear that "it would be abused."[50] Kades recalled Minister of State Matsumoto Jōji citing U.S. Supreme Court decisions to defend restricting freedom of the press "by not allowing obscene publications." Kades replied, "Your Supreme Court may do the same thing, but we don't want to put that in the Constitution. *We mean these to be absolute*."[51] According to Kades, Matsumoto "thought that the Constitution should have the limitations in there because the Supreme Court might not (set limits); it might take the words literally and might not make any rule of reasonableness."[52]

Ultimately Matsumoto need not have worried. Limits on the absolute wording of provisions such as Article 21 were carefully created by the innocuous-seeming inclusion of two articles in chapter 3 introducing the concept of public welfare:

> Article 12. The freedoms and rights guaranteed to the people by this Constitution shall be maintained by the constant endeavor of the people, who shall refrain from any abuse of these freedoms and rights and shall always be responsible for utilizing them for the public welfare.
>
> Article 13. All of the people shall be respected as individuals. Their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness shall, to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare, be the supreme consideration in legislation and in other governmental affairs.

Postwar courts followed this lead, consistently finding that all constitutionally specified rights were limited by Articles 12 and 13 in the interest of the public welfare and by Article 12's injunction against abuse. In so doing, the courts ignored the distinction between articles which included restrictive provisions (such as Articles 22 and 29) and those such as Article 21 which pointedly lacked such language out of the American drafters' concern for this very eventuality. And yet in public welfare as well as in a host of issues,

the Occupation either accommodated or colluded with the Japanese government in limiting or undermining early reform efforts. The language of Article 21 remains as a trace of earlier reforms whose import was reversed in a shared preference for order over democracy.

The Supreme Court ruled as early as 1948 that all of the constitutional rights might be limited "in the interest of the public welfare" (*kōkyō no fukushi*).[53] This holding was extended specifically to political speech with the Grand Bench decision of May 18, 1949, in *Takahashi v. Japan*,[54] in which a farmer was prosecuted for arguing for civil disobedience against government rice quota demands. At a meeting of farmers in Bippu Village, Kamikawa Township, Hokkaido, the defendant had purportedly stated, "It is selfish of the government one-sidedly to determine the price for rice that we as farmers raised and harvested ourselves and compel us to hand it over. The submissive attitude taken by us up to now is no good! Since the farmer has been cheated up to now, there is no damn need to deliver the rice."[55] The court ruled that this statement, beyond criticizing the government,

> goes on to urge the nonperformance of an important legal duty borne as a member of the nation and to violate the public welfare. Thus, since deeds of this sort depart from the bounds of freedom of speech guaranteed in the new Constitution and ought to be condemned morally in our social life, a rule of law punishing them as a crime does not contravene the terms of Article 21 of the new Constitution.[56]

In allowing the state to criminalize the farmer's exhortation to collective action, the court established public welfare as a standard by which the state might specifically abridge political speech to act in the name of the nation. As the legal scholar (and later Supreme Court justice) Itō Masami comments in his analysis of *Takahashi*, "These reasons are not convincing. The Court used its familiar but vague notion of 'public welfare' as a panacea for curing the alleged unconstitutionality of the law. This decision, rendered in 1949 only two years after the new Constitution came into force, played a pioneer role in the course which the Supreme Court has developed toward laws restricting freedom of expression."[57] Subsequent decisions strengthened and extended this line of reasoning. *Takahashi* in particular was cited by the Grand Bench in its decision on August 2, 1951, dismissing the appeal of a suspected Communist Party member who had been sentenced to six months in prison for giving a handbill to a Muroran city policeman urging a police slowdown. The handbill requested that the police cease obeying the orders of

the "foreign imperialists and the traitorous government" which were leading Japan to war in violation of the Constitution.[58] The court reaffirmed its prior ruling in *Takahashi*, stating, "Acts which instigate the nonperformance of important obligations legally imposed upon the people are injurious to the public welfare and go beyond the limits of the freedom of speech."[59] In other words, the state was authorized to restrict political speech and solicitations to collective action by acting in the name of the people.

The public welfare arguments in regard to criminalizing obscene expression in *Chatterley* and *de Sade* were both phrased in the language of social hygiene, based upon a state-defined notion of sexual order and propriety; later decisions followed and reinforced this approach. In rejecting the constitutional argument of the defendants in *Chatterley*, the Court held:

> The appellant asserts through counsel that, since Article 21's protection of free expression does not indicate any possibility of restriction, unlike in the case of the other fundamental human rights set forth in Articles 22 and 29,[60] and is thus absolutely unrestrictable [*zettaimuseigen*], it may not be limited even in the interest of the public welfare. However, this court has repeatedly held [eight citations omitted] that regardless of whether or not each of the provisions [of the Constitution] in regard to the fundamental human rights speak of the possibility of limitation, because of [the provisions of] Articles 12 and 13, they are all subject to limitation for the public welfare, and their abuse is proscribed.[61] In applying this general rule to the freedom of expression, although this freedom is extremely important, it must be recognized that it must finally fall under the limitations of the public welfare. *As it is self-evident that maintaining good sexual order [seiteki chitsujo o mamori] and a minimum standard of sexual propriety is integral to public welfare*, the judgement of the previous court recognizing this translation to be obscene writing, and its publication to infringe upon the public welfare, was correct, and appellant's argument is without merit.[62]

Similarly in *de Sade*, the Court held:

> Freedom of the press and of other expression and academic freedom are extremely important as foundations of democracy, but as held by the above-mentioned judgment of the Grand Bench of this Court on March 13, 1957 [*Chatterley*], they are not absolute and without limits, their abuse is forbidden, and they are placed under limitations for the public welfare. *When writings of artistic and intellectual merit are obscene,*

> *then to make them the object of penalties in order to uphold order and healthy customs in sexual life is of benefit to the life of the whole nation*. Thus, we cannot say this is contrary to Articles 21 and 23 of the Constitution. . . . Holding that the above translation, including these passages, corresponds to obscene writing under Article 175 of the Criminal Code was appropriate. Consequently, we cannot hold there was violation of the Constitution in the judgment below, as contended.[63]

Although both refer to an arbitrary, self-generated standard, the language of health provides an apparent scientism, supporting a supposedly necessary and disinterested, but paternalistic, state intervention. The police order as a social whole is subject to judicial hygiene: the state is authorized to intervene against expression on the grounds that the welfare of the social body necessitates a "clinical role."[64]

Itō recognized the extent to which the court's reasoning on public welfare elided the clear intent of the postwar Constitution, authorizing the state to proceed as if it were still under the Meiji Constitution:

> In the Supreme Court's practice, the public-welfare test has come to be a justification for supporting the constitutionality of any law limiting freedom to express oneself. This way of thinking deprives the constitutional guarantee of free speech of its substantial significance, for whenever a law is enacted some kind of danger to the public welfare can easily be found as a legal regulation would rarely, if ever, be imposed in case no danger exists. Therefore, under the public-welfare test, only extremely arbitrary restrictions upon this freedom are invalid. This attitude loses sight not only of the distinction between intellectual freedom and its external expression, on the one hand, and economic freedom, on the other, *but also between the new Constitution, which guarantees the freedom of expression in absolute words, and the old Constitution which had protected it only to the extent permitted by law*.[65]

In this the court was supporting actual state practice. The historian Ienaga Saburō quotes one of the *Chatterley* court procurators, Nakagome Noriyori, as stating, "I advise young procurators that if they want to get ahead in their careers they should, on going through the door into the procurator's office, *believe that the Imperial Constitution [of 1889] still lives*."[66]

The discord sensed by Itō in the courts' interpretations—between the absolute language of Article 21 and the courts' interpretation of it, the conflation of freedom of speech and thought and economic freedoms, and more-

over the effective return to the Meiji Constitution's framework for state power against political expression and action—all originated in the struggles over writing and rewriting the postwar Constitution during the Occupation and the actions of both the Japanese government and GHQ / SCAP. It is here that we must look to understand how Akasegawa came to be confronted by a postwar state imbued with reconstituted imperial authority and powers.

CHAPTER 2

THE OCCUPATION, THE NEW EMPEROR SYSTEM, AND THE FIGURE OF JAPAN

Article 21 of the postwar Constitution of Japan provides, (1) "Freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression are guaranteed. (2) No censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated." The absolute language of these guarantees originated in discussions within the drafting group in GHQ / SCAP's "Government Section" assigned to frame the new Constitution—and again, the concept of obscenity figured prominently. According to contemporaneous notes by Ruth Ellerman, secretary for the Steering Committee (and a former government analyst), a provision in an initial draft that permitted censorship of indecent expression other than in speech and the press was specifically rejected:[1]

> Objection was made to Article XXXIV that assures freedom to all forms of expression other than speech and press but provides that legal measures may be taken for the suppression of indecent and degrading literature, plays, films, etc. . . . in the interests of the protection of youth and the

> maintenance of high public standards. The Steering Committee believed it excessive to give Constitutional blessings to the crusading pursuits of the Public Decency and Purity Leagues, and dangerous to afford any justification for police supervision of public expression. Any novel or play that criticized the government could be suppressed by labeling it "degrading" or "indecent." The restrictive clause was discarded.[2]

A separate provision in the first draft concerning speech and press also featured numerous restrictions; in the condensing of all of these measures into a single article in the final draft of Chapter III, dated February 9, 1946, these restrictions were also deleted, leaving the article's absolute language unalloyed.[3] The article retained this precise form through all subsequent negotiations and emerged as Article 21 of the revised Constitution.

Yet despite this broad conception of constitutional protections, the very process by which the revised Constitution would safeguard the rights and freedoms of the Japanese people was from the outset imagined to rely on the emperor. In discussing a future Bill of Rights provision in the internal report of December 6, 1945, on preliminary studies on the problems of the Meiji Constitution and its necessary revision, Maj. Milo E. Rowell of Government Section (a future member of the Steering Committee) asserted:

> The Japanese Constitution is a reasonably permanent political document and the one least likely to be modified. The present constitution has not been amended since it was promulgated in 1889. If the constitution guarantees these rights without equivocation *as the expressed will of the emperor*, it will be more difficult for any militaristic or ultra-nationalistic group to limit these freedoms in the future, particularly if enforcement of these rights is lodged in an independent judiciary.[4]

Recognizing that constitutional guarantee of rights would ultimately be but paper-thin, Rowell suggested that they might be ensured by their concretization in the speaking body of the emperor. At this point, prior to the creation of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (which would indict and try Class-A war criminals) and the drafting of a postwar Constitution, members of GHQ / SCAP were working on the assumption that a future constitutional revision would be delivered, ultimately, in the person of the emperor, and understood that this act, whatever the ceremony or context, would be more than merely a formality: the authority of the Constitution and its guarantee of rights would ultimately be underwritten by the emperor's enunciative powers.

Rowell's report further suggested relying on imperial authority to authorize final judicial action: "that the highest court be the exclusive representative of the emperor in the interpretation of the constitution and laws and the adjudication of civil and criminal matters." This formulation is close to that of the Meiji Constitution, in which the courts act "in the name of the emperor," and indeed appears to recommend imperial sanction for granting the "highest court" (the future Supreme Court) its new power of judicial review.[5] Rights would thus be doubly ensured and overseen by authority deriving from the emperor.

The decision to take over and hurriedly complete the drafting process of a "model Constitution" in early February 1946 is part of a larger history of policies which envisioned the need to preserve the emperor for a postwar order congenial to American security interests.[6] In early 1946 this meant protecting him from two likely dangers: more punitive or reform-minded allies on the Far Eastern Commission (FEC) and domestic, popular political demands within Japan.[7] Conversely the preservation and protection of the emperor, and of the elites whose position was linked to his authority, served as the means by which to maintain exclusive American control over the Occupation and the shaping of a postwar Japanese order.[8] Hence the preservation of the emperor as a constitutional monarch "at the head of the State," to be succeeded dynastically, was the first of MacArthur's nine instructions ("musts") to the drafters of Government Section.[9]

Foot-dragging by the Japanese government over the draft's revisions and curtailments of imperial state authority might have resulted in these dangers' being realized; hence threats and entreaties were immediately brought to bear from the very day the American draft was presented. The draft revision of the Constitution by GHQ / SCAP was submitted to a stunned Japanese cabinet on February 13, 1946, at the foreign minister's residence.[10] Gen. Courtney Whitney, chief of Government Section, informed Foreign Minister Yoshida Shigeru, Minister of State Matsumoto Jōji, and the others present that the Japanese government's draft constitutional revision previously submitted to GHQ / SCAP (the "Matsumoto draft") was "wholly unacceptable to the Supreme Commander as a document of freedom and democracy." Presenting GHQ / SCAP's draft revision (in English, without translation), General Whitney stated, "The Supreme Commander, however, being fully conscious of the desperate need of the people of Japan for a liberal and enlightened Constitution that will defend them from the injustices and the arbitrary controls of the past, has approved this document and directed that I present it to you as one embodying the principles which in his

opinion the situation in Japan demands."[11] He went on to press for acceptance of the American draft as the basis for revision by a carrot-and-stick approach focused on the emperor, arguing that acceptance of the draft and its redefinition of the imperial institution was the "only hope" for elites to protect the emperor and retain their control over the state. Whitney spoke of MacArthur's "unyielding" defense of the emperor in the face of "increasing pressure from the outside to render him subject to war criminal investigation" and of MacArthur's belief that "acceptance of the provisions of this new Constitution would render the emperor practically unassailable."[12] The converse was implied: failing to adopt this draft might result in the trial of the emperor as a war criminal and the consequent devastation of the imperial institution, despite assiduous efforts to imagine Hirohito as a figure of peace.[13]

Whitney offered the government the chance to sponsor the proposal but threatened that, absent such sponsorship, MacArthur was "prepared to lay it before the people himself."[14] Whitney explicitly presented this as a democratic threat to the position of the governing elites—and as a potential avenue for them to preserve their authority by cooperating with the Occupation and thus averting a plebiscite that might drive them from power:

> *General MacArthur feels that this is the last opportunity for the conservative group, considered by many to be reactionary, to remain in power*; that this can only be done by a sharp swing to the left; and that if you accept this Constitution you can be sure that the Supreme Commander will support your position. I cannot emphasize too strongly that *the acceptance of the draft Constitution is your only hope of survival*, and that the Supreme Commander is determined that the people of Japan shall be free to choose between this Constitution and any form of Constitution which does not embody these principles.[15]

In this case the potential threat of radical reform beyond the American draft lay in an unlimited plebiscite on constitutional revision—a prospect so fearful that Foreign Minister Yoshida immediately requested that GHQ / SCAP "preserve secrecy."[16] Again underlining American desire to work within a structure of elite rule, Whitney reassured Yoshida that secrecy had been preserved explicitly "for [Japanese governmental] convenience and protection, not for that of the Supreme Commander."[17] These exchanges had followed a none too subtle reference to the force ultimately compelling Japanese government accession to American demands; just after delivering the rejection of the Matsumoto draft, Whitney, stepping outside into the sunlit garden of

the residence, made his famous remark to Yoshida's assistant, Shirasu Jirō: "We are out here enjoying the warmth of atomic energy."[18]

Each of these inducements was reiterated on separate occasions subsequent to the draft's presentation. General Whitney's letter of February 16, 1946, again warned of the demands of other Allies, which would be given a structural basis with the formation of the FEC (scheduled to meet ten days later, on February 26).[19] Should the American draft be rejected, Whitney cautioned, "it is quite possible that a constitution might be forced upon Japan from the outside which would render the term 'drastic' . . . far too moderate . . . a new constitution which well might sweep away even those traditions and structures which the Supreme Commander by his instrument makes it possible to preserve."[20] In a meeting two days later with Shirasu, on February 18, Whitney delivered a revised plebiscite threat, again in the form of an ultimatum: "Unless I hear from the Cabinet within 48 hours that the principles of the constitution which I submitted are acceptable to the Cabinet, and will be sponsored by it before the people, the Supreme Commander will take the constitution to the people directly and make it a live issue in the forthcoming campaign in order that the people will have the opportunity to enact this constitution."[21] Although this was delivered as an ultimatum, the fundamental threat had been notably softened. While still demanding Japanese government acceptance of both the "principles" and "basic form" of SCAP's draft,[22] Whitney's language suggested that the draft would merely be leaked to the press in advance of the election; he omitted reference to a plebiscite's being given freedom to effect constitutional revision on its own. Cabinet discussions reveal this clear understanding on the part of the Japanese government, which focus on the effect of publication on the upcoming election.[23] The potential publication was nonetheless a matter serious enough to merit quick action. Thus it was agreed that Prime Minister Shidehara Kijūrō would immediately meet with General MacArthur.

According to Shidehara's account of the meeting on February 21, 1946, General MacArthur proclaimed his "concern for the safety of the emperor" and warned that the FEC was contemplating measures "beyond the Prime Minister's imagination" (specifically mentioning the Soviet Union and Australia, both known for hard-line stances).[24] MacArthur then stated his belief that the American draft was "trying to protect the emperor" and "that the emperor's authority [would] be reinforced by it."[25] Prominent in its absence, again, is reference to an open plebiscite.

MacArthur's comments clarify the actual strategic position of the United States and of the Occupation. The fundamental threat noted is from the

FEC, whose intervention in pressing either for war crimes prosecution of the emperor or for his complete removal from the postwar constitutional order would disrupt not only the governing elites but also American dominance over the Occupation. Interest in reinforcing the emperor's authority on the part of the Occupation was entirely self-serving. Preserving the emperor was seen as the fundamental means by which to control the Japanese government, ensure order, circumscribe popular action and political power, and guarantee a postwar order conducive to American interests.[26]

This merely continued SCAP's recognition of the indispensability of the emperor's authority from before the very beginning of the Occupation. As the first official SCAP summary report for nonmilitary activities phrased it:

> The Supreme Commander characterized the initial landing as the greatest gamble which had been taken in history. Balanced against a well-armed Army, the secret police, terrorist and nationalist societies and other potential forces of possible resistance was the assurance that the United States possessed the use of the most important and powerful single instrument of authority in Japan—the emperor.
>
> The power of the emperor to facilitate absolute surrender and to aid in the establishment of complete control by the American Army was gambled. . . . The gamble proved justified as control of the civilian population did not manifest itself as a problem. Since the majority of the Japanese people were found to be passive, and in many cases, anxious to assist the American Forces, the occupation was orderly and devoid of casualties.[27]

It was an easy passage from the "establishment of complete control" through the "most important and powerful single instrument of authority" to its continued maintenance by those same means. The order on August 28, 1945, that among other cultural, historical, and religious properties, "imperial palaces and all shrines be given special protection" may be seen as anticipating the need to preserve the adjuncts to imperial authority.[28]

Conversely, by late January 1946, MacArthur was arguing, in a dispatch to Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, that trying the emperor for war crimes would unleash unimaginable chaos in Japan. MacArthur asserted that with the removal of the emperor, the very nation of Japan would dematerialize: "[The emperor] is a symbol which unites all Japanese. Destroy him and the nation will disintegrate."[29] Regardless of whether or not this statement reflected any level of actuality in January 1946, it reveals the degree to which the nation had become inconceivable to MacArthur without

the visible figure of the emperor (figs. 2.1a and 2.1b). He saw the emperor as not only the means by which to exercise proxy sovereignty but also, as an overdetermined instrument of convenient rule, the visible materialization of the nation itself.[30]

MacArthur warned of dire consequences were the emperor to be removed:

> It is not inconceivable that all government agencies will break down, the civilized practices will largely cease, and a condition of underground chaos and disorder amounting to guerilla warfare in the mountainous and outlying regions result. I believe all hope of introducing modern democratic methods would disappear and that when military control finally ceased some form of intense regimentation probably along communistic line would arise from the mutilated masses.[31]

As if the end of democracy, total chaos, communism, and mutilation were not enough, MacArthur added:

> It is quite possible that a minimum of a million troops would be required which would have to be maintained for an indefinite number of years. In addition a complete civil service might have to be recruited and imported, possibly running into a size of several hundred thousand. An overseas supply service under such conditions would have to be set up on practically a war basis embracing an indigent civil population of many millions. Many other most drastic results which I will not attempt to discuss should be anticipated.[32]

While MacArthur was forecasting cataclysm should the emperor be indicted, the following month's assessment of Japanese attitudes toward the emperor, by Robert A. Fearey of the U.S. State Department's Office of the Political Advisor, was more candid about the reasons for his entrenched support among the elite and their endless pieties of devotion: "For the educated and ruling classes the emperor has been and is today less, if at all, an object of devotion than *an instrument of control for their own and, according to their varying lights, the national interest*. With the exception of a small number of Communists, left-wing Social Democrats and a sprinkling of leftist writers, the educated classes unanimously favor retention of the emperor system."[33] At a stroke, Fearey clarified the cynical ideological function of the discourse masquerading as protestations of faith: behind all of the reverential claims of the emperor's centrality within a national community of faith and feeling, the calls for a return to values, the haranguing of the populace to ask the





2.1a and 2.1b Top: General MacArthur departs from his Tokyo headquarters at the Dai-Ichi Building for a trip to the American Embassy, January 1951. Japanese observers are kept at a distance. Bottom: General MacArthur's son, Arthur (center), watching a swim meet at Meiji Stadium in March 1950. To the right sits Crown Prince Akihito and his younger brother Masahito. USIA photos, National Archives.

emperor's forgiveness for losing the war, there was an elite maneuvering for self-preservation and power.[34] Perhaps more surprising is the fact that this analysis was produced by someone who was part of the State Department's "Japan Crowd"—all determined supporters of retaining the emperor (a policy endorsed strongly in this report of February 11, which went so far as to warn that an endorsement of popular sovereignty "would merely arouse resentment and confusion, and would be unnecessary and ill-advised").[35] The frankness here about elite attitudes, the casual and unremarked-upon reference to their cold and interested hypocrisy, reveals how clearly members of the Occupation too perceived the convenience of the emperor for enabling their own mediated rule. The emperor would function as well for facilitating and dissembling American rule as he had for elite control. The dawning recognition by the elites of the Japanese government of this level of shared interests, manifested most directly in the need to preserve the emperor, in turn facilitated greater cooperation with the Occupation.[36]

For these reasons, GHQ's earlier threat of an open plebiscite, quickly amended, was empty from the start. The Occupation's deep investment in the preservation of the emperor was visibly evident in its shielding of him from war crimes indictment and prosecution, in its support for his pronouncements of innocence, and, a few months later, in MacArthur's caution against "excesses by disorderly minorities" in the wake of "Food May Day" protests.[37] These protests followed a series of escalating demonstrations in April and May (including the first May Day celebration since the defeat ended its banning) targeting government failures but also, increasingly, the emperor and the general question of elite privilege.[38] At the May Day rally in the Imperial Plaza, for example, according to Mark Gayn, a reporter for the *Chicago Sun Times*, "The most prolonged cheers came when Tokuda [Kyūichi, chair of the Japanese Communist Party], both arms in the air, shouted: 'Down with the emperor!'"[39] Subsequent rallies took place in the plaza before the palace demanded that the emperor hear and acknowledge their demands, and, like Prime Minister Shidehara, meet with a delegation from the protesters. On May 19, during the Food May Day rallies (fig. 2.2), a delegation was allowed into the palace and, although they were refused an audience with either the emperor or the minister of the Imperial Household, gained access to the imperial kitchens. Emerging from the palace, they reported the failure of their attempted audience and on the bountiful food on offer for the emperor and his officials from the imperial preserves: "This is what the emperor and his officials eat. Do you think they understand the meaning of the word 'hunger'?"[40]



2.2 Protesters and police shove against each other on the plaza before the Imperial Palace as the Food May Day protest heats up. May 19, 1946. Courtesy of *Yomiuri Shinbun*.

The Occupation had supported protests, unions, and the reconstitution of leftist parties up until this point fairly consistently; significantly MacArthur's pronouncement followed demonstrations that included criticism of the throne—at the very moment that the Tokyo Tribunal had commenced for the Class-A war crimes suspects, shielding the emperor with coordinated testimony.[41] John Dower points out that MacArthur's warning against "excesses by disorderly minorities," translated as *bōmin demo*, precisely revived the "language in 'peace preservation' legislation" (the prior cornerstone of fascist repression in imperial Japan) "that SCAP had ordered abrogated only a half year previously."[42] According to Gayn, this turnaround led to "undisguised jubilation" among conservatives and "consternation in union headquarters and in the office of the left-wing parties": "I could actually recall no American move that matched this pronouncement in its repercussions."[43] As Takemae Eiji relates, the announcement was buttressed with concrete legal measures: "SCAP promptly drafted a harsh public security ordinance and ordered the government to enact it as a Potsdam decree . . . creat[ing] prohibitive fines and prison terms of up to 10 years at hard labor for engaging in 'acts prejudicial to Occupation objectives.'"[44] Meanwhile the protesters were slandered on May 15 by George Atcheson Jr., the new chairman of the Allied Council, as having colluded with the Soviet Union and issuing a petition translated from a "foreign language" with "unmistakable earmarks of Communist propaganda." In other words, rather than expressions of democratic dissent, dealing with real political concerns, the protests merely revealed foreign agency at play in Japan, with protesters as its dupes or accomplices.[45]

In Rancière's terms, the protesters had developed a "politics," "an extremely determined activity antagonistic to policing [in his technical sense of 'police']," that "makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise." Their political activity was on the verge of "break[ing] with the tangible configuration whereby parties and parts or lack of them are defined . . . undo[ing] the perceptible divisions of the police order by implementing a basically heterogenous assumption, that of a part of those who have no part"; at that very moment, they were relegated to mere "noise."[46]

The "placard incident" reveals additional, directly imperial stakes for the suppression of the politics of the Food May Day protests. Matsushima Matsutarō, a clerk employed at Tanaka Seiki Kabushikigaisha (Tanaka Precision



2.3 Matsushima Matsutarō, placard in hand, at the Food May Day demonstrations, May 19, 1946, Imperial Plaza, Tokyo. Courtesy of *Mainichi Shinbun*.

Instrument Manufacturing Co., Ltd.), prepared several 2′6″ × 3′ signs carried by fellow workers from his factory joining the march through the streets and into the plaza in front of the Imperial Palace (fig. 2.3). They read, "Imperial edict: the *kokutai* [national essence or polity] has been preserved! We [*chin*, the sovereign] are stuffing ourselves to the gills! Ye people, starve and die! Signed and sealed, the emperor."[47] The language of the placards mixed the standard imperial references (*chin* for the imperial "We," *shōsho* for "imperial edict," and the like) with a rough and minatory style radically distant from the usual carefully formal and pseudo-ancient language of official imperial pronouncements, even considered apart from the content. The triumphant and crude celebration of the preservation of the *kokutai*, "*Kokutai wa goji sareta zo*," is linked to bluntly expressed gluttony and callousness: "tarafuku *kutte iru zo*" and "uete shine" (emphasis in original). The overall impression is that the vaunted preservation of the *kokutai* amounted to protecting the heedless gluttony of a crude, selfish, and brutal sovereign, concealed behind the usual flowery formalisms—a radical rejection of the fantasy of the emperor as embodying an empathetic community, gifting the public with his deep paternal care in return for their unshakeable affection. By implication, the placards gave voice to an aesthetic for a people betrayed by a callous imperial order, left to imagine their own postimperial sovereignty.

With approval from the minister of justice, Matsushima was indicted for lèse-majesté the following month and subsequently brought to trial—the first lèse-majesté prosecution since the end of the war. The crime was amended to libel months later, after a meeting on October 18 between Alfred C. Oppler, the chief legal officer of the Government Powers Division, Government Section, and Takahashi Ichirō, the chief of the Criminal Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Justice.[48] As Dower notes, "To many Japanese who had embraced the idea of civil liberties, it was nothing short of shocking—and again shockingly reminiscent of the world of the peace-preservation laws [of the prewar state]—that the occupation authorities permitted the case to be dragged into the courts."[49] But lèse-majesté predated the Peace Preservation Laws: that "world" was in fact the world of imperial sovereignty, threatening to migrate into the postwar with the approval of the Occupation.

Takemae points as well to the suppression in June 1946 of a proposal within the Civil Information and Education Section (CI&E) "to encourage critical public discussion of the Throne" by Chief Donald R. Nugent, "said to be acting on secret instructions from Washington in mid-April to avoid direct attacks on the emperor system." Takemae also notes Chief of G-2 Gen. Charles Willoughby's intervention "at [Prime Minister] Yoshida Shigeru's request" to suppress a documentary for its "explicit treatment of Japanese war crimes and implicit portrayal of the emperor as a war criminal," overriding its previous approval by David W. Conde of CI&E and nearly bankrupting the studio, Nichiei.[50]

The centrality of the emperor's role in the Japanese polity—as Fearey indicated, a centrality to rule, not to reverence, for the elite—was backed up in practice by an Occupation increasingly sympathetic to the Japanese government's assertion and maintenance of that very position by suppressing dissent, especially when the criticism and protest showed signs of targeting the emperor, or imagining a separation between emperor and people. For all the talk of democratization, GHQ / SCAP came increasingly to oppose all signs of political disidentification with the imperial state—a consequence, again, of the decision to work through the governing elites and the emperor.[51] The emperor was the linchpin of the authority of the imperial state, within which elite control was articulated. To continue to exercise its own control, the Occupation was committed, in negotiations on the Constitution and within its daily practice of rule, to forging a new emperor system.

Lèse-majesté and the Gift of the Emperor

From the outset, the creation of the postwar constitutional order was to be marked and enabled by the exercise of imperial authority. Yet in the more than half a century of its development under the terms of the Meiji Constitution, such authority had been constructed as superconstitutional, with the emperor bequeathing constitutional government as part of the eternal love and benevolence of the members of the unbroken imperial line toward the people.[52] The state's exercise of that authority was thus the sign of more than a merely visible, determinate order: every aspect of its actions were putatively imbued with the emperor's unitary sovereign authority. In turn, once protectively reimagined as a great figure of peace, the postwar emperor served as a convenient means of both dissembling loss of sovereignty and deepening the power of the Occupation's authority. Moreover, his continued presence also enabled the fashioning of a state order bonded to the extraconstitutional dimensions of his new postwar guise as symbol. By providing the means by which the state might continue to act under the sign of imperial authority, the preservation of this acting, visible monarch in both Constitution and government would continue to legitimate extralegal actions beyond delegated state powers.

An early example of this exercise came in the aftermath of the conviction of Matsushima for libel in the "placard incident" on November 2, 1946. As Dower notes, Matsushima's sentence of eight months' imprisonment was commuted in a general imperial amnesty proclaimed on November 3 in honor of the emperor's promulgation of the revised Constitution. Dower traces the course of Matsushima's appeals of his guilty sentence:

> In June 1947 an appeals court judged that he had indeed been guilty of lese-majesty (rather than libel), but was qualified for pardon under the imperial amnesty. When the hapless placard carrier attempted to bring his case to the Supreme Court, he was turned down (in May 1948) on the grounds that the amnesty had voided his right of appeal. From the imperial perspective, this was all a splendid way of demonstrating how the emperor's magnanimity extended even to his most ungrateful subjects.[53]

It was also another instance of ceremonially conflating the revised Constitution with the Meiji Constitution: the imperial promulgation of the Constitution of 1889 had been similarly celebrated by a release of hundreds of political prisoners, who, as Takashi Fujitani reports, were informed "of the

greatness of the imperial benevolence and of their responsibility to become good subjects."[54] As a consequence of the postwar reenactment of this gesture, Matsushima became the unwilling recipient, in effect, of an imperial mercy that trumped his right to judicial review of his conviction, thus dispensing with his legal claim that his conviction for lèse-majesté (*fukeizai*) was unconstitutional and restoring the emperor as the aggrieved but merciful party.[55] And again, the bestowal of a new Constitution was heralded by imperial action, demonstrating the continued presence of an emperor empowered to dispense benevolence and absolution (by Article 7, section vi).

The very strategy that enabled this portentous and silencing intervention—announcing the decision in Matsushima's court case prior to the November amnesty—had in fact been recommended by two of the SCAP personnel most noted for their defense of civil liberties. It was proposed to the Ministry of Justice by Alfred C. Oppler, chief legal officer of the Governmental Powers Division of SCAP, during the meeting on October 22, as a "third solution" superior to either dismissal of the charges or application of the amnesty prior to a verdict. Oppler made the suggestion after consulting with Colonel Kades, deputy chief of Government Section, and one of the prime movers in constitutional revision.[56] Described by Takemae as the "premier legal mind" of Government Section, Oppler headed the Courts and Law Division in its reform of the Japanese legal system and, after transfer to Legal Section in 1948 to head its Legislative and Justice Division, "was responsible for examining the constitutionality of Diet legislation," "worked to free the judiciary from executive domination," and "tried unsuccessfully to limit the persecution of leftist groups during the Red Purge."[57] Legal Section itself was, according to Takemae, "SCAP's watchdog agency for civil rights."[58]

One of the few major changes to the postwar Criminal Code was the removal of the lèse-majesté chapter, which had included provisions for death sentences for offenders.[59] The course of their abolition reveals a particular limit case for the revision and retention of imperial authority. On October 9, following the lifting of lèse-majesté charges against several others earlier that month,[60] and prior to the long-delayed meeting between Oppler and Takahashi (on October 18, over three months after Matsushima was indicted), MacArthur issued a statement praising the Japanese government:

> The decision of the Japanese procurators to drop accusations against men charged with *lese majeste* is a noteworthy application of the fundamental concept, embodied in the new constitution just adopted by the National

> Diet, that all men are equal before the law, that no individual in Japan—not even the Emperor—shall be clothed in legal protection denied the common man. It marks the beginning of a true understanding of the lofty spirit of the new national charter, which affirms the dignity of all men, and secures to all the right freely to discuss all issues, political, social, and economic, of concern to the people of a democratic nation. For, the free interchange of ideas, the free expression of opinions, the free criticism of officials and institutions is essential to the continued life and growth of popular government. Democracy is vital and dynamic but cannot survive unless all citizens are free thus to speak their minds.[61]

MacArthur explained that this would all be in accord with the revised position of the emperor under the new Constitution and the imminent exercise of popular sovereignty:

> Such action, moreover, emphasizes the fact that from this land broken and ravaged by war, there is emerging a free people and a free nation. As the Emperor becomes, under this new constitution, the symbol of the state with neither inherent political power nor authority, the Japanese men and women are raised to a new status of political dignity and, in fact, will become the rulers of Japan. In his new role the Emperor will symbolize the repository of state authority—the citizen. The dignity of the state will become the dignity of the individual citizen, and the protection accorded him as the symbol of the state ought to be no more and no less than the protection accorded the citizen.[62]

In an odd exchange, the emperor became both citizen (through equivalent protections) and symbol of the sovereign citizenry, who inherited "the dignity of the state." In other words, he reclaimed the "dignity" in part through his membership in the citizenry, or more accurately, the *kokumin*.

MacArthur explained how crucial was this absolution of the lèse-majesté charges to the prospects for democracy in Japan: "To hold the contrary would constitute a direct negation of one of the basic principles of democratic government. It would but serve to perpetuate the pattern of feudalism and autocracy and do violence to those basic freedoms acknowledged by Japan and to which the Emperor himself has given most hearty accord."[63] The last clause, acknowledging the emperor's endorsement of "those basic freedoms," once again highlights the anomalous position of the emperor in the constitutional transition as authorizing entity.

MacArthur closes his statement with a proviso and a caution:

> It should be needless to point out that it is for an enlightened public opinion to exert its great moral influence to the end that this right freely to criticize be exercised with decorum and restraint—that all public officials be protected against unwarranted defamation or vilifications in licentious disregard of the respect to which they as free individuals in a free society and as the public representatives of a free people are fully entitled.[64]

In context, what sounds like a generic endorsement of antidefamatory legal protections in fact specifies how policing of lèse-majesté may continue by other means. On October 20 SCAP noted that the Justice Ministry had instructed the procurator general accordingly: "Hereafter, procurators were informed, lese majesté provisions should be applied only to offenses which constitute slander, libel, or insult, and in these cases only after consultation and approval of the Procurator General and Minister of Justice."[65] While anticipating their ultimate abolishment, the strategy of continuing to employ the lèse-majesté statutes but limiting their application to defamation makes clear the ways in which the concept of lèse-majesté would be conserved in a new legal regime under the guise of defamation.

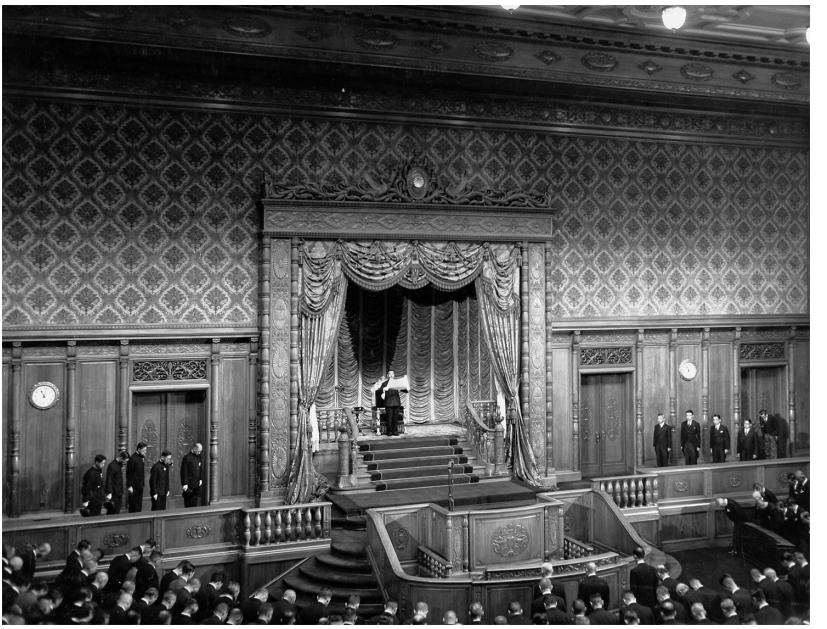
On December 11, 1946, Oppler and Kades together were responsible for conveying SCAP's expectation to representatives of the Japanese government that the lèse-majesté provisions in the Criminal Code, Articles 74 and 76, be abolished. Their instructions, however, would have allowed the retention of Articles 73 and 75, concerning bodily injury to members of the Imperial Household and "disrespectful acts against the Great Shrine or an emperor's mausoleum," and made the special provision that, while the emperor would subsequently be covered against "libel and insult" only "through the general provisions of the Criminal Code," he would not be required to lodge a complaint with the court personally: "No objection would be raised to a provision authorizing the Prime Minister or the Minister of Justice to act on behalf of the emperor with regard to such complaint."[66]

General Whitney's subsequent instruction to the Japanese government on December 20 demanded the removal of Articles 73 and 75 as well. Prime Minister Yoshida appealed directly to MacArthur for the retention of all four of the lèse-majesté articles in a letter on December 27; the request was rebuffed in a detailed, point-by-point argument in MacArthur's reply of February 25, 1947.[67] In September 1947, Diet efforts to reaffirm lèse-majesté as a criminal offense were forestalled by Colonel Kades, who demanded rejection of the legislation as unconstitutional, informing the two Diet representa-

tives (the chairmen of the Judicial Affairs Committee and of the Legislative Bureau), "The only majesty in Japan today is the people in whom sovereignty is vested. There is no other majesty."[68] The lèse-majesté provisions were finally removed in the Partial Amendment of the Criminal Code on October 17, 1947.

Yet even with the abolition of the four articles, we see the retention nonetheless of imperial exceptionalism and the impossibility of reconciling Kades's absolute defense of popular sovereignty with the position of the emperor enacted in practice, conditioned by the needs of the Occupation. The bending of the concept of libel and the convenience of the imperial amnesty in the Matsushima case, the granting to the heads of government the right to file a libel action on behalf of the emperor, the briefly contemplated retention of special protections for Imperial Household members and for the sites associated with its veneration—these events were authored in part by two of SCAP's most notable legal and constitutional reformers, testimony to the fundamental, irreconcilable contradiction between strategic policy and the ideal of popular sovereignty.

The emperor's official state functions under the revised Constitution were enumerated under Articles 6 and 7; these powers involved the formalizing of decisions made elsewhere: the appointment of prime ministers and chief justices of the Supreme Court, promulgations, convocation, and dissolution of the Diet, receiving foreign dignitaries, and the "attestation" (*ninshō*) of ministerial and ambassadorial appointments, treaties, and (Article 7, section vi) amnesties. By the terms of Article 3, all of these acts required the advice and approval (*jogen to shōnin*) of the cabinet. At the insistence of GHQ, Article 4 further specified, "[The emperor] shall perform only such acts [*kōi*] in matters of state [*kokuji*] as are provided for in this Constitution and he shall not have powers related to government [*kokusei*]."[69] Despite such limitations, the emperor's newly minimized state functions still retained aspects of the prior superconstitutional authority derived from imperial sovereignty. His association with governance in turn retained the alibi of that authority for state actions. In this case, the courts worked to retain their prior authority under the Meiji Constitution, whereby they acted in the emperor's name as a manifestation of his sovereign power. Thus, for example, the Supreme Court's finesse in invoking the power of an "attested" general amnesty to avoid addressing the constitutionality of the lèse-majesté conviction: it was imperial authority deployed to forestall questioning of the legality of imperial authority. This oddly atemporal, extraconstitutional authority was in fact exercised simultaneously with the inauguration of the



2.4 Speaking before the bowed Diet members in the House of Peers, Emperor Hirohito asks them to "sanction and promulgate" the newly amended Constitution, November 3, 1946. His words were broadcast by radio throughout Japan. U.S. Army photo, National Archives.

revised Constitution, through Hirohito's promulgation. It marked new authority with old, in a double association with Meiji constitutional authority.

In their meeting with Government Section back in February 22, 1946, the Japanese government negotiators Matsumoto and Shirasu had attempted to have the preamble of the revised Constitution present the document as coming from the emperor.[70] They were informed that GHQ / SCAP required the Constitution to state that its origins lay with "the people" instead. On the one hand, this debate was about a choice of dissimulations—that is, choosing the means for dissembling the actual origins of the Constitution in lopsided discussions typified by this negotiation.[71] Yet a very real political issue was at stake: how the Constitution would posit the locus of sovereignty. And while Government Section pushed hard to have popular sovereignty enshrined in the revised postwar Constitution, careful textual manipulation allowed for an additional, imperial dimension (fig. 2.4).

In the Meiji Constitution, the preamble specified, "The rights of sovereignty of the State, We have inherited from Our Ancestors, and We shall bequeath them to Our descendants."[72] In addition, the entire text, as a pre-

sentation by the emperor, was alive with that concept of sovereignty and imperial authority. The members of Government Section were steadfast in specifying that the revised Constitution would in contrast come from the people and flatly refused the request for a preamble specifying an imperial origin.[73] At the same time, perhaps seeing the advantages of imperial enunciation, they were prepared to allow the emperor to issue a "preceding statement":

> *Whitney*: That puts the problem into a different complexion. Our concept of a Constitution is that it comes up from the people, not down to the people. The emperor can precede the presentation of the Constitution by any step he likes. He can make a statement to the people that the new Constitution embodies principles for their guidance.
>
> *Shirasu*: You mean that you have no objection to a preceding statement by the emperor?
>
> *Kades*: No. Such a statement would be merely the cover sheet for the Preamble and the Constitution.[74]

But as Major Rowell's report the previous year had indicated, the whole point of involving the emperor rested on the fact that his statements could never be a mere "cover sheet." This would be doubly true of a statement paternalistically informing the people of the Constitution's embodiment of "principles for their guidance." In fact the very conception of Government Section was that the emperor would be acting under the Meiji Constitution in presenting the revised document:

> *Commander Alfred R. Hussey*: As to your first point, no real inconsistency is involved. In presenting the new Constitution the emperor would act under the old Constitution. The emperor would submit the Constitution to the Diet, the representatives of the people, and the Diet would adopt it.[75]

As the discussion continued, these distinctions were again either missed or elided by Government Section's negotiators:

> *Hussey*: The procedure is quite clear. The emperor speaks in presenting the Constitution to the Diet; when the Diet has accepted the Constitution, it speaks as the people. The emperor can state his position in the Imperial Rescript initiating the project.
>
> *Whitney*: In effect, the emperor suggests to the people that they shall adopt the principles embodied in the Constitution. Then General Mac-

> Arthur will proclaim to the world—this is the Constitution now accepted by the Japanese people.[76]

The Japanese government negotiators let the matter rest at this point—most likely understanding the opening that had been left for reinscribing imperial authority.

The date set for the promulgation of the revised Constitution further reinforced the connection to imperial authority and the Meiji Constitution: November 3, the date on which the birthday of the Meiji emperor had been celebrated. The Chinese mission specifically objected to this choice of dates in October 1946, pointing out that the Meiji era had featured imperial expansion in "two aggressive wars against Japan's continental neighbors" and was thus "hardly an auspicious day for the promulgation of the new constitution which is intended to serve as the political foundation of a democratic Japan."[77] Their concerns were dismissed as groundless by the State Department special envoy George Atcheson Jr. in the Office of the Political Advisor, since the date was to his understanding merely "chosen by the Japanese Government because the Emperor Meiji was mainly responsible for the first Japanese Constitution"—revealing a lack of concern over the Japanese government's continuing attempt to depict democracy as the "benevolent intention" and gift of the emperor, then and now.[78] The story of the Chinese objections in the *Asahi* newspaper was censored (by Kades, acting for Whitney in the name of the Supreme Commander).[79] One year later, the government renamed the celebration of the Meiji emperor's birthday Culture Day (Bunka no hi) to commemorate the Constitution's promulgation, effectively making the postwar state's inaugural conflation of emperor, culture, and constitution into a recurring, annual event.

Another Imperial Constitution, the Visible Emperor, and the Picture of Japan

While its style did not mark the revised Constitution as the speech of the emperor in the same way as the Meiji Constitution did (in which the emperor addresses his subjects in a familiar manner),[80] the language nevertheless implies a dimension of paternal authority and imperial involvement on multiple levels. In her detailed examination of the language of the revised Constitution, Kyoko Inoue has pointed out that the Japanese version contains an "assertive illocutionary force" not present in the English draft, by which it would "speak to the Japanese people . . . in a manner similar to that

of the Meiji Constitution."[81] In the Japanese text, "the people do not command the government not to infringe their rights and liberties. Instead, it affirms the responsibility of the Japanese government to establish a democratic government, and the people and the government together affirm the necessity of protecting individual rights and liberties."[82] The key linguistic difference between the Meiji Constitution and the revision of 1946 is the inscription of "the people," or *kokumin*, as speaking subjects. Inoue writes, "The government, joined by the people, undertakes the responsibility to create a democratic government, and to safeguard the citizen's rights and liberties."[83] As many critics have pointed out, the choice of *kokumin* for "the people" over more progressive phrases such as *jinmin* had dire implications for minorities within Japan, who would subsequently suffer disenfranchisement and discrimination from the statutory determination of *kokumin* (to whom rights were exclusively granted). The affirmative choice of *kokumin* over *jinmin* also avoided the latter's potentially worrying suggestion of a separation between state and people.[84] But the addition of "the people," as *kokumin*, made a new version of imperial sovereignty possible, for, as the government exhaustively argued in the Diet sessions debating the revised text, *kokumin* necessarily includes the emperor.

Minister of State Kanamori Tokujirō, the Yoshida government's principal spokesperson in the Diet debates, maintained that the emperor was to be considered part of the referent of both *kokumin* ("the people") and *shuken zaimin* ("popular sovereignty").[85] According to Inoue, this was the core of the government's defense of the Constitution against the charge that it altered the *kokutai* (the "national polity" or "national essence"): the symbolic emperor would be "the center of adoration (*akogare*) of the Japanese people. . . . In effect, by adoring the emperor, the people would, by their will, leave the emperor as sovereign."[86] Opposition members questioned the inclusion of the emperor among "the people" in the interpretations offered by government spokespersons during the Diet debates and their subsequent conclusions about shared or unchanged sovereignty.[87] Subsequent government practice and court interpretations, however, would ultimately determine the validity of the government's position; in other words, the question of whether or not an imperial locus remained (in one form or another) would be demonstrated in the practice of sovereignty and the particular character of government authority.

The relegation of the emperor to the status of "Symbol of the state and unity of the People" in the revised Constitution suggests a dematerialization of Hirohito's position.[88] In several senses, this was intentionally the

case; as symbol, the emperor would be insulated from concrete responsibility for actions of the state in the present and future—and in the past as well, to the extent that the project of constitutional revision was itself driven by the imperative to protect the emperor from being held accountable for a war fought in his name. Symbolic status might also distract from another troubling materiality: as Herbert Bix has noted, the Occupation's revelations on October 30, 1945, of the total assets of the Imperial Household were "grossly understated" but still revealed the emperor to be "far and away the nation's biggest landowner and wealthiest individual."[89] Harry Harootunian has elaborated Bix's account to illustrate how this project provided a cue for some on the Right to call for a purified form of emperorship, separated—by abdication—from its current holder, who had been revealed to be all too connected to the material world of possessions.[90]

The material wealth of the emperor became the source of secret debate and accord between the Japanese government and SCAP during the summer Diet debates, when an attempt was made to preserve income from imperial property that draft Article 88 would have returned to the state. In early August, GHQ officials stressed to the Yoshida government that imperial property and sovereignty were "the most important point[s] in the new constitution."[91] Their argument once again cited internal and external threats to the emperor: "given current international relations," if Article 88 were tampered with, it "would become very difficult for General MacArthur to support the draft for revising the Constitution."[92] Pushing a compromise on the matter, General Whitney half-threatened to publicize the debate, with unspecified but undoubtedly red-tinted consequences: "I want you to consider how unfortunate it would be if the Communists were to learn of this magnanimous offer which we have strongly urged on the Japanese Government."[93] Here too a departure from materiality would work to preserve the emperor from "grave consequences."[94]

In another sense, however, it was the very materiality of the emperor as symbol that made this role powerful for both the state and the Occupation. Despite the Constitution's ascription of sovereignty to the *kokumin*, the inclusion of emperor as symbol in effect short-circuited popular sovereignty, since one but not the other had a concretely visible referent. As Harootunian explains:

> An emperor who was made to symbolize the unity of the people constituted a representation of power, but because both he and the people's unity were symbols relating to each other in a circular chain of exchange

> they possessed the power of representation. But the symbol-emperor referred to the existing occupant of the throne, in this case Hirohito, while the unity of the people constituted a pure abstraction with no reality and no independent source of identity other than the meaning derived from the figure that symbolized it.[95]

For his part, Minister of State Kanamori, chief spokesperson for the Yoshida government's interpretation of the draft revision of the Constitution, attempted to elide this difference in visibility: "It is not easy to answer the question of what is the State after all. But the people of a country are visible to our eyes. Speaking philosophically, 'the people' may be invisible, but individuals forming that body are discernible. So 'the people,' in the sense of an aggregation of individuals, may justly be classified as what is visible."[96] Despite Kanamori's claim, the visibility of individual persons merely provided a partial sign of the existence of an abstract unity that could never materialize and speak apart from their delegated representatives—in contradistinction to the emperor. In fact "the people" were doubly trumped, symbolically, by the concretely existing emperor, since the *kokumin* always already included him.[97] That is, his physical person could be imagined as standing in for both symbol and referent, in a representational short-circuit.

This visibility offered a rather attractive possibility at a time in which popular protest, union organizing, and direct action tactics (such as production control) threatened to give rise to a different manifestation of the presence and will of the people. And of course this had been the goal from the first in preserving the emperor as a bulwark for order and rule, for both Japan's governing elites and for the American Occupation. Even in the context of their disputes over the disposition of imperial wealth, the Occupation was able to signal this shared interest to their counterparts in the Yoshida administration by naming shared concerns—phrased as a threat that would not, could not be carried out. The reference to an "unfortunate" result should "Communists" learn of such negotiations, as with the quickly discarded threat of constitutional plebiscite, and again in the reaction to the May protests, highlight the extent to which the Japanese government and the Occupation shared fears of a politically activist population, one whose imagined face took on more and more of a red tinge from mid-1946 onward.

The symbolic emperor was to provide a different picture altogether. The interpretations during debates over the draft Constitution in the Diet focused on the visibility and materiality of this emperor as so constituted. The symbolic emperor was not to be a matter of abstract conjecture but rather

a concrete, ordinary, and commonsensical presence that grounded something beyond itself. Indeed the danger of too much concreteness in this role prompted some concerns. Matsumura Shin'ichirō, for example, objected in the House of Peers to the term *symbol* (*shōchō*) precisely for its sense of materialization: if the emperor were to be the "symbol of the state," he would materialize it and hence be "a thing"—at the cost of losing spiritual meaning.[98] Kanamori replied:

> I never said that the emperor mentioned in Article 1 was invisible. I was harboring in my mind the substantial emperor, as well as the abstract one. We can know the abstract emperor through the substantial one. . . . I believe "symbol" [*shōchō*] as a word expresses substantial existence. . . . After all, in this case the main point is the real emperor. By seeing the real emperor as the abstract or complicated organized body of the Japanese country itself, the Japanese nation's unity itself is reflected in the mind of the Japanese people. I am of the opinion that the emperor mentioned in Article 1 should be interpreted in such a meaning.[99]

For Kanamori, the very visibility of the emperor enabled the sensuous presentation of the nonvisible, the essential. In another exchange, he explained:

> Dr. Sasaki [Sōichi, of the House of Peers] has asked me whether by "symbol" is meant a sign or a representation. Now I, not being so strong on erudition, being as a matter of fact quite ignorant, don't quite know what the interpellator [*sic*] meant by "sign" or "representation," but when we say that the State itself is revealed by the emperor being revealed,[100] we do not mean that this is so because some characteristics of the nation and those of the emperor are common. What we mean is that when we look at the emperor by coming into close contact with the sentiment that is pulsating through the fabric of the nation, we can see the State vividly revealed to us.[101]

Or, as Kanamori put it in a meeting with Colonel Kades on July 17, 1946, "The essence of this symbol is that through the emperor we are able to see the figure of Japan [*Nihon no sugata*]."[102]

Seeing the emperor as the "figure of Japan" required a renaturalization of the relationship most vigorously and notoriously asserted in wartime ideologizing and, in a slightly different version, in postwar patronage. Signs of fractures in this durable cultural-historical identity (damaged by wartime suffering and postwar political awakenings) had prompted deep anxiety within the wartime regime and significant political suppression and collu-

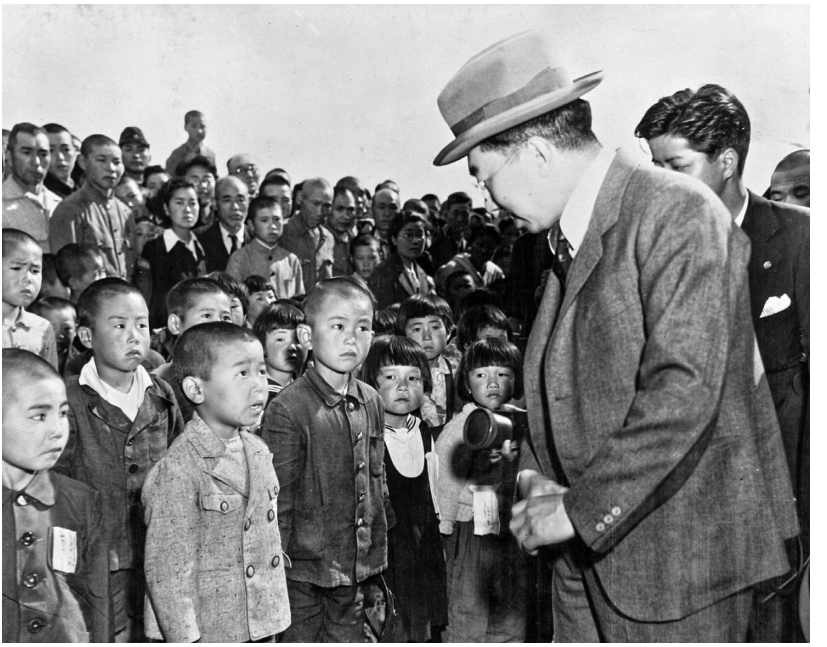
sive manipulation by the Occupation, as we have seen.[103] Speaking in the Diet, Kanamori continually declared that this relationship between the emperor and the people's sentiment was not merely proper but natural, eternal, and fundamental—as if to overcome troublesome reality by sheer repetitious assertion:

> A "symbol," in its correct sense, cannot fully work if it is irrelevant. If we take a very commonplace instance, in the feeling that the spring has come when we hear the nightingales sing, we recognize the nightingale as the symbol of spring. But if there is no seasonal relationship, at least between nightingale and spring, this feeling does not arise. Our affection for our emperor cannot so easily be expressed by words, but by stating that we look up to him as the symbol of the State, we believe that we can fully enough express the rich content of that situation.[104]

By the logic of the new Constitution, and the attempts by the government to generate a governing, official interpretation of that Constitution, the body of the emperor would be enshrined as the sign and guarantee of the abstract presence of national unity in a community of feeling (fig. 2.5)—a sentiment whose putative truth was simultaneously being policed by repressive action against criticism of the emperor and the Occupation's collusion in shielding Hirohito from war crimes prosecution. Both the Occupation and the Japanese elites were committed to the same cynical ideological project in which belief was more a matter of practice than conviction. By the same token, by being divested of direct responsibility for governing, the emperor was shorn of determinacy, standing instead for the eternal copresence of the imperial line and the nation rather than the actual results of government action (separating him from, for example, the consequences of a war fought in his name or inaction in the face of starvation).[105]

This relation was bound to a continuing investment in the theory of the divine origins of both the nation and the imperial line. As Bix has argued, Hirohito's New Year's address in 1946 (the putative "Ningen sengen," or Declaration of Humanity) in fact "downplay[ed], without ever explicitly repudiating, the Shinto foundation myths" while denying "'the false conception' of [the emperor] as 'a living deity' (*akitsumikami*)."[106] This displacement, exchanging the determinacy of living deity status for signification of the eternal, was echoed in Kanamori's interpretations as well:

> Under the past institution, it is expressly stated that in actual practice the emperor forms the center in the exercise of the right of rule. Be-



2.5 Emperor Hirohito, the "symbol of the state and of the unity of the people," speaking with a group of children, May 1949. U.S. Army photo, National Archives.

> yond that, the fundamental shape of the government of the land was not visible to the eye. Only what was actually visible to the eye was taken as the true, fundamental principle of the Japanese State. This was certainly going too far. . . . We have hitherto been under the perceptual illusion of taking the basic conception of form of government for that of national polity [*kokutai*]. Now, the time has come for us to destroy this illusion: we must retrace our steps, force back this illusion and ask what truly constitutes the fundamental national character of Japan. . . . In the final analysis, the foundation of the Japanese state lies in the general will [*sōi*] of the people, which is formed with the emperor as the center of the link. In the words already used in this regard, it returns us to the fact that sovereignty resides in the whole of the people [*kokumin zentai*], among whom is included the emperor.[107]

In other words, the "illusion" was of a living deity accountable for determinate, actual rule; this would be replaced with the understanding of the real "foundation" or "core" of the nation as located in the symbolic unity of emperor and people, separate from the merely "phenomenal" or "superficial"

world of political structure and action—and responsibility.[108] And as articulated here, the visibility of the people (*kokumin*) would in fact be manifested by the material, visible emperor. The emperor's overdetermined visibility would stand for a nonillusory, natural, and real link both to an affective unity in the present and to a national history tracing a united people, nation, and imperial family back into the murky past, while never entirely disavowing the mythic origins of this narrative. This reality would be endlessly underwritten by belief manifested in state practice, testifying to the naturalness of the position at every opportunity. The practice of this belief, in turn, would enable otherwise extraconstitutional practice by a state imbued with this imperial authority derived from teleological mytho-history and a popular sovereignty metonymically short-circuited and supplanted by its symbol.

The Reality of Paternal Imperial Authority

From the Matsumoto draft to the tendentious debates over popular sovereignty in the Diet and with Government Section representatives, and on to the defense of lèse-majesté, the Japanese administrations sought to preserve a maximum of imperial authority for the postwar state. The Occupation, for its part, sought to curtail excesses in this direction that might result in domestic or international challenges to the emperor's retention, and thus to American dominance over Japan. The very retention of an officially acting emperor within the provisions of the Constitution provided an avenue for the state both to invest governance with extralegal, imperial paternalism and to displace the problem of sovereignty during and after the Occupation in Japan's cold war relationship with the United States. As Kanamori explained during the Diet debates:

> If the emperor were to be kept aloof from all political affairs of the state, he will be regarded as a being entirely unworthy of his position as the symbol of the state. . . . As a matter of practice, the emperor is expected to perform certain necessary acts related to government, otherwise the object of the Constitution may not be fully attained. You will agree that there are probabilities of a position purely nominal getting eventually ignored. I fear that if the emperor were to keep himself aloof from any matters of the state he would gradually disqualify himself for the performance of various duties accompanying his position as the symbol of the state. It is, therefore, essential that he should perform some affairs related to matters of the state. It goes without saying that those affairs fall under government.

> Therefore, such state functions as may be performed by the emperor are enumerated in several Articles of the Constitution, mainly in Article 6 and Article 7, which clearly determine what the emperor is required to perform on account of his position. Thus, by virtue of several provisions specially incorporated in the Constitution, it is rendered intelligible to careful observers that the emperor, while being requested to abide by the principle that a ruler reigns but not governs, is accorded the unique position as the symbol of the state, a position not nominal, but *real*.[109]

The "real" nature of the emperor arose from the ambiguity of *kokuji ni kansuru kōi*, "acts in matters of state," in Articles 3, 4, 5, and 7. These were distinguished from *kokusei ni kansuru kennō*, "powers related to [national] government," denied to the emperor per Article 4—the basis for divesting the emperor from direct responsibility for governing. Yet "careful observers" could see that these "acts in matters of state" made his symbolic status "real," neither abstract nor merely ceremonial.

During the secret House of Peers subcommittee meetings in the fall of 1946, Kanamori explained the essence of this distinction: "The English draft is built on the principle that the emperor has only ceremonial functions, and it is easy to understand its sense of Article 4, if you change [the Japanese] Paragraph 1's 'matters of state' [*kokumu*] into 'protocol' [*girei*]. We insisted that the functions of Articles 6 and 7 are not mere ceremonial matters and have the character of matters of state, but in the end compromised by amending "matters of state" [*kokumu*] to "affairs of state" [*kokuji*], and governance [*seiji*] to '[national] government' [*kokusei*]."[110] Colonel Kades of Government Section had confronted Director General Irie Toshio and Deputy Director Satō Tatsuo of the Legislative Bureau on this very point in August, stating his concern that ambiguity in this language might erode popular sovereignty; subsequent to this discussion, the compromise language was adopted.[111] Subsequent to this conversation the Diet changed the term in the articles in question from *kokumu* (matters of state) to *kokuji*. While this created a distinction in language between the emperor's acts and those of the Diet (Article 73 specified "affairs of state" as within the Diet's purview), the ambiguity of *kokuji ni kansuru kōi* nonetheless provided for an emperor who acted on behalf of the nation and the state.[112]

These constitutionally permitted acts (*kōi*) by the emperor would serve to create, through practice, the reality of a "new emperor system," while avoiding the danger of direct responsibility for governance.[113] As Kanamori succinctly phrased it, "In the latter sense, that the emperor is the *nucleus of*

national administration within the fundamental organization of our country, this Constitution is unmistakably a Code under the [new] Tennō system."[114] And while this represented a new configuration in one sense, Kanamori again and again stressed that the person of the emperor continually negotiated between popular will, nation, state, and sovereignty—a role he had ultimately always performed.[115]

During the Diet debates, Representative Nosaka Sanzō argued at length that because of provisions such as Article 7, the new Constitution granted both sovereignty and "sublimity" to the emperor, and as a result would allow reactionaries to retain power:

> The circumstances at present or in the near future are very favorable for retention of the power of reactionary or military [forces] in a substantial measure. Under such circumstances, it is undesirable to leave such rights in the hands of the emperor because these reactionary elements, by taking advantage of such rights, may start a second war in the Pacific or other wars of invasion. We foresee such dangers. This is why we want to have such rights abolished. This is why we want to have Article 7 struck out and replace it by provisions making it clear to us that sovereignty is in the hands of the people. . . . A perusal of this draft Constitution leads us to the conclusion that the sovereign, in accordance with the draft, formally belongs to the people. In reality, however, it belongs to the Throne. We cannot understand it otherwise.
>
> This is quite clear from the explanations given in this House by the Prime Minister Yoshida and other State Ministers. Besides, the draft Constitution is self-explanatory of the fact. Why? . . . In the third place, the first chapter of the draft Constitution deals with the emperor instead of the people. This clearly shows that sovereignty in this country still belongs to the Throne. It admits of no other interpretation. In the fourth place, the emperor is not to have any right in politics in accordance as it is told by the draft. Nevertheless, he enjoys the right to convene or dissolve the Diet, to order the prosecution of a general election, and so on. This clearly shows that the emperor has the sovereign right. In the fifth place, the emperor has the right to confer honors. This tells the fact that the country is still maintaining a structure wherein the emperor is treated as an object of sublimity. Herein also, we perceive the fact that the Throne possesses the sovereignty of the country.[116]

Nosaka clearly recognized the discrepancy between the ideal of popular sovereignty and the position accorded to the throne: the practice instantiated by

the revised Constitution would perpetuate, in a new guise, imperial sovereignty, retaining imperial authority for the state and a still entrenched elite.[117]

In order to thereby signify the putative reality of imperial reign as a nucleus mediating between nation and governance, state actions needed to preserve indications of their imperial origins. The retention of a speaking, acting emperor as the annunciator of state actions provided the apparent, crucially visible guarantee of this relationship. Conversely the supposed affective relations obtaining between the emperor and the people provided the alibi for encroachments upon popular sovereignty by a state acting out of allegedly paternal concerns—in much the same way as the emperor, standing for eternal nationhood, provided the alibi for American encroachments upon sovereignty during and after the Occupation. State legitimacy would hinge on its imperial sanction.

The basis for the postwar state, the revised Constitution, was itself multiply signed with putative imperial authorship. Comments about "cover sheets" notwithstanding, adopting it as a revision of the Meiji Constitution in effect made the emperor's promulgation in November 1946 simultaneously an act of the new, visible "symbolic" emperor and an exercise of his full imperial sovereignty under the old Constitution (as attested to by the imperial amnesty).[118] In turn, the constitutional basis for reasserting the presence of an imperial, and hence paternal, relationship between government and governed—antithetical to popular sovereignty and inviolable rights—arose in the enshrining of the principle of public welfare (*kōkyō no fukushi*) in Articles 12 and 13 (and to a lesser extent, Article 29) in Chapter III of the revised Constitution. This language provided the basis for courts to affirm the state's legislative and judicial power to abridge rights in the name of public welfare, limiting even absolutely phrased provisions (such as Article 21) while asserting paternalistic control as the arbiter of the nation's interest and spiritual health.

The origins of Articles 12 and 13 appear to lie in the model Constitution submitted by SCAP to the Japanese government on February 13, 1946. Then numbered Articles 11 and 12, the model Constitution enjoined the people to employ their rights "always for the *common good*" (Article 11) and proclaimed the right of the people to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" as "the supreme consideration of all law and of all governmental action"—"within the limits of the *general welfare*" (Article 12).[119] Other provisions encouraged laws "designed for the promotion and extension of social welfare, and of freedom, justice and democracy" (Article 24), limited property rights specifically "in conformity with the *public welfare*" (Article 27), and enjoined prop-

erty use "in the *public good*" (Article 29). In the draft revision dated March 2 presented by the Japanese negotiators on March 4 (the "Matsumoto draft"), all of these varied terms for the common weal had been replaced by a single phrase: "public welfare" (*kōkyō no fukushi*). Despite the many subsequent revisions in the "drafting marathon," the resultant draft of March 6 preserved the Matsumoto draft's reformulation of Articles 12 and 13, which then remained virtually unchanged up through ratification.

It appears that at least initially, the American drafters viewed such language as benign, or even positive, reflecting a reasonable balance between individual rights and general welfare and protecting rather than abridging constitutional guarantees.[120] A provision abandoned during the February drafting process in Government Section had gone further, demanding, "No future Constitution, law or ordinance shall limit or cancel the rights guaranteed in this Constitution, or subordinate public welfare and democracy to any other consideration"; one drafter felt its omission "inevitably opened the gates to Fascism in Japan."[121] The explicit limitations on property rights in the name of public welfare, conversely, were part of the New Deal legacy of struggle with courts limiting federal social policies; this would have further predisposed some to look favorably upon this language.[122]

During the Privy Council discussions and Diet debates on the Constitution, however, the Japanese government was absolutely clear and forthright in their proposed interpretation of Articles 12 and 13, and Chapter III in general. These debates were translated in their entirety for SCAP and closely monitored, with occasional but significant interventions (such as described above);[123] SCAP also kept close track of discussions in the press concerning these deliberations. Its inaction on this point must thus be understood as intentional and as part of an evolving pattern of siding with the Japanese government against protest and individual liberties.

As early as the fourth Privy Council meeting (May 6, 1946), when queried as to the absolute language of Article 21 (freedom of assembly, association, speech, press, and expression, and freedom from censorship), Irie Toshio, assistant to Kanamori and director of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau (and future Supreme Court justice), stated their intent to disregard such distinctions:

> *Member Hayashi [Raisaburō]*: While there is a limitation that "to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare" in Article 22, there is no such limitation in Article 21. Is it because it is quite free from any limitation?

> In Article 21 censorship is prohibited. Does it mean not to interfere even with the corruption of public morals or the upsetting of social law and order?
>
> *Director Irie*: Freedom does not mean the same thing as arbitrariness. As it is self-evident that such freedom requires discipline, I presume that it is not without limitation.
>
> It is because of the interpretation that it is improper as it contravenes the fundamental principle of the freedom of speech to suppress what is not yet given outward expression. *In case what is given outward expression is found illegal, it may well be controlled by the police power.*[124]

On this point, during the June Diet deliberations, Minister of State Kanamori stated directly, "If I remember correctly, the first question was whether or not the freedom of assemblies, organizations, speeches and publications provided for in Article 21 are excessive, the abuse of which might be detrimental to peace and order. To this question Article 12 will give a satisfactory answer. *Under Article 12 this freedom of publication is not absolute but is subject to the public welfare*."[125] Kanamori made it clear that all rights were so subject: "The Constitution makes its point that, behind the so-called right of freedoms and other basic rights, there lie corresponding duties. There are mentioned separate rights one by one, but in Article 12, as its comprehensive content, the duties versus these rights are regulated en bloc."[126] Kanamori similarly responded to specific queries regarding academic freedom, freedom of religion, freedom of publication, labor rights, and freedom of thought and speech—in each instance asserting that these rights were to be regulated in the interest of public welfare.[127] The courts, and specifically the Supreme Court, would in turn use the new power of judicial review to determine the constitutionality of such regulations, since, unlike the situation under the Meiji Constitution, these rights "cannot be restricted even by law except for the consideration of public welfare, as provided for in Article 12, etc., *and the extent of this limitation is to be appropriately determined by the state*."[128]

Nosaka Sanzō's interpellation during the Diet debates rejected as sheer sophistry the notion that the "public welfare" standard sufficed to guarantee rights, as precisely public welfare had been the premise behind the most repressive legislation of the old regime:[129]

> These fundamental human rights, as they are expressed in Articles 11, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27 and 28, are placed under some restrictions. The people are authorized to enjoy these rights within the limits of the public wel-

> fare. Nowhere in the draft Constitution are these fundamental human rights guaranteed against any infringement thereon in the name of law. Here lies the source of our profound anxiety. *The Peace Maintenance Law and other bad laws that are intended for the oppression of the people and other bad laws have been enacted under such fine pretenses as the maintenance of peace and order, the promotion of public welfare, etc*.[130]

Kanamori's comment that he felt no need to reply to such concerns triggered cheers from the other Diet members.[131]

Nosaka returned to the point on July 12, again raising the specter of thought-policing (a reality under the old regime): "This problem has been brought up for discussion in various circles, as it was fragmentally reported in the newspapers. Not only my Party, but the Social Democratic Party and various non-partisan labor organizations as well, have a suspicion that this is, after all, a revival of the now defunct Peace Preservation Law."[132] Nosaka directly probed Kanamori's assertion that criticism would be protected, but not "the use of actual power," in regard to recent demonstrations that had targeted the emperor:

> *Nosaka*: Are such demonstrations, as the ones recently carried out peacefully, unlawful if they were carried out under this slogan [abolition of the Tennō system]?
>
> *Kanamori*: Demonstrations are carried out in various forms: Therefore, a demonstration in its simple form is perhaps not against the public welfare as provided for in this Constitution. But the question is the fact; it is difficult to answer in abstract terms and there is no help for us but to refer any actual case to the court of justice. (Applause.)[133]

As the courts of justice were at this point poised to try Matsushima for lèse-majesté over the placard incident, Kanamori's reply could not have been reassuring to Nosaka, but the apparent invitation for courts to abridge protest rights in defense of the emperor system—in the name of public welfare—brought applause from the chamber.

Hirohito had responded to the criticism of the May demonstrations by going on the radio on May 24—his first broadcast since the surrender announcement of the previous year. As Dower notes, the emperor expressed sympathy, "as he had throughout the war," "reiterated his appeal for national solidarity," and concluded, "I hope that everyone will carry out the beautiful tradition of our country, namely the *family state*, in coping with the situation, forgetting individual selfish desires and striving ahead on the

path of reconstructing the country."[134] The call for abandoning selfish desires was part of a long campaign to supplant war responsibility and deflect criticism—ironically, as Dower points out, in the language of wartime pronouncements. But the reassertion of the "family state" was coupled to a form of address that asserted this parent-child relation at all levels.[135] The state's positive determination of public welfare would put this ideological relationship into practice.

Imperial Mercy, Paternalism, and the Welfare State

Under the imperial sovereignty of the Meiji Constitution, the legitimacy of the state lay in identifying its actions as expressions of the emperor's will. Governance thus required marking bureaucratic action with the stamp of imperial sanction and even origin—with varying degrees of success. As Ikeda Yoshimasa has pointed out, welfare policy became a venue in which state action particularly took on the aura of imperial action. Ikeda charts how, from the earliest moments of the state, ideas of Confucian moralism and benevolent rule were reconstituted within the absolutist state with language marking welfare policies as imperial charity (*jikei*), arising from the emperor's paternal mercy and love of his people.[136] Relief regulations, as expressions of "his exalted intention of mercy," colored political aims as virtuous imperial practice. In time the flexibility of this ideology allowed for relief to combine imperial mercy, a contempt for the indolent born of Confucianism and liberalism, and a notion of social progress that disregarded the weak (in proper social Darwinist fashion).[137]

In consequence of a stepped-up promotion of the ideological notion of emperor as father figure, welfare discourse in the late 1930s reached another high point in its direct association of welfare and the emperor, according to Mutsuko Takahashi.[138] Takemae describes the practice of public welfare prior to the Occupation: "Welfare activities were grounded in paternalistic concepts of mercy strongly associated with Imperial benevolence and implying state surveillance. The act of receiving charity was stigmatizing, and the criteria for assistance were not from need per se but social status, an assessment of the recipient's character and the reasons for seeking help."[139] In other words, the practice of relief put an emperor-centered ideology into practice, simultaneously supporting state legitimacy (as a manifestation of imperial will) and domination (in a practice of state surveillance with both direct and ideological consequences).

In keeping with the need to manifest the reality of an emperor nucleus

in the postwar state for both legitimacy and social control, legislators attempted to preserve this relationship while acquiescing to Occupation pressures for increased social assistance. The Daily Life Security Law of 1946 (Seikatsu hogo hō) presented a negotiation between two differing visions of state and society. Though compromised in a variety of other areas, Occupation demands here were predicated upon the future status of citizens as rights possessors and a concept of a state enjoined to provide relief without prejudice.[140] This directly conflicted with the Japanese government's imperative to sign social action as imperial mercy, enjoining the people as supplicants in an unequal relationship to a state manifesting that benevolence.

As Takemae relates, the law was drafted by the Welfare Ministry, following directives by SCAP mandating legislative action, and was presented to the Diet in late July, as the constitutional discussions continued.[141] The directives from SCAP had specifically required that public assistance be the nondelegated responsibility of the state, involve no discrimination or preferential treatment, and involve no preset limit on the aid to be furnished.[142] Paraphrasing Gen. Crawford F. Sams, head of GHQ's Public Welfare and Health Section, multiple commentators have argued that "the concept of public assistance as a state obligation and individual right was alien to the Japanese experience."[143] But it was also inimical to the prior concept of the imperial state. The new law deflected Occupation demands in language that skillfully reasserted the old relationships of paternal protection, supplication, state legitimacy, and surveillance—against a population that in 1946 was particularly charged with a potentially explosive combination of deprivation and fused material and political demands.[144]

The legislation initially maintained an article denying eligibility to the "lazy" (*taida*), a provision of the prewar law of 1929, maintaining state authority to identify the deserving and to investigate to cull the unworthy—key elements in the prewar scheme. Officials attempted to dissimulate the existence of this particular language with paraphrase and mistranslation to English.[145] By retaining the prewar system of district commissioners (under a new name) until 1948, the state similarly continued both the arbitrary practice of relief through mercy and of surveillance.[146] Mutsuko Takahashi comments that the bill's title in Japanese was actually the Daily Life Protection (*hogo*) Law, "implying that the protection is reserved for those minor cases living in great difficulty," and, as Takemae notes, "enabling [the Welfare Ministry] to retain the traditional gloss."[147] The director of the Bureau of Social Affairs of the Welfare Ministry, Katsunishi Yoshisuke, related, "(At the ministerial level) in those days we took the view that the protection

on the basis of this new law was to be offered by the state (*kuni*) to the people but not be actively demanded from the state as a right (*kenri*) by the people."[148] The Supreme Court was later to concur, finding in 1967 that Article 25 of the Constitution (the sole article to refer to social, not public, welfare) was merely a principle, not a "concrete right"; the state was not bound to a citizen-held right of relief.[149]

Adopting the principle of welfare, or *fukushi* (literally, "well-being"), thus meant that daily life in the new postwar state was to be constituted as a zone for paternalistic control, sanctioned by an unequal relationship undergirded by imperial authority. In turn the Supreme Court's broad interpretations of the state's constitutional authority to abridge rights in the interest of overseeing the public welfare of the nation ultimately extended this principle back to constitutional law.[150] Both concepts originated out of a quantum of imperial sovereignty, preserved in practice within the broad prerogatives of the postwar state, and legitimizing extralegal action as paternal sovereign authority. As Akasegawa Genpei discovered, challenges to that authority would be responded to as lèse-majesté—in all but name—and the determined reimposition of the police order.

CHAPTER 3

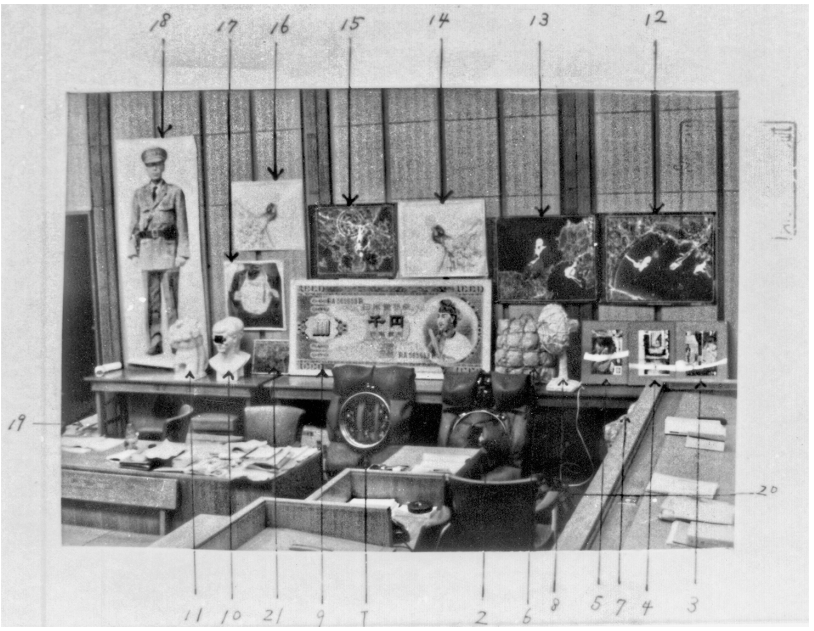
THE PROCESS OF ART

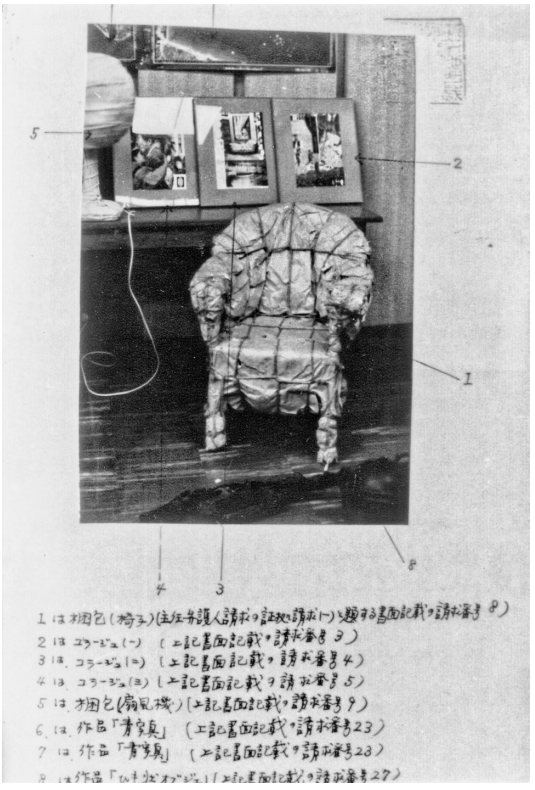
Akasegawa Genpei's 1,000-yen project intervened in areas of practice and representation in which state legitimacy and power were highly invested. The evolution of state response—from fortuitous encounter (via surveillance of the League of Criminals and a shoplifting arrest) to multiple interrogations and on to indictment and trial in Courtroom 701—traces the state's gradual recognition of the troublesome nature of Akasegawa's critique. But it was the very submission to a trial process that brought about the greatest confiscation of his work. *Confiscation* is Ross's term for the dual retrospective modes that have served to occlude the participatory politics of May 1968 in France: the biographical and the sociological perspectives.[1] Through these modes, the events' complexities are reduced to personal identity, officially recognized spokespersons, and unproblematized sociological categories—precisely what was most consistently rejected in the mass movement of 1968. The term also highlights the extent to which such processes act to reassert a police order, confiscating, or seizing, the memory of a movement which broke with such determinations. In Akasegawa's case, a

related, judicial mode presented a contemporaneous instance of such confiscation: state authority deployed to reassert the police order and suppress its questioning through the normal workings of law.

Following Akasegawa's conviction at trial, the freedom of speech and expression issue was, by necessity, central to his *jōkoku* appeal to the Supreme Court.[2] As discussed in chapter 1, the finding by the trial and higher courts that the work was simultaneously art and *mozō* accorded with the logic of obscenity case law, under which free expression was no defense against criminal content. The part of the decision finding Akasegawa's work to be art, however, was no less problematic than that finding it to be criminal. The forcible ascription of his activities into the delineated sphere of Art compresses the work's dimensions as part of an emergent, radical practice within the established definitions of this sociological category. The confiscation amounts to concealment of the ways in which the practices of Akasegawa and his compatriots inaugurated a radical politics precisely to the extent that their works escaped these boundaries. These artists experimented with bringing artistic techniques of perception and provocation into direct, productive interaction with the everyday world. And although their political practice emerged from art, their practice soon overflowed its usual boundaries, as it directed a transformed political practice against other unexamined distinctions, boundaries, and practices undergirding the reproduction of the status quo (figs. 3.1a and 3.1b). Their target was Rancière's police order, the conceptual orderings and differences, interpretations, and practices of the current political arrangement, embedded in the practices and categories of everyday life. This most particularly included what Slavoj Žižek would call "ideology in practice," actions that instantiate or constitute a sort of belief through action, such as the reality of paper money, or of the state's operative political mythologies.[3] Thus the state, through the legal system, attempted not only to punish Akasegawa and to deter others from similar acts, but also to silence his work by reinscribing his activities within the unproblematic sociological spheres of criminality and art.

The structure of the trial process itself compelled complicity in this confiscatory process by Akasegawa, his lawyers, and witnesses as the price for participation. When he was indicted, Akasegawa was advised by his lawyer that he could either plead guilty and silently accept the penalties (as well as acceding to the state's redefinitions of his work) or fight the case in court.[4] Akasegawa chose the latter, but in so doing virtually conceded half of the state's assertions almost immediately. By virtue of the legal strictures, the only defense possible was that the work was Art and was therefore either





3.1a and 3.1b Exhibits at trial, 1966. Right: Akasegawa's *Wrapped Chair* is in the foreground. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

lacking in criminal intent or constitutionally protected speech and expression. Thus each time the defense attempted to invoke the familiar arguments about freedom of speech and creativity, it further reinforced the "Artness" of Akasegawa's work and hence participated in reinscribing it within the very determinations that his practice sought to escape and examine.

One can perhaps see a certain parallel with Kafka's *The Trial*, in which all of the ultimately fatal proceedings start with a recognition and acceptance of the state's authority, a simultaneous interpellation of self and state that irrevocably draws Josef K. within it. The ironically understated phrase which notes this moment of acceptance and first participation comes in the first couple pages of the novel, when Josef K. makes a brief declaration of his own actions to the man who has invaded his room: "'I'm going to find out what sort of people those are next door, and how Frau Grubach can justify allowing this disturbance.' Although he realized at once that he shouldn't have spoken aloud, *and that by doing so he had, in a sense, acknowledged the stranger's right to oversee his actions*, that didn't seem important at the moment."[5]

As the translator, Breon Mitchell, notes in his preface, the novel's title, *Der Prozess*, refers not only to the trial but to the surrounding proceedings;[6] it is this "process" to which Josef K. submits and, to an extent, commences with this small act of recognition. As Žižek points out, this act of interpellation differs from the Althusserian version in that it is "an interpellation without identification / subjectivation."[7] The radically external "belief" thus constituted is independent of subjective, internal concerns; in fact, when belief is internal, it is something else entirely: "The only real obedience, then, is an 'external' one: obedience out of conviction is not real obedience because it is already 'mediated' through our subjectivity—that is, we are not really obeying the authority but simply following our judgment, which tells us that the authority deserves to be obeyed in so far as it is good, wise, beneficent."[8] Seen in this light, the trial process enacted a pedagogy, enforcing the sociological distinctions of the police order upon otherwise heteronomous practices.[9] This confrontation between political practice and police order and the deployment of a particular mode of state authority in Akasegawa's case thus turns on the presumption of a social "common sense."

Shakai Tsūnen

The reasoning employed by the courts in finding Akasegawa guilty rested on the state's own definitions of art and criminality. The language undergirding this reasoning in both the precedent-setting cases on obscenity and the

court's holdings in Akasegawa's case was based on the notion of healthful sociological determination implied in the legal concept *shakai tsūnen*. Literally meaning "commonly held social ideas," the phrase's flexibility enabled the court to use it in a multitude of ways, primarily as "common sense" and "community standards."

In their brief to the Supreme Court, Akasegawa's counsels argued that the *mozō* statute was vague and unclear, lacking standards for determining the meaning of the phrase "a thing having an exterior confusable with [money] [*magirawashiki gaikan wo yūsuru mono*]," and that it was therefore in violation of Articles 21 and 31 of the Constitution.[10] In countering this, the majority opinion in Akasegawa's case declared that the wording "can be rationally interpreted as everyday speech [*nichijō yōgo to shite kore o gōriteki ni kaishaku suru koto ga kanō*]," and "since one can judge on the basis of common sense [*shakai tsūnen ni shitagai*] whether or not something has an exterior confusable with currency, the defense's premise fails."[11] In other words, their response to the assertion of vagueness in the law was that the wording was rationally understandable speech (that is, not nonsensical) and, further, that common sense, *shakai tsūnen*, provided it with sufficient specificity. The possibility of the phrase's being rationally interpreted by someone—the court, as the definer of *shakai tsūnen*—was tautologically used to reject the allegation of vagueness. The court conflated understandability with legal standards of specificity, eliding the constitutionality of both the law and the arbitrary judicial determination of common sense. As Chin Kim notes, this was far from an unusual occurrence: "Few statutes have been overruled [by the courts] for vagueness despite indeterminate meaning. Indeterminateness is taken for granted and thus gives almost limitless scope for widening or narrowing the meaning of statutes."[12] In so doing, the court laid tacit claim to extraconstitutional authority.

In appointing itself the de facto interpreter of *shakai tsūnen*, which was then cited to determine criminality, the court again followed its long series of rulings in obscenity cases. In these cases, the court designated itself not only the proper arbiter of the content of *shakai tsūnen* but also its proper evaluator and shaper. In *Chatterley*, the court held:

> The standard for the court rendering its above judgment is the good sense [*ryōshiki*] and community standards [*shakai tsūnen*] functioning in general society. These community standards are just as the court of first instance found them to be: "it is neither the collection of individual consciousnesses, nor their mean value; it is the group consciousness [*shū-*

> *dan ninshiki*] which transcends them, and cannot be denied by the fact of individuals with understandings at odds with it." *The determination of what these community standards are is under the present system entrusted to the court*.[13]

Having arrogated to itself the authority to specify the content of community standards,[14] *shakai tsūnen*, the court in turn defined those standards ipso facto on a level unreachable by any dissenter. In fact neither dissent outside nor even inside of the court was seen as a sufficient challenge to the imputed univocality of these standards:

> The fact that it is not always the case that there is unanimity of opinion among individuals in society, or between judges at each level of the courts, or among the judges constituting the same adjudicating body, is the same as in any other instance of legal interpretation. This is not merely the case when determining whether or not something is obscene literature, and cannot be used to deny the court's authority to determine community standards. It is thus unavoidable that the court's judgment whether or not this work is obscene literature will not be in agreement with some part of the citizenry. The fact that in this instance the members of the court must follow their own good sense [*ryōshiki*] in determining [*kettei suru*] the community standards differs not at all from all other instances of legal interpretation.[15]

Good sense, necessarily undefined, guided the court in determining community standards. In fact the court held this circular definition of one abstraction out of another to be an objective judgment, the mere discernment of the already extant and obvious. This in turn became the court's answer to the defense's constitutional objection, under Article 21, to censorship and prosecution absent prior specific standards for determining obscenity: "However, the basis for the determination in regards to the acceptability or unacceptability of the translation in this case is extant as the community standards and good sense functioning in general society, and so one cannot say that it was unclear prior to the fact."[16] The purportedly "extant" community standards intuited by the court countered the defense's direct constitutional challenge that the obscenity law, Article 175 of the Criminal Code, was part of a prewar system of censorship not in accord with the postwar Constitution's guarantee of free expression. The existence of the community standards provided the positive content to the law required by the Constitution.

The courts asserted their right to force adherence to their vision of com-

munity. Thus in spite of its having defined away opposition to its determination of the content of *shakai tsūnen*, the court in *Chatterley* also proclaimed its right to go further, to intervene actively in reshaping social reality against degeneration:

> Even if we granted for the sake of argument that the ethical senses of a sufficiently numerous mass of the citizenry had become so inured that they fail to recognize a truly obscene thing [*makoto ni waisetsu na mono*] as obscene, the court must defend against moral degeneration by following the good sense provided by the norms of community standards, the ideals of healthy people [*kenzen na ningen no kan'nen de aru shakai tsūnen no kihan ni shitagai*]. Ultimately, neither law nor the courts need always affirm social reality [*shakaiteki genjitsu*]; rather, *they are to oversee evils and decadence with a critical attitude and must play a clinical role*.[17]

In its *de Sade* decision of 1969, the court implicitly endorsed its commitment to this role when it declared, "While it might be preferable to learn of the response of the average person reading the piece in determining what the community standards are, this in the end has no more meaning than that of a reference."[18] That is, the court would impose its views of "good sense" and "the ideals of healthy people" as it saw fit.[19] *Shakai tsūnen*, as community standards, thus ultimately was the court's standard: its notion of social reality as it ought to be, an official articulation and simultaneous legal authorization of the police order.

Though cast in the neutral language of the law, the idea of an eternally a priori community echoes the postwar work of theorists such as Watsuji Tetsurō, particularly to the extent that this community was considered a *standard* for the alignment of actual society rather than an empirical determination of present practice. The courts did not seek to determine the actual practiced standards of the community; they presumed a particular shape and content as "community" and sought to impose it. Such formulations after the war were inevitably linked to the status of the emperor. As Harootunian demonstrates, writers such as Watsuji took advantage of the emperor's new symbolic status to "ma[k]e possible the production of an imaginary community that no longer needed to derive its identity from the state but only from the Japanese collectivity"—in the case of Watsuji, a community that was traceable solely through the figure of the emperor.[20]

By using *shakai tsūnen* to refer to some abstract yet putatively specific content, the courts bridged the gap between, on the one hand, prewar laws

and the exercise of broad imperial state authority and, on the other, a postwar Constitution encompassing legal positivism which would in theory set limits on state authority. The content of *shakai tsūnen* was, in practice, whatever the court cared to impute to it; this arbitrariness was concealed by the supposition that it was actual, existing thought, properly perceived by the court. Failing this, the court could fall back on further abstractions—"good sense" and the "ideals of healthy people"—to "correct" social reality through the power of the state's judicial apparatus. In either case the court substituted recourse to popular thought (*shakai tsūnen*), and "good" and "healthy" portions of it, for its prewar role under the Meiji Constitution of acting directly in the name of the emperor. The social body was substituted for the emperor's delegated body as the grounds for state action—or rather they become fused together to undergird state authority. Such was the practical function of the new emperor system.

Safe Art

While reserving to itself the power to determine community standards, over time the state became receptive to the idea of a harmless sort of art. Unlike the *Chatterley* decision, the Supreme Court's *de Sade* ruling in 1969 held that "the artistry and intellectual content of a work may diminish and moderate the sexual stimulus caused by its portrayal of sex to a degree less than that which is the object of punishment in the Criminal Code, so as to negate the work's obscenity; but as long as obscenity is not thus negated, even a work with artistic and intellectual value cannot escape treatment as obscene writing."[21] In other words, artistry might make a work unstimulating and therefore not obscene, but if obscene, it was criminal. The majority court in *de Sade* began for the first time to contemplate some sort of assessment of the nature of the artistry involved in a work which might make its content ineffectual and thus not criminal. In so doing, the court moved toward a long line of concurring and dissenting opinions in the obscenity cases which argued in favor of some sort of balancing between obscenity and "social value" as art.

Justice Irokawa Kōtarō's dissent in the *de Sade* case raised concerns over the majority's approach to obscenity rulings. As discussed earlier, the majority cited the interest of public welfare as both the justification and the constitutional basis for restricting freedom of expression. While not disputing such an approach, Justice Irokawa recommended caution:

> It hardly bears special mention that since free speech and a free press are foundations of democracy and basic conditions for the development of culture extending across all spheres, we must be extremely cautious about restricting them. Even when restriction for the public welfare is unavoidable, the way to fulfill the spirit of the Constitution is to give serious thought to what the public welfare is in that case, making an effort to deepen and concretize that concept. We must strictly avoid an attitude which casually uses the abstract notion of the public welfare and cuts down on freedom of expression with great dispatch.

Justice Irokawa recognized that the majority opinions permitted almost any restriction of expression; to moderate this, he requested greater attention to the concept of public welfare and restraint in the interest of the "foundations of democracy" and the "development of culture."

In calculating public welfare, Justice Irokawa recommended weighing the possible negative effects of an artistic or literary work against its "social value," its positive side, rather than seeing any degree of obscenity as necessarily criminalizing the work—an approach explicitly rejected by the majority.[22] He echoed the majority opinion that artistry might moderate obscenity but cast it in terms of a part-to-whole relationship, whereby "obscenity in form" in certain passages might be sublimated by the work as a whole: "Where the work is earnest and truthful in its subject manner, where the portrayals of sex in its narrative are fit and appropriate, inextricably related to the subject matter, and where its value as art is *high*, it may not be unreasonable to see also the phenomenon of a sublimation of obscenity [*waisetsusei shōka no genshō*] if the work is viewed as a whole."[23] The stimulation might be sublimated, that is, redirected toward appropriate social goals and values, as long as the work remained firmly within the category of art. As the justice recognized, "Since amusement is an essential requirement in a mass society (It doesn't take many words to say how dreary a society without amusements is!), we can recognize the existence of at least some social value even in works for vulgar entertainment." Alternatively, the work might promote the "nation's culture"; such high art would have its own value.[24] Both sorts of work promote "cultural development": "Absent special circumstances, cultural development can be anticipated precisely when both ordinary types of books and works whose great artistic or intellectual value is clear and virtually undisputed are freely published and distributed and freely read."[25] In other words, the justice held open the possibility of recognizing something as art and *therefore* not criminal if it made a social

contribution—if it had social worth. Such social worth was predicated upon the work's artness, its adherence to the proper role of art in society: either building up *national* culture or providing escapist amusement for an otherwise stressful and tedious daily life.

In his concurring opinion in Akasegawa's case, Justice Irokawa proposed a doctrine extending well beyond obscenity cases (in keeping with the other expansive uses of this case law discussed earlier). In language that clarified his notion of proper art, he wrote:

> If the artistic activities of expression were of a high order [*kōji de atte*], and if the social value of the work thus created far and away surpassed its negative value, in such an exceptional case (and it is clear that this case does not rise to this level) the conclusion would need to distinguish this [from the one rendered here]. This is because in the end, in considering the propriety of restrictions being added to the freedom of expression, social worth must first be comparatively assessed [*shakaiteki kachi no hikaku kōryō ga mazu nasarenakereba naranai kara de aru*].

As in his commentary in *de Sade*, what at first reads like a lukewarm endorsement of liberal positions on freedom of expression must be understood within this context as a recognition of the ultimately unproblematic and socially salubrious nature of those works which most wholeheartedly embrace the category of art. Both "social value" and "[art] of a high order" assumed a hierarchical, ideal concept of Art as a distinct and bounded sphere of activity within everyday life. This category, however, like *shakai tsūnen*, would not be left to the whims of the citizenry, or artists, to specify; the state, in the person of the court justices, would make that determination. At trial a parade of expert witnesses, including some of the top figures in art criticism, testified that Akasegawa's work was squarely within trends in contemporary art, and the district court agreed (fig. 3.2). And yet Justice Irokawa of the Supreme Court, in a brief parenthesis, dismissed the work summarily as lacking counterbalancing social worth and for not being of an artistically "high order." For Justice Irokawa, artistic worth and the proper role of art was for the state to determine as a matter of law.

If the majority opinions in *Chatterley* and *de Sade* expressed a hard-line view, in which the state asserted its right to criminalize expression with a broad understanding of the interests of the public welfare, Justice Irokawa's arguments (and those of other dissenters in the cases) suggested a more flexible approach, whereby the state would recognize an interest in cultural

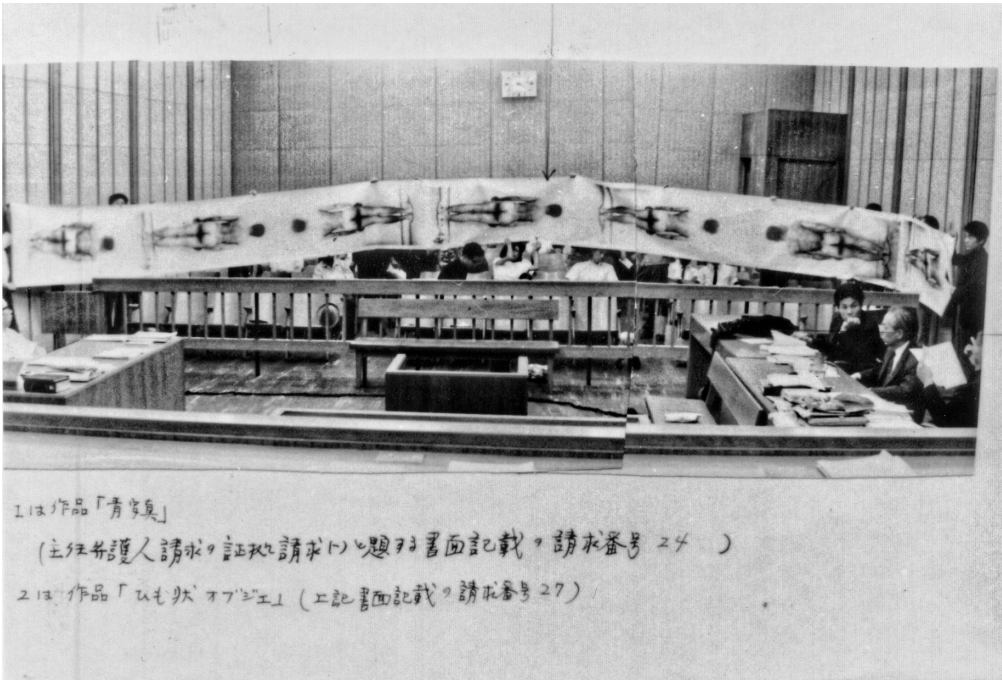
development per se and would be willing to allow some leeway for art that it found to be of social worth—in other words, safe art, functioning either as distracting entertainment or "high art" that proclaims its inutility and its separation from all other social spheres as its very definition and role (while nonetheless supporting "national culture"). These arguments anticipated a depoliticized art and a climate of less overt protest and opposition.[26] Such an approach would still effectively support police order because its very definition of art presumed works that surrendered all claims to social effect and remained unproblematically within accepted concepts—an extension of *shakai tsūnen*, in other words. Lack of dangerousness would be the implicit criterion for such art; art which best embraces the state's definitions of art would ipso facto be the art least troubling to the state.

Intent and Faith

The question of dangerousness arose in both Akasegawa's case and the obscenity cases. In the latter, the issue was damage to public morals; the state's role was seen as maintaining "minimum morality" (*saishō gendo no dōtoku*), which is "the morality of significant meaning to the maintenance of the social order [*shakai chitsujō no iji ni kanshi jūyō na igi o motsu dōtoku*]."[27] In other words, the state responded to a threat to the social order that it perceived in obscene materials. In Akasegawa's case, according to the courts, the threat was to "society's faith and credit in currency [*tsūka ni taisuru shakai no shin'yō*]." The district court in his case held:

> The benefit protected by the Law Controlling the Imitation of Currency and Securities should be understood to be the same as those of the Crime of Counterfeiting Currency provision of the Criminal Code [*tsūka gizōhai*]—society's confidence and trust [*shin'rai*] in the genuineness of currency and the like [*tsūka nado no shinsei*], and the security [and] safety [*anzen*] of transactions produced through it on the basis [of that trust]. Further, even if this act of imitation [*mozō kōi*] is not to the extent to constitute a counterfeiting offense under the Criminal Code, we may understand the reasoning of the law as attempting to prohibit this out of the fear [*osore*] that public faith and confidence [*ōyake no shin'yō*] in currency and the like would be harmed.

The court conflated the means by which harm resulted from *mozō* with that of *gizōhai*, counterfeiting:



3.2 First trial session, August 10, 1966. At the far right, Special Counsel Nakahara Yūsuke and Takiguchi Shūzō are seated at the defense table next to Akasegawa's attorney, Sugimoto Masazumi (speaking). Left, a prosecutor gapes at the life-size nude images of Hi-Red Center members Akasegawa, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, and Izumi Tatsu rendered on blueprint paper and introduced as a defense exhibit. To document the exhibit's introduction, a court official took this photo, shooting from the very middle of the judge's bench. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

> If the benefit protected by this law is understood in this way, the phrase "a thing possessing an exterior confusable with [money]" [*magiwarashiki gaikan o yūsuru mono*] ought to be understood as pointing to an item that, while not of a sort able during the course of transactions to engender a false belief [*goshin*] in the average person that it is genuine currency, depending on its place, time, or situation of use, or dependent on the other person involved, might yet somehow be feared to cause another person to mistake it for genuine currency [*hito o shite shinsei no tsūkanado to gonin saseru osore ga ari*], and so holds the risk [or] danger [*kikensei*] of being able to be used as the means of a fraud.

The linguistic acrobatics the court engaged in to suture the difference between *mozō* and *gizō* resulted from its need to suppress the criticism em-

bodied in *mozō* simulacra: the problematizing of the status of genuine currency itself. While both counterfeiting (simulations) and simulacra might harm "faith and credit" in currency, only the latter directly challenged state authority by drawing attention to printed money as social means and to state support for currency's unquestionable reality. Their conflation silenced Akasegawa's critical act.

This conflation was supported by the courts' repeated assertion of the possible "danger" of the one-sided, monochrome notes, "somehow" being used "as the means of a fraud"—in other words, as counterfeits. It also extended to their description of Akasegawa's act. The district court held:

> Defendant Akasegawa, on or about January of 1963, took notice of the Bank of Japan's 1,000-yen note (the then-circulating note with the portrait of Prince Shōtoku; hereinafter abbreviated "1,000-yen note"), possessing the most universal nature of all [things] within everyday life [*nichijōseikatsu no naka de motto mo fuhenteki na seishitu o motsu sen'en no nippon ginkōken*], and thought that he would like to make a work *using this as his material*.[28]

The district court's finding innocently incorporated Akasegawa's argument that the 1,000-yen note was the most universal of all things within everyday life, presumably without noticing that such a recognition would bolster his argument of the need to scientifically examine this most universal of all quotidian things. This observation was notably elided from the Supreme Court's paraphrased citation of the District Court's holdings. The Supreme Court held:

> The defendant's conduct [*shoi*] in this case was that, turning his attention to the then-circulating Bank of Japan 1,000-yen note with the portrait of Prince Shōtoku, and for the purpose of making works *using this as a material*, [he did] make a request to a print shop employee, and did decide to print through photo-offset printing, altogether around 2,100 monochromatic prints on cream-colored high-grade paper, in green, black, and black and green mixed ink with the same measurements and the same aspect of this [bill].[29]

The courts significantly failed to distinguish between Akasegawa's project and using "actual" bank notes as material. The trial court even enacted this reduction directly into its name for Akasegawa's project, referring to it as the "1,000-yen note." They thus silenced all of his arguments about the artis-

tic investigation of money exhaustively set forth in pleadings and court testimony. Akasegawa's money works, as *confusing* imitations, invited questioning of currency's representational status and of state authority. Lacking a rebuttal that would accord with postwar constitutional guarantees, the courts intentionally misrecognized the nature of Akasegawa's act, reinscribing this criticism back into the categories of police order.

This confiscation further enabled the reductions enacted in the courts' responses to the defense's constitutional arguments. Vagueness in the *mozō* statute, its trespass upon issues of freedom of expression and thought, were all rejected in tautological assertions conflating *mozō* and *gizō*, thus conflating the politicality of Akasegawa's work with the more straightforward "dangerousness" of counterfeiting.

The courts' final suppression of the criticism embodied by Akasegawa's work came in its understanding of "intent" (*ito*) as "criminal intent" (*han'i*). Here as well the courts followed obscenity law. In *Chatterley*, the courts held:

> In order to make out the criminal intent for the offense described under Article 175 of the Penal Code, it is necessary only to ascertain the knowledge concerning the existence of the writing in question and its distribution and sale; and it does not go so far as to require that the person involved must also be cognizant of the fact that the writing in question contains obscene matters within the meaning of the provisions of the same article.

In Akasegawa's case, the district court held:

> Generally in determining that intent exists, the text of the Criminal Code, article 38 paragraph 3, holds that if there is a recognition of the concrete particulars that are the necessary conditions constituting a crime, it is not necessary for there to be recognition of the act's illegality. . . . Therefore, considering the case at hand, it is clear that the defendants recognized the form and design on the imitation 1,000-yen bills in this case, and since this recognition was present, even if the manufacture of the above imitation 1,000-yen notes had been done as creative activity from the standpoint of art, or if it had been done for the purpose of using them for invitations [*annaijō*], or even if the circumstances were such that there was a false belief that police permission had been given, it could still hardly be credited that there was no possibility of recognizing this act's illegality. Therefore, the defendants cannot escape intentional responsibility.

By restricting the issue of defendants' intent to the question of whether or not they were aware that their acts occurred, the courts reduced those intentions to simple criminality and nothing else: *ito* and *han'i*, intent and criminal intent, became indistinguishable. While not necessarily unusual as a legal practice, in this context this reduction aided the second of the state's categorical confiscations of Akasegawa's act: redefining his activities as crime, and crime alone. In so doing the court avoided engagement with Akasegawa's points of critique. The impossibility of doing this within the bounds of state authority and police order asserted through the legal process was conveniently removed as a problem.

If the question of intention had been posed seriously, it would have required tracing the gradual development of Akasegawa's critical and artistic notions. That is, it would have required openness to the political practices manifested in the project itself. Akasegawa's works, and particularly his "model 1,000-yen note projects," together reveal an evolving concern with everyday life and its systems of order, with social reproduction, and with the body. Following the development of this work returns us to issues raised in his prosecution but foreclosed by the judicial process.

To trace this politics, and the complicated question of why Akasegawa created his model 1,000-yen notes, we must first look to his remarkable short story, "Aimai na umi."

"Supai Kiyaku" and "Aimai na umi"—On Simulation and Simulacra, or Spies and Ex-spies

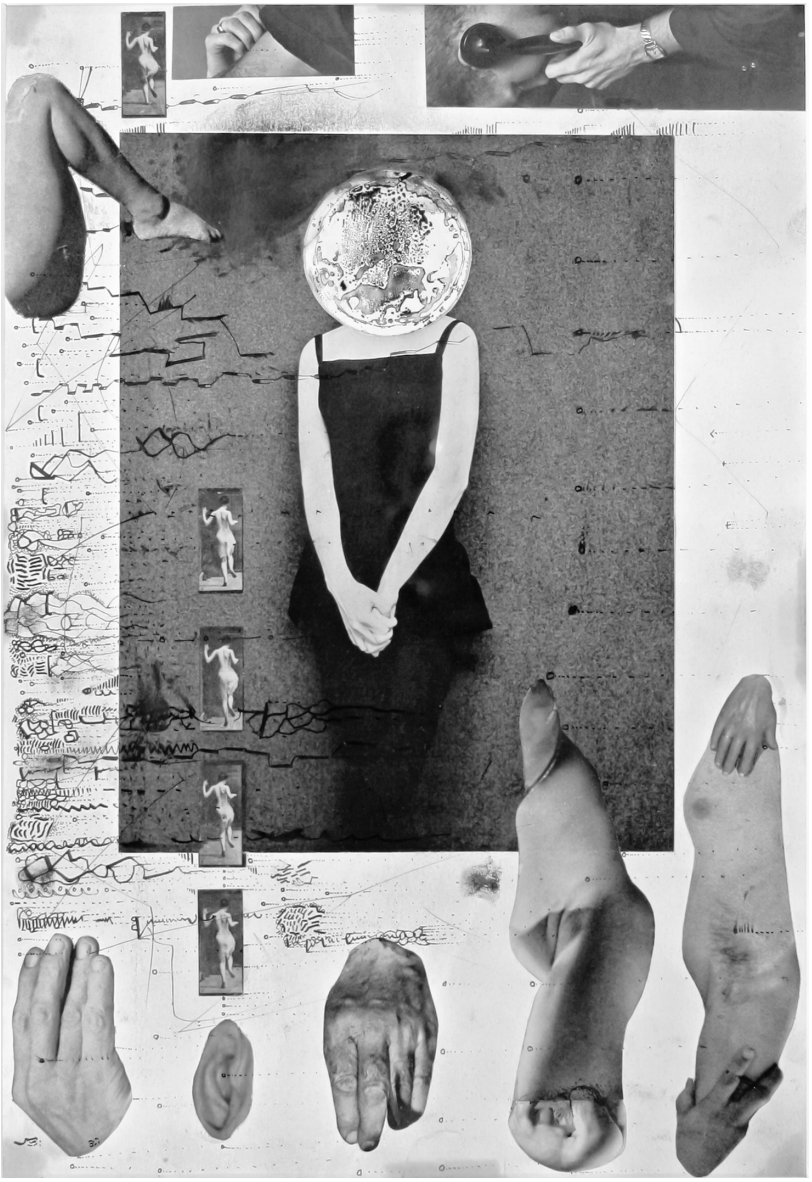
In June 1963, Akasegawa published a short story in the art magazine *Image* (*Keishō*) titled "Supai kiyaku," or "Spy Rules." The piece was subsequently given the title of the poem contained within it, "Aimai na umi," or "The Ambiguous Ocean."[30] This was Akasegawa's first serious effort at writing; he purportedly initially intended to write a critical essay based on his and his compatriots' experiments in artistic "direct action" (see chapter 6). Instead his prose poured forth in the form of a rather odd short story.[31] According to his later, somewhat inchoate recollections, he had been thinking a great deal about the act of expression, and his thoughts led him to a hatred of "originality-based existence [*orijinariti ni yoru sonzai*]," of system and organization, and his sense of his own identity as a single particle within that system.[32] When he tried to set down these ideas as critique, he ended up with a spy story.

Though it was published in June, Akasegawa likely wrote "Aimai na umi"

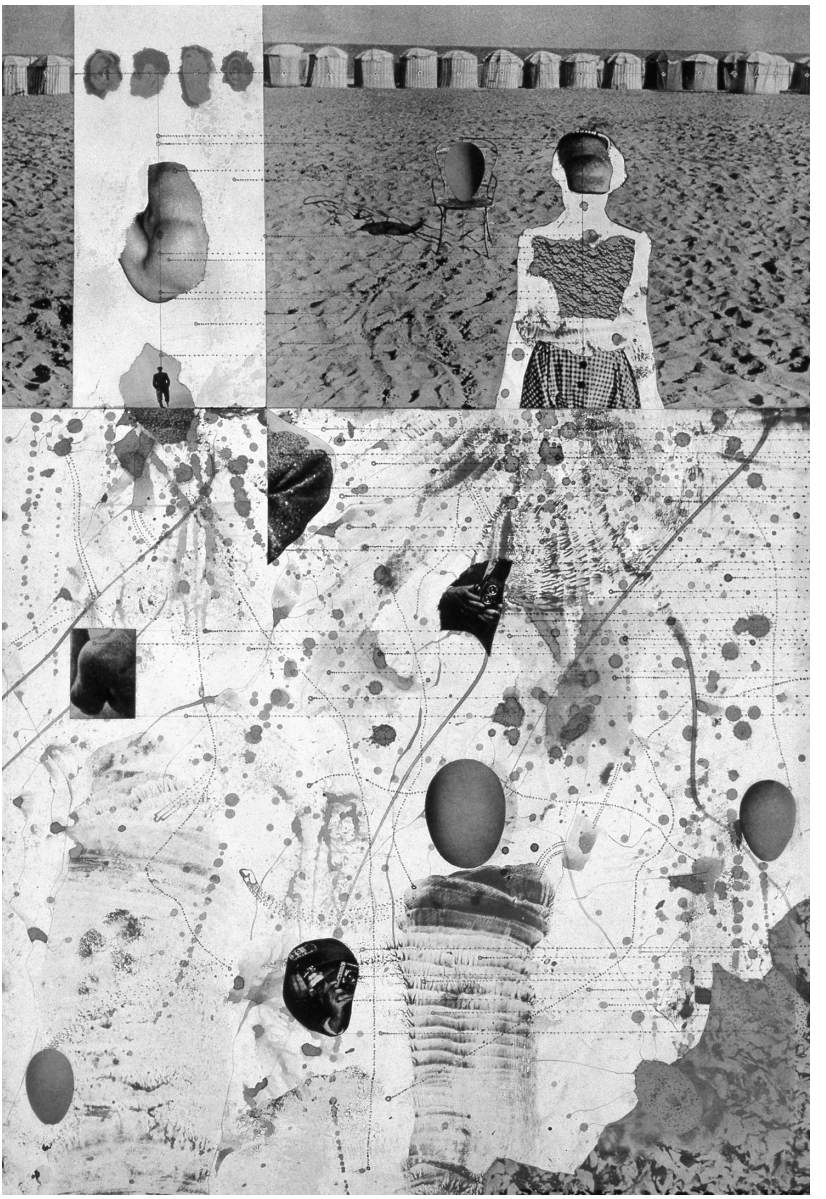
during the preparation of his first 1,000-yen print sets. Unique among his money prints, this first set featured an invitation to his one-man show in February 1963 of a similar name, *Aimai na umi ni tsuite* (On the Ambiguous Ocean). The exhibition contained a number of collage works that Akasegawa had created between 1961 and 1963, combining photos cut from film magazines with painted additions. The works show eerie montage scenes—bizarre landscapes, disarticulated body parts, egg shapes (suggestive of embryos, development, cells), clock faces, and other items, either superimposed on each other or drawn together by connecting lines and painted patterns (see plate 3 and figs. 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5).[33]

Taken as a whole, the works reveal Akasegawa's developing interest in issues related to the body, to a system that encompasses the body and its own order, and a search for an adequate critical medium to uncover this order and to work toward its overthrow. This critical impulse registers in all three of his projects associated with this exhibition: the collages, the 1,000-yen notes, and the short story. A transformed yet related form of this critique continued into the projects associated with the founding in May 1963 of the art group Hi-Red Center, whose principals were Akasegawa, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, and Takamatsu Jirō. The moment in which Akasegawa wrote "Aimai na umi" thus corresponds to a key juncture in his practice and that of a larger group of activist artists with which he was associated. A close examination of "Aimai na umi" reveals the central concerns of this critique in perplexing forms, posing in turn the question of why they emerged in this fashion. Exploring these issues provides a tentative response to the question of intent raised, and abortively answered, by the courts: Why did Akasegawa print his model 1,000-yen notes? Or better, what sort of concerns and reflections are embodied in the work?

"Aimai na umi" concerns a spy who has just received a curious new gun, a *taijin'yō pisutoru*, or "antipersonnel [literally "antiperson"] pistol." This weapon turns out to be the opposite of what a spy might wish for; it makes a loud noise like a howitzer but lacks penetrating power: "The power to penetrate frying pans, destroy combination locks to safes, smash fire engine pumps—in other words power beyond that necessary for killing a person—was completely excluded. Perhaps this pistol came into being so as to be very precisely limited to antipersonnel firepower, just enough for the bullet to penetrate a shirt and dive inside the flesh [*nikutai*]."[34] The spy reflects upon the utter inappropriateness of the thing; its use would instantly disclose his carefully concealed identity. Yet he remains strangely fascinated with the gun, and one day, when he is unlikely to need to resort to gun-



3.3 Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi 11 (zakotsunai no gankyū)* (The Ambiguous Ocean 11 [Eyeball inside the Hipbones]), 1963. Collage, ink, paper. 35.5 × 25.0 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.



3.4 Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi 2* (The Ambiguous Ocean 2), 1963. Collage, ink, watercolor, paper. 39.8 × 27.2 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.



3.5 Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi 9* (The Ambiguous Ocean 9), 1961. Collage, ink, paper. 25.0 × 35.5 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

play, he straps it on and goes out. In a restaurant he meets a person whom he plans to assassinate later, and he experiences a long fantasy about suddenly shooting the man and everyone else in the restaurant, the customers running about in panic as he loudly discharges the weapon at point-blank range. The fantasy scenario concludes with the arrival of the police, who take a couple of casualties but finally shoot the spy. He reflects that playing out such a scenario would fail to achieve his true wish: "The reason he became a spy was really based on a desire for a grand revenge [*yūdainaru fukushū*]," the "eradication of the entire population of humankind." The status of this target is made somewhat clearer as the narrative progresses.

There then follows the first of several fantastic reflections on the spy's body and humanity in general: he imagines trying to shoot all of humankind with the *taijin'yō* pistol and experiences the sensation of his own expansion and dissolution. His flesh expands into formlessness as his consciousness recedes to nothingness:

> When he holds that antipersonnel pistol before him, his flesh begins to expand outward. The flesh fills with oxygen, swells, and folds back upon itself just like popcorn.
>
> Or rather, his consciousness within this, his individual flesh, turns

toward the interior, heads toward the final, existence-less center, and sinks into the infinitesimal. As this occurs, his flesh expands in precise inverse proportion, and as it swells to enfold the room, it is expelled out to cover the hallways, paint over the trains, and expand outward toward infinity.

Perfect infinity is formless; as long as the limitless is unable to attain existence in this world, this individual flesh, the closest of all things to him, in heading toward the infinite, progresses toward nothingness [*mu*]. While growing until all of its details [*saibu*] become visible, it continues toward its own extinction.

After these reflections, the spy again takes the *taijin'yō* pistol and heads out to the seashore. What follows is a long poetic meditation and fantasy about bodies and flesh. The title of this poem was later adopted by Akasegawa as the title for the short story, attesting to its centrality to the work (see plates 4 and 5):

The Ambiguous Ocean

As flesh is enclosed by buildings
And buildings are enclosed by flesh
The sea is enclosed by the land
And the land is enclosed by the sea.
To the extent that the earth is a sphere.

Apply water to the human body and as it is diluted
It shudders violently,
And as the body's cells [*saibō*] separate, the cells become independent amoeba
As they swim about
Together with the water that filled the gaps between them
They become seawater and flow away.
That is why the ocean is viscous.
It is
Undying flesh's
Lifeless horizon
The ocean is flesh without system
The tapestry of flesh from which laws have evaporated.

Why did God condense the sea and make a system,
Give food to the system and make a human?

Why?
Not knowing the answer,
Flesh prefers the ocean to humans.
The ocean with the measureless body temperature
Of the flesh that lives even as it dies.
An unmistakable injection of Ringer's solution.[35]

Since God did not do anything more for me
I started myself.
In the depths of night
So as not to be suspected by anyone
With a scalpel, one by one
Under the swimming beach's shower
Careful not to do them any harm
I cut off the cells of my body.
My consciousness evaporated bit by bit
And the ocean expressionlessly welcomes in
The little seawater that runs off.
Even with me added to the ocean
The ocean neither rises nor falls.
And I am in there, but
There is no "me" to speak of.
I wonder if you understand.
I am in there, but
There is no "me" to speak of.

But I was just a bit mistaken.
The error of
A too proper
Illiterate virgin.
With too careful preparation
I chose night
And so my becoming seawater and joining with the ocean
Was suspected by no one.
Humans are well disciplined from the time of birth,
Are busy growing up, so
Only while swimming in the sea, is there an ocean.
I mistook the other's flesh.

Flesh prefers the ocean to humans.

This is a kindness toward humans.
And yet, although it comes from my kind sympathies
I must first
Begin from flesh not of my own flesh.
One fine noon,
I conceal on my person a portable shower, microscope, and scalpel
And while strolling the beach swimming area,
Take care of them one by one.
Perhaps when showered with the saltwater spray
All of humanity's flesh
Will shudder violently
From a great antipersonnel earthquake.
Only at this point is care [*saishin no chūi*] required so as not to be suspected.

Afterward, God still does not do anything,
So I make an imitation system [*boku wa taikei o mozō suru*].
Only at this point, deep in the night, by the shore
Do I drag out a deep-sea diving suit
And force in with a gurgle
Six thousand drums of seawater.
The cells jostle together and cling
Packed tightly together with Ringer's solution between,
Once it becomes like a human
Warmed by the light of the moon
I remove the diving suit.
Ah, this glorious rebirth!
This is me.
It is but
The least I can do out of kindness
For the flesh other than my own.

As the ocean is enclosed by the earth
And the earth is enclosed by buildings
Flesh is enclosed by buildings
And the buildings are enclosed by flesh.
To the extent that the surface of the earth curves
To the extent that space has curvature.

Here we have yet another exploration of bodily boundaries and limits, now in poetic form, a work within the larger work, echoing his collage creations (see plates 3–5).

The beginning and ending verse paragraphs of the poem echo the narrator's prior sensation of flesh swelling out of his room "to cover the hallways, paint over the trains, and expand outward toward infinity," asserting the mutual, paradoxical enclosure of flesh and buildings. These complementary verse paragraphs, introducing and concluding the poetic narration, speak to the imbrication of things and flesh upon the land, the inseparability of body and system, flesh and structure. The land, characterized by this structured and structuring flesh and the buildings as large-scale objects of its interaction, is in turn contrasted with the sea, depicted as a zone of chaos. At the beginning of the poem, we are led from interrelated systems on land to a contrast between land and sea, opening the way to considering the possibilities inherent in the latter.

As the poem moves into the second verse paragraph, Akasegawa elaborates upon this ocean: it is a zone of flesh without system, an anarchic concatenation of cells swimming about, independent of any order within bodies (hence the analogy between seawater and Ringer's solution). It stands for anarchic, unstructured potential prior to and beyond the systems on the land.

Having established the contrasting land and sea as zones of the given and the potential, the determinate and the anarchic, the temporal and the atemporal, Akasegawa then figures an impossible operation, a restructuring of the spy's own body through bodiless agency. First, we have a description of the narrator cutting away his cells one by one under a beach shower, continuing somehow until his body is completely disassembled and the cells flow back into the sea. Yet the conclusion of this act, the satisfaction of the "there is no 'me' to speak of" is gainsaid by the following paragraph, which chides his actions for lacking effect. One might understand this first dissolution fantasy as contemplation of suicide, a fading away in the night "suspected by no one" and of no consequence, merely an exchange of land for sea.[36] What is required is agency in the midst of dissolution—the ocean exists only as potential to the extent that there is realization of body and structure on the land. Thus the paradoxical line, "only when swimming in the sea, is there an ocean," can be understood as an ontological statement to the effect that the atemporal ocean enters into time only through interaction with temporal bodies. It is the relation of primordial anarchy to the physicalized order of the moment.

With this reflection, the poem returns to renarrate a bodily disassembly, but this time there is a space for some sort of ghostly, noncorporeal agency: after deconstructing himself, the narrator surrealistically rebuilds his body. In contrast to the ineffectualness of mere dissolution, this scenario for an attack on "system" imagines all bodies under the salt shower, "shudder[ing] violently from a great antipersonnel earthquake." It is an image of the shock of utter transformation triggered by the creation of a single "imitation system." By packing cells and seawater together in a deep-sea diving suit, the narrator reconstitutes himself as a body that has been freed of the present system through reassembly according to a different logic. This human simulacrum would be disruptive to that system, as it would lack those networks of order which manifest and reproduce the systemic status quo.

Reflecting a degree of optimism inherent in this fantastic solution, the concluding verse paragraph reverses the order of the items alluded to earlier. The beginning of the poem leads from land to sea, or from status quo to chaotic potential; its conclusion instead proceeds from sea to land, or in other words from potential to actualization, in terms of Akasegawa's iconography.

Following the poem, Akasegawa's hitherto loosely narrative, allusive story changes form yet again, this time to a series of declarations. Direct statements about the role of spies, bodies, and money clarify the target of this fantastic critique:

> Spies reject the entire system of private property [*jiyūzaisanseido*] which includes the body [*nikutai*] as well as the consciousness which accompanies the body.
>
> There are among the spies activities related to the rejection of the system of private ownership: the destruction of the currency system. They possess suitably elaborate counterfeit bill manufacturing techniques to throw it into commotion [*sono kakuran no tame no nise satsu seizō de wa sōtō seikō na gijutsu o motte iru*]. But manufacturing counterfeit humans? Well, although God's last exertion, woman, seems to be something that can be made from two or three ribs and some other sort of shit mixed together, making a human seems to be not quite so simple a task.
>
> Recently in Italy it seems that they've succeeded in making an embryo in a test tube, and have grown it for a month, but since the raw material was real human sperm and ova, it still seems a ways away from the production of a real counterfeit human. At this point there is no other option but to counterfeit counterfeit humans out of the humans currently in circulation today.

The spy's target (or rather Akasegawa's target) is thus identified as capitalism, putting Akasegawa's general orientation in line with other forms of left-oriented criticism in his day. The limitations of his focus on capitalism as a "system of private property" contrast with his rather interesting understanding that both bodies and consciousness are implicated within this system. His choice of terminology, however, may have derived from the particular history of leftist opposition and critique within Japan rather than from a reductive, traditional understanding of Marxism.[37] Regardless of its origin, the limitations signaled by a focus on private property are overcome immediately by an evolving and potentially sophisticated notion of the mutuality of thought and practice and its implicatedness within systemic reproduction. It is at this level of everyday interaction that Akasegawa was to develop his art and critique most thoroughly.

After these expository paragraphs, the narrative resumes, returning to the story of the spy dedicated to the destruction of humans. He has constructed a new *taijin'yō* pistol, to be smuggled throughout the country in mass quantities:

> It's like a small "bazooka"; upon leaving the muzzle the bullet itself acquires rocket propulsion; the pistol is just for ejecting the bullet outward. After that, the bullet enters the body by its own rocket propulsion, and there, its rust-corroded iron gets mixed into the blood.
>
> For basically, he really didn't like murder.

The story concludes with a remark to the effect that these guns are already circulating.

Akasegawa's unusual narrative contains numerous contradictory impulses which, while hardly constituting a thoroughgoing and complete critique, may be analyzed to reveal a range of fascinating ideas, critical notions, and considerations. Foremost among these, within "Aimai na umi" we see evidence that in his critical thought and practice Akasegawa had turned, like so many of his artist contemporaries, to the problem of the body. The text enacts two of the major dimensions of this turn to be found at the time; in the person of the spy we have the body as a site of action and infiltration, and in the targets and constructs the body is examined for the operations of hegemonic systematicity and authority within its very makeup. The former figures a kind of fantastic enablement of possibilities for radical action against what is revealed in the latter.

Thus the humankind that is the spy's target is not merely people but

rather a humanity that structures and is structured by a hegemonically ordered everyday life. Akasegawa's desire to radically restructure this reality is figured in the story first as a fantastic wish for total destruction, then as an equally fantastic wish for total self-reconstruction and the remaking of all people (after a brief and rejected contemplation of self-obliteration). This targeted reality extends all the way inside the very constitution of humans, organizing them from the cells up—a metaphorical illustration that attempts to grasp the interconnected levels of what Akasegawa refers to as "system." The spy's dedication to the destruction of humankind, therefore, is a commitment to this system's overthrow, with the understanding that human practice and consciousness would need to be transformed.

The story is not a manifesto; its suggestions and fantasies register both optimism and despair at the possibilities for this transformation. Thus we have the doubly imagined fulfillment of this transformation: the fictional work and, within it, a presentation of the spy's own imaginings—and also pessimism and renewed commitment in the spy's sober reflections on the possibility of effecting change at the desired level. Akasegawa's fictional solution, contemplated against the fate of the 1,000-yen artwork he was producing at the time, embodies elements of hope and critique differently articulated within his artistic production.

The strange attraction of the *taijin'yō* pistol itself (personified in the work as "waiting" for the spy) seems to embody both the ineffectualness of opposition and a sense of its utter necessity nonetheless—a poignant figuring of the bind faced by activists of all sorts in the early 1960s, and felt with particular acuity by Akasegawa and his like-minded compatriots (see chapter 6). Relating its fictional description (including the spy's fantasy scenario in which it is used) and form to the specifics of Akasegawa's 1,000-yen project reveals common threads in different forms across his art and writings. The gun's attractiveness seems particularly linked to its absurd qualities: not only its unsuitability as a spy's weapon but also its capacity to reveal in an instant the spy's identity as a spy upon its use. It is this unmasking operation that seems at issue.

The ultimate goal of Akasegawa's fantasized gunplay, however, is revolution—revolution as a total transformation of thought, system, people. Here too is a source of the gun's attractiveness: it figures both the desire for revolutionary transformation and its concrete possibility through a radical unmasking procedure, albeit one with direct consequences for the agent, or spy. In this Akasegawa perhaps elaborates upon one of the canonical texts

of avant-garde art and revolution, André Breton's "Second Manifesto of Surrealism" of 1930 and his intransigent depiction of the "simplest Surrealist act":

> The simplest Surrealist act consists of dashing down into the street, pistol in hand, and firing blindly, as fast as you can pull the trigger, into the crowd. Anyone who, at least once in his life, has not dreamed of thus putting an end to the petty system of debasement and cretinization in effect has a well-defined place in that crowd, with his belly at barrel level. The justification of such an act is, to my mind, in no way incompatible with the belief in that gleam of light that Surrealism seeks to detect deep within us.[38]

In the words of Maurice Nadeau, Breton's "Second Manifesto" trenchantly asserts that surrealist activity "posits first of all a radical break with the world as given by the exercise of a constant and universal violence." If we posit that Akasegawa's story responds to Breton's "act" (which seems rather close to Akasegawa's first fantasy sequence, the killing spree in the restaurant) and to his challenge to create a radical practice of "absolute revolt, of total insubmission, of formal sabotage" in opposition to "the world as given," then Akasegawa's pistol represents in part an extended surrealistic contemplation of the potentials and pitfalls of this "simplest Surrealist act"—or in other words, the possibility of revolution through art, the classical goal of an avant-garde.[39]

In comparing Akasegawa's 1,000-yen note project to counterfeiting, I have suggested that this relation is one of simulacrum to simulation, or the copy that declares its own falsehood, in contradistinction to the copy that attempts to pass as the original object. The former challenges the status of the original itself, while the latter seeks to participate in the networks and status associated with that original. This relationship seems personified in the difference between spy and ex-spy related in "Aimai na umi"; specifically it seems to embody Akasegawa's conundrum as an artist interested in making works questioning the status of money. The loud bang of the gun and the unmasking of the spy might be read as a fantastic appreciation of the direct challenge to state authority involved in Akasegawa's printing of money simulacra: potentially a first noisy shot exploring the possibilities of revolution (see plate 6).

Akasegawa's work is playful, and he is far from the stereotypical revolutionary type.[40] Yet evidence does point to his own increasing sense of anxiety over the implications of his activities. According to his testimony to

the police in the *kyōjutsu chōsho*, Akasegawa had concerns about the legality of the act from the beginning and discussed it with his friend Ōnishi Tenshi before even attempting to get prints made. Even though Ōnishi perhaps was able to reassure him by stating that monochrome, one-sided prints would probably be acceptable, the resistance Akasegawa met with from the printers during each printing (including the somewhat accidental production of the plate in the first place) and his deceptive statements to Sugita Fusae suggest that he was nervous throughout the project.[41] Thus the depictions of the limited range and power of the *taijin'yō* pistol, the spy's fate in his fantasy shootout at the restaurant, and the like, all present fictional analogies contemplating the possible results of his own limited production, display, and circulation of money simulacra-based works. In fact the scenario in the restaurant neatly presages the actual results of his act. The gun's strange attractiveness and the temptation to reveal oneself as a spy are related to the personal, curious attraction Akasegawa felt to making these works, regardless of the consequences to himself. The compulsion to make the 1,000-yen pieces, despite all setbacks and all of his worries, speaks to the inseparability of his critical, artistic sensibilities and his practice. Here we see the boundaries of this desire played out within a different art form, a short story, within which the combination of art and criticism was, by Akasegawa's own description, self-emergent, independent of his initial intentions.

The story's conclusion, with the spy discovering a new sort of pistol, seems to show this desire reviving, having identified a new avenue for possible action, with a different and more hopeful outcome. Viewed broadly, this second weapon, a small bazooka-like gun with self-propelled bullets, figures a solution to the problem of lack of firepower faced by activists, both literally—their lack of adequate force to combat the state—and figuratively: their impotence in the face of state actions. The self-propelled bullets that infiltrate and somehow transform the body, the comment about the gun's being already in circulation—this comes very close to metaphorically describing a project for which the model 1,000-yen works really might be a model: the rejection of money, either by its overt private printing or through some sort of general popular refusal of its status. It also gives fantastic form to the imagined effects of his and his compatriots' insurgent art practice on the quiescent body politic after the diminution of protests following the summer of 1960 (see chapters 5 and 6).

I would not suggest that these sorts of ideas were completely worked out (and indeed the brevity with which the new gun is described at the end of

the story argues for their having been only minimally conceived by Akasegawa at that time). It does provocatively accord with Akasegawa's expressed interest in the potential of masses, brought home to him not only through artworks (such as Ai Ō's *Pastoral*) but also by the popular demonstrations and protests culminating in Anpo in 1960.[42] For Akasegawa, the fascination of masses seems to have resided not in their ultimate failure but in the potential they spectacularly embodied. He seems to have viewed these political actions as artistic objects, whose potential might be realized politically through art—a neat reversal of the usual conceptual understandings of art and politics. While this conceptual displacement speaks to the status of both art and politics in Japan in the early 1960s, it also marks a truly political shift beyond the sociological category of art (see plate 7).

Akasegawa Genpei, Ex-spy

Akasegawa's initial explorations of the potentials of his 1,000-yen prints reveal a continued broadening of critical concerns and understandings, registered through the medium of the artistic works themselves. The slowness with which he incorporated 1,000-yen simulacra into his primary work also perhaps reflects his continuing uneasiness over the project. I would like to consider the first two of these 1,000-yen works to extract the outlines of a broad artistic problematic that might shed light on the question of Akasegawa's intent.

According to Akasegawa, his first 1,000-yen work was his large-scale, tatami mat–size drawing of the note (fig. 3.6).[43] This 1,000-yen note magnified two hundred times was an exacting color imitation done painstakingly by hand over a number of months.[44] Akasegawa entered it in the fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant* in March 1963, still missing the Prince Shōtoku portrait and other portions, under the title *Fukushū no keitaigaku (korosu mae ni aite o yoku miru)* (The Morphology of Revenge: Take a Close Look at the Opponent before You Kill Him) (fig. 3.7).[45] He displayed it again on May 7–12 at the Shinjuku Dai-ichi Gallery as part of Hi-Red Center's first group exhibition, the *Daigoji mikisā keikaku* (Fifth Mixer Plan), in what would become the work's final form.[46] By the time of the latter exhibition, Akasegawa had added Prince Shōtoku's face and the left half of his robes, as well as some other details.[47] He thus apparently abandoned the work at a point of near completion,[48] or rather the work was likely in a "completed" form precisely at this point, where its very incompleteness highlighted its status as a process, as a duplication in progress.



3.6 Akasegawa Genpei, *Fukushū no keitaigaku (korosu mae ni aite o yoku miru)* (The Morphology of Revenge: Take a Close Look at the Opponent before You Kill Him) (*Enlarged 1,000 Yen*), 1963. Ink and paper. 90 × 180 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

Although he had apparently begun this hand-drawn enlargement prior to the printed 1,000-yen works, Akasegawa continued his work on the *Enlarged 1,000 Yen* (*Sen'ensatsu kakudaizu*, the colloquial name by which Akasegawa and others commonly refer to the work) throughout the period of their printing, from the first set of invitations in January 1963 almost to the date of the final set of prints in May. Ultimately the work itself begs the question of the artist's intention: Why take the time and excruciating effort to create such an exacting, yet giant duplicate of the 1,000-yen bill?

Akasegawa wanted to stay just within the boundaries of legality during his 1,000-yen project from its very beginning: rendering this imitation by hand at two hundred times life-size allowed him latitude to commence an accurate reproduction in full color.[49] Even as a painting, mechanical reproduction was explicitly suggested by the image's exacting precision, by the colloquial title of the work as an "enlargement" (in the sense of a photographic enlargement), and by its very incompleteness. The gaps in the picture and the pencil-drawn scale grid clearly visible at its margins and within the work mark its status as a duplication in progress and portended further work to follow.

In a sense, the work represented the limits of a painterly reproduction of the 1,000-yen note, its mass-printed object. Conversely, in its exactitude (where it differed notably from contemporaneous works by artists like Robert Dowd and Phillip Hefferton—of which Akasegawa was unaware), it pushed the legal limits of reproducibility. As part of Akasegawa's artis-



3.7 Akasegawa Genpei, *Enlarged 1,000 Yen* at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, 1963. Shinohara Ushio stands in for Shōtoku Taishi on the face of the bill. Four of Akasegawa's 1,000-yen prints appear on the wall above the work; to either side, Akasegawa's wrapped canvases, *Jijitsu ka hōhō ka* (Reality or Method? 1 and 2) are just visible. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

tic production in early 1963, the *Enlarged 1,000 Yen* served as a foil to his printed notes (which *Enlarged 1,000 Yen* briefly antedated), opening up a complementary set of complexities raised by interrogating the form and status of money—an original or real thing, which is nonetheless a *reproduction*[50]—to the extent that it could be interrogated by its strange opposite, a painted, and therefore original, copy.

Akasegawa made his first set of three hundred life-size prints of the 1,000-yen note as invitations for his *Aimai na umi ni tsuite* exhibition of February 1963. This fact might suggest that he had not yet fully embraced the prints as part of his artistic output but only as a secondary creation to advertise his more conventional solo exhibition of collage works. And yet these three hundred printed invitations and his remarkable method of distributing them to his list of around 150 invitees—through registered mail in envelopes used for sending cash—reveal his moving toward a sort of performance art that would not neatly fit within standard artistic conventions

of works and their exhibition, a trajectory that would lead him to cofound the remarkable artistic group Hi-Red Center in June that year. While similar turns to performance were evident in both the international and domestic art scenes, these developments in Akasegawa's art came about as an organic result of his developing artistic and critical sensibilities and were neither a fashionable turn to performance nor mere formal innovation for its own sake.

The invitations were the first set of 1,000-yen prints that Akasegawa created and were the subject of count 1 of the state's indictment: "a life-size obverse of the 1,000-yen bill on the face of cream-colored high-grade paper in green ink," featuring on the reverse "information as to a painting exhibition by defendant Akasegawa."[51] In fact although the works were notable for their precision, their high-grade, cream-colored paper, and their method of delivery, the information on their reverse was at least equally provocative, though unindictable (see plates 8 and 9).

The invitation portion (i.e., the reverse) of this first set of 1,000-yen prints was both visually and numerically subdivided, with numbered legends on several of its features. Across the top, labeled "1," was the title of the exhibition, preceded by a curious statement: "1. Jintai ⟨saibō sōsū yaku 8000000000000 (tyō) ko = kaisui ⟨doramukan yaku 6000 hai⟩. Aimai na umi ni tsuite. . . . . ." (Human body [8 trillion individual cells combined] = seawater [about 6,000 drums]. On the Ambiguous Ocean. . . . . .). The details of the first line echo Akasegawa's depiction in the as yet unpublished "Aimai na umi" story of the fantastic creation of a new human. The nearly identical exhibition title not only closely associates exhibit and story but also is connected explicitly with a statement about the cellular constitution of the human body—a point of interest common to the exhibition, the invitation, and the short story.[52] Particularly in the collages from early 1963, ocean, body, and bodily constitution are all closely associated; fragmentary body parts and incomplete body shapes, images of the ocean side, and striated or wavelike washes of blue and green oceanic colors are all in evidence in several of the works. All of these visual images notably find textual interrelation within the short story, again arguing for an extensive commonality of focus among story, exhibition, and invitation.[53] In fact all of the details of the invitation relate first to the body and second to money, and all of them point toward either the exhibition or the short story of the same name (which often seems to textualize the visual imagery).

On the right, much like a portrait on a bill, is an image of a dark-colored mask or bronze face, partially obscured by a white ellipse at dead center,

bearing the label "2. Jiyū zaisan seido hakai" (The Destruction of the System of Private Property). To the left of this image, in smaller print, is the following:

> "The destruction of the system of private property, that includes the body as well as the consciousness accompanying that body."
>
> The sophistication of the methods and techniques of [the Akasegawa Genpei Co., Ltd.], which is concerned with the destruction of the currency system, is common knowledge. But counterfeit humans are extremely difficult to make, still technically impossible, so for the time being we will be counterfeiting them out of the humans currently in print.[54]

The text closely follows the series of direct statements that appear after the long poem in "Aimai na umi," from the target (of the spies)—"spies reject the entire system of private property which includes the body as well as the consciousness which accompanies the body"—to the secondary focus, the "destruction of the currency system." They share a prescriptive solution as well: the counterfeiting of humans "out of the humans currently in circulation today." Again bodies and consciousness are implicated in the system whose destruction is to be plotted, but here the plotting is not by spies but explicitly by the artist, the Akasegawa Genpei Co., Ltd., whose large-type moniker occupies the bottom center of the invitation (complete with an office address), next to the modestly sized listing of the date and location of the exhibition, and just below the manifesto-like statement translated above. Such an avowed goal may very well have influenced police, prosecutors, and the courts to take a hard line against this young artist and his otherwise ambiguous project. It represents a declaration against the system as loud as that of the spy in Akasegawa's story firing off the *taijin'yō* pistol, in that moment becoming an ex-spy.

The detail labeled "3" features a pair of symmetrical oval shapes on the left side of the invitation. The leftmost of these is an image of a sculpted human ear; to its right is a black ellipse cut by an internal white oval, such that the whole resembles a large image of a zero. Within the zero is the caption "3. Da'en seizō," a rather ambiguous term. The *da* appears in *katakana*, for emphasis, with *en* in the *kanji* for circle or for counting money. It thus permits two readings: *da'en* as "ellipse," echoing the two shapes of the detail as well as the shapes of detail 2, and *da'en* as "useless or insignificant yen." The second reading accords better with the full caption, which would thus read "3. The Manufacture of Useless or Insignificant Yen," the meaning of which is readily explained by the reverse of the invitation itself. The read-

ing "ellipse," however, suggests a second level of meaning, bringing together the production of useless yen and the oval images. Within the collages of the exhibition advertised by this "useless yen," egg-like shapes abound, linked by lines to human figures, or hovering, rebus-like, in a landscape amid cells, body parts, watches, and other visual puzzles.[55] The egg shapes in the collages might be read within this artistic context as suggesting bodies in the process of formation (much like the cells of detail 1 and of the short story and the closely associated ocean) or, where they appear linked to heads, human minds incubating. In either case they suggest enigmatic possibility and potential. The mask from detail 2 similarly assumes a rather egg-like form. The oval, egg-shaped ear in the invitation further recalls the images of ears and various other body fragments within the works, as well as being a part of the human anatomy that a number of artist associates of Akasegawa were focusing on (including Kazakura Shō and, soon after, Miki Tomio, whose ear series became a near obsession). Finally, the zero shape, which looks somewhat like a value denomination for a bill, suggests the value of the "useless yen"—zero—and neatly presages Akasegawa's yen-printing project of 1967, the *Dainippon Rei'ensatsu* (Greater Japan Zero-Yen Note; see plate 17).[56]

Yet a third reading is possible, combining the exchangeable ovoid, mask, zero-oval, and *da'en* as "useless circle," as references to faces on bills, that is, the practice of portraiture on currency. In the case of this B-series 1,000-yen note, the specific target of this potential critique raises its stakes: it features a portrait of Prince Shōtoku (573–622 CE, conventionally), the imperial prince and regent who, among his other conventionally credited accomplishments (variously including becoming a deity, founding Japanese Buddhism, introducing Confucian moral principles, establishing Japanese art, and fathering the state), enacts the Seventeen-Article Constitution of 604, which centers the emperor as the source of authority—providing a plausible link for modern commentators between Constitution, nation, and emperor from the deep recesses of the ancient past.[57] According to Okakura Kakuzo, a major author of the modern Japanese nationalist aesthetic canon:

> Prince Wumayado, commonly know as Shotoku-Taishi, the Saint among Princes, who becomes the great personification of this first Buddhist illumination . . . as regent of his aunt, the Empress Suiko, wrote the seventeen articles of the Japanese constitution. This document proclaims the duty of devotion to the emperor, inculcates Confucian ethics, and lays its stress on the greatness of that Indian ideal which is to pervade them

all—thus epitomising the national life of Japan for thirteen centuries to follow.[58]

Prince Shōtoku thus serves as a historical figure for a mythic history binding the nation and the imperial line in an archetypal moment of imperial national authorship.

Since the "Empress Jingū note" of 1883 (with an imagined rendering by Edoardo Chiossone), imperial mytho-historical figures had long been featured on currency. Prior to appearing on the 1,000-yen note, the prince's portrait had graced the 100-yen note, both during and after wartime: all of the figures appearing on the postwar currency were first carefully scrutinized and approved, in secret, by SCAP's Civil Information and Education Section (CI&E) subsequent to an administrative order banning certain subjects from currency and stamps, SCAPIN-947.[59] Whether or not Akasegawa intended it, the image of the semimythical prince adds an additional imperial dimension to the forms of state authority his imitation transgresses. Suggestively, both the district court's and Supreme Court's opinions identify this particular bill by the portrait of the prince rather than by its series of issue.

The last detail on the invitation is the only item which departs from the monochrome green ink scheme of both sides of the note: it is Akasegawa's fingerprint, in ink, placed just to the left of the paragraph discussing the counterfeiting of humans and the destruction of the system of private property. It too assumed a roughly oval shape and, being located directly to the right of the two ovals of detail 3, adds a third association of ovals with bodies and body parts. Yet as a fingerprint it adds two dimensions: that of identity and of an association with crime. The criminological implications of a fingerprint resonate with the conspiratorial tone of the text of the invitation and with the near-criminal implications of money simulacra such as was printed on its obverse. When Akasegawa was first interrogated by the police, on January 9, 1964, he was shown one of these invitations and apparently asked whether the fingerprint on the back was his own. His *kyōjutsu chōsho* identifies it as the print of his right thumb and adds the wry comment, "This unexpected act [of being confronted with this fingerprint identification by actual police under these circumstances] is also perhaps a kind of artistic act."[60]

The sort of suggestive play with signs of criminality multiply present in the invitation typifies not only Akasegawa's project but also a range of artistic activities at the time, such as the League of Criminals group (Hanzai-

sha dōmei). Anti-authority stances of this sort proclaimed a varying level of commitment among artists at the time, one which tended to attract, at a minimum, police interest. It was in a sense a shortcut to a critical perspective that did not by itself necessarily signify a targeting of the elements of Rancière's police order. In this case, much like the textual details of the invitation, it likely acted as one more stimulus sustaining police interest and inquiry, identifying Akasegawa as a promising target for an educational display of preemptive state coercive force against a potentially troubling emergent politics.

And yet play with the signs of criminality, or skirting the boundaries of legality as discussed above, was neither gratuitous nor mere fashion. Rather it arose from the very nature of this artistic and critical activity, which necessarily was operating at a point between the unproblematic poles of either conformity or criminality, with more conventional understandings and practices of Art constituting part of the former. Indeed the fingerprint may be seen as a canny embrace of both the criminal and the artistic, substituting, on its reverse side, Akasegawa's "criminal" authorship for the conventional forms of portraits of national symbols and for a conventional artistic signature—and challenging national production of real notes with his private, criminal-artistic production.[61] The reduction of Akasegawa's project and of his intention to Art and Crime was an attempt by the state to forcibly resolve the challenge to police order posed by this emergent politics.

The oval form of the fingerprint raises another possibility: the presence of an undetected crime. Put into the equation of *da'en* as "useless circle," mask, and other oval shapes that pointed to the image of Prince Shōtoku, the oval fingerprint might reference the merging of different registers of identity on the 1,000-yen note itself in the presence of the prince's portrait. Imperial portrait, historical entity, mytho-history, the practice of artistic portraiture, commemoration, state authority, the "figure of Japan," the genuineness of currency, money as the universal commodity—had not a fraud been perpetrated? If the face of the 1,000-yen note is itself a crime scene, perhaps we can see the evolving elements of a criminal indictment in Akasegawa's invitation text and imitation bill.

PART II

ARTISTIC PRACTICE FINDS ITS OBJECT

The Avant-Garde and the *Yomiuri Indépendant*

How is everyday life to change, if even those whose vocation it is to stir it up pay it no attention?

—**SIEGFRIED KRACAUER**, *The Salaried Masses*

Pollock, as I see him, left us at the point where we must become preoccupied with and even dazzled by the space and objects of our everyday life, either our bodies, clothes, rooms, or, if need be, the vastness of Forty-second Street. Not satisfied with the suggestion through paint of our other senses, we shall utilize the specific substances of sight, sound, movements, people, odors, touch. Objects of every sort are materials for the new art: paint, chairs, food, electric and neon lights, smoke, water, old socks, a dog, movies, a thousand other things that will be discovered by the present generation of artists. Not only will these bold creators show us, as if for the first time, the world we have always had about us but ignored, but they will disclose entirely unheard-of happenings and events, found in garbage cans, police files, hotel lobbies; seen in store windows and on the streets; and sensed in dreams and horrible accidents. . . . All will become materials for this new concrete art.

—**ALAN KAPROW**, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock"

It will be labeled as anti-painting [*hankaiga*]. Not just labeling—there's probably [an anti-painting] consciousness too. And so, on this basis it becomes a discussion about art. In the end it's like it all gets sucked up into something like a giant mouthpiece. I find it annoying that it all will get sucked up into the category of art.

—**NAKANISHI NATSUYUKI**, "The Young Adventurers' Group Speaks"

With such a detail, as with everyday life as a whole, alteration is always the necessary and sufficient condition for experimentally bringing into clear view the object of our study, which would otherwise remain uncertain—an object which is itself less to be studied than to be altered.

—**GUY DEBORD**, "Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life"

THE ANARCHICAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE LATER YEARS OF the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition, sponsored by *Yomiuri Shinbun*, has proved difficult to describe and to re-create. Contemporary observers agreed that *something* was under way there, but they differed greatly over what that something might be, although they overwhelmingly spoke of its "energy." Although the exhibition had been held annually since 1949, it was the arrival of a new generation of artists in the late 1950s that occasioned a discernible change, bringing forth a playful competition in increasingly puzzling and provocative *objets*, installations, and performance elements.

Chapter 4 traces the origins of the exhibition to the Allied Occupation of Japan and art promotion's fraught involvement with the "reverse course." The newspaper company Yomiuri Shinbunsha was center stage for the Occupation's policy swing from promoting unions and direct action to supporting police suppression of labor activism. The newspaper was the venue for the first postwar labor "production control" struggle, and in December 1945 the newspaper's owner was arrested during negotiations with the newly

formed union as a suspected class-A war criminal. Yet by the next summer, the Occupation was actively working to defeat the union and suppress political protests, sacrificing democratic possibilities for the expediency of elite control.

For the *Yomiuri Shinbun* as well as the other major dailies, art exhibition sponsorship in this period provided a way to displace recollections of both wartime propaganda activities and postwar labor conflicts with association with high-cultural masterpieces from around the world. The *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition was born of this conflict and displacement; its prime mover, Kaidō Hideo, took advantage of this promotional activity to institute an unjuried and open exhibition, which he hoped would serve—eventually—to promote democratization within Japan's ossified, risk-averse, patronage-bound art world. The realization of this wish in the late 1950s came as the economic boom was getting under way, providing a wealth of detritus for use in *objets* by an art looking for forms in touch with the times. Akasegawa's path from Social Realist and African-inspired art to this new art typifies a conceptual and practical journey made by many artists who came to exhibit at the *Yomiuri*.

The transformations in art at the *Yomiuri Indépendant* set the stage for a remarkable politicization: while protest politics aspired to realize "postwar democracy" and focused on the revision in 1960 of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Anpo), *Yomiuri Indépendant* artists played with the debris of the economic expansion and consequently developed a discourse in forms addressing transformations in everyday life. When a change of prime ministers and state tactics allowed the state to redefine its political legitimacy as the beneficent guarantor of economic benefits, it took advantage of the barely examined power of these transformations to undercut and depoliticize an opposition used to forceful confrontation. Artists associated with the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, however, had already been focused on the riddle of the everyday world, positioning some to become among the earliest to respond to the new political scene.

Chapter 5 explores the many oddities of the later years of the exhibition to reveal the commonalities in evolving practices and formal concerns taking shape with each successive year. By bringing together a diversity of individual artists and groups and a diversity of interests and practical orientations, the exhibition provided an occasion for an intense formal interchange that drew artists to commonalities. Within the crucible of their community, the artists combined familiar and heterological elements which, taken together, worked to alter modes of perception to generate a local aes-

thetic and practical transformation. The exhibition's cancellation in 1964, the year of the Tokyo Olympics, came as part of a wider campaign of cultural policing in support of affirmative cultural production (such as the ancient arts exhibition held in conjunction with the Olympics). By the exhibition's last year, 1963, however, artists were already taking their newly honed practices and interests outside of the museum to intervene in the everyday world in accord with their distinctive politics.

CHAPTER 4

THE *YOMIURI INDÉPENDANT*

Making and Displacing History

By the end of its fifteen-year run, and much to the surprise and delight of its founders, the yearly *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition had become for many young artists the signal event orienting their daily practice.[1] Artists were devoting substantial amounts of time and imagination to their preparations for the roughly two weeks of the exhibition. Participants—exhibitors and spectators alike—would often show up every day of the show to enjoy its unique atmosphere within the otherwise staid exhibition space of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum in Ueno Park. Stimulated by the exhibition, artists refined their own practices and came together in dynamic new groups, then returned the following year to reinvigorate fellow participants once again—and in one case, to contemplate dynamiting the museum in the interim.

The existence of this nonjuried exhibition was, broadly speaking, thanks to its consistent promotion and sponsorship by the Yomiuri Shinbunsha (Yomiuri Newspaper Co.), from its debut in 1949 through its final showing in 1963, until their sudden withdrawal of sponsorship and cancellation of the

exhibition in 1964. The exhibition would open annually for approximately two weeks sometime in late February or March at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the same venue in the fashionable fall season for the juried *Nitten* exhibition, gatekeeper for the patronage networks of the art establishment. Unlike the *Nitten*, the *Yomiuri Indépendant* never received a visit by their majesties.

The *Yomiuri Indépendant* arose out of postwar contention over the very notion of an *indépendant* as a space for furthering the democratization of art and society. Indeed the actual title of the exhibition was originally the *Nihon* (Japan) *Indépendant*, a name it laid claim to after an exhibition of the same name was held in December 1947 by the Nihon Bijutsukai (Japan Fine Art Association). When the Yomiuri Shinbun Co. announced in October 1948 (one month before the second *Nihon Indépendant*) their own plans to open a rival *Nihon Indépendant* in 1949, it occasioned both protests and a fair degree of confusion. This was exacerbated by contentious scheduling: beginning in February 1950 with the Nihon Bijutsukai's third *Nihon Indépendant* (ending February 17) and the Yomiuri's second *Nihon Indépendant* (commencing February 18), the exhibitions frequently followed each other at the same venue, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum. Common usage came to distinguish the Yomiuri-sponsored exhibition as the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, effectively ceding the *Nihon Indépendant* name to the Nihon Bijutsukai's exhibition—a fact ultimately formalized by the Yomiuri Shinbun Co. itself from the eighth exhibition (in 1956) onward.[2]

By the time of the last exhibition, in 1963, in which Akasegawa displayed his yen and wrapped-canvas works, the *Yomiuri Indépendant* had become the center of a constellation of interconnected artists and art groups, a yearly celebration generating exhibits ranging from paintings, photography, and prints to the extremes of performance art, happenings, and strange installations. Many artists formed new groups from contacts occasioned by the exhibition, together expanding their own distinctive approaches and concerns in the interim between shows. The sociality of the exhibition also manifested itself in the numerous informal, shifting associations it fostered among friends, classmates, mutual acquaintances, and the like, bridging both geographical and practical separations between the various artists and groups.

In his retrospective writings, Akasegawa characterizes the yearly *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition as a "crucible," in which the work of various young artists, including his own, combined in the late 1950s and early 1960s to acquire a certain degree of cohesion, intensity, and purpose. In the prologue

to his account of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* "phenomenon," *Ima ya akushon aru nomi! "Yomiuri andepandan" to iu genshō* (Now There's Nothing Left but Action! The Phenomenon of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*), Akasegawa elaborates on this metaphor:

> A crucible [*rutsubo*] is a pot used for melting metals and the like, and is a necessary piece of equipment for chemistry experiments. The inside of the crucible attains a red-hot, incandescent state, and so acquires the [colloquial] usage, "the place became a crucible of excitement," as a form or appearance of excitement, agitation, frenzy or the like. In the case of optical glass, the crucible is in the end divided and the glass within taken out. Purportedly, when the crucible is split, fissures run across the mass of glass within and a molten sort of light runs about. Through its fifteenth exhibition in 1963, the Yomiuri Indépendant was such a crucible. Pigments, rubbish, the brains and bodies of youths, all burned incandescent; and then the crucible was wrenched apart.[3]

The image of the crucible expresses for Akasegawa both the intensity and the ephemeral nature of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* phenomenon, giving a sense of something forged and then shattered, a flowing, incandescent agitation rife with possibilities, present solely in the process of formation, and inadequately captured by its end products.

For Akasegawa, it was the making, the practice, that was the remarkable thing: the combination of "pigments, rubbish, [and] the brains and bodies of youths" in a white-hot, mutable mixture. It yielded works but also a fugitive "molten sort of light." The very title of his book, a quote from Kudō Tetsumi in 1960, plays on the excitement and potential felt by the artists at the time, for whom "action" was an immanent and politically charged potentiality, and the ephemerality of the traces of that action-oriented artistic context, viewed in retrospect.

This sort of allusive language typifies much that is said about the *Yomiuri Indépendant* when viewed as an entirety. Retrospective accounts are marked by language struggles: frequent and often indistinct metaphors, conceptual obscurities, and difficulties in recollection. They point to the intensity of individual experiences with the *Yomiuri Indépendant* and also to a problem of representation inherent in it, despite—or perhaps because of—this intensity.[4] For these artists, as for the historian, the problem of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* takes the general form of the problem of the historical event: what seems to be a readily specifiable, broad object of inquiry fractures into a multiplicity of interrelated experiences and crosscurrents the closer one ap-

proaches. But the problematic fit with ready-to-hand concepts and language may equally point to additional complexities in this case: not only to the gap or lag between the artistic practices and their moments of subsequent theorization but also to an ongoing, active reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible, in Rancière's terms. In a communal effort spurred by the exhibition, artistic experimentation altered modes of perception and generated an aesthetic and practical transformation: the incandescent "crucible" changed the way its participants looked at and thought about the world. Or, framed in Rancière's language, the artists built an instance of the "worlds of community . . . worlds of disagreement and dissension" from which politics may emerge—the very kind of politics that Ross sees as typifying the politics of the 1960s in general, and posing particular interpretive challenges in its elusive, fugitive basis in perceptual transformation (see the introduction and part I).[5]

In manifold ways, moreover, those who constituted this politics in the early 1960s engaged with—and even realized—the history of a prior moment, one in which the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition originated. The founding of the exhibition in 1949 profoundly relates to the ambiguous political uses of "culture" during the Allied Occupation of Japan, and more broadly to the struggles over democracy and art's role in it, as the peremptory appropriation of *indépendant* for the exhibition's title indicates. While the exhibition itself arose from this earlier history (and bore the mark of it in its very name), these antecedents and unresolved struggles returned forcefully to charge the political context of the later years of the exhibition, from the standpoint of opposition politics and of the state.

The Politics of Culture I: Art, Distraction, and the Occupation

The *Yomiuri*'s sponsorship of the *Indépendant* was part of a general pattern of newspaper patronage of the arts beginning early in the postwar period. Newspaper publishers, and secondarily department stores, became the main sponsors of the majority of art and musical exhibitions, especially those imported from abroad.[6] This was especially true for the three largest papers, the *Asahi*, the *Mainichi*, and the *Yomiuri*.[7] This was not a wholly private affair; tours of foreign masterpieces fit within one of the classic paradigms of the early postwar period: the mutual exchange of priceless national treasures by former adversaries as a signal between the nations and to the citizenry who would view these exhibitions that hostilities were already forgotten, or were to be forgotten.[8] Thus the complement to these exhibitions in Japan was,

for example, the tour in 1951 of 177 national treasures from Japan in the United States, the same year that Japan joined UNESCO.[9] Such exchanges also reinvigorated tropes of nationhood recentering these cultural objects; in Japan 1950 saw the establishment of an agency to protect and identify items of the national cultural heritage.

Newspaper corporations' cultural promotion activities also arose from an interest in self-promotion; as Thomas R. H. Havens has noted, the publishers hoped to improve the image of their paper and increase circulation, especially among the more educated.[10] Cultural promotion also appealed to those looking for highbrow escape from the sordid venality and chaos of black markets, gangs, prostitution, and marginal existence that marked early postwar life for many—precisely the phenomena innumerable cultural commentators identified as evidence of national purposelessness, exhaustion, and decadence. In both instances the assertion of hierarchies of cultural value was bound to the immediate context, and conveniently shorn of their all too familiar associations with wartime mobilization, fascist ideology, and elite privilege. With the *Yomiuri*, corporate sponsorship worked against a specific, fraught history as well. The image of the *Yomiuri* had suffered a number of blows, both during wartime and as the result of a protracted labor dispute that put the *Yomiuri* at the heart of the conflicts over the shape of the postwar democratic society. Their cultural sponsorship activities worked to occlude these historical referents, even in the case of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, where such sponsorship ultimately enabled a space for art to develop as a mode of critique.

The initial conflict at the *Yomiuri* was between newspaper staff and the owner, Shōriki Matsutarō, a man who, while also known for his founding of Japan's first professional baseball team in 1935, the ubiquitous Yomiuri Giants, and later for his key role in pushing television broadcasting in Japan, was then remembered more for being deeply implicated in imperial Japan's repressions, dirty politics, and enthusiasms for ultranationalist maneuverings. Shōriki was a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University's prestigious Law Department; in an eleven-year career at the Metropolitan Police Board marked by both considerable political connections and responsibility for political policing, he was, as Simon Partner has noted, "involved in virtually every major incident of police repression up to 1923," including the Waseda University sit-in of 1917, rice riots in 1918, violent repression of Koreans in 1921, and a major roundup of communists and socialists in 1922. He was notorious enough to be popularly implicated in the murder in military police custody in 1923 of the anarchist Ōsugi Sakae (slain together

with his wife, Itō Noe, and six-year-old nephew).[11] After the Toranomon incident, when the crown prince and future emperor Hirohito was nearly assassinated, Shōriki was fired from his post as chief secretary of the Metropolitan Police Board in January 1924, in accordance with the Civil Officer Disciplinary Punishment Law. Receiving an imperial amnesty, he assumed the presidency of the Yomiuri Company the very next month.[12]

Shōriki bought a controlling interest in the *Yomiuri* for 100,000 yen—money received from "political interests eager to buy a voice," including the well-connected and powerful home minister, Gotō Shinpei.[13] As the *Yomiuri*'s publisher, Shōriki rebuilt the newspaper's lagging circulation to two million readers by 1944. Part of this was due to his adept use of cultural promotions and publicity stunts. Shōriki's founding of the immensely successful Yomiuri Giants baseball team followed his sponsorship in 1934 of a visit to Japan by Babe Ruth and the New York Yankees. The paper also maintained a reputation for literariness through the end of the 1930s, a high-cultural platform from which Shōriki could expand.[14] After the war he hoped to encourage the selective memory of the paper's reputation for culture—and occlude the other aspect of its rise: the growth of the *Yomiuri* in recent years coming from his taking opportune advantage of both political connections and the imperial fascist context.[15] The paper's war boosterism, preeminent among the dailies, attracted readership and allowed for expansion both nationally and within the capital, and Shōriki's police background and high-level political connections provided additional opportunities.[16] He personally received a Silver Cup from the emperor for outstanding national service during the war.[17] His position was further improved with his elevation in 1944 to the House of Peers (by imperial appointment on the recommendation of Prime Minister Tōjō); in the same year he became an advisor to the cabinet and a member of the Privy Council.[18]

The *Yomiuri* took advantage of absences created by the selective decimation of newspapers and publishing in general by various state censorship mechanisms. At the time, entities such as the Cabinet Information Bureau worked to eliminate the last vestiges of criticism from an already heavily censored and menaced print world, and the draconian cuts and political controls (including state-corporatized sales and distribution) provided opportunities for the well-connected. Registered newspapers were reduced from over 13,286 in 1937 to 5,871 in 1940, and had declined to a mere 1,606 by 1944, when the *Yomiuri* hit its two-million-reader mark.[19] Measures against individuals ranged from the legal—including fining, blacklisting, arrest, imprisonment, and sudden drafting to front-line units in the military—to the

extralegal, including summary execution and rightist assassination.[20] Already severe prepublication censorship consultations were bolstered by wartime mobilization controls: publications could find their editions banned, their paper ration drastically reduced, even shut down outright or simply obliterated by one of the many publication "consolidations." Such were the conditions under which the *Yomiuri* prospered.

The labor disputes began in October 1945, when *Yomiuri*'s staff members approached Shōriki with a plan to reform the editorial and political policies of the paper; negotiations quickly broke down, with Shōriki refusing reform and threatening to deal with the "rebels" on the staff.[21] Employees called for the resignations of all of the paper's executives, and Shōriki fired several of the reform leaders.[22] The staff responded by forming a union (the first independent newspaper union in postwar Japan), locking out management, and then continuing to print the newspaper—the first Japanese incident of postwar "production control."[23]

This episode, and the production control tactic it inaugurated, was one of the first postwar explorations of the new freedoms promised by the Occupation. Early general statements regarding defense of liberties, including labor and political organizing, as well as the freeing of political prisoners, notably communists, all seemed to portend a radical new freedom, one which people actively and spontaneously worked to bring to immediate fruition.[24] Production control in particular was, as John Dower has noted, "lacking official support from either the Communists or the Socialist factions" and thus "appeared to represent the emergence of a truly radical anticapitalist ethos at the grass-roots level. Employees in individual enterprises, acting largely on their own initiative, simply took over the offices, factories, or mines where they were working and ran them without consulting the owners or the managerial elite."[25] In the case of the *Yomiuri*, the action came out of employee group discussions on the paper's war responsibility and was realized, according to one participant, Masuyama Tasuke, in shop-floor participatory "struggle committees," which combined into a companywide struggle committee; the actual union emerged only after the production control action was under way.[26] The entire decision-making process throughout the conflict was purportedly remarkably democratic, with decisions rendered by collective discussion and voting; production control was implemented by the struggle committees, with the emergent union playing no leadership role.[27]

Officials at SCAP,[28] many of whom were New Dealers, were initially delighted by the spontaneous unionization of the *Yomiuri* (then the *Yomiuri*-

Hōchi), both for the labor organizing which was spreading to other newspaper organizations and for the new critical stance of the paper under employee control. This positive response spread to their treatment of other production control actions. Takemae notes that in late January 1946, SCAP's ESS Labor Division went so far as to publicly oppose Japanese government plans "to prevent production takeovers using the police and public prosecutors," and instead backed the unions.[29]

In his media analysis of November 23, 1945, Lieutenant Colonel Greene (of the Analysis and Research Section of the nascent Civil Information and Education Section) states, "As the internal strife in YOMIURI becomes more and more heated daily, Yomiuri employees are taking more and more advantage of the directives on freedom of speech and thought, and *as suggested by a GHQ spokesman*, have presented important issues 'in terms the people can understand and encourage[d] them to use their new rights.'"[30] With this approval and encouragement from the Occupation, the *Yomiuri* took the lead in critical, "informative and accurate" reporting:

> A primary example of this tendency is the front-page series in Yomiuri appearing the last four days attacking fascist bureaucracy. The presentation to the reader appears informative and accurate since no names were omitted in the accusation. Not satisfied with the bold front-page attacks, *Yomiuri* yesterday devoted both the editorial and important back-page space to an acclamation of the action taken by General Thorpe in probing the war guilty. All other Tokyo papers gave stories on war guilt good coverage.[31]

The *Yomiuri*'s efforts were, at the time, completely in line with Occupation policy; with the Occupation's blessing and protection, the paper continued its muckraking. As Dower notes, it was during the period of employee control that the *Yomiuri-Hōchi* published a story detailing Prince Higashikuni's revelation to an Associated Press journalist that the emperor's abdication was being considered and would meet with Imperial Family support should it occur (February 27, 1946). It also reported that "the reactionary Matsumoto draft" of the postwar Constitution had been "blown away," though it was prohibited from discussing the "open secret" of SCAP authorship (March 8, 1946).[32]

The *Yomiuri* union got direct assistance from SCAP in two ways: first, arbitration for their dispute was set up, using the Tokyo metropolitan government; second, SCAP named Shōriki as a suspected war criminal in the mass announcements of warrants on December 2, 1945. His negotiations with the

union continued under the shadow of this warrant, culminating in a signed agreement announced on December 11. The agreement recognized union rights to collective bargaining and converted the company to public holdings through Shōriki's sale of 30 percent of his stock. Shōriki was to resign, though he retained a majority ownership; no employees were to be fired in retaliation.[33]

To replace him at the paper, Shōriki appointed a longtime journalist, Baba Tsunego, a "liberal" whose manuscripts were subjected to "deferment" during wartime by the authorities, but his influence was negligible, as employees at the paper in effect continued their production control, running the newspaper themselves under Suzuki Tōmin, the managing editor and leader of the strike.[34] Like many of the union activists early in the postwar period, Suzuki and others at the paper were leftists, but not necessarily Party members.[35] The *Yomiuri*, however, took on what SCAP came to consider a pro-communist line, lauding the recently returned Communist Party leader Nosaka Sanzō (who had been in exile in the Soviet Union and China since 1931), the proponent of a new, "loveable Communist Party" (*aisareru kyōsantō*). The employee-run paper joined in Nosaka's calls for a democratic people's front that would include not only the communists and the Democratic Socialists but all parties and groups.[36] As Victor Koschmann notes, Nosaka was soft on the issue of the status of the emperor and was on record anticipating an almost indefinite postponement of revolution.[37] However, this proved inadequate to alleviate growing concerns within a portion of SCAP. The early welcome extended to press criticism from the Left, then thought to be an important counterbalance and corrective to years of rightist domination, soon turned to fear of a communist-controlled press and led to conflict between the Labor Section (which remained in favor of the unionized activity) and the Press Section.[38] By May 1946 SCAP was clearly aligned on the side of newspaper ownership, and for ownership in general, as SCAP faced a situation in which production control surpassed strikes and slowdowns as the major form of labor agitation, with 110 occurrences in April and May.[39] The April Diet elections were allowed to take place despite conservative elements' retaining clear advantages in extant organizational structures; the Yoshida cabinet formed with MacArthur's blessing was a clear sign of the repudiation of the Left. The Occupation was firmly on its way to what is popularly termed the "reverse course," perhaps better seen as a partial resolution of contradictions inherent in the Occupation's support for both democracy and elites, including the emperor.

The very moment that signaled the new Occupation policy—which I have

characterized in Rancière's terms as a reassertion of police order over demands for equality and a relegation of protesters from speech to noise (see chapter 2)—directly involved an incident with *Yomiuri* union leadership. On May 19, after participating prominently in one of the "Give us rice" demonstrations in the Imperial Plaza—at which the contents of the imperial kitchen stores at the palace were revealed—a delegation including Tokuda Kyūichi and Suzuki went to the prime minister's residence (then occupied by Yoshida) to demand his resignation and the distribution of hoarded food.[40] When refused an audience, they declared that they would "sit here until he resigns."[41] According to Gayn, a secretary reported Yoshida's acquiescence to the demand, but, not trusting Yoshida, the sit-down strike continued, with Suzuki taking over for Tokuda when stomach trouble forced his withdrawal.[42] On May 20, with the protestors still at the residence, MacArthur gave his *bōmin demo* speech (see chapter 2). Gayn speculates that Yoshida had indeed been "ready to give up—partly because he was having trouble finding ministers, partly in fear of what was beginning to look like a full-scale, nonviolent revolution."[43] But with the weight of the Occupation clearly thrown behind Yoshida, Suzuki and the rest left the grounds; Yoshida announced he would have his cabinet ready by the next day.[44]

In the subsequent struggles in which Shōriki reclaimed control over the paper, Baba, with the support of SCAP, fired Suzuki and several others; when they refused to leave, Takemae relates, "over the opposition of Theodore Cohen's Labor Division, GHQ condoned massive police raids on the *Yomiuri* staff—the first of their kind since the war years—and the sacking of prominent union officials."[45] This triggered more strikes in support of Suzuki, intersecting a protracted, broad conflict with labor that culminated ultimately in the official Red Purges of June 1950. At the Baba-controlled *Yomiuri*, realignments among employees led to the ousting of left-wingers and the withdrawal of a majority of the *Yomiuri* union from the very All Japan News and Radio Workers Union that struggles at the *Yomiuri* had been instrumental in creating. Suzuki and others fought the company union and the firing of some thirty-one employees; in support, the Newspaper and Radio Workers' Union mounted the "October Offensive," a planned serial walkout of journalists and affiliated workers, coal miners, and electrical workers. On October 4, 1946, while SCAP intimidated *Asahi* newspaper employees (ultimately succeeding in getting their union to reverse itself and withdraw from the strike, thereby crippling the effort), the *Yomiuri* editorialized in favor of firing union members who were either Communist Party members or sympathizers, on the grounds that "there is no room for such

a *foreign element* in present press circles. . . . A member of the Communist Party is in no sense a liberal or a democrat."[46] Over the next few days, while the Diet passed the Constitution, police broke up the strikes and beat protesters.[47] Two years later the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association would proclaim the first week of October "National Newspaper Week."[48] With the aid of SCAP, the postwar *Yomiuri* and the police returned to business as usual. It was in this fraught context that the *Yomiuri Indépendant* art exhibition was born.

ART AS POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY: A *YOMIURI INDÉPENDANT*

The prime mover behind the *Yomiuri Indépendant* was Kaidō Hideo (1912–91) of the *Yomiuri*'s Cultural Bureau. Kaidō had a long-standing commitment to theoretically sophisticated and politically committed art; though he only dabbled as a painter, he had been active in a Surrealism study group in 1936 that included Takiguchi Shūzō, the prominent prewar Surrealist painter, poet, critic, and translator of André Breton.[49] After returning from wartime postings as a *Yomiuri* special correspondent in Hanoi and Rangoon, Kaidō worked after the war at the desk of the *Yomiuri Weekly* (*Yomiuri wīkurī*, later the *Shūkan Yomiuri*), at which time he participated actively in the labor conflicts.[50] At some point during the purges, Kaidō was suspended for half a year; he quietly returned afterward to a new position at the Cultural Bureau, which was then becoming active in forms of cultural sponsorship.[51] It was in this role that he promoted the idea of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*.

Kaidō purportedly was interested in creating an unjuried exhibition as an important intervention in the process of artistic production in Japan, a way to "further the modernization and democratization of the feudal [Japanese] art world."[52] At the time, his thinking was influenced both by Socialist Realism and by his strong interest in the avant-garde. He provided a venue in the paper for reporting conditions from the European art world, in the hopes of injecting something from the contemporary scene into Japan, in contrast to the efforts of others at the *Yomiuri* who sponsored an exhibition of Western masterpieces in 1947.[53] Seeking to intervene further into what he perceived as pernicious stagnation, he brought together the critic Imaizumi Atsuo (as chair) and the artists Uchida Iwao (a founder of the Nihon Bijutsukai) and Okamoto Tarō for extensive debates published in *Yomiuri*. Titled "What Is New Art?," the debates critiqued *Nitten* and the institution of Art.[54] As he later told Akasegawa, "I felt like we ought to smash the old system of group exhibitions, the *Nitten*, etc."[55]

Their target, the *Nitten*, was very much "official art." Prizes were awarded

yearly by the prime minister. The exhibition dated back to 1907, when it was established as the *Monbushō Bijutsu Tenrankai* (Ministry of Education Fine Arts Exhibition), or *Bunten*. From 1918 to 1936 it became the *Teiten* (Imperial Exhibition), then finally the *Shin* (New) *Bunten*.[56] In 1945 the Ministry of Education changed the name to the *Japan Fine Arts Exhibition* (*Nihon Bijutsu Tenrankai*, or *Nitten*), and the first and second exhibitions were held under this new name in the spring and fall of 1946.[57] Its sponsor since 1937, the Imperial Art Academy (Teikoku Geijutsuin), was similarly retitled, becoming the Japan Arts Academy (Nihon Geijutsuin) in 1947.[58] In 1947 an attempt to democratize the judging system with elections failed when members managed to subvert the process, leading some—including the prominent Arts Academy member Umehara Ryūzaburō—to call for the exhibition's cancellation. In 1948, as Occupation officials investigated the exhibition, the Ministry of Education announced that it was withdrawing its (*Monbushō*) sponsorship in favor of the (pseudo-private) Academy, but this was mere verbiage: they continued to finance both the exhibition and the Arts Academy itself.[59]

The assessment of the *Nitten* in June 1948 by Sherman E. Lee, the former curator of oriental art at the Detroit Institute of Art and head of the Arts and Monuments Division of the Civil Information and Education Section, concluded:

> Pressure was brought to bear by the government on the awarding juries to ensure that prizes were given to painters with the appropriate sentiment. . . . In practice, the exhibition represents official sponsorship of a segment of the artistic population, giving undue importance and sanction to the works of these people to such an extent that there is a definite influence, not only upon the honorary position of those invited for the exhibition, but on the market value of their works.[60]

As Lee explained, direct government pressure was hardly necessary to ensure the reproduction of ideologically safe, and "senile," art, thanks to the *Nitten*'s insider-biased system:

> In view of the fact that the Academy generally represents the most conservative art traditions and the fact that at the Academy members and other specified artists are allowed entrance into the exhibition without examination, while other painters are required to submit works for examination by a jury selected by the Ministry and the Academy, it appears that the makeup of the exhibition cannot be anything but undemocratic and unrepresentative of Japanese contemporary art.[61]

The Occupation finally decided to permit the exhibition, considering it "on trial" for 1948. In 1949 the emperor and empress favored the exhibition with a visit, dining afterward with newly inducted Academy members.[62]

For someone like Kaidō, who had been at least peripherally a part of the prewar Surrealism movement, the postwar return of the *Nitten* signaled a parallel in the art world of the rightward turn in evidence everywhere else: the return to power in the postwar period of the same people who had been active in wartime and who, like Shōriki, had capitalized on the opportunities made available as competing voices were silenced (or who had even taken an active part in that silencing). The patronage networks that were being reenergized by the return of *Nitten* were those that had survived and even prospered in the face of a host of repressions: the virtual elimination of the Communist Party by 1930 and the subsequent suppression of proletarian art by 1934, then during stepped-up wartime repressions, the arrest and jailing of Surrealists by the *tokkō* thought police, who had come to regard the movement as a kind of "communist art philosophy."[63] Takiguchi reflected on this dire situation for new art in 1952, noting that journalists also had accommodated themselves to the filtering enforced by the *Nitten* and other major exhibitions. He held out hope nonetheless that small movements might somehow break through these impasses.[64]

The artistic community remaining after such repression found ways of getting along, and even thriving, in the face of active official scrutiny and suspicion. In fact Kawakita Michiaki notes that the explosion of art groups after the war had its roots in a proliferation of art organizations in the late 1930s, which kept close contact with official desires.[65] In this art world of self-limited horizons, the reorganization of the Imperial Art Academy (in which some of the founders of the ostensibly independent Second Division [Nika] group became members) was of preeminent importance.[66] The state worked to maintain a level of support as well as control, adding the incentive of awarding cultural medals in 1937, the same year that it reabsorbed the previously nominally independent Imperial Fine Arts Academy back into the Ministry of Education (Monbushō) as the Imperial Art Academy.[67] Even among the Surrealists, artists perhaps less inclined to cooperate with state cultural goals, John Clark notes that by the late 1930s a defensive "inner emigration" was in evidence: works tended toward mathematical abstraction or a pretense toward a strictly limited, inner, reflective perspective (inverting Surrealism's very stance on the politicality of the unconscious and the individual mind): "References that gave their meaning any kind of criti-

cal edge were buried in an emphasis on the technical procedures used, the iconography of the image, or the sheer emotional mood conjured up."[68]

In many ways the art world paralleled that of organized labor in the late 1930s: thriving in a sense, but thoroughly adjusted to accord with state authority.[69] It was perhaps for this reason that after the war the political sensibilities of the remaining left-sympathetic artists tended to return them to "unfinished business," a set of concerns that had the cachet of wartime suppression and yet reproduced earlier self-limitations as well. In works produced in the immediate postwar period, styles ranging from an overtly political Surrealism to Socialist Realism (the latter despite the total absence of proletarian art for over a decade) revisited previously forbidden territory for representation. A notable difference between this art and, for example, the extensive debates over subjectivity (*shutaisei ronsō*) by postwar Japanese intellectuals, is that the art's representational mode became inadequate only in the face of the defeat of the postwar democracy movements, whereas the intellectual debate was abstract from its very inception. And yet for those who yearned for a decisive break with a fraught past, many of the art practices appeared insufficiently rethought.

Having experienced this recent history from the perspective of someone both seriously engaged in the study of Surrealist theory and practice and with hope for art's participation in transforming the postwar world, Kaidō was dissatisfied with the initial boom in art groups. His sense was that the arts community needed more than simple support for current practices through more sponsored exhibitions (in the fashion in which his and other papers, such as the *Mainichi Shinbun*, were currently engaged); his idea was to use the newspaper's patronage to help foster a new kind of artistic production. He saw an unjuried exhibition as a way around the overwhelmingly conservative patronage system and the common, long-standing habit of avoiding risk taking (fostered by patronage and censorship). The hope was that the exhibition would draw artists to itself and would serve as the vehicle for individual artists finding their way to some sort of new artistic practice adequate to the postwar historical situation.[70] Kaidō was thoroughly won over by the concept of an *indépendant*, but when the Nihon Bijutsukai debuted their exhibition in 1947, he was dissatisfied by its being bound to the political advocacy of one particular approach, Socialist Realism. He thus launched into his own preparations for a rival *indépendant*, by which he hoped to foster something different.[71] Although in the end he had to resort to sending invitations to established art groups for the first exhibition,

as a necessary compromise, the *Yomiuri Indépendant* ultimately achieved Kaidō's aims.[72]

Yet even as the *Yomiuri Indépendant* promised to break out of the conservative art establishment's controls and habits of accommodation, it did this as part of the cultural promotions by the *Yomiuri*. Freud proposes the general case of sublimation of conflict through art;[73] in this instance, however, conflict was suppressed through the sign of art in general: art sponsorship, irrespective of its content (from imported art exhibitions to emergent, even critical local artworks), promised a cultural expansion and a wide-open future, a hope congenial to the developing conservative coalition and the terms of its power monopoly, as it steered a path toward economic, but not political, recovery. For the *Yomiuri* itself, the image of patron of the arts could serve to displace political considerations: Shōriki (who remained majority owner), the paper's wartime enthusiasms, the history of the suppression of the radical labor politics and critical journalism that had begun so promisingly at this very newspaper,[74] and its replacement by a new conservatism.

Against this broad displacement of history and politics by culture there were continued attempts to mobilize a repoliticized cultural production for progressive ends. While ideologues such as Ishiwara Kanji urged the populace to shame, remorse, and a reembrace of imperial values,[75] a number of writers examined the grim realities of the postwar world and sought an honest reassessment of the real practices and effects of the moral injunctions that had led to such a level of death and suffering. These writings included Sakaguchi Ango's "Discourse on Decadence" ("Darakuron") of April 1946, a ferocious indictment of political tradition, the emperor system, and contemporary ethical standards as abstract, inhuman, cynical, and poisonous. Sakaguchi celebrated the much-maligned postwar "decadence," or falling away from these deadly illusions, as a quest for truth and a sober encounter with the real.[76] In a different vein, unions and leftist groups sponsored a variety of cultural productions as an integral part of their efforts to garner support and publicity and often received direct assistance during labor struggles from politically committed artists.[77] Despite Kaidō's hopes for its democratizing potential, however, there was little initially to give executives at the *Yomiuri* pause in the format of the exhibition; public participation in an exhibition could only help the newspaper's image, and the cultural cachet of the French word in the title also likely helped smooth over any minor anxieties.

The Politics of Culture II: 1960, Critical Mass, and the Monty Hall Moment

The two *Indépendant*s (separated here into their common terms, *Nihon Indépendant* and *Yomiuri Indépendant*, but in actuality sharing the former name for much of the latter's existence) provided key exhibition circuits for art outside the official art world of the *Nitten*.[78] The *Nihon Indépendant*, sponsored by the Japan Fine Art Association (Nihon Bijutsukai, not to be confused with the *Nitten*'s Japan Arts Academy), and thus closely connected with the Communist Party, by the 1950s was firmly associated with art inspired by Socialist Realism's reportage style.[79] Despite the eclecticism with which it was practiced in Japan, the fundamental style nonetheless risked substituting a reified gesture of political commitment for actual critical practice. During the years of political mobilization and protest following the war's end, this art's depiction of the dignity and power of mass mobilization appealed to many as a representative practice consonant with the best goals and aspirations of postwar democracy: the struggles for expanded political opportunity and against remilitarization and a return to authoritarian government. But toward the end of the 1950s the representations of ever-larger raised fists were beginning to appear a bit pitiful and ludicrous to a new generation of artists.[80] As postwar democracy's possibilities receded and popular protests met with failure, Socialist Realist representation came to be seen as inadequate to the contemporary situation.[81]

Politically committed artists faced a choice. Many continued to soldier on with reportage at the *Nihon Indépendant*, but others were drawn to the problem of form as they attempted to construct an art that could speak to their situation and their time. Examining the complexities of the contemporary everyday context, these artists focused on the artistic object and the practice of art itself. Yet this is to speak of the end results of a complex dialogue. The focus of this art arose over time out of an enthusiastic and committed kind of playful competition at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, which drew a wide range of artistic practices and concerns, politicized and unpoliticized alike. In time, however, this playful art addressed daily life as a space of hidden processes and concealed political investments.

By the late 1950s everyday life in urban Japan was being transformed at all levels, especially within the urban spaces reconfigured by a host of new and interdependent working, living, and consuming practices. The staggering growth in this period was particularly concentrated in urban areas, such as in the Keihin region comprising Tokyo, Yokohama, and their environs

(including the heavily polluted Kawasaki industrial corridor). In 1956, as events unfolded within the Soviet bloc, several popular publications and a government white paper proclaimed the "end of the postwar," based on GNP and national income having returned to prewar levels. Having rebuilt from the ignominy of defeat and the black market profiteering, sordid exigencies, and other general brutalities of the struggle for existence that followed, the country could now look forward to new growth and affluence.[82] With growth came the new possibilities of a modernized consumer existence, as the triumvirate of the refrigerator, washing machine, and black and white TV, as well as a host of other domestic goods, were aggressively promoted by the new, popular weekly magazines, as well as by television broadcasting (including on Shōriki's network). Simon Partner notes that national advertising and promotional expenditures increased from 9 billion yen in 1953 to 146 billion in 1959, or 1.5 percent of total GDP.[83] These advertisements borrowed from a long-standing, ambiguous political rhetoric about a "new everyday life" (*shin seikatsu*), championed especially by the Hatoyama cabinet of 1955. These nonspecific promises of a general and thoroughgoing renewal raised expectations well ahead of actual improvements in the living situation. Advertising worked to give content to those raised expectations, fueling the production and consumption boom of the late 1950s, which in turn provided further material for subsequent governmental promotion of this daily life.[84] Department store displays, advertisements, and imported television programming (especially from America, featuring images of modern domesticity and convenience) all gleamed with the allure of promised luxury.

At the same time, an accommodation among conservative groups led to the formation in 1955 of the Liberal Democratic Party. The Party's continuing political control over the country was assured by a variety of mechanisms, including rural gerrymandering, vote apportionment procedures, covert American support, and the Party's role as the key mediator between state bureaucracy and industry. Labor, for its part, remained the main ingredient in the numerous popular protests of the 1950s but nonetheless began to shift from political, systemic objectives to economic goals. Labor's political activism had been steadily suppressed from mid-1946 onward, while employers and secondary, single-company union organizers and a host of other mechanisms—as well as growth itself, and its publicity—slowly co-opted union goals and eroded the position of activist labor.[85]

The failure to prevent the renewal of the Security Treaty with the United States in 1960, despite the massive demonstrations and strikes (called Anpo), marks both the apparent terminus of postwar democracy and the

point of coalescence of these economic potentials into the cooptation of resistance through an affirmative program of growth and consumption (fig. 4.1). Though termed a "renewal" of the treaty of 1952, the context for the new treaty included a decade of pressure from the United States to increase the rate of rearmament, circumventing Article 9 of the Constitution's "renunciation of war" clause by creating first a "police reserve" and then "self-defense forces."[86] Beyond its explicit provisions for "mutual" defense and American military bases throughout Japan, the Security Treaty deepened Japan's role in the cold war as the key to U.S. "containment" in Asia. It ratified U.S. support and endorsement of the Japanese state's ruling coalition and its efforts at domestic control, as well as (covertly) Japan's acceptance of nuclear weapons on American warships and bases. In each case, memories of wartime and the imperial state, prospects for future warfare, and a postwar history of suppressed aspirations made the Security Treaty demonstrations the culmination of years of struggle, particularly for the Left.

Protest actions escalated in the late 1950s, culminating in massive strikes throughout the country and ever-larger demonstrations outside the National Diet and the prime minister's residence in opposition to the revision and renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Their failure to prevent the treaty's renewal, despite having reached this participatory crescendo, seemed to point to the limited effectiveness of such political tactics in the face of an (at best) indifferent ruling bloc. Despite accusations of protester force and violence by Supreme Court Chief Justice Tanaka Kōtarō and others,[87] the protests were primarily spectacular and supplicatory in nature, seeking to move hearts and votes through the visible demonstration of their committed opposition; even during the Diet compound incursions, protesters stopped short of actually entering the Diet building itself, and the huge strikes of June were not sustained. Absent government acceptance of protesters' legitimate voicing of popular political demands, and with treaty passage already achieved, the protests had reached a tactical dead end. But especially damaging to the opposition was the state's tactical shift from confrontation with naked force to consolation based on providing material comforts.

The grounds of political debate shifted virtually overnight with but a single change of prime ministers. Much activism had found a mobilizing focal point in the figure of Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke. A former Tōjō cabinet member and high-level colonial administrator for Manchuria who had close ties to *zaibatsu* industrial combines and the military,[88] Kishi had



4.1 Anpo demonstrations before the Diet, June 18, 1960. Courtesy of *Asahi Shinbun*.

been incarcerated in Sugamo Prison for three years during the Occupation as a suspected class-A war criminal. He was one of hundreds of thousands de-purged by the Occupation under Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway in 1951.[89] Fewer than six years later, Kishi was prime minister. He seemed to many to represent a direct return to fascist imperial Japan, an impression strengthened by his efforts to revise the Constitution, suppress teachers, and expand police authority. The key role of this overdetermined figure in backing renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty obscured the complexities of Japan's cold war position, in which economic prosperity was tied directly to America's Asian wars and strategic policy and Japan's own troubled history of war and colonial expansion in Asia. These issues receded before the nightmare vision of Kishi as a revival of the old order.[90] On May 19, 1960, he dispatched five hundred police to the Diet Chambers prior to a surprise vote on the treaty in the Lower House; the televised forcible extraction of socialist members from their sit-in outside the speaker's office persuaded many of Kishi's duplicitous nature and brought universal condemnation from the press. In turn, his dismissal of the protesters' demands in the name of a larger, quieter set of "voiceless voices" in favor of the treaty intensified

4.2 Demonstrators against the Security Treaty burst through one set of gates at the Diet compound, June 15, 1960. The sign to the left announces the presence of the Chūō University Economics Department; the sign to the right proclaims, in the voice of the Diet, "Sorry 'bout the war!" At center top, a police photographer documents the demonstrators' identities. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.





4.3 Anpo demonstrations, June 15, 1960. Students inside the Diet compound face riot police. In the resulting melee, the student leader Kanba Michiko was killed. Courtesy of *Asahi Shinbun*.

opposition anger (fig. 4.3).[91] Kishi's resignation just after the Security Treaty renewal defused a potentially volatile situation and provided the opposition with a compensatory victory.[92]

His successor, Ikeda Hayato, quickly formed a cabinet full of new, younger faces (including the first female cabinet minister, Nakayama Masa, appointed as welfare minister), demonstrating continuity and confidence against expectations of persistent chaos and signaling a new governmental outlook. Ikeda's government immediately adopted a low profile (*teishisei*), replacing the violence and confrontational policies of Kishi with well-orchestrated public gestures toward reconciliation with the opposition parties. When a nine-month struggle at the Miike coal mine in Kyushu flared up in a massive confrontation in July, Ikeda and his new labor minister, Ishida Hirohide, negotiated to resubmit the dispute to mediation, an action that ultimately brought an end to the conflict, the last major action of this scale by an activist union in postwar Japan. The workers had sought to link the strike to the Security Treaty protests, a move that left them similarly vulnerable to the new tactics of the Ikeda government. Conciliation

ended a visible, violent spectacle of class conflict and handed labor a major defeat.[93]

A notable exception among the new faces in the cabinet was Yamazaki Iwao, placed in charge of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Public Safety Commission (policing). Yamazaki had been home minister in the 1945 postwar Higashikuni cabinet, where he presided over an unreconstructed security apparatus from imperial Japan, including the notorious *tokkō* police. His continued postwar enforcement of lèse-majesté statutes (including threats of imprisonment for criticism of the emperor) ended only when his seizure of newspapers for publishing the famous picture of General MacArthur and the emperor in September 1945 helped provoke the Occupation into issuing SCAPIN-93, the "Japanese bill of rights" directive freeing political prisoners, ending the Peace Preservation, lèse-majesté, and other repressive laws, and dismissing the heads of most major police bureaus—including Home Minister Yamazaki himself.[94] The choice of the notorious Yamazaki points to an underlying repressive counterpart to the Ikeda administration's public conciliatory stance. When a young rightist assassinated Socialist Party Chairman Asanuma Inejirō onstage at a rally in October, however, Yamazaki took responsibility and resigned, leaving the position to Sutō Hideo, a longtime protégé of Yoshida Shigeru. Prime Minister Ikeda himself delivered an unprecedented eulogy for his deceased political opponent, and the emperor dispatched sympathy and condolence money to Asanuma's widow, the first time that such a gesture had been made for someone neither in the cabinet nor with an imperial appointment. All three gestures worked to prevent the incident from becoming an effective opportunity for remobilizing opposition to the government.

At the same time, Ikeda further undercut opposition (and especially electoral challenges from the Socialist Party) with promises for action on improved social security, tax reductions, and public projects and, at the end of the year, by announcing a sweeping program of national "income doubling," pledging to fulfill this goal within ten years. By promising to deliver high growth and substantial material benefits to all in short order, Ikeda positioned the government behind the effects of an economic expansion under way at least since the mid-1950s, fueled by domestic consumption, trumpeted by advertising, and associated with profound changes in how people worked, lived, and conceived of their lives.[95] Everyday life in urban Japan by the late 1950s was changing at all levels, and yet apart from an explosion of enthusiastic advertising, television, and light journalism, the *effects* of this transformation constituted the great unaddressed political phenomenon of

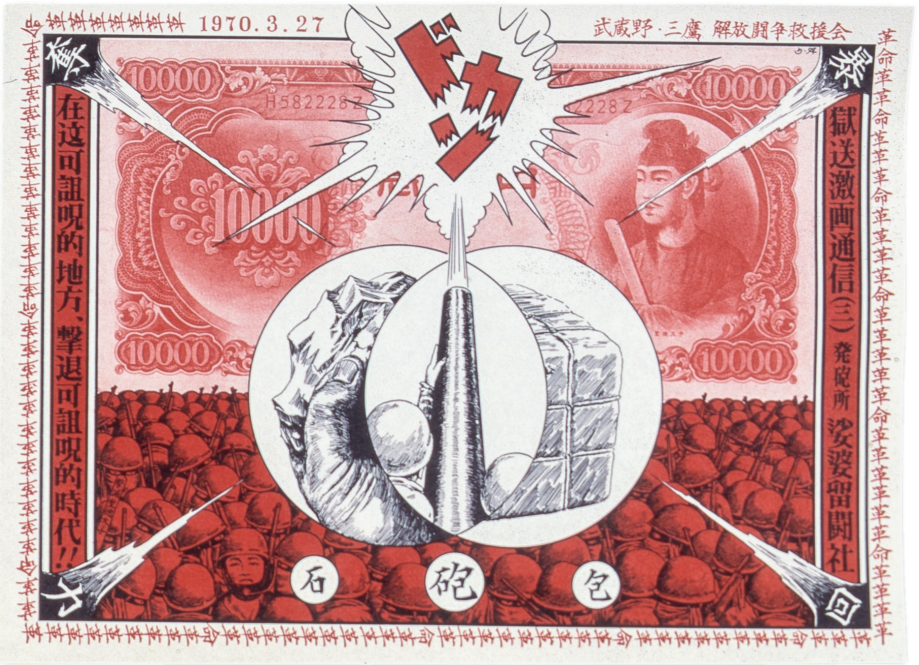


PLATE 1 Akasegawa Genpei's postcard journal, *Raging Picture Prison Mail Newsletter*, third issue (March 27, 1970). "Fired off" by the "Struggle from the Outside World for the Detained, Co." (Akasegawa and coauthor Matsuda Tetsuo), the journal was sent only to imprisoned activists. Echoing insights from his 1967 essay "The *Objet* after Stalin," this enigmatic postcard intimates the explosive potential from uniting protestors and avant-garde art and their shared origin in *objets*. It presents a visual pun playing on the elements of the Kanji character for cannon, *hō* (bottom center), as consisting in rock, or *seki* (bottom left), and wrapping, or *hō* (bottom right). The central image literalizes this insight, presenting a cannon firing on the 10,000-yen note as the intersection between a rock, clutched and ready for throwing, and a wrapped commodity, one of Akasegawa's signature works—in other words, the spheres of political protest and avant-garde art. The cannon's shot in turn yields the ricocheting words (read diagonally) "violence" (*bō-ryoku*) and "recapturing" (*dakkai*). The B-series 1,000-yen denomination famously targeted by Akasegawa similarly featured a portrait of Shōtoku Taishi; changing to the contemporary 10,000-yen denomination allowed Akasegawa to feature a similar-looking note, but also perhaps reflected inflation. Postcard, 15.6 × 21.7 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.



PLATE 2 Seized *1,000-Yen Wrapped Work*, with evidence tag 1963 / 1966. Printed matter, can, string. 8 × 8 × 14 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.



PLATE 3 Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi 12* (The Ambiguous Ocean 12), 1961. Collage, ink, paper. 35.7 × 25.0 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

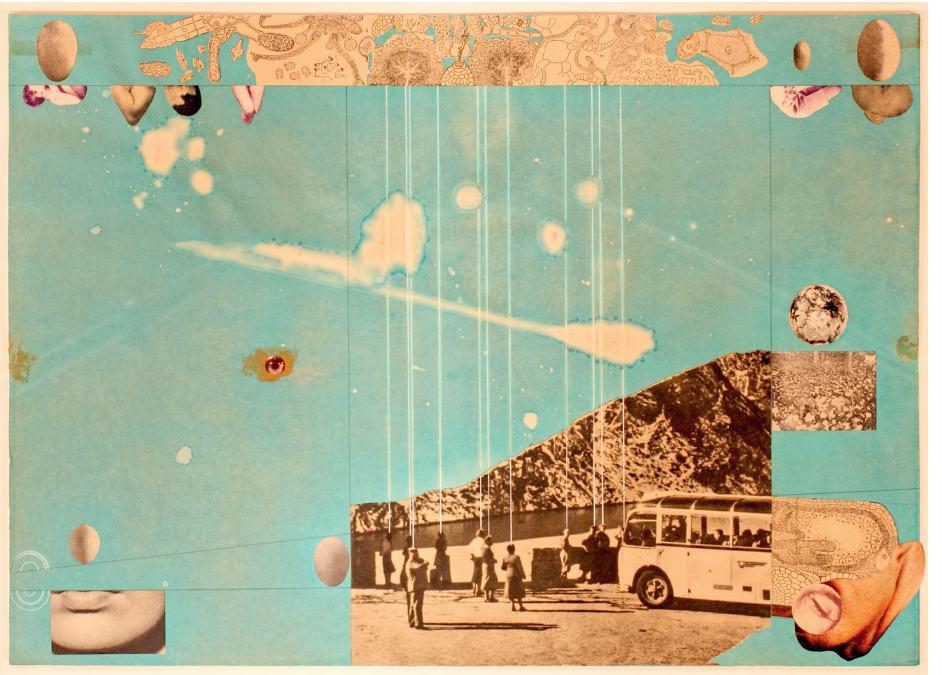


PLATE 4 Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi 4* (The Ambiguous Ocean 4), 1963. Collage, watercolor, paper. 27.0 × 38.2 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.



PLATE 5 Left: Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi D* (The Ambiguous Ocean D), 1963. Collage, ink, watercolor, paper. 39.5 × 27.2 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.



PLATE 6 Akasegawa at home with works, ca. 1966. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

(opposite)

PLATE 7 Akasegawa Genpei, *Fukushū no keitaigaku (korosu mae ni aite o yoku miru)* (The Morphology of Revenge: Take a Close Look at the Opponent Before You Kill Him) (*Enlarged 1,000 Yen*), 1963. Ink and paper, 90 × 180 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

PLATES 8 and 9 Akasegawa Genpei, model 1,000-yen note (green, invitation), obverse and reverse faces. Printed matter, double-sided. 7.4 × 16.1 cm. Back: invitation to the exhibition, *On the Ambiguous Ocean*, Shinjuku Daiichi Gallery, February 5–10, 1963. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.


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赤瀬川原平CO.,LTD.
東京・杉並・阿佐ケ谷 1.856 藤谷方



PLATE 10 Akasegawa Genpei, *Vagina no shītsu (nibanme no puresento)* (Vagina Sheets [The Second Present]), 1994 re-creation. Rubber inner tubes, vacuum tubes, pipette, wheel. 182 × 91 cm. Not pictured: floor *objet* portion of original work (a toaster stuffed with long nails, slowly corroded by acid dripped from the pipette, submitted as a separate exhibit, *Nijikan oki no haihatsu* [Stirred Up Every Two Hours]). Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.



PLATE 11 Katō Yoshihiro with *objet* works at the Aichi Prefecture Art Museum, Nagoya, January 1963. The mandala composition the artist is standing before became part of his *Yomiuri* installation in February 1963, with the addition of inset boxes of cigarette butts. Photos courtesy of the artist.



PLATE 12 Nakanishi Natsuyuki, *In* (Rhyme), 1959. Paint, enamel, sand on plywood. 114.0 × 92.0 cm. Part of a multicanvas series from 1959–60, all sharing the same title (a reference to Karlheinz Stockhausen's work, in its spatial graphical notation and explorations of seriality). Photo courtesy of Nakanishi Natsuyuki / Museum of Contemporary Arts, Tokyo.

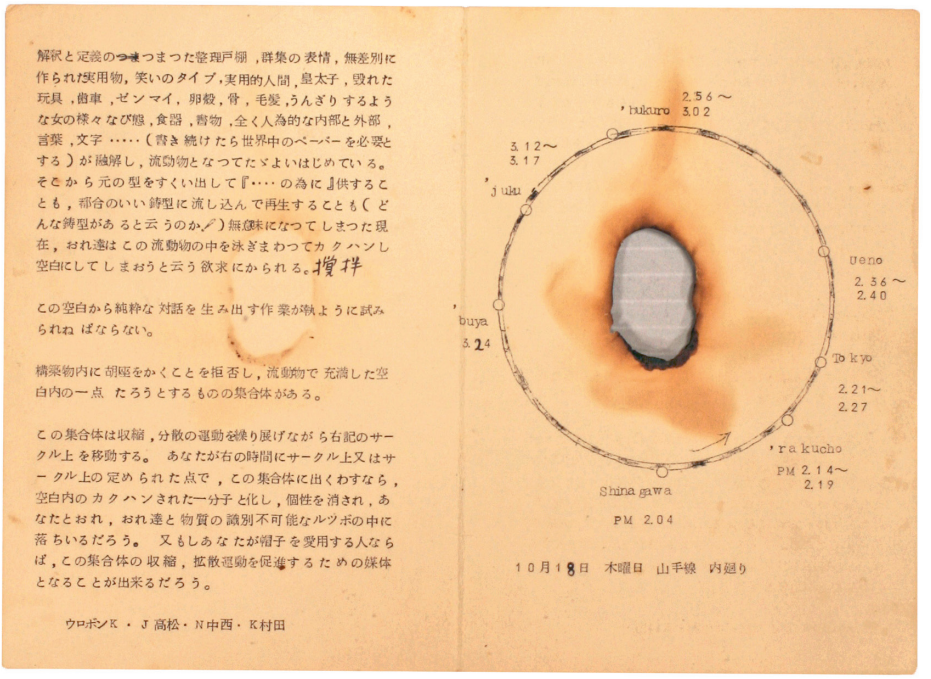


PLATE 13 The Yamanote event invitation received by Akasegawa, 1962. The characters for *kakuhan* (agitation) have been written in by hand below the printed *katakana* syllables. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of the Nagoya City Art Museum.



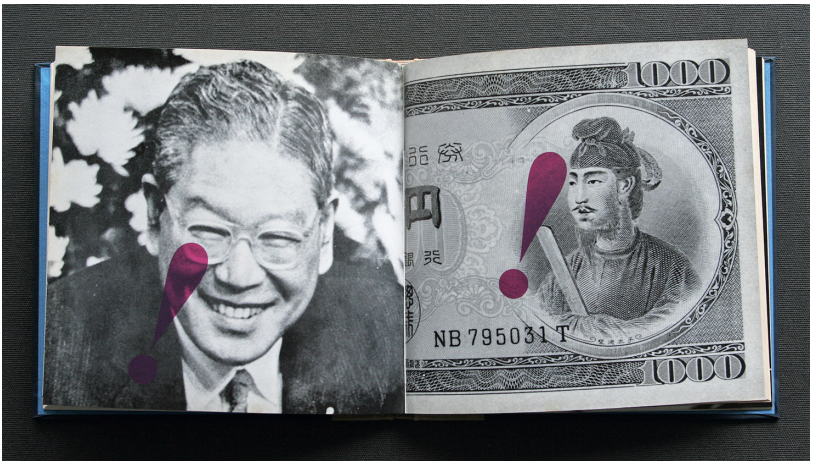


PLATE 14 A different kind of ready-made objet: Akasegawa's coat hanger wrapped in 1,000-yen notes, originally displayed at the Group Sweet exhibition at the Kawasumi Gallery, March 1963 (shown here with the subsequently affixed court evidence tag). Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

PLATE 15 The image(s) that started it all: the 1,000-yen note, set against a grinning Prime Minister Ikeda and featuring Hi-Red Center's distinctive diagonal exclamation point seal. These are the second and third pages in Akasegawa's illustrated series within the League of Criminals' book, *Akai fūsen arui wa mesu ōkami no yoru* (The Red Balloon, or the Night of the She-Wolf), 1963.

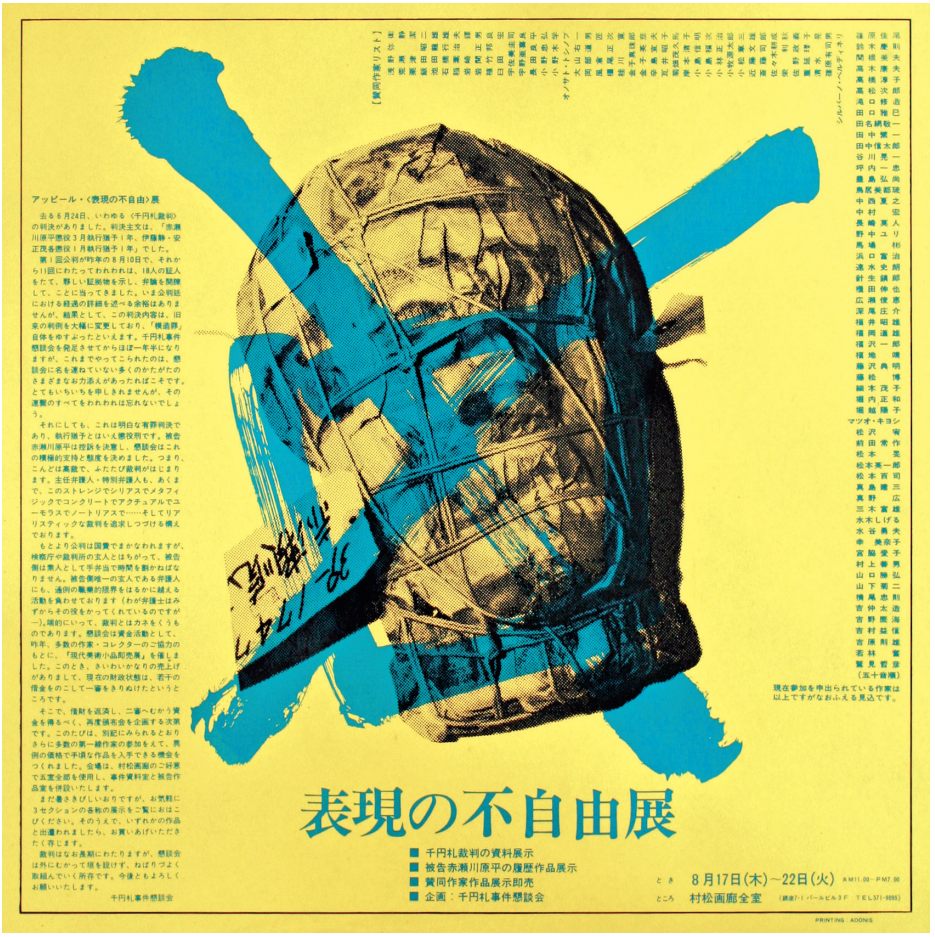


PLATE 16 The poster for the 1,000-yen Incident Discussion Group's *Unfreedom of Expression Exhibition*, August 1967, Muramatsu Gallery, publicizing the verdict from the June trial and supporting Akasegawa's legal costs. The poster lists nearly a hundred contributing artists, a number "which we expect will increase." Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.



PLATE 17 Akasegawa Genpei, *Dai Nippon rei'en satsu* (Greater Japan Zero-Yen Note), 1967. Obverse and reverse faces. Printed matter, double sided. 14.4 × 30.8 cm. Akasegawa's rebuttal on December 1967 to his trial verdict was this printed work, a "real" note with a value of zero. The characters for "real thing," or *honmono*, are emblazoned on the obverse; the figure with the curiously empty head is the "portrait of a [or the] real thing" (*honmono no zu*). Akasegawa sold these notes for cash, which he then collected in a jar, with the (modeled) goal of, over time, replacing all government currency with these real, but valueless, ones. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.



PLATE 18 Members of the group Zero Dimension parade through the Ginza on February 11, 1967, in vacant-eyed plastic masks cast from an art school instructional bust of Agrippa. They wave *Hinomaru* flags emblazoned with "Celebration of Imperial Japan Zero Dimension Day." February 11 had just been reestablished as a national holiday, ostensibly in celebration of National Foundation Day, Kenkoku kinen no hi. In Imperial Japan, however, the day went by another name, Kigensetsu, first proclaimed in 1872 as a commemoration of the mythohistorical founding of the nation by the accession to the throne of the divine progenitor and first emperor, Jimmu. In 1889 it was the day chosen for the Meiji emperor to "bequeath" the Constitution to the people in a carefully sacralized and choreographed set of ceremonies. Despite its renaming as *Kenkoku no hi* in 1947, the holiday was eliminated in 1948 and only restored in 1966, after years of campaigning from the Right. Zero Dimension's burlesque of the glassy-eyed zeal of the self-proclaimed patriot groups effectively lampoons the emptiness behind the state's restoration of this celebration—and its transparently willful historical amnesia—one year before the centennial anniversary of the Meiji Restoration. Photo courtesy of Katō Yoshihiro.



PLATE 19 Akasegawa Genpei's poster for Adachi Masao (formerly of VAN Film Science Research Center) and Wakamatsu Kōji's film, *Sekigun—PFLP: Sekai sensō sengen* (Red Army / PFLP: Declaration of World War), 1971. The poster was allegedly a hit among the PFLP (the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the film's coproducers), who invited Akasegawa through Adachi to to spend a year with them in Lebanon doing further design work. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

the period. This was in spite of the fact that many of its *causes* were directly related to the security arrangement with America, including Korean War procurements, a transistor and television industry arising from technology transfers, and continuing beneficial trade arrangements—directly related, in other words, to the cold and hot wars in Asia.[96]

More than just an electoral ploy, Prime Minister Ikeda's strategy was able to take advantage of these transformations already under way to ease and displace the memory of naked state force and thwarted demands for democratic participation. The elaborate performance of conciliation, the abandonment of constitutional revision, and calls to respect social order promised a path away from violence and confrontation, while the prospect of true economic benefits had a real appeal for people whose recent memories included postwar starvation conditions and devastating economic contractions.[97] In many ways, this was a Monty Hall, *Let's Make a Deal* moment for Japanese politics, when thwarted demands for democratic participation were traded away for fabulous prizes—with Ikeda and the Liberal Democratic Party reaping the benefits of their apparent munificence.[98]

This was completely in keeping with the confidential assessment of the American Embassy at the time: that to stay in power, conservatives needed economic prosperity and the adoption of a "progressive, more liberal image, in order to undercut the left's fixation that contemporary Japanese conservatism is no more than the old pre-war militarist conservatism in disguise."[99] The state's promise of order and that it would deliver the good life and income doubling within a decade became a primary means for co-opting dissent.[100] The promotion of this vision of prosperity anticipated the state's tactics for the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 in its image of a peaceful postwar Japan divorced from troubling histories.[101] This dehistoricization was all the more paradoxical since this daily life was directly linked to a cold war military alliance with the United States that determined the form in which Japan would renew and continue its historical relationship with Asia and the world.[102]

At the moment the state began championing an everyday defined by forms of consumption as the complement to an administered, closed political realm, an evolving artistic avant-garde turned to this everyday as a space to rethink a political project.[103] Poised on the brink of a slide into a proliferating mass culture, artists worked to contest an increasingly homogeneous everyday life. Through a practice that foregrounded making and producing, and direct engagement instead of passive consumption, these artists developed an art critiquing the realities and prospects of this daily life on offer.

The opportunities provided for both artistic exhibition and communication at the two *Indépendants*, particularly the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, played a pivotal role in bringing this art into being. In this the exhibitions fulfilled their promise as independent spaces for furthering democratic cultural practice and dialogue.

The Promise and Practice of Independence

From its opening on February 11, 1949, onward, the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition offered the promise and potential for democratized cultural production—but it took nearly a decade before this began to be fully realized. In its brief exhibition brochure for the inaugural exhibition—a simple list of exhibits by title and author (in order of submission)—attendees found an untitled manifesto:

> The present condition of our art world [*bijutsukai*] is that, behind the eruption of groups from every faction, and flood of exhibitions of every stripe, a jumble of feudalism, patronage bonds, utilitarian considerations and political programs remain, a labyrinthine system of detail with little prospect of democratization—or so it is said. To break through and purge all of this, and newly imbue a spirit of the highest artistic creativity, our only option is to discard all of this [in favor of] an *Indépendant*, the most democratic method of exhibition thanks to its form of completely free competition. Disregarding expertise or lack thereof, fame or anonymity, it liberates the world of art to everyone, without restriction, making it possible for works and aesthetic sensibility to attain freedom.
>
> It is for this reason alone that [the Yomiuri Shinbun Co.] endures every difficulty and sacrifice to take the decisive step towards art revolution [*bijutsu kakumei*] by opening this, our country's first [*Indépendant*]. Here there are no factions, no connections, no favoritism, no barriers of any sort: just merit and creativity, displayed without limitation in an enthusiasm for the highest art. [The Yomiuri Shinbun Co.] has every confidence that this undertaking will gain the accord of you, dear guests, who seek true democratization.[104]

The manifesto, likely written by Kaidō Hideo (perhaps together with Takiguchi Shūzō), displays both the hopes and the ambiguous cultural politics from which the exhibition originated. It declares as its goal the radical discarding of the entire hidebound, insular, and corrupt Japanese art world by supporting an entirely open exhibition. This blanket disapproval apparently

extended to the *Nihon Indépendant* held in 1947 by the Nihon Bijutsukai; in a move that perhaps clarifies the newspaper's decision to adopt the same title, the statement completely disregards the existence of the other exhibition, proclaiming its own to be "our country's first."

The manifesto congratulates the sponsoring *Yomiuri Shinbun* for its enlightened motives and many sacrifices in promoting true democracy through this exhibition. This was in keeping with the broader efforts of the *Yomiuri* to remake its image in the wake of its wartime and early Occupation history by sponsoring art exhibitions and other cultural events. At the same time, the manifesto indicates aims that go well beyond such purposes. It explicitly links the liberation of the art world and democratization, and even speaks of "art revolution," or *bijutsu kakumei*. It would take years before the possibilities of these latter goals would eclipse the former, cynical enterprise of exculpation and distraction.

In the early years of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, the majority of exhibits were staid portraiture and various modernist paintings and sculptures, although there was an undercurrent of oddities. Akasegawa points out the debt owed to these artists, whom he characterizes as nameless, unknown *henshitsusha* (literally, "degenerates"), absent from conventional histories, as a way of explaining his desire to write his account of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*; Akasegawa's figure of the unknown *henshitsusha* also explicitly poses the general problem of accounting for a (historical) phenomenon incompletely preserved in memory and traces of works alone.[105]

The exhibition's chief initial effect was not in artistic forms so much as in its liberation of a previously closed institutional space. Just as the manifesto asserted, with the mere payment of a nominal exhibit fee, anyone could display their art in the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the same place many prestigious art groups and collections were exhibited (including the *Nitten*, visited by their imperial majesties; see fig. 4.4a and 4.4b).[106] The works of professional artists hung next to children's drawings; amateurs with no access to patronage networks could hang anything, without jury screening.

Kaidō recounts that, in contrast to his political hopes for creating an *indépendant*, his practical expectations were fairly low, as there were few signs of major developments for many years. He recalled a long conversation with Takiguchi in the early years of the exhibition, reflecting on its progress and discussing whether or not the exhibition had any point. Neither of them expected much, but they "concluded that it was probably better to have it that way than to not have it."[107] This also reflects the extent to which the decision to continue the exhibition was entrusted to Kaidō—an effect of his posi-





4.4a and 4.4b Top: the emperor and empress visit the *Yomiuri*'s Matisse exhibition, April 9, 1951. Brushstrokes are visible on their retouched faces on this published image. Bottom: the crown prince inspects the brushwork. Photos courtesy of *Yomiuri Shinbun*.

tion's enhancement from a blockbuster exhibition on Matisse in 1951 that he had organized.[108]

In 1955 the exhibition began to change, with the involvement of a number of young artists of a new generation—including future Neo-Dada Group members Yoshimura Masunobu and Shinohara Ushio—whose influence would only increase. It is in this period that the *Yomiuri Indépendant* came into its own, with the steady proliferation of increasingly provocative and bizarre *objets*, performances, and installation works. Kaidō's retrospective view was that the exhibition of 1955 (the seventh) showed the first signs of the rise of true postwar newcomers, with the next exhibition, in 1956, proving that postwar art had at last come of age, "out of these unjuried, prize-less, free exhibits."[109]

Other critics and observers at the time generally acknowledged that the *Yomiuri Indépendant* of 1957 was the take-off point for the exhibition. As late as 1956, Takiguchi had been bemoaning the sad state of affairs with both *Indépendants*, accusing them and the art world in general of having lost their original democratic goals (from which the *Indépendant* in their titles derived) and having instead reached some sort of accommodation or settlement (*wakai*).[110] He described the *Nihon Indépendant* as having an "oppressive atmosphere" in which "the crude application of ideology biased the creative activities"; the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, on the other hand, seemed utterly dependent on *Yomiuri* sponsorship, despite its pretense to independence.[111] For Takiguchi, the key to the art world's having lost track of its goal of democratization (*minshūka*) lay in the poor choices posed to new artists by these two alternatives and their accommodationism.[112] Given the ever-diminishing likelihood of a wider democratization process in formal politics and society at large, a loss of focus or momentum in artistic enthusiasms for *minshūka* is hardly surprising. Pessimism would be the natural accompaniment to the accommodativeness identified by Takiguchi. And yet by the following year the young artists were actively staking out new positions in a way that could not help but be noticed; not for the last time, commentators began speaking of the "energy" newly visible at the exhibition as a way of obliquely describing this phenomenon.[113]

Kaidō retrospectively characterized the *Yomiuri Indépendant* from 1957 to 1963 (exhibitions 9 through 13) as another exhibition entirely, one "made by the artists." In this sense the later *Yomiuri Indépendant* fulfilled his original optimistic goals, at least in fostering a vigorous, critical artistic productivity. He associates the artists' affectionately abbreviated term for the *Yomiuri In-*

dépendant, "Yomiuri Anpan," with this "other *Yomiuri Indépendant*," the name transforming spontaneously in the new atmosphere of the exhibition, providing an appropriately playful title for the dynamism of the changed environment, and simultaneously resolving the problem of the two *Nihon Indépendants*.[114]

Several causes have been suggested for the transformations in these works of the late 1950s. Many point to the so-called Informel whirlwind following the Tokyo exhibitions of Art Informel works in 1956–57; these included exhibitions such as the *Yomiuri*'s *Exposition Internationale de l'Art Actuel* and the *Asahi*'s *Sekai konnichi no bijutsuten* (Art of Today's World) and one-man shows by Georges Mathieu (in the autumn of 1957), Sam Francis, and others, as well as a visit by Michel Tapié.[115] Equally important was the contemporary work of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, not only for its form and action-style execution, but also because it directed critical and artistic attention to the possibilities inherent in the predecessors of Neo-Dada. Popular critics like Hariu Ichirō, who had previously supported the reportage works, began to champion a return to Dada.[116]

Yet it is equally worth considering to what extent critical explanations after the fact attempted to account for these emergent developments at the *Yomiuri Indépendant* by imposing a genealogy to conceal an interpretive crisis. Associating these transformations with Informel, or any other artistic movement, substituted a label for an explanation—either for the true international dimensions of this phenomenon or for an analysis of the contents of this particular derivation of oddities. A variant of this problem is reproduced in retrospective accounts which attempt to claim primacy for some of these innovations for certain artist groups, such as in the push to credit the Gutai group for its action and happening innovations. Such a focus reduces the analysis of artistic innovation to a single dimension: that of ownership.

Takiguchi was perhaps the least reductive of the contemporary critics in his appraisal of these phenomena when he suggested that Informel had provided not a template but a "cue" for an "outpouring of pent-up creative energy that was still in search of a direction" for "young talent struggling to develop its own world of expression." Such a description left open the question of genealogy and avoided the closure of terms such as "anti-art."[117]

Akasegawa, one of the young artists of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, provides a tongue-in-cheek account of how the *objet* emerged:

> I held in my hand the explosive to fuse fiction and the real world and I could foresee that flat and closed pictorial space could now be twisted out

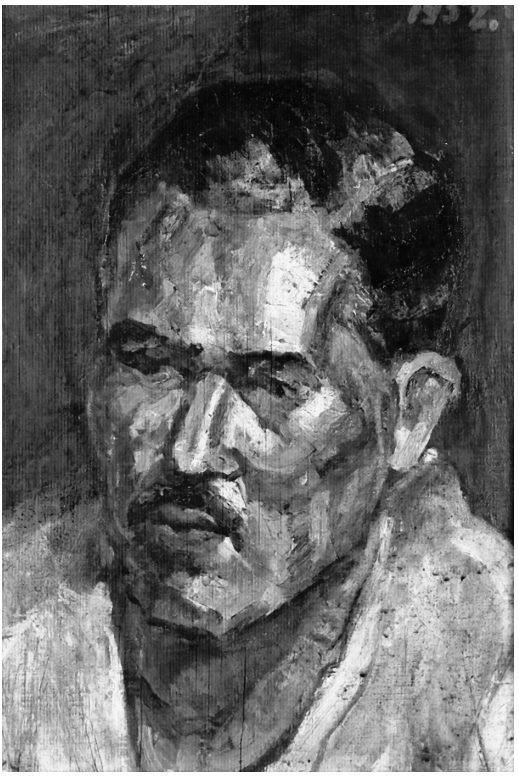
in to three dimensions. At first, our timid attempts to protrude further from the picture surface progressed rapidly. Wood, rope, shoes and cooking pans were all used. Then steel ribs, car tires, scrap metal were brought into play; the protrusion leapt *Akushon* from 17 centimeters to 30, and then on to 1 meter. This soon went beyond the boundaries of what the picture surface could support and the projections began to fall off. In this way the picture was left behind and we began to look at different kinds of objects lying on the floor.

It was by doing this that we learnt what an *objet* was.[118]

This is something of a caricature, but Akasegawa's depiction nevertheless locates the origins of this new practice in an unexpected organic extrusion from conventional framed works and thus captures the sense of the dynamic dialogue in forms that was under way at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. That dialogue will be the subject of chapter 5; here we shall briefly examine how considerations of practice led Akasegawa himself to the new *Yomiuri Anpan*.

Routes to the *Yomiuri Anpan I*: Akasegawa Genpei

Akasegawa's initial experience with the two *indépendants* came right at the point that the *Yomiuri Indépendant* was beginning to be remade by the participation of young artists; the timing of the subsequent transformations in his art, in fact, makes him an exemplar of the artistic dynamism that typifies this later, self-made *Yomiuri Indépendant*. His artistic orientation was in many ways typical of young postwar artists. Born in Yokohama in 1937 (as Akasegawa Katsuhiko) but growing up largely in Oita City in Kyushu, he displayed artistic interest from an early age. His interest deepened when, while in middle school, he visited the only arts supply store in the city with a friend and, despite his youth, was invited to the owner's atelier to join the group of adult painters there. Although the family experienced considerable poverty in the years after the war, Akasegawa's father managed to save enough money to send him to the Musashino Art School in 1955; its rundown appearance and antiestablishment tendencies excited Akasegawa for the year and a half of studies he was able to afford. (He supplemented his father's savings with part-time work as a sandwichman, standing in place for four hours at a time, wearing placards front and back with advertisements.)[119] Akasegawa also participated in May Day demonstrations in his first year and in the Sunagawa River protests in 1956, where he witnessed terrifying scenes of police violence for the first time.[120] It was during this



4.5 Akasegawa Genpei, *Chichi no shōzō* (Portrait of My Father), 1951. Oil on canvas. 33.7 × 24.3 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

time that he began to enter his art in the two *Indépendant* exhibitions, first in the *Nihon Indépendant* in 1956, then in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* in 1958 (fig. 4.5).

Akasegawa's dissatisfaction with the *Nihon Indépendant* and its reportage works was almost certainly conditioned by his experience with the demonstrations and his developing sense of what an engaged artistic practice might require. It was only some years later, however, that he was able to articulate an explanation for what at the time were moves guided by artistic interests and practice rather than by political theorization. He has written of the ever-larger images of hands raised in united protest and the despair that they evoked in him.[121] Like Takiguchi, he too seems to have found the *Nihon Indépendant* somewhat confined and confining, but Akasegawa identifies his and other similar artists' itinerary—in the *Nihon Indépendant*, and then departing for the *Yomiuri Indépendant*—as driven by the same core desire: a "longing for an immediacy [*chokusetsusei*] of painting adequate to contemporary society."[122] His retrospective view was that the heroically caricatured reportage works comprised stereotypical imagery disconnected from actual

events, in which a reified gesture of immediacy stood in for actual artistic connection to society:

> That longing for immediacy at first attracted the artists to the paintings of "Socialist Realism." Yet this at once became a stereotype [*ruikei*], and instead acted as an embankment maintaining the distance between painting and contemporary society. This was virtually of a piece with the bureaucratization of revolutionary government in politics. At this point, all adventures vanished, and painting became something that could not stir without permission from verbal thought [*kotoba no shisō*]. It was a condition in which painting, attracted by [the hope of] social immediacy, marked out worthless days in that pictorial surface.[123]

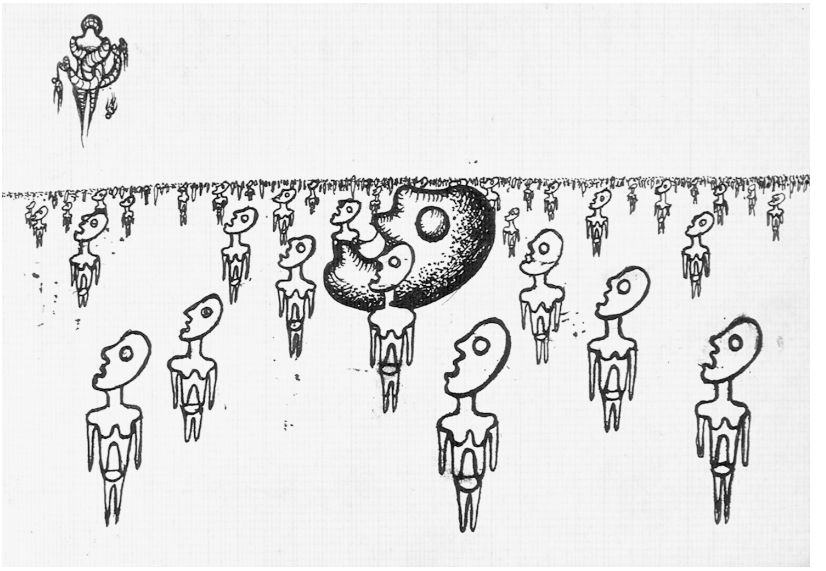
This was an art that had become subordinated to the range of possibilities present in an extrinsic theory and discourse rather than finding its own voice from within an engaged practice. Yet despite the disappointment (and anti-Stalinist perspective) registering in the quote above, both the protest experience and the encounter with the reportage works productively shaped Akasegawa's interests and art.

In the protests, Akasegawa had his first encounter with a mass, whose image, if not its concrete effects, deeply impressed him (as discussed in chapter 3). At the same time, he found his own temperament unsuited for direct action and the use of force. Yet his encounter at the *Nihon Indépendant* with reportage's attempt to reach out and connect with the protest movements focused his attention on its inadequacy, on the gap between art and direct action that could not be reduced by this artistic approach. Again the *Nihon Indépendant* was not the sole source for reportage works, which Akasegawa had clearly encountered and even drawn for years (particularly through a fondness for the work of Käthe Kollwitz). It was, however, the negative example made visible by the large, simultaneous display of so many versions of reportage that drew attention to their inadequacy; just as the collection of works in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* could present a continued, promising artistic discourse, the works in the *Nihon Indépendant* could render visible the problem of form itself. A single work might be given credit for the sincerity of the political impulse behind it and defer the problem of formal inadequacy as a merely incidental issue for the work at hand (with the hope that perhaps another work might get closer to the political sentiment or event represented through stronger commitment and a more faithful rendering of the sense of struggle). However, in the context of the late 1950s, a collection such as at the *Nihon Indépendant* would have made this deferment

and hope a more remote possibility for someone as politically and artistically astute as Akasegawa. He notes in particular that as he and his friend Kazakura Shō were touring the *Nihon Indépendant*, they were both drawn to the few scattered works outside the reportage style—a sign of the particular fascination such works possessed in this setting.[124] In this way, by negative example, Akasegawa was directed toward the problem of artistic form itself. It was in this context that he encountered the nascent avant-garde activities within the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, first in a series of exciting rumors of provocative works, of a kind of rule-breaking, evolving chaos, a playful setting where one might find a real flower vase placed in the middle of a painting of a desk.[125] He went to the exhibition of 1957 (whose surprising displays had spawned the majority of these rumors in the artistic community) and was deeply intrigued. The next year he submitted works for the first time at the *Yomiuri Indépendant* and for the final time at the *Nihon Indépendant*.

The change in Akasegawa's art in this period is instructive: his work at the time of his first submission to the *Nihon Indépendant*, in 1956, was, like that of his *senpai*, Yoshimura Masunobu, figurative, though in Akasegawa's case it had recently moved from portraiture to surrealistic bodies composed of tubular structures—as much as these transformations may be gleaned from the works that have survived from this period or that were captured on film.[126] His concern with the body during the late 1950s reflects a broadening of focus to consider systematicity in the body, a body riven by, even comprising wormlike and cocoon-like forms, a body that is mechanically or unconsciously organized and sexualized. The work *Kafka Otoko (Chiheisen)* (Kafka Men [Horizon], ca. 1957; fig. 4.6) further incorporates his interest in African art; it depicts a multitude of identical, simplified human forms stretching out to infinity (but retaining sufficient space between each to convey a sense of abject aloneness, despite their numbers), their heads facing up and to the side, eyes blank, mouths open.[127] In their midst a mask-like enlargement of their heads, like a master template, also gazes blindly at the sky. At the top left, one of Akasegawa's tube-like body structures hovers with tiny human forms clinging to it, one of which has lost its grip and is falling. The overall effect is of profound alienation, a mass without a spark of unity, fascinated, stupified, horrified, unable to look away, again with some sort of structuring element or principle hovering unassailably out of reach—a deeply pessimistic image, a Socialist Realism rendered profound and unrecognizable through an encounter with Kafka.

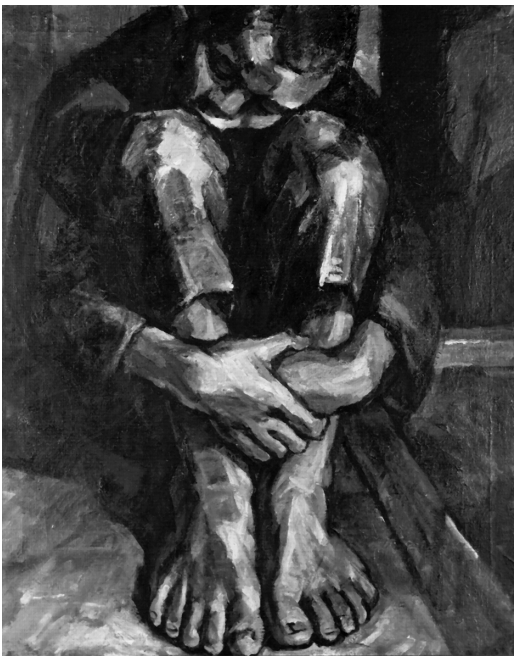
In a sense, Akasegawa was especially prepared to see the shortcomings of the reportage works at the *Nihon Indépendant* through his prior inter-



4.6 Akasegawa Genpei, *Kafka Otoko (Chiheisen)* (Kafka Men [Horizon]), ca. 1957. Ink, paper. 14.8 × 20.8 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

est in the work of Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945), whose haunting images of poverty and peasant rebellion predated Socialist Realism as a movement and were, as politically committed representations, vastly superior to much of what Akasegawa saw at the *Nihon Indépendant*.[128] His earliest surviving compositions show the strength of Kollwitz's appeal (figs. 4.5 and 4.7); his encounter with the reportage works of the *Nihon Indépendant* was also mediated by her virtuosity and his own attempts along these lines. By contrast, their "amateurishness" was somewhat painful to him.[129] In other words, the works failed, in his eyes, for both their artistic and their political inadequacies. Thus Akasegawa's move away from this sort of work during the second half of the 1950s admits a number of interpretive possibilities; it seems, however, that his artistic shift was reinforced by these negative examples. Whether or not they echoed an earlier sense of his own inadequacy at emulating Kollwitz or reinforced a conclusion he had drawn earlier about the potential of even the best-executed realism, Akasegawa was at a point in his work that would have made him particularly receptive to and perceptive of the sorts of formal questions presented by the collections of works at the two *indépendants*.

Numerous encounters by others with the evolving art of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* were occasioning similar sorts of transformations in artistic prac-



4.7 Akasegawa Genpei, *Mazushiki fuyu* (Winter of Poverty), 1954. Oil on canvas. 80.5 × 65.0 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

tices, as artists responded to the broadening experimentation with forms; these in turn provided further impetus to developments at the exhibition. While the *Yomiuri Indépendant* itself occupied only a few weeks a year in the lives of its participants, its remarkably free space concentrated and nurtured the developing artistic anarchy. Drawn together during the exhibition, artists were able to acquire a much sharper sense of their collective endeavors through its cross-section of intense, committed experimental activity. They mutually fed off of their shared enthusiasms, played off each other, engaged in one-upmanship, learned from and criticized each other's works, socialized, and enjoyed the mutual support and collective madness.[130] For many, the two weeks of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* each year was the signal event punctuating their artistic activity, providing a mutually constitutive and ongoing orientation for their work. The exhibition was propelled between years by a self-generated dynamism sustained in the artistic activities it had nurtured. Such artistic practices took on their own momentum in the intervening months before being refocused again for the next exhibition, hotly anticipated in diverse discussions and preparations. By bringing together in one location all of these disparate practices, the exhibition drew the artists' attention to questions of form, expression, and action that perhaps would

not otherwise have been addressed so powerfully or presciently.[131] The *Yomiuri Anpan* as crucible certainly met and exceeded Kaidō's original hopes in providing this space for free practice and exhibition, a space which he had enabled and supported over the years even while despairing of its ever amounting to anything.

CHAPTER 5

THE *YOMIURI ANPAN*

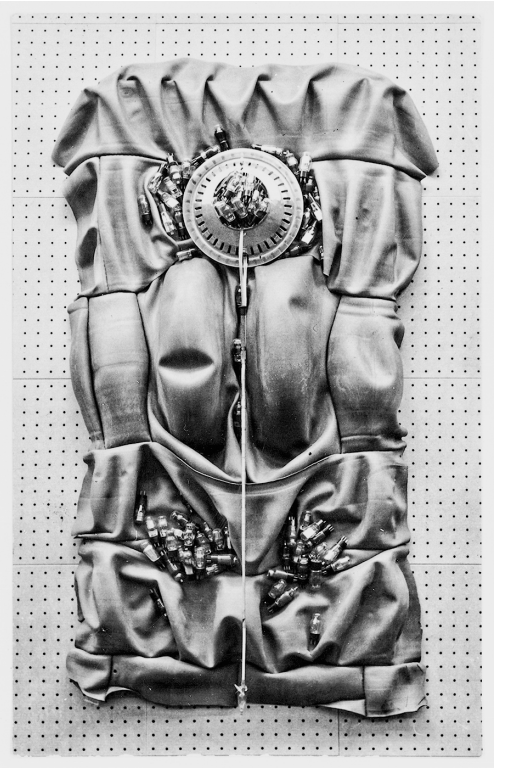
The *Yomiuri Indépendant* was originally conceived as a step toward "art revolution," democratizing an ossified, corrupt, and stunted art world in Japan, "making it possible for works and aesthetic sensibility to attain freedom." Yet born of the fraught cultural politics of the Occupation period and its many reversals, the exhibition only slowly came to realize such aims with the influx of a new generation of artists in the latter half of the 1950s, an influx that inaugurated a playful competition in forms that increasingly focused on the everyday world. As discussed in chapter 4, this was the founder Kaidō Hideo's second, revised *Yomiuri Indépendant*, or *Yomiuri Anpan*. In this chapter I provide a partial account of the evolution of artists' works in this dynamic period, tracing the complex dialogue and convergence in forms between artists of widely divergent backgrounds, theoretical concerns, and practices—a dialogue that gave rise to an unexpected, critical politics.

A Partial *Yomiuri Indépendant* Bestiary

Within the time of Kaidō's second *Yomiuri Indépendant*, or (more commonly) *Yomiuri Anpan*, we might provisionally typologize certain related sorts of formal experiments. Following Akasegawa's account in his retrospective, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi! "Yomiuri andependan" to iu genshō*, we first have the *objets*: uncanny figures and agglomerations, difficult to interpret, often of waste materials—glass, metal, plastic, vacuum tubes (then being replaced by the transistor), used inner tubes, and the like. The *objets* ranged freely from assemblages to sculpture, from mixed media to ready-mades. Regardless of form, at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, *objet* became shorthand not for something aestheticized but rather for an object that, first of all, was put under a kind of radical scrutiny. There was an expectation that the artist's gesture of setting forth the object implied a kind of suspicion; whether it was a specially assembled art construction or an everyday item sitting there with little or no embellishment or reconfiguration, it was to be interrogated like a criminal for a yet unknown crime. Encouraged and legitimated in turn by a contemporary, new critical appreciation of Dada and of the ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp, artists expanded their practice in this huge potential field of action and investigation.[1]

Typically assembled from cheaply obtained mass-produced items and finds from garbage dumps, the *objets* confronted spectators with the debris of the economic expansion in transformed, hieroglyphic form. Some *objets* approximated objectified, isolated parts of the human body, refiguring waste materials into often obsessional, menacing, or sexualized forms. A work by Akasegawa, *Vagina Sheets (The Second Present)* (*Vagina no shiatsu* [*Nibanmei no puresento*], 1961), for example, presented a vaginal or labial form (constructed of clay-red truck tire inner tubes, clusters of vacuum tubes, and a hubcap) dripping hydrochloric acid from a long pipette onto an *objet* on the floor (Plate 10, fig. 5.1). Part of a series, the work culminated months of experimentation with works based on truck inner tubes sewn together; in this version, the critic Ehara Jun detected "in its much more detailed construction, a kind of special eroticism."[2]

Abstract enough to avoid inviting censorship, Akasegawa's inner-tube works and *Vagina Sheets* series ultimately led him to think about the mutual imbrications and productivity of flesh and things (see chapter 3), but the inspiration for the works came originally from the materials themselves. The choice of waste materials—discarded truck tire inner tubes—was itself conditioned by the extremely limited space of Akasegawa's tiny apartment; he



5.1 Akasegawa Genpei, *Vagina no shītsu (nibanme no puresento)* (Vagina Sheets [The Second Present]), 1961 (at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*). Rubber inner tubes, vacuum tubes, pipette, wheel. 182 × 91 cm. Not pictured: floor *objet* portion of original work (a toaster stuffed with long nails, slowly corroded by acid dripped from the pipette, submitted as a separate exhibit, *Nijikan oki no haihatsu* [Stirred Up Every Two Hours]). Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

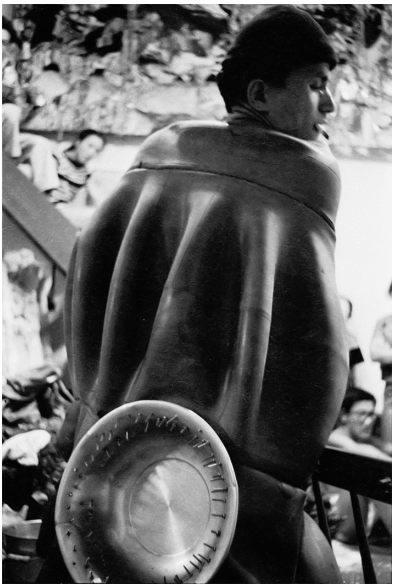
wanted to build giant works of junk art (*garakuta*) but needed something that he could assemble without a great deal of noise or equipment and that could fit inside the cramped space.[3] The vaginal reference in particular was perhaps suggested by the material's color, wet look, and tendency to bulge along its length once the inner tubes were split, turned inside out, and sewn together. The final result was uncanny, an inorganic figure of life and desire, a vaguely menacing disclosure of hidden animation in the object world.

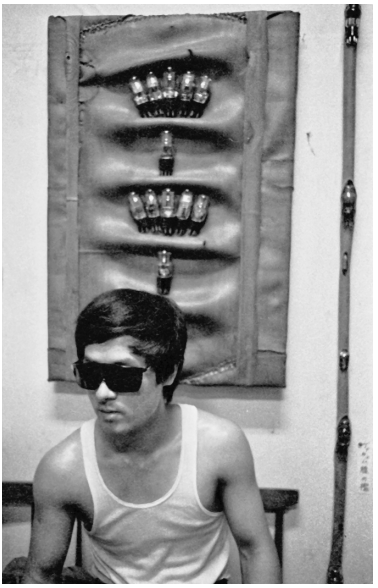
Akasegawa's recollection of preparing the first of these works interestingly parallels the narrative in his short story "Aimai na umi" (The Ambiguous Ocean), as discussed in chapter 3. Starting with a smaller inner-tube work, he labored every night to extend the piece outward by sewing on addi-

tional tubes with nylon line. He speaks of his crazed delight at the notion that he was preparing a work within his six-mat room that was actually much wider than the apartment (ultimately, twice its size). The final emergence of the huge work from the apartment after months of silent preparation purportedly gave Akasegawa's landlord a real shock.[4] While Akasegawa explains his preparations as art bordering on mania, the experience also resonates with the text of "Aimai na umi" as the spy grasps his strange pistol: "When he holds that antiperson pistol before him, his flesh begins to expand outward. The flesh fills with oxygen, swells, and folds back upon itself. . . . His flesh expands in precise inverse proportion, and as it swells to enfold the room, it is expelled out to cover the hallways, paint over the trains, and expand outward toward infinity."[5] Some analogue of Akasegawa's oddly exciting experience of slowly preparing the fleshy "vagina sheet" artwork, secretly extending it outward until its length overflows the room's dimensions, appears to be reproduced in the later text, with the power of the artistic act itself transformed into the fantasy of a moment of contact with the strange pistol. Perhaps in its imagery we can grasp some of that thrilling sense of potential he felt in making the art *objet*. His friend, the artist Kazakura Shō, recalled his own shock upon a visit to Akasegawa's tiny, six-mat apartment during the construction of this work: it was "as if a dinosaur's internal organs were being dissected." Moving about the space, Kazakura felt a bit like a microscopic person groping about inside internal organs. He concluded that Akasegawa was looking for the point of contact where "inside" and "outside" reverse themselves, suggesting another level at which contemporary observers understood the vagina reference of the works. (See figs. 5.2a, 5.2b, and 5.2c for Kazakura's own exploration of the performance potentials of this *objet*.)[6]

Many of the *objets* either gave an uncanny, alien animation to agglomerations of waste materials or externalized and objectified isolated human body parts; some performed both operations simultaneously (such as Akasegawa's *Vagina Sheets* and related works). Yoshino Tatsumi's entry in 1963, *Eating Things / Things Eating* (*Mono-kui*) presented a compelling visual pun (fig. 5.3). He affixed gaping, toothy mouths to the openings of five large, bulging canvas bags of staple foods, playing on the double meaning of his work's title as to the indeterminate identity of the subject and object of consumption—what might ultimately consume what.[7] Other works were often subtler in exploring the possibilities of conflating the biological and the material. Indeed an artist's concern with corporeality could animate the production of works which themselves lacked visible reference to the body:







5.2a, 5.2b, and 5.2c

Akasegawa atop the first *Vagina no shītsu* (Vagina Sheets) at the second Neo-Dada exhibition, Yoshimura Masunobu's atelier, July 1–10, 1960. Akasegawa produced a variety of inner tube works during his participation in the Neo-Dada Group in 1960 for exhibition and performance. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

Group member Kazakura Shō performs while wrapped in Akasegawa's *Vagina no shītsu*, second Neo-Dada exhibition, July 1960. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

Group member Toyoshima Sōroku in front of another of Akasegawa's tube works. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

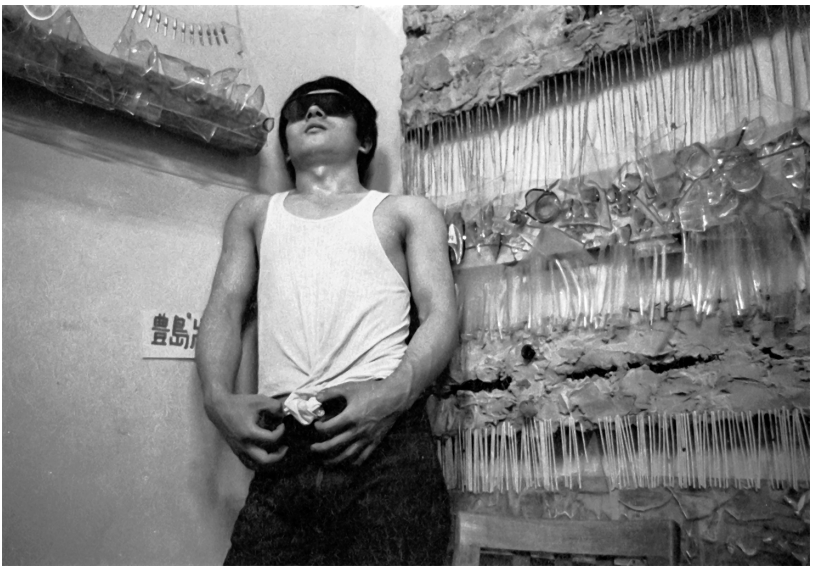


5.3 Yoshino Tatsumi, *Mono-kui* (*Eating Things / Things Eating*), 1963. Courtesy of Yoshino Tatsumi.

Akasegawa's first work in his 1,000-yen project, the 3′ × 6′ hand-drawn magnification of the 1,000-yen note, was closely bound to his analysis of bodily order and system binding together money, things, and flesh (see chapters 3 and 7).

Toyoshima Sōroku's output illustrates the circuitous route *objet* work could take in a short time, from an excited, explosive fusing of materials into a finer, more figurative, and even biological exploration of forms. Around 1960, as a member of the group Neo-Dada, Toyoshima produced works such as *Junk Put on the Wall* (*Kabe oki no janku*), a fantastic, looping frenzy of old painted tatami mats on a wooden frame (later burned in a field), and assemblages featuring large, jagged pieces of broken glass jutting from the surface (ultimately left outside to fall apart and shatter when rain dissolved the water-soluble glue binding the work together) (fig. 5.4).[8] With the breakup of the Neo-Dada Group in 1961, however, Toyoshima departed from this form of junk art to produce a series of works fusing together metal materials into well-formed, organic, and provocative creations.

Using materials from his family's business enabled Toyoshima to move



5.4 Toyoshima Sōroku in front of two of his works, 1960. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

toward an increasingly figurative practice. His sculptural entry for the exhibition in 1961, *Dinner of the Soul* (*Sōru no bansan*; fig. 5.5a), comprised fused metal chair legs and automobile headlights rendered strange by their repetitive conjoining. The work prompted the critic Nakahara Yūsuke to muse on how the "coarse materials result in our being invited to a non-everyday world [*hinichijōteki na sekai*]" through its "metal skin" and "strange world from a kind of noise made into harmony."[9] Toyoshima's works in 1962 demonstrated further progression into figuration and reflection on artistic practice, often highlighted by the works' titles. His submissions to the *Yomiuri* exhibition that year, both titled *Yet Another Work Presented to You by Mr. Impotence* (*Impotenz shi ga anata ni kōkai shimasu tsugi no sūji*), continued a series of metal *objet* works begun the prior year, wall-hung "canvases" composed of finely undulating and protruding strips of sheet metal. Both the title and the ever-increasing size of the works (see fig. 5.5b) proclaimed the artist's own sense of frustration and social powerlessness, along with his pugnacious determination to continue his practice. *The Collaborative Work of the Crowd Personified* (*Gijun gun mo rensaku*) presented a stand-alone, finely crafted metal *objet* echoing the "steel art" wall-mounted works, yet moving further toward a kind of puzzling figuration. Here the undecidability of the figure leaves open the question of *what* the crowd of the title has created. Both the notion of the crowd's collaborative authorship and its paradoxical







5.5a, 5.5b, and 5.5c

Toyoshima Sōroku, *Sōru no bansan* (Dinner of the Soul), 1961, on display at the thirteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*, March 1961.

Toyoshima Sōroku poses with his *Yomiuri Indépendant* submission of 1962, *Impotenz shi ga anata ni kōkai shimasu tsugi no sūji* (Yet Another Work Presented to You by Mr. Impotence), 1962.

Toyoshima Sōroku, *I to YOU no toraburu* (The Trouble with Me and You), 1963, on display at the fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*, March 1963. All photos courtesy of Toyoshima Sōroku.

result suggest a variant of the Surrealist quest for the profound disclosures of a truly automatic work, a search that was being revisited by a number of Toyoshima's contemporaries, such as the members of the Music group (Gurūpu ongaku). But in contrast to the group improvisational approach of the latter, a kind of automatism was reflected in Toyoshima's solo production process, where form often followed from his immersion in a repetitive process of agglomerating metal objects (both waste materials and "borrowed" pieces from his father's shop).[10]

Toyoshima's entry for the final *Yomiuri Indépendant*, in 1963, *The Trouble with Me and You* (*I to YOU no toraburu*; literally, "The Trouble with I and You"), presented a further formal refinement in both scale and detail: giant organelle-like, pod-shaped bodies clustered together on stands, finely detailed yet roughly connected by cords to wall-mounted electrics (fig. 5.5c). The fine, undulating curves and repetitions of the metal strips gave an impression of discrete yet congregating bodies with electrical umbilici: perhaps a hidden life of objects and debris emerging from new patterns of daily life? Or is this us, reduced to unrecognizability and concealed dependencies by this daily life? The undecidability of these forms again plays against the title's promise to identify—what? Our trouble? Is that what these forms constitute? But then, where are the "I" and the "You"? Or is that very formulation itself the problem, and the work an exploration of deeper structures of connection missed by an I/you perspective? If the title continues Toyoshima's tendency toward self-referentiality, it might point to his ongoing, frustrating struggle with both representation and social relevance. All of these readings were possible within the ambiguities of the title's language and the context of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* works. Indeed the contemporary commentator Takashina Shūji saw in the complexities of the piece "the volition of an autonomous system beyond that of its creator," demonstrating the strong propensity at the time to make such contextual associations with these works.[11]

Such immediate references have tended to be overlooked in retrospective examinations of these and other works. In Toyoshima's case, the biographical entry in the exhibition catalogue for a recent retrospective directly associates his penchant for scrap metal materials with his childhood play with waste items left in the rubble after the war.[12] Despite the ubiquity of such aesthetic claims, and their reductiveness, we might reconsider this gesture for what it leaves out: the origins of the material, the metal itself, in the contemporaneous economic expansion, and the puzzling, uncanny link between such debris and war posited by this characterization. Rather than

returning us to the narrative origins of a postwar Japan and the aesthetic preferences of an individual artist, this latter link is ultimately decipherable only by considering the connection between Japanese prosperity and war in Asia.[13] While Prime Minister Ikeda's shift in strategies of political legitimation effectively worked to obscure such connections, the Vietnam War would exhume these issues again for millions of protesters later in the decade.

Despite a preponderance of "junk art" and repetitions of inorganic materials in many of the new works, much of the art focused on corporeality and the physical. While highly indirect in the case of works such at Toyoshima's, in others, photographs of actual bodies, especially nude bodies, were used to jarring effect. In 1963 three giant photographic enlargements by Yoshioka Yasuhiro (titled with an upside-down graphical symbol for woman) remained on the exhibition walls until a museum official recognized in their strange, undulating contours the fact that they were extreme close-ups of female genitalia. Another exhibit, one that Akasegawa calls one of the signature installations of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, was Itoi Kanji's strange little shrine, featured in the exhibitions of 1960 and 1961. Itoi, a.k.a. Dadakan, built the structure from wood taken from a distant, abandoned home; its dark interior was filled with cut-outs of crudely printed color nudes from weekly magazines. Akasegawa recalls his own embarrassment and shock from viewing the piece, and the sense that he had peered into a medical exhibit.[14]

With such works artists played against official prohibitions against pornography and forbidden representation. While such works were of course marked by the male-dominated art world's long-standing and often misogynistic obsession with the female body, the works also playfully intimated a world of bodies and objects outside of approved forms of representation, where secret desires accompanied the possibility of a startlingly alien birth, corrosive to the world as given. From their own particular and wildly divergent theoretical and practical concerns, such artists simultaneously participated in a broader, many-layered contemporary discourse on sex, eros, bodies, and liberation, constructed in dialogue with a variety of canonical texts, including those of Georges Bataille, Jean Genet, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, the Marquis de Sade, Herbert Marcuse, and Comte de Lautréamont (Isidore Lucien Ducasse). Art itself was at the center of figuring this imaginative encounter.

Artists' explorations of the uncanny potentials and eerie physicality of the discards of the everyday world expanded from *objets* to the practice of large installations, allowing artists to present massive repetitions of materi-

als and objects and to create encounterable spaces of their own within the exhibition. Kudō Tetsumi's entries at the *Yomiuri Indépendant* demonstrate a particularly remarkable example of this evolution in scale and scope in the work of a single artist, and of yet another distinctive engagement with the discourse of sex, bodies, material, and liberation. Kudō's work ranged across a variety of media, including *objets*, oils, and action painting performances, addressing a range of issues from mathematics, physics, and biology (including set theory, repetition and proliferation, and fusion and coalescence reactions), as well as the problem of action. His complex and evolving approach sought to make such formal problems immanent to the work of art itself, by relating the structure and physical interactions constituting the artistic work to problems of social constitution as a whole: "I am thinking about such ideas as reaching the state of saturation in the limited space of the canvas and trying to paint the states of lines. At the foundation of this way of thinking is an image of the way humans exist in this society, within some sort of mechanism—all of us packed together and wriggling inside a giant polyethylene packaging."[15]

Kudō's first submissions, in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* of 1958, received lavish praise in an article in the *Yomiuri Shinbun* by Michel Tapié, who visited the exhibition as "an unparalleled chance to seek out new young artists of Japan. And to inflame [his] own passion." Tapié's identification of one of Kudō's works in particular as "perhaps the most important harvest of this exhibition" brought the artist to the attention of many critics and supporters, including Kaidō Hideo, who visited the artist's solo exhibitions and helped direct attention to his yearly *Yomiuri Indépendant* submissions.[16] Kudō subsequently changed the name of his art group at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (Geidai) from Earth (Tsuchi) to Sharp (Ei) as it gained the sometime participation of new classmates of growing prominence, such as Shinohara Ushio, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Tanaka Fuji, and Dōi Mikio (later of Neo-Dada, Hi-Red Center, and the Time Group, respectively). Stimulated by such contacts, Kudō's art went through a series of rapid evolutions, gravitating to increasingly intricate, stand-alone *objet* sculptures and a growing emphasis on the biological in works that gave figure to complex interactions, structures, and concepts.

Kudō's *objet* entries in 1960 and 1961, *Proliferating Chain Reaction "B"* (*Zōshokusei rensa hannō [B]*) and *Proliferating Punch Reaction in "H" Style Basic Substance* (*H-gata kihontai ni okeru zōshokusei panchi hannō*), were strange sculptural creations in which hundreds of precisely tied rope knots and black, hairy scrub brushes (*tawashi*) clustered together on metal frames,

bound with endlessly knotted plastic red, white, black, yellow, and clear cords and tubing. The *objet* of 1960 appeared together with two earlier works: one, an oil painting bearing a nearly identical title, *Proliferating Chain Reaction-1* (*Zōshokusei rensa hannō-1*, 1959), was an intricacy of layers of seemingly intertwined paint flows, applied in continuous drips and pours of orange, black, white, clear varnish, green, and blue, which cracked upon drying on the saturated canvas. The other, a sculptural work, *Confluent Reaction in a Plane Circulation Substance* (*Heimen junkantai ni okeru yūgō hannō*, 1958–59), was complexly rendered (but finished only on the facing side) with oil upon string, vinyl tubing, and gloves mounted upon a steel frame; it appears to have occupied an intermediate, planar step between the artist's oil on canvas works and the larger, more three-dimensional *objet* it accompanied at the exhibition. The gloves and scrub brushes in these works were purchased in mass quantities during Kudō's frequent strolls through the city in search of intriguing materials.[17]

The *objet* submission of 1961, *Proliferating Punch Reaction in an "H" Shape Fundamental Form*, was, if anything, more complex, bizarre, and unsettling than the "B" version, adding dangling strings into an even larger and more intricately tangled matrix presenting hundreds, perhaps thousands of precisely tied knots in indecipherable, intricate conglomerations. Kudō Hiroko, his wife (also his photographer, assistant, and collaborator), recalls that the "punch" in the title referred to a "boxing punch." In this sense the *objet* echoed Kudō's earlier action painting performances (which often involved actual karate strikes) as another meditation upon action, force, form, material, and reaction.[18]

Yet as odd as these *objets* were, few were prepared for Kudō's installation work of 1962, *Distribution Map of Impotence and the Appearance of Protective Domes at the Points of Saturation* (*Inpo bunpuzu to sono hōwa bubun ni okeru hoko dōmu no hassei*). Kudō had brilliantly realized that, since the museum rented a certain amount of wall space for exhibits for a nominal fee, by simply purchasing enough of these units, one could completely take over an entire exhibition room. Carefully planned in a detailed preliminary sketch, his installation filled the room with numerous dangling penis- or pupa-shaped forms strung in clusters on a mesh of squared ropes suspended from the ceiling and walls in a net-like grid, accompanied by loaves of *koppe* bread similar in form to the chrysalises or phalluses. The phalluses varied in shape, length, and color, but were predominantly black (wrapped in black tape), with rounded, clear, or blue flashbulb tips (some in monstrous shapes, with two or three flashbulb tips), but also pale green or red flecked with

tips ranging from slightly darkened to black and red, looking perhaps injured or blasted. A few were composed of thick rope or plastic cord, terminating in a bushy-headed puff of short bits of string, with the whole held together with varnish or a semiclear plastic wash; others were shaggy shapes covered in a tangled mass of black strings. Toward one corner hung a huge column of these forms, stretching from floor to suspended rope-grid ceiling, bound together with wide, amber vinyl tubing and small tangles of whitish string, and terminating in an open, clear, plastic clamshell-like structure, from which erupted a giant, erect, brilliantly red phallus. Its tip, resting on the floor, sat atop a massive "emission" of white, cooked *udon* noodles and a variety of contemporary popular and art images in plastic bags—including Jasper Johns's *Target with Four Faces* (1955), a Buckminster Fuller geodesic dome, and dancers doing the Twist, along with a bag of pharmaceutical pills.[19] Toward the center, a similar column featured smaller, mostly red phalluses (but also black and white) within several closed plastic spheres (together with vitamin supplements and pharmaceutical pills) and a couple plastic bags; the base of this structure extended into another large pile of *udon*, again like an emission of semen.[20]

Kudō's eccentric approach was mediated in part by his idiosyncratic, sexualized theory of human oppression, his "philosophy of impotence," which he was formulating in the early 1960s. As described by Nakamura Keiji, Kudō theorized that human mechanism, the mechanism of human thought, of history and society, were all in thrall to the survival and preservation of the species.[21] Modern humans, by suppressing and forgetting the biological mechanism of sex in the act of showing love, deliver themselves unconsciously over to it (and hence the survival of the species compulsion). In response, to seek liberation, they must embrace an ascetic "philosophy of impotence" to escape from these strictures, if any revolutionary change is to be successful. In essence, Kudō's approach focused on restricting expenditures, in every sense, a Bataille-inspired twist on sex and liberation in which human desire, social phenomena, and objects are conflated in monstrous forms. But his biological, phallic figuring of proliferation out of control also referenced and perhaps spectacularly resolved a personal, unexpected encounter some years prior, in which his first *Proliferating Chain Reaction* sculpture—a twisted tree root studded with hundreds of nails, painted, and covered with flour-dipped papier-mâché—burst forth in maggots that had fed on the flour mix and multiplied in the summer heat. Pupae, maggots, penises: desire and biology erupting mindlessly from objects, proliferating out of control.[22]

Yet despite the idiosyncrasies of Kudō's theorizations and productive trajectory, his staging of everyday objects rendered strange by proliferation and reassembly—from his *objets* to his full-room installation and use of isolated anatomical parts (made even more biological through the glistening noodles) in more or less ambiguously distorted shapes—all put him on a formal level within the mainstream of his cohort of energetic, experimentally minded *Yomiuri Indépendant* artists. While motives and theories could differ wildly, with artists moving in diverse personal trajectories, the dialogue in these works nonetheless constituted a developing, shared artistic discourse of forms, constituted in an intense spirit of excitement and competition and realized in a proliferation of mutually informing works.

Yoshimura Masunobu's installation entry in 1961, *Mr. Sadada's* (literally, "Mr. Kill Dada") *Reception Room* (*Sadada-shi no ōsetsushitsu*), created a cramped stand-alone room within the exhibition room, clustered with hundreds of whiskey bottles, along with an accompanying bench and desk made of yet more whiskey bottles. Yoshimura had first experimentally covered a wooden chair with the bottles, then a table (both entered as part of the exhibit as *Mr. Sadada's Tower*, *Sadada-shi no tō*); excited by these structures, he then embarked upon the larger room. The completed work was first displayed at the third Neo-Dada event in September 1960 at the Hibiya Gallery, then entered in the thirteenth *Yomiuri* exhibition as a painting (figs. 5.6a, 5.6b, and 5.6c) and discarded afterward.[23] Distantly echoing assemblages like Kaprow's *Rearrangeable Panels* in "kiosk configuration," Yoshimura's work suggested an everyday world confined, menaced, and enabled by constant, numbing intoxication—increasingly the very image of salaryman existence, but also a favorite romanticized preoccupation of defeated political activists, and indeed of avant-garde artists. The bottles were allegedly the products of Yoshimura's own particular everyday life, the empties from get-togethers with the other members and associates of the group Neo-Dada at his atelier in Shinjuku, the White House. Such a claim was manifestly preposterous, albeit hilariously so; in fact the bottles were obtained from the neighborhood liquor shop owner, whose children Yoshimura was tutoring in art.[24] Such insider jokes often coexisted with the uncanny formal aspects of works to produce a multilevel critical representation of daily life, beginning with self-critique (and playful self-mythologization) and expanding outward to a more general reference.[25]

The development of the categories of action and performance at the exhibition was also closely linked to the evolving practice and significance of the *objets*. Though initially spurred on by the action painting of contemporary,



5.6a, 5.6b, and 5.6c Yoshimura Masunobu and his installation *Sadada-shi no ōsetsushitsu* (Mr. Sadada's Reception Room), at the third Neo-Dada Group exhibition, Hibiya Gallery, September 1960. Photos courtesy of Ishiguro Kenji.





well-known American and European artists—many of whom had put on exhibitions and demonstrations in Japan—the practice of *akushon* (action) came to encompass experiments investigating the very notion of artistic practice as a general category of action and agency. This was to develop a focus increasingly pointing beyond the art institutional frame to a general consideration of the possibilities of action, and even direct action, through their practice.

Group Zero Dimension made *objet* submissions that heralded and provided an improvised set for a mysterious ceremony. Adopting the then still surprising happening format during the exhibition of 1963, each day group members in street clothes assembled at the exhibition, then lay down en masse atop the floor portion of the multiexhibit installation of Katō Yoshihiro, a key member of the group.[26] A participant in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* since 1961, favoring large-scale, colorful *objets* (see plate 11), Katō had submitted his multiwork installation as a combination of several entries, listed as *Mandala of a Nirvana-Entering Rite (March 10 revolutionary rite 1)* (*Aru nyūmetsushiki mandara [3/10 henkaku gishiki 1]*), *Black Eros (3/10 revolutionary rite)* (*Kuro no erosu [3/10 henkaku gishiki 2]*), and *March 10 Revolutionary Rite Divine Instruments 1* and *2* (*Sangatsu tōka henkaku gishiki shinkigu 1* and *2*). Exhibition staff likely assumed that *Black Eros* referred to the cloth and pillows spread upon the floor (later the group typically used shabby futons) and that the *Divine Instruments* comprised the small black and white *objets* (representing breasts). The submission of the innocuous *objets* created the space for the group to enact their ritual without raising the suspicions of the edgy museum officials. In truth, the titles likely referred to the combination of performance and *objets* carefully planned by the group, a "revolutionary rite" for which the entries formed a background and a kind of impromptu ritual setting. Once the group took position and reclined, the exhibit labels—and indeed the *objets* themselves—would take on their full meaning (figs. 5.7a, 5.7b, and 5.7c). While a part of the still-coalescing group's own developing vocabulary of distinctively ritualistic performance and gestures, the action performed at the exhibition also amounted to a dramatization and attack upon the very act of museum exhibit viewing as a form of sedentary voyeurism.[27] The elaborate system of lookouts and coordination made it possible for the group to rapidly assemble, carry out their daily performance, and disappear. The action in its setting presented a number of contrasts, or perhaps alternations, in mandala fashion: the tight coordination and the title's allusion to revolution (*henkaku*) contrasting sharply with the relative inaction and calm of the performance, while the masses of ciga-



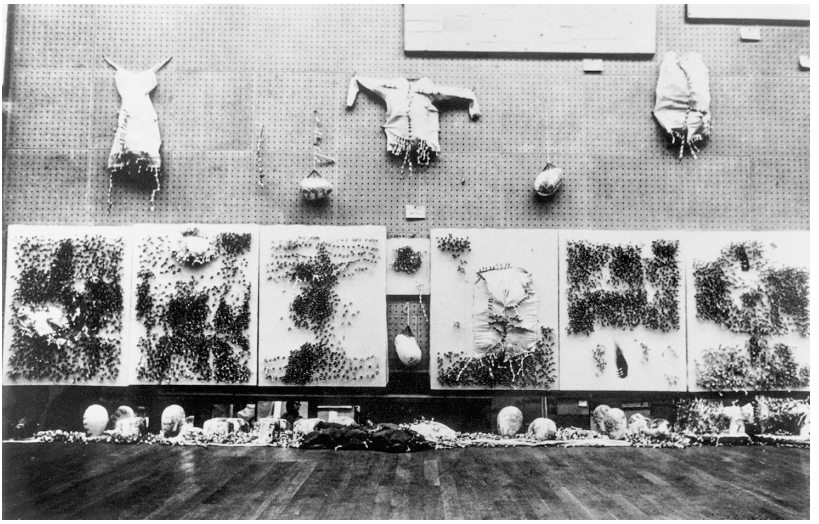


5.7a, 5.7b, and 5.7c (Above and opposite) Zero Dimension members and Kishimoto Sayoko (of Neo-Dada) recline amid the *Yomiuri* exhibition of 1963. Katō's *Mandala*, now augmented with small inset boxes of cigarette butts. Courtesy of Katō Yoshihiro and KuroDalaiJee.

rettes contrasted the mandala Buddhist theme with worldly desires. Viewers were left to ponder the totality of the scene and, potentially, synthesize the prospects for Nirvana and revolution, voyeurism, repetition, and inertia before the debris of considerable smoking, and art.

There were also works that brought spectators too into an active, even creative role, such as the installations by Nakazawa Ushio, Nagano Shōzō, Dōi Mikio, and Tanaka Fuji of the Time Group, presented at the 1962 exhibition. The entry by Nakazawa featured a large white sheet spread across the exhibit hall floor; as passersby walked over it, they would tread upon bags filled with ink underneath, spilling the contents onto the floor and leaving an ink-blot trace of the moment upon the sheet—and likely upon the museum floor as well, to museum officials' dismay.[28] *Jikan* (Time) by Nagano Shōzō featured plastic balls that would be kicked about the floor within a low, rubber rope boundary.[29] Appropriate to the group's name, these *objets* were experiments in spectator-driven performance temporality, acquiring form and substance at the moment of the museum visitor's interaction with the pieces.[30] The first generated an *objet* marking the traces of such interactions as a series of ink stains upon a sheet, but in a sense this was a poor substitute for the larger work, which encompassed the temporality of all of the interactions that the spills recorded (revealed in the serial rupturing of the ink bags). The second featured no *objet* traces, but as Time existed only as dynamic interaction, balls rolling or scattered about in whatever configu-





5.8 Nakanishi Natsuyuki, *Sentaku basami wa kakuhan kōi o shuchō suru* (Clothespins Assert Agitating Action), fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*, 1963. Photo by Sawatari Hajime. Courtesy of Nakanishi Natsuyuki.

ration the last visitor had left the work. They were both removed by museum officials.[31]

Nakanishi Natsuyuki's entry at the last *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition, in 1963, combined objects and performance elements, the artist's own body, and spectators.[32] The work's title, *Clothespins Assert Agitating Action* (*Sentaku basami wa kakuhan kōi o shuchō suru*), was a pun conflating "political agitation" and the "agitation" (*kakuhan*) of washing machines, a fine example of the humorous yet nonetheless serious concern these artists had with the relation between political action and the transformations of daily life brought about by the new boom in mass consumption.[33] Yet during the prior year, this shy artist, together with Imaizumi Yoshihiko, had begun serious planning for an ultimately aborted guerrilla art installation that would have placed a guillotine in the plaza outside of the Imperial Palace (see chapter 6).[34]

In Nakanishi's *Yomiuri Indépendant* installation (fig. 5.8), masses of clothespins, like strange swarms of aggressive metal insects, coalesce into half-formed images across six canvases, including something resembling a mushroom cloud.[35] The feeling of attack and transformation was strengthened by large rents in several of the canvases, looking as if they had been torn by live clothespins; yet the holes, taken with the egg forms of the compact objects, suggest an ovulatory version of Akasegawa's narrative of ob-

jects extruding from canvases. One set includes an egg covered in the complex forms employed in Nakanishi's *Rhyme* (*In*) series of paintings (plate 12), echoing their finely detailed meditation on pattern, repetition, and texture—in the midst of a piece in which such concerns were translated into clothespins and cloth.[36] Not limited to the canvases, the clothespins were scattered out across the floor of the exhibit hall; viewers would occasionally unthinkingly reattach some to a portion of the work.[37] The expansive nature of the work seems to have been suggested by the repetitive creation process of attaching clips: after affixing the clips within the exhibition, Nakanishi continued applying them to his own clothes, hair, and face (figs. 5.9a and 5.9b). After Takamatsu Jirō added some to hard-to-reach areas, Nakanishi displayed himself in the exhibit room together with the work. When not shocking patrons by his appearance, Nakanishi, his friends, and others in on the joke would surreptitiously affix clothespins to the clothing of passersby, who would then unwittingly extend the work out into the everyday world.

Including one's own body in works as a kind of strange object framed the promise and excitement of doing artistic work *within the artifact itself*, by

5.9a and 5.9b Nakanishi Natsuyuki, with assistance from Takamatsu Jirō, becomes an extension of *Sentaku basami wa kakuhan kōi o shuchō suru* (Clothespins Assert Agitating Action), fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*, 1963. Photos by Sawatari Hajime. Courtesy of Nakanishi Natsuyuki.



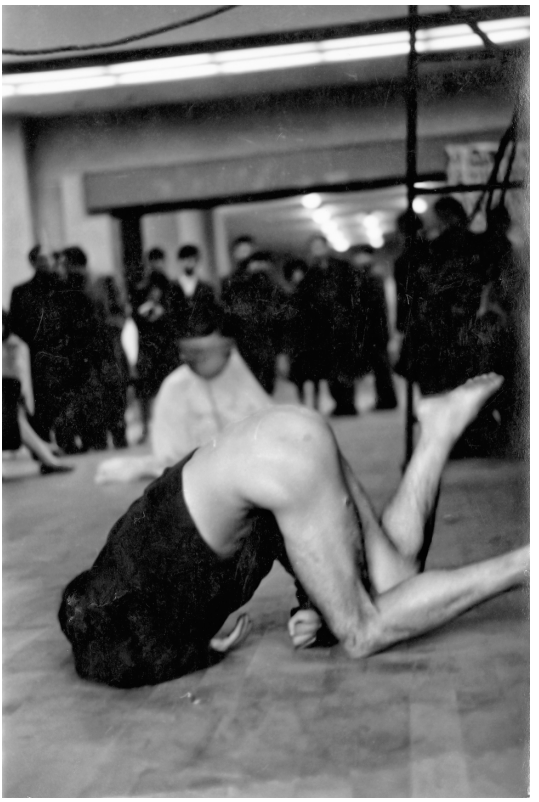


entering into its enigmatic surface and partaking of its uncanny nature. The practice dramatized a central concern developing from this art: the desire to take the emergent critical, active art practices into direct contact with the everyday world. An art that blurred the boundaries between art and performance expanded conventional notions of the work to posit *action* as an explicit problem for consideration. And in turn, having one's art impinge upon the artist's own body allowed for a dramatized experience of reflexive self-transformation through art itself.

Kazakura Shō's remarkable contributions often blurred all distinctions, such as in *Siren* (*Sairen*).[38] It featured two framed works mounted on the wall, across which a plastic bag (partly in the shape of an ear) would fill and flutter about, moved by the fan on a switched-on air horn. Its wail lent the exhibit a sense of crisis, as well as perturbing museum officials. At the final *Yomiuri Indépendant*, Kazakura's work *Stuff Comes from Somewhere and Goes Somewhere* (*Jibutsu wa doko kara kite doko e iku*) completely dispensed with the artwork itself. His submission was himself: he would stand in the middle of the gallery and periodically remove his pants and underwear to engage in a nude, slow-motion performance. As recorded in photos, this included a slow-motion, bent-over walk with one-legged, forward-leaning poses, while one hand grasps the middle of a rope swaying down from on high across the exhibition space, and abject, head-down postures and contortions on the floor (fig. 5.10). Each day of the exhibition, Kazakura would perform the work; caught and ejected by museum personnel, he would return to perform it again the next day.[39]

As much as they focused on action and performance, these works were marked by the turn to the body characteristic of much art in the 1960s. Apart from problematizing the artist and foregrounding active, immediate engagement, such works' participation in the complex discourse of Eros and liberation followed a long postwar history which included the early postwar "carnal literature" of Tamura Taijirō. His and others' turn to the carnal body, *nikutai*, in addition to celebrating the corporeal, subverted the relationship to *kokutai*, the national body (conflated with that of the emperor) that was the cornerstone of nationalism.

Including one's own body in works as a kind of strange *objet* also spoke to a situation in which political possibilities seemed limited and were thus existentially alienating. Yet artistic work also showed promise and excitement, however uncanny and unfathomable it might be (as we saw earlier with Akasegawa's *Vagina Sheets* experience), offering a present engagement and a freeing immediacy. An art that blurred the boundaries between it and



5.10 Kazakura Shō performing *Jibutsu wa doko kara kite doko e iku* (Stuff Comes from Somewhere and Goes Somewhere) at the fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*, 1963. Visible behind Kazakura is Kosugi Takehisa, performing "Chamber Music / Anima 2" inside one of his two zipper-laden cloth bag submissions to the exhibition, both titled *Cheironomy / Instrument* and submitted as sculpture (as was Kazakura's work). Courtesy of Hashimoto Toshiko.

performance attracted some for its variety of action and its expansion of conventional notions of the work, promising yet-undiscovered existential potentials. In all of these cases, the concern was to reach into an everyday context through a critical art that acts (*kōi, kōdō*).

The first attempts to reach through to the everyday world by artistic practice involved a concern with action per se. The concerns and limitations of the action-oriented approach were perhaps revealed best by the activities of the members of the Neo-Dada Group, which included many of the artists named earlier during its slightly more than year-long existence (fig. 5.11). Assembled by Yoshimura Masunobu, they first called themselves the All-Japan Group (suggesting something like a sports event). When Shinohara Ushio, who sported a mohawk haircut, joined the group in March 1960, the name changed to Neo-Dada Organizers, prompted by reports of New York Neo-Dada. (The group's name was later shortened to its more common Neo-Dada on Takiguchi's recommendation.)[40] With some twenty members and associates, the group based many of its activities at or near Yoshimura's

Shinjuku atelier, the White House, built by Yoshimura based on a sketch by his longtime friend Isozaki Arata and named for its unusual white exterior in an area predominated by wooden buildings.[41] Much of their activity focused on a style of action which parodied that of Georges Mathieu or Jackson Pollock. Shinohara, for example, attacked cloth with knives or wrapped or gloved hands dipped in ink, whitewash, or paint (his *Boxing Painting*; fig. 5.12); Masuzawa Kinpei notoriously urinated onto his *Imperial Hotel* objet work during the group's third exhibition (September 1960, Hibiya Gallery). At group events, members frequently constructed works which were then destroyed at the climax of their completion or engaged in violent performances of creative destruction which consumed the materials, leaving nothing but the temporality of the act itself (figs. 5.13a and 5.13b). In essence, they compressed the *Yomiuri Indépendant*'s frequent pattern of laborious creation, exhibition, and then abandonment of works right down to the moment of the work's creation itself (while also replicating the intense spirit of one-upmanship). Such art differed from the increasingly work- and painting-focused productions of the Gutai group as well as the action painting-creation of works for sale engaged in by Mathieu (for example, his Tokyo performance work sold for 3 million yen—$8,333 at the time, given the artificially low yen value of 360 to the dollar).[42]

If the group's works and activities arose from the intensification of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, its activities were also marked in part by the politics of 1960, the year of Neo-Dada's activities and of the culmination of the Anpo demonstrations. Several members participated in the antitreaty demonstrations, including Yoshimura, Shinohara, Arakawa, Yoshino, and Tanabe. (Their participation has given rise to a number of rumors portraying them in a variety of acts, from chanting "Anfo hantai" [Down with Art Informel] instead of "Anpo hantai" [Down with the Security Treaty], to throwing the first rock and precipitating the violent clash between police and demonstrators on June 15.) They witnessed firsthand rightist assaults on demonstrators and the final, violent confrontation with the riot police that would claim the life of a demonstrator, Kanba Michiko, on June 15, 1960. Returning that night to Yoshimura's atelier, the group decided to hold an event on June 18, the night the Security Treaty would renew automatically at midnight, signifying the failure of the protests. That evening, the Neo-Dada Group erupted in a performance event inside, outside, and on top of Yoshimura's atelier. With some members nude, painted, or strangely masked with cloth, the action became increasingly intense as the hour approached—though none spoke directly of the night's significance nor of the death of



5.11 Members of Neo-Dada Group gather at Yoshimura Masunobu's Shinjuku atelier, the White House, 1960. From left to right in the circle, with faces visible: Akasegawa Genpei, Arakawa Shūsaku, Kazakura Shō, Kishimoto Sayoko. Yoshimura is standing at right, facing forward. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

5.12 Shinohara Ushio prepares to demonstrate *Boxing Painting* for the cameraman Ishiguro Kenji, 1960. The gloves will be dipped in ink or paint, and then deliver blows to a suspended sheet. As Shinohara's *Yomiuri Indépendant* submission in 1960, *Boxing Painting* was created by dropping ink-soaked balls onto a sheet. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.



5.13a and 5.13b

Shinohara Ushio amid the debris of destroyed and abandoned Neo-Dada works by Yoshimura's atelier in Shinjuku, 1960. One of Shinohara's *Boxing Painting* canvases is visible in the background. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.



Yoshimura Masunobu swings a stave at a canvas held by Shinohara Ushio and Yoshino Tatsumi while another Neo-Dada member sprays canvas and artists alike with water, in a performance at Hibiya Park during the group's third exhibition (at the Hibiya Gallery), September 1–7, 1960. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

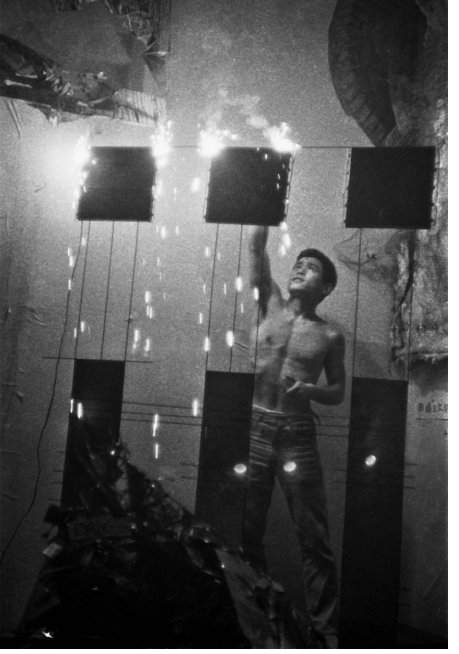
the demonstrator three nights before. Works were assembled and burned. The critic Yoshida Yoshie, a witness to these events, is surely right in pointing out a certain complex and indirect flirtation with politics within the group's art from this point forward, now tending toward commitment, now resistance—even entertaining a serious discussion over whether or not they might blow up the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum.[43] One might equally point to an element of recklessness as ambiguously positioned between excited commitment to the group dynamic and a sort of nihilism. Examples abound: Yoshino Tatsumi during the group's second exhibition (July 1–10 at Yoshimura's atelier) igniting his appropriately titled *objet* work, *Danger* inside the atelier, filling it with smoke (fig. 5.14); Yoshimura, Masuzawa, and Shinohara striking jagged holes into sheet metal in a September performance (fig. 5.15); Masuzawa's stroll through the Ginza, and on and off of trains, covered in fragile glass bulbs (fig. 5.16).

If the Neo-Dada Group produced little in the way of preserved works (apart from photographs), their experiments with taking performances outside of institutional spaces were, like those of their contemporaries in the Kyushu Group (Kyūshū-ha), pioneering in exploring the possibilities for active artistic intervention into everyday spaces. They also established the limits of this anarchical approach to action, leading some members, such as Akasegawa, to consider the basis and goals of their own artistic endeavors. Such activities ultimately pointed well beyond their origin within the orbit of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* and would draw in new participants in the final years of the exhibition.

Routes to the *Yomiuri Anpan II*: Tone Yasunao, Kosugi Takehisa, and the Music Group

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HISTORIC AVANT-GARDE

As yet another example of the diverse paths to participation within this nexus for art and performance centered upon the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, Tone Yasunao's case is instructive in both its parallels with and marked departures from the routes of many of his contemporaries and future collaborators. Tone's meandering course into art and performance through poetry and music richly demonstrates the kind of diversity of experience and interest that was drawn into the orbit of the exhibition and the artists associated with it. His work, along with that of fellow musical innovator Kosugi Takehisa, also bears witness to the unpredictable ways such genre-disregarding

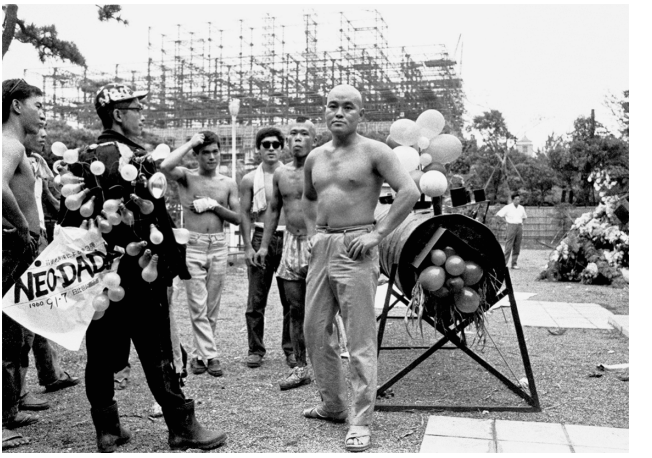


5.14 Yoshino Tatsumi ignites his work *Danger* inside Yoshimura's atelier during the Neo-Dada Group's July exhibition, 1960. "I didn't really care if I burned the whole place down," Yoshino recalls. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

5.15 Yoshimura Masunobu swings an axe at sheet metal, ripping jagged tears in the material; to the right, Masuzawa Kinpei awaits his turn to attack. *The Bizarre Assembly*, September 30, 1960, Tokyo Gas Hall. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.



5.16 Group Neo-Dada exhibiting outside at the Hibiya Gallery. Masuzawa Kinpei stands festooned with bulbs; to his left is Akasegawa (in a shirt behind an unidentified individual); to the right are Yoshino, Toyoshima, Shinohara, and Yoshimura, plus *objet* works by Tanabe Santarō (front) and Masuzawa. Takiguchi Shūzō and Tōno Yoshiaki are present but out of frame. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.



productivity might combine to engage with both current practice and the historical avant-garde.

Tone's own contact with the avant-garde, including Surrealism, was nurtured and expanded by relationships with its original participants and commentators. His high school interests in Japanese avant-garde poetry and prose of the 1920s and 1930s expanded into a broad interest in modernist works of the interwar period while he was in the literature program at Chiba National University (1953–57). Tone especially recollects the influence of Assistant Professor Shigenobu Tsuneyoshi and instructor Kurita Isamu. Shigenobu led Tone and other students in a two-year ongoing project of translating Blanchot's *La Part du feu* and lectured on *L'Espace littéraire*.[44] Kurita and Tone met informally on numerous occasions, during which Kurita elaborated upon aspects of untranslated works by Bataille, particularly his anthropological reflections, "general economy," and "philosophy of expenditure."[45] Kurita also introduced Tone to the contemporary active critics and poets of his own generation, including Ōoka Makoto, Tōno Yoshiaki, and Iijima Kōichi. Meanwhile Tone continued to seek out copies of prewar avant-garde journals such as *Shi to Shiron*, *Ge.Gjgjgam.Prrr.Gjmgem*, *Bara•Majutsu•Gakusetsu*, and *Fukuikutaru Kafu-yo*, hunting down the traces of a suppressed Japanese avant-garde, including the work of Murayama Tomoyoshi and his associated group, Mavo.[46] His wide-ranging studies culminated in a graduation thesis on the Japanese Surrealists, for which he conducted interviews with some of the principals of the early twentieth-century avant-garde, including Kitazono Katsue (1902–78), Takiguchi Shūzō (1903–79), Kihara Kōichi (1922–79), and Yamanaka Sansei (1905–77).[47] In considering domestic participation in international Surrealism, Tone still recalls Takiguchi's comment during the interview: "'We tried to be as faithful as possible to Breton's doctrine,' which, he confessed, was a mistake."[48] By the time of his graduation in 1957, Tone was immersed in debates on art, criticism, and the historic avant-garde at the very moment of their transformation in both practice and criticism. He had reached this position principally through a serious and sustained engagement with the work of an indigenous avant-garde, reflecting historically on their own complex mediations and participation in a local and international twentieth-century relation of art and politics.

THE POLITICS OF IMPROVISATION

Tone's subsequent path, ostensibly from literature to music, is in fact broader and more complex, and is indicative of the broad-based theoretical

rejection of formal boundaries, genres, and other commonplace assumptions across the entire field of artistic endeavor that particularly marked the art scene in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a tendency centered on the artists of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. The specificity of Tone's artistic development and his personal route to the *Yomiuri Indépendant* illustrate the multiplicity of distinct theoretical and practical paths that led to participation within this shared conversation across art forms and practices.

Mizuno Shūko, Tone's classmate from Chiba National University, had gone on to enter the musicology program at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music (Geidai). Contemporaneous with experimental collective practices in the arts program (such as the group Sharp [Ei], featuring Kudō, Shinohara, Nakanishi, Dōi, Tanaka, and others), Mizuno had been improvising with a fellow musicology classmate, Kosugi Takehisa, in what Tone describes as a "kind of dialogue on cello and violin." After playing him a tape from these sessions, Kosugi invited Tone to join them, utterly unmindful of Tone's lack of musical training. This gesture had a deep impact on Tone as a realization in practice of a leveling impulse he subscribed to theoretically. He bought a saxophone from Kosugi, purchased a Sony open-reel tape recorder, and began participating.[49] Also joining the collective were Shiomi Chieko, Tsuge Gen'ichi, and Tojima Mikio of the Musicology Program—which addressed historical, theoretical, philosophical, and ethno-musicological perspectives on music—and Tanno Yumiko of the Vocal Music Program. Tone was the only nonstudent member. Mizuno's home provided a key venue for some of their earliest group improvisational efforts.

Their experiments were further encouraged and facilitated by the young ethnomusicologist Koizumi Fumio, who gave the performers the run of the ethnomusicology studio and its collections of instruments, an incomparable venue within which improvisation could encompass a music that freely crossed from orchestral to ethnic instruments, technology, and daily objects, melding sound production from devices associated with vastly different forms of sonic practices.[50] Tone recalls that they carried on such improvisations at the studio daily from mid-1958.[51] Geidai itself was thus becoming a locus for engagement with broader experimental practices and the rethinking of artistic boundaries, for example, incorporating experts in science into the curriculum and, in music, continuing the investigations into ethnomusicology that yielded the studio's treasure trove of instruments from around the world. For the group's performers, each of these instruments embodied different possibilities, freedoms, and critical potentials. The various "ethnic" instruments were each bound to a complex performance tradition outside

of a Western orchestral frame and thus provided a variety of rich alternatives to the latter's conceptual dominance of music with its particular, narrow, and oppressive systematicity. Such perspectives in turn also allowed the group to explore simultaneously the European classical instruments in the studio, but with a newfound sense of freedom from orchestral tradition and a renewed interest in the sonic possibilities of these instruments. They found pleasure in exploring, for example, the sonic capabilities of stringed instruments, either bringing in techniques from other performance traditions or even playing the wooden parts rather than the strings.

Tone recalls that at the time, he saw music as an art form acutely lagging behind its contemporaries, a ghetto of stultifying formal conventions; its hidebound nature thus promised an attractively wide range of possibilities for transformative practice. Tone and Kosugi were especially critical of the contemporary formalistic experiments in music in the 1950s (in particular, play with dodecaphony and varieties of serial music), their paucity in comparison to contemporary innovations in the visual arts, and their sterility in comparison to ethnomusicology's revelations of alternative, richer practices to be found in gamelan and the music of India. Tone recalls reflecting on this situation at the time and wondering, "Why must we bear such things in the age of Pollock?"[52] Tellingly, visual arts were indeed the reference point for avant-garde transformation, particularly Pollock, whose name acted as a kind of shorthand for the range of contemporary, expanding action experimentation that Tone saw as compatible in spirit with the critical insights derived from ethnomusicology.

Attention to contemporary international avant-gardism, ethnographic perspectives, and an engagement with a historical avant-garde as conceptual reference points broadly typified the contemporary surge of avant-garde activity in Japan in its simultaneous relation to both international developments and its own local eclecticism. As reflected in their early writings, the Music group perceived themselves as musical innovators in the company of others, both local and internationally based, making similar efforts in a variety of artistic and performance areas—efforts which ultimately aimed at producing art that would throw off conventional and genre constraints to better grasp reality. Indeed Tone's first essay on the group's activities, from August 1960, advances considerable claims of progress in this direction, describing the group's "chance encounter" with "an experiment concerning an absolutely new music."[53] The key to this achievement, according to the essay, was the group's pursuit, and perhaps even realization, of automatism. In automatism we find the origin of the group's name and identify, for Tone,

its potent political aspirations, predicated upon a transformed practice of music.

This first essay of Tone's, and the group's adoption of a name, were both occasioned in August 1960 by a special introduction in the fifth issue of *Nijū seiki buyō* (Twentieth-Century Dance) in anticipation of the group's performance at the Nijū seiki buyō no kai (Twentieth-Century Dance Association) event the following month at the Kuni Chiya Dance Institute.[54] The connection with the dance world had arisen from Mizuno's part-time job, accompanying the Kuni Chiya Dancers on piano.[55] Kuni Chiya had generously allowed the group use of the rehearsal space for their improvisations during the dancers' rehearsals, and through this connection arose the opportunity to make a larger, public debut.[56]

While the group had been improvising together since the previous year, Tone's essay "On Improvised Music as Automatism" specified a more recent origin for the practice that defined the group's activities: "In May 1960 the members of our group chanced to encounter [*sōgū shita*] an experiment concerning an absolutely new music. It was an improvisational work of *musique concrète* done collectively" (15).[57] Tone's earnest description of this encounter captures his passionate desire to bring to humanity, through a new music, a discovery as momentous as Surrealism's practice of automatic writing. It also locates his and the group's project within a diverse avant-garde involved in exploring and transforming the world of the actual, the world of the everyday.

Tone indicated that their works' divergence from prior forms of *musique concrète* rested on two procedural refinements: "our adoption of improvisation within *musique concrète*, and our recording of the actual sound without the addition of any mechanical processing to preserve the purity of the spontaneous method" (15). Both were vital, however, to creating and preserving the twin aspects of their momentous discovery. First, according to Tone, group improvisation might escape egotism and humanism in seeking "to attain the universality of automatism, Jung's Collective Unconscious at the base of each Personal Unconscious" (16). Here Tone proclaimed their desire to realize, sonically, nothing less than the Surrealist quest for what Blanchot called "the revelation of the *real* functioning of thought by automatic writing."[58] They would simultaneously avoid the perils of egotism, which would often lose rapport with the characteristics of the materials and "descend into mere ornament" (16).[59] The materials for their sound works could instead lead them to true sonic materiality: "Our pure spontaneous method was no simple improvised performance, but rather a utilitarian improvisational musical performance based on *musique concrète*, concrete sounds [*gu-*

taiteki na onkyō]" (16). Freed of egotism through group improvisation, the performers in turn could encounter the pure materiality of sounds—in fact a second, unconscious world of things. This could then be preserved on tape, without further manipulation, as a successfully realized work.

Tone's essay asserts the group's unprejudiced approach to sound-emitting materials in a simple list of everyday items whose order equalizes and disregards classic distinctions between musical and nonmusical objects—while echoing the contemporaneous eclecticism of materials in evidence at the *Yomiuri*: "We prepared a variety of materials for *musique concrète* for recording onto the tape. Numerous items such as drum cans, washtubs, water jugs, forks, plates, hangers, metal and wood dolls, a vacuum, Go stones, cups, radio, gardening reference books, a wall clock, cello, a rubber ball, an alto saxophone, prepared piano, etc. were readied as sound sources" (15). His description of their pivotal improvised interactions with these "sound sources" in May 1960 asserts their deep spontaneity, as an encounter between a universalized mind moved by the actuality of things:

> Once we began recording, the innumerable sound materials arranged before us strangely and intensely impressed us with a sonic image (*onkyōteki imāju*). Our improvisational performance then began completely spontaneously. And so, these innumerable sounds (*onkyō*) that in everyday life go unnoticed, or are emitted according only to necessity, made us feel as if we had set our identities aside amid the movement and collision of the materials themselves, and been able to grasp their materialized unconscious breath. (15)

Tone explicitly identifies the historical antecedent for this discovery:

> In this manner our first experimental work was completed, but we at once noticed that it was a method analogous to that defined in the first Manifesto of Surrealism: "[Surrealism, n. Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express—] verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner, the actual functioning of thought. . . . Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern." We were excited by this discovery, and decided to continue such experiments intentionally. And so our second work, "Automatism No. 1," was completed. (15)[60]

Tone goes on to compare their methods directly to those of the collaborative work by Soupault and Breton, *Les champs magnetiques* (The Magnetic Fields), the first product, according to Breton, of their marathon sessions of auto-

matic writing, and hence the first Surrealist work. The very title, "Automatism No. 1"—that is, the first automatism—implies this relationship (with an additional pun supplied by the means for the work's creation and preservation: literally, by magnetic fields, that is, magnetic tape recording).[61] All of these parallels, quotations, and examples mark the essay with Tone's aspiration to share in an analogous program of discovery and creation—a pretension closely related to the group's decision, that very month, to name the collective the Music group (Gurūpu ongaku).

Tone's identification of the original practice of automatic writing as the historical analogue of the group's musical practice and the group's designation of their second, intentionally produced improvised work as "Automatism No. 1" both speak to the gravity with which they regarded their activities—but this was a seriousness that emerged from and was bound up with a playful exploration of sonic possibilities. This serious play in the service of investigating actuality, closely associated with a complex but ultimately liberational politics, places the group squarely within the broader contemporary avant-garde community in Japan, especially as focused at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. The group's choice of a name in August 1960 sought also to ground their current practice as succeeding to as well as revising the politics of a famous historical avant-garde.

In his essay "Reflections on Surrealism" Blanchot considered the continuing legacy and potentials of the Surrealist movement from a postwar perspective, in which it was seemingly at once everywhere and nowhere. At Chiba National University, this was the first essay from *La Part du feu* that Tone translated in Professor Shigenobu's class. Blanchot argues that the automatic message was Surrealism's "central discovery," one in which the freeing of words was bound directly to the possibility of human emancipation. Its politics was inextricably bound to the aspirations of Marxism and amounted to a kind of alternative materialism:

> Language disappears as an instrument, but only because it has become subject. . . . When surrealists speak of "freeing" words, of treating them other than as little servants, it is a veritable social revindication they have in view. *There are men and a class of men that others think of as instruments and elements of exchange: in both cases, freedom, the possibility for man to be the subject, is called directly into question*. . . . On one hand, in automatic writing . . . the word and my freedom are now no more than one. . . . But on another side, this freedom of words means that words become free for themselves: . . . words have their own spontaneity.[62]

Blanchot's complex argument expounds upon Surrealism's simultaneous banishment of prior literature and art while persistently resorting to literary and artistic means, insisting that its political commitment and freedom were indissociable from those means—and those means, from revolutionary politics.

Tone himself has spoken of the extent to which he felt burdened in the 1950s by the dominance in criticism of a kind of reductive materialism, one that, for example, disparaged the better indigenous Surrealist works for their frivolity and lack of "value as thought" (*shisōsei*)—that is, their lack of weighty engagement with the conventionally identified issues for political criticism.[63] In fine arts this desire for immediate, tangible political commitment was manifested in the artistic preference for new reportage works (a practice centered on the other *Indépendant*, as discussed in chapter 4) and in literature, in a decline in critical popularity of much of the work of the interwar modernists (as well as a dismissal of the centrality of Freud's insights to Surrealism).[64] Tone's response was to gravitate to that which had been devalued, gaining an interest in issues of language and repetition—for example, in the works of Gertrude Stein—that would become lifelong and lead through Surrealism to an increasing appreciation for Dada.[65] Tone's own preferences thus led him to a position in consonance with that developing among the artists and critics of the *Yomiuri* exhibition. By the time the group had adopted its name, we can see a synthesis in Tone's writing by which the group's practice is related to a broader politics of culture, in his case authorized by the practices of a historical avant-garde (including not only the Surrealists but a range of related explorations, such as the Surrealism-inspired ethnographic considerations of Michel Leiris and Georges Bataille). The continuing attraction and relevance of such historical practices and their productive potential once reconfigured may well have been mediated and strengthened for Tone by his encounters with arguments such as Blanchot's.

In Blanchot's essay, automatism's potential "emancipation of words" posits the indissociability of human emancipation and language, where "my freedom" is bound to that of words acting for themselves, words given over to their own sensual spontaneity. Blanchot's analysis gave political weight and validity to the kind of investigative play with language, composition, improvisation, and sound that continued to attract Tone's interest, and was readily extensible to the world of objects and sonics.[66]

The first three chapters of *Les champs magnetiques* had been published in 1919 in the pages of *Littérature*, the magazine founded that spring by Aragon, Soupault, and Breton. When Tone proposed to name their collec-

tive the Music group, he had this historic magazine's title in mind (with the addition of "group" to avoid confusion).[67] The group's name asserts the same combination of antiphrasis and urgent supplantation, humiliation, and liberation with which Breton, Aragon, and Soupault titled their magazine, in which nascent Surrealist and Dada works appeared side by side.[68] In *Littérature*, literature was to be mocked but also freed by new writings generated by new procedures such as the automatic message. When the editors posed their survey question, "Why do you write?," as a "trap" to bait contemporary authors (whose answers were printed "in order of mediocrity"), the question nonetheless remained central to their own enterprise and was bound up with the question of method.[69] Blanchot's essay emphasized the urgent seriousness behind the more obvious mocking, antiphrastical relationship to literature evident in both the magazine's title and the notorious survey's question: "We remember that the first journal of those who were going to become surrealists was called *Literature*. Nor was this ironic."[70] As Blanchot argued, "Words are free, and perhaps they can free us; one has only to follow them, to abandon oneself to them, to place all the resources of invention and memory at their service." In the magazine, writing would continue, urgently, but literature could not remain as it had been constituted: it needed to be rethought at the deepest levels. No poetry after Auschwitz, proclaimed Adorno. But earlier, for Breton and his compatriots, No literature after the First World War.

For Tone, asserting the deeply analogical relationship between the Music group and the formative years of the Surrealists did not mean a simple repetition of this historical gesture. For Blanchot, our freedom was bound to that of words. With the Music group, Tone and his compatriots would free not words, however, but sounds and things. As his essay asserts, their procedures could reveal the "materialized unconscious breath" of the items of the everyday world, the hushed whispers of things speaking their secrets. Freed of "egotism," "electronic manipulations," the assumptions of the traditional categories and very definition of music, their practice would engage the "concrete," the "true" through a "spontaneous," "utilitarian," "pure" improvisational encounter with sound objects. Tone's descriptive vocabulary resonates with the desire to penetrate to the true nature of things without the abstract mediation of formalistic materialism and without the limits of traditional artistic and musical procedures and genre boundaries. In this they joined in the contemporary quest to investigate actuality through art.

Having developed through an ethno-musicologically informed improvisational practice of leveling instrumental tradition in the Geidai studios,

the group's practice now aspired to complete and move beyond the original project of *musique concrète*, to "the true form of the *objet sonore* in which degrees of transparency and opacity, dampness and hardness [yin-yang], resound within the tempest of directness [*chokusetsusei no arashi*]."[71] *Objet sonore* (sound object) derived from a certain European conceptual vocabulary in which a given sounding body could produce a variety of sonic objects; in contrast to the presumed invariability of a note, the sound object would be linked to time and location.[72] Here Tone speaks of it as revelatory of the "tempest of directness," a messenger bearing secrets of a nonstatic world of actuality and immediacy. In this way, his concept of their actions brought the notion of an *objet sonore* into the wider set of *objet*-focused discourses and practices centered on the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, in which, as discussed earlier, the gesture of setting forth any item—be it a well-formed work, found object, installation, or even the artist's performing body itself—was to call for a radical scrutiny of the item in question, and in turn, of actuality.

Particularly in the case of Tone and Kosugi, these sorts of resonances in the group's practice would lead to a continuing expansion of their own work to join with these broader experiments. Thus while divergences among group members would lead to the Music group's fragmentation, both Kosugi and Tone would submit works for the exhibition, beginning with Tone in 1962. A brief examination of this work demonstrates the specific results of Tone's arrival in particular within this expanding field of avant-garde investigation and provocation.

TONE AT THE *YOMIURI INDÉPENDANT*: *OBJET* AND IMMEDIACY

Tone was close to a number of prominent participants in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibitions and had been visiting the exhibitions regularly from around 1960 onward. He also spent time with Neo-Dada during their gatherings at the White House in Shinjuku and was invited to participate in a number of subsequent events. Tone and Kosugi in particular became notable for their participation in a broad range of artistic practices, epitomizing the tendency at the time for avant-garde activity to disregard prior practical and genre-based separations to combine in new, productively experimental forms.

In 1962 Tone offered his first submission to the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition, *Tēpu rekōdā* (Tape Recorder), a piece that went through several evolutions before its final form. Tone had initially thought to submit a reel-to-reel tape machine (this was before the days of small, portable recording and playback devices), but, losing his nerve, he painted the device in the hopes of

its being more readily accepted into the exhibition. Dissatisfied with this, he then engulfed the entire device in a large white cloth bag of Kosugi's and, with a thirty- to forty-minute endless loop tape loaded into the device, submitted the work as a sculpture.[73] Tone would go daily to the exhibition and switch on the machine, which, hidden within the cloth, would produce intermittent, curious sounds.[74] The title of the piece gave away the nature of the joke (a hidden tape recorder that made a shapeless lump of a cloth bag produce sound), but the work itself assumed a form similar to many partially or fully concealed *objets* designed to provoke curiosity and further interrogation. Tone's innovation to the practice of *objet* at the exhibition was to integrate sound into the work, and while other exhibits that year were sound-emitting (such as Kazakura's *Siren*), Tone's was perhaps the first to make its sonic component the very focus of the heightened attention the *objet* commanded.

The introduction of sound into the exhibition was experienced not only as an expansion of the possibilities for works but also as a further deinstitutionalization of the exhibition space. Takiguchi Shūzō, reflecting on Tone's piece in the *Yomiuri Shinbun*, commented, "Finally, the art museum has produced sound."[75] When the museum banned "unpleasant or high-pitched sound" works that December, the critic Takashina Shūji complained in the *Yomiuri Shinbun* that such regulations separated the museum from the noise of the daily world.[76]

Both Kosugi's and Tone's entries for the final, fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition in 1963 ranged beyond sound works to join other artists in attending to action and performance. Kosugi's three entries included a deconstructed sonic installation, *Micro 4/Instrument*, which featured a vacuum tube radio pulled apart into components and sewn into a cloth, leaving the magnetic speaker exposed. Pieces of foil from cigarette packs were attached to thick-diameter wire bent in an 80 cm. circle and suspended from the speaker driver; effectively thus made part of the speaker, they would oscillate and wave about with the broadcast (though emitting only a small range of sounds in the absence of the paper cone). Kosugi's other two submissions, both titled *Cheironomy/Instrument*, comprised a pair of large cloth bags (one white, one blue), each with a multiplicity of zippers. While at other times the *objets* merely hung from the wall, Kosugi would periodically come to the museum to realize the import of their titles in a simultaneous art of gesticulation and musical performance: taking down one of the bags from the wall, he would crawl into it, move about the floor, and open and close zippers to extend his hands or feet, discard clothing, or receive a goldfish bowl (see fig. 5.10).[77]

Tone's final submission, *Something Happened*, though little remarked-upon in print, presented a truly uncanny *objet*.[78] While other artists (such as Takamatsu Jirō and Nakanishi Natsuyuki) submitted works that literally extended out into the everyday world, Tone's brought the everyday world into the museum. With the assistance of a friend on the staff of the *Yomiuri Shinbun*, Tone was able to get a stereotype mold (*shikei*) for the newspaper printed on the opening day of the exhibition. He poured plaster into the mold to produce a solid plaster version of that day's paper.[79] He entered this work the same day, again as a sculpture. Viewers were greeted by the strange sight of a work that somehow, despite its rock-solid form, reproduced that most impermanent but eminently topical of printed items, the newspaper of the day. The page reproduced by Tone featured an article on the exhibition itself, further heightening the work's paradoxical topicality. Events were fixed in stone, or rather plaster, and yet the artwork was able to achieve ultimate timeliness, to achieve the speed necessary to grasp the fleeting moment of the everyday. Without sound, the work "spoke" to the events in progress in its very location—a paradoxically immediate *objet* at the final *Yomiuri Indépendant* and the outcome of a circuitous route to an art of the immediate and the everyday.

Art and Politics: The Quest for Action

Having established an art focused on the everyday world, many artists of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* returned to the question of political action through art. Previous attempts to bring the politics of the art world directly into oppositional movements had proved abortive. The title of Akasegawa's book on the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!* (Now There's Nothing Left but Action!), plays on one such episode involving the Neo-Dada Group at the height of the Anpo demonstrations. As Akasegawa recounts it, the death of the student Kanba Michiko during the fights between demonstrators and riot police in the incursion into the Diet compound on June 15, 1960, charged the entire country with the strong possibility of a final, violent confrontation. And yet, in Akasegawa's words, the problem is that "action [*kōdō*] is a tricky thing. Even if the act itself would be simple once under way, the difficulty resides in reaching the point of action."[80]

A group driven chiefly by youthful intellectuals and cultural figures, the Young Japan Society (Wakai nihon no kai), was meeting in opposition to Anpo (figs. 5.17a, 5.17b, 5.17c, and 5.17d). The group's call for membership featured prominent names such as the novelists Oe Kenzaburō and Ishihara

Shintarō (now better known as the nationalistic, multiterm governor of Tokyo), the poet Tanikawa Shūntarō, the critic Etō Jun, the composer Takemitsu Tōru, the theater director Asari Keita, and the poet, playwright, and essayist Terayama Shūji.[81] Kudō Tetsumi took it upon himself to attend as a sort of representative of the artists associated with the Neo-Dada Group. He meant to lend his voice to those calling for immediate action and mounted the stage to speak; however, nervous and, like most artists, focused on his own work and its context, he substituted the art-world term *akushon* for the usual Japanese terms *kōi* and *kōdō*.[82] A transliteration of the English word "action," *akushon* was coming into vogue in a limited segment of the art community; its specialized usage followed the contemporaneous *Yomiuri Indépendant*–related expansion of the concept of action painting into what later might be referred to as happenings or events. While the politics of such a transformation was indeed on a parallel path with that of the protests, the term itself was by no means well known to a general audience—not even to a gathering as culturally sophisticated as this one—and certainly not as a broad category relatable to political action. Hence his passionate call, "Ima ya akushon aru nomi desu!" (Now there's nothing left but action!), perplexingly endorsed immediate *akushon* to his wondering audience.

Akasegawa leaves it to the reader to make explicit the conclusions concerning the genesis of his book's title in this episode. In context, Kudō's communication failure dramatizes the gulf between the avant-garde art world and the world of organized political protest. As *akushon*, this concept of action is either incomprehensible or, in the case of those few listeners familiar with the term, relegated conceptually to a sphere of artistic endeavor presumed to have little to do with political action—and this despite the many intersections between the goals of the politicized art from which it derived and those of these "culture worker" demonstrators. Yet as Akasegawa's cutting description of the Young Japan group implies, the gap between the world of intense, politically charged artistic commitment and that of the actionless protest mobilizations is equally an indictment of the latter. In a moment that seemed pregnant with revolutionary potential, Akasegawa seems to argue, both were unable to synthesize and actualize the possibilities inherent in the two versions of "action."

In the case of the Music group, all of the members had participated in the Anpo demonstrations in different capacities, though Tone, because he was no longer a student, lacked a ready entry into the highly organized and self-segregated protest groups.[83] Collectively, however, the members staged a little-marked and little-remembered event that nonetheless speaks to their





5.17a, 5.17b, 5.17c, and 5.17d
(Counterclockwise from left)

Security Treaty protesters atop seized police vehicles at the entrance to the Diet, June 15, 1960. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

Police arresting a student demonstrator at the Diet, June 15, 1960. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

Young Japan Society protest against the Security Treaty, June 15, 1960. The "youth ballet" contingent stands together. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

Uno Jūkichi (left) and Sugimura Haruko (middle) join other high-profile actors and directors from theater and film in the drama section of the Young Japan Association protest against the Security Treaty, June 15, 1960. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.





self-understanding of the political potential of their work during this crucially formative period.

According to Tone, while the Anpo protests filled the streets by the Diet and by the prime minister's residence, the members of the Music group took their distinctive experiments in improvisation and performance to the streets. They had been in the habit of borrowing the light van from Tone's family business (Gosan'ya Shōji) to conduct private improvised tailgate performances in different locations—for themselves alone—but on this occasion, according to Tone, they all climbed into the van and, with Tone at the wheel, rode through the streets performing their distinctive music. Lacking loudspeakers, their performance ebbed and flowed unnoticed and unheard by other drivers, distant demonstrators, and residents as the van sped along. As fusions of art and political action go, this would seem to have been a fairly unproductive experiment.[84] Yet examining why this action made sense returns us to the complex world of art, politics, and the everyday world from which many of Tone's and other artists' lifelong interests and experiments originate.

If the likelihood was minimal that the performance had immediate effects, it nonetheless marks an attempt to conduct politics directly out of artistic performance, neither as an adjunct to protest nor through the conventional forms of agitprop but rather through the political potential of their practice itself. It also testifies to the group's consciousness of that potential during this key, formative period. On the one hand, the action makes sense as protest only if one appreciates their aspirations of the moment: to fulfill a liberatory political legacy inherited from the historical avant-garde.[85] On the other hand, their attempt to bring their art into contact with the movement within the city's expanding arteries—where economic change was bringing about massive transformations in life and work patterns—joined a broader tendency to investigate and interact with the spaces of daily life, a tendency that Tone and Kosugi would revisit in their participation two years later in the Yamanote event (see chapter 6).

Beyond the Institutional Space: The End of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*

Many of the exhibits in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* were not works in the high modernist sense; they were created for the space and simply abandoned after the exhibition. Performance pieces were by nature ephemeral, and although there were a number of carefully crafted *objets* and other works,

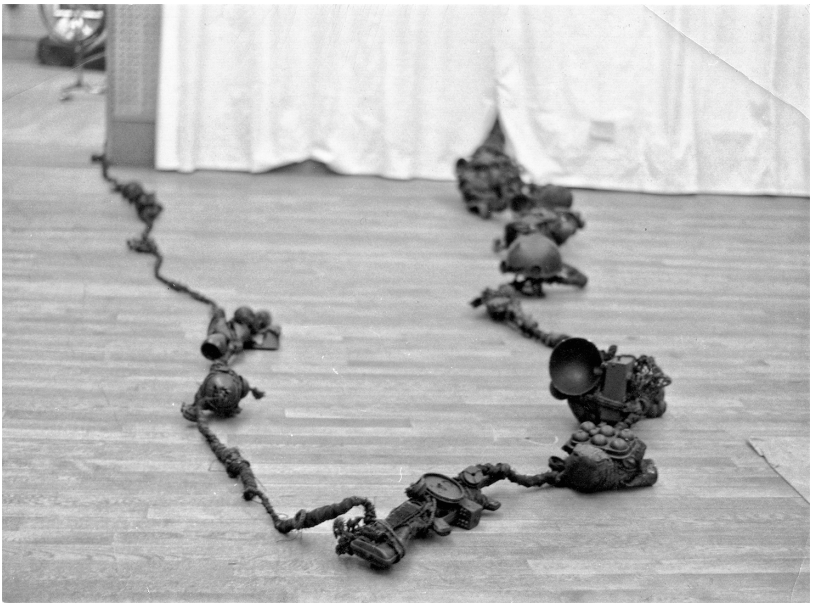
their content was equally specific to the time and place of exhibition: when re-exhibited, they required a space to re-create the *Yomiuri Indépendant*'s anarchical atmosphere. (Contemporaneous exhibitions by Neo-Dada, Group Sweet, Hi-Red Center, and the like managed at times to achieve this effect and in a sense were contiguous with the *Yomiuri Indépendant* phenomenon.) This accounts for the elusive, dissatisfying element noted by many artists in retrospective shows.[86] Ultimately Akasegawa may be right in stating that the real work the artists produced was the space and energy of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* itself.[87] It was this created space that in turn nurtured and energized artistic activity that would overflow its institutional frame.

Although the end of the exhibition was not officially announced until early 1964, many artists recognized the likelihood that the *Yomiuri Indépendant* of 1963 would be the last. In December 1962 the exhibition site, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, issued a set of new regulations, inspired by many of the works mentioned above, forbidding the following:

> Works issuing unpleasant or high-pitched noise
> Works including items that might rot or smell
> Works which incorporate bladed instruments or other potentially injurious objects
> Works which possibly contravene health laws and offend viewers
> Works which soil the floor with sand, gravel, or other substances
> Works which hang directly from the ceiling[88]

This was also the year that the exhibition spilled out of the museum, with works such as the latest entry in Takamatsu Jirō's *Cord* series (*Himo*).[89] This work consisted of a white curtain hung on one wall from which a lumpy plastic rope extended, studded with objects (toys, kitchen implements, and other everyday items). The ten-meter-long whole, painted black, meandered from behind the curtain all the way into the next exhibit room (figs. 5.18a and 5.18b). At some point, inspired by the work, unseen hands attached a string to the end of the work; this extension ran through the entire museum (Takamatsu's and Nakanishi's works were displayed in the most interior exhibition space), out the doors, across the park, and all the way to Ueno Station, a key commuting landmark nearly a kilometer distant and the terminus of the prior year's Yamanote event (figs. 5.19a, 5.19b, 5.19c, 5.19d, and 5.19e).[90]

In the Yamanote event in 1962, artists in white face paint, carrying strange art *objets*, rode Tokyo's central circular subway line, the Yamanote, pausing at stations to perform ritualistic happenings, dramatizing a key everyday





5.18a and 5.18b Takamatsu Jirō, *Himo* (Cord), fifteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*, 1963. Note the thin line attached to the end of the work. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

space with their artistic critique and practice. Subsequent to the performance, discussions with Akasegawa and the editors of a radical art magazine *Keishō* (Image)[91] led to the theoretical foregrounding of the concept of direct action in their artistic practice, or rather the thinking through of the possible relation between the radical political concept of direct action and art—a focus that encompassed Akasegawa's 1,000-yen project (see part III). The subsequent extension of Nakanishi's and Takamatsu's *Yomiuri* entries in 1963 outside of the museum was both conceptually and directly related to these events: it was Nakanishi, together with one of the *Keishō* editors, Imaizumi Yoshihiko, who personally ran the line from the museum to Ueno (see chapter 6).[92]

Protests outside the museum in 1963 by artists whose works had been removed the previous year were broken up by police for assembling without a permit. The longtime *Yomiuri* participants Itoi Kanji and Nakajima Yoshio's seminude performance with *objets* on the steps of the museum climaxed with the arrival of a police car, sirens blaring, and their arrest.[93] In a sense, the artists' attention to and attempted interaction with the wider context was met halfway by the political situation itself. When the *Yomiuri* announced the following year that it would no longer conduct the exhibition, most artists were upset but not surprised.[94] The noise of the exhibition's overflow from its institutional borders had apparently, but not unexpectedly, attracted adverse notice.

Kaidō Hideo relates that the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum had been complaining about the exhibition to the *Yomiuri* since around 1960—the year of Anpo and roughly the time the *Yomiuri Anpan* was coming into its own—and had asked the newspaper to suspend it "because it was disturbing public order." And yet when the final suspension was announced shortly before the opening of the sixteenth exhibition in 1964, Kaidō had neither been informed nor involved in the decision, which came from higher up in the corporation.[95]

In fact the *Yomiuri Indépendant*'s end had been forecast by the artists themselves in 1963, particularly those involved in the overflow from the museum. On March 15, 1963, the night before the last day of the exhibition, with Kawani Hiroshi and Endō Akira of *Keishō* acting as lookouts, Imaizumi painted a huge *shisu* (using a brush on a long pole) onto the banner hung outside the museum,[96] amending the exhibition's banner to announce to visitors the next day the "Death of the Fifteenth Yomiuri Indépendant."

The end of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* fit a general pattern in the early 1960s of government-instigated pressure to tidy up symbols that detracted from

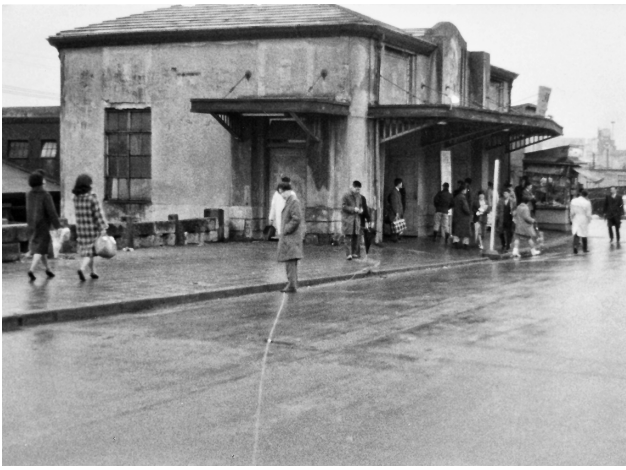


5.19a, 5.19b, 5.19c, 5.19d, and 5.19e

The line attached to Takamatsu's *Cord* extending down the steps of the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum, across Ueno Park . . .







. . . all the way to the park entrance of Ueno Station. Photos courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.





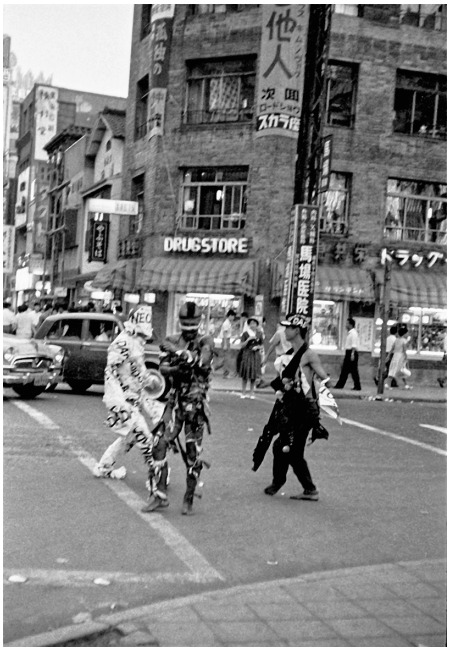
5.20 (Left to right) Yoshimura Masunobu, Masuzawa Kinpei, and Shinohara Ushio on the way to Hibiya Park (on the occasion of the Neo-Dada Group's third exhibition, at the Hibiya Gallery) attracting police interest. July 1960. Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

its presentation of a Japan reborn. This became increasingly oppressive as the Olympics drew near, the event that was to symbolize Japan's triumphant emergence from under the clouds of wartime and reconstruction, standing on its own as a showcase of U.S.-sponsored modernization. That same year, 1964, Akasegawa was first interrogated about his 1,000-yen printed works, after their existence was brought to light during a police surveillance of another group (see chapter 1). Like the cancellation of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, this incident spoke to the expansion of cultural policing within the broad program of affirmative cultural production and repression that typified the political scene after 1960, as the government worked to promote Japan as a "culture state."[97] At stake was the defense of daily life from politicization at the very moment in which its depoliticized image of imminent prosperity and comfort was enabling a new configuration of hegemonic politics, and a new political mythology. Once a series of art practices emerged to intervene in and critique this quotidian world, they too were targeted—with the ironic result of further radicalizing a portion of this community and giving art such as Akasegawa's 1,000-yen works notoriety and political prominence (fig. 5.20).

In a certain sense, agents of the state became some of this art's most enthusiastic appreciators, albeit negatively, as they identified nascent politi-

cal potential within it. Analogous contemporaneous examples abound, of course, such as the notorious state responses to leftist works in America in the 1950s and the coordinated support for Abstract Expressionism during the cold war.[98] But we might note that the practices that especially attracted repression and energized artistic activism were those that anticipated the key strategies associated with the explosive activism marking the second half of the 1960s in Japan. All were focused on everyday life: the analysis of its signs and fragments for the operations of hidden forms of domination; the focus on local practice, the here and now, as a space implicated in larger structures and events, and the locus either for their replication or transformation; strategies of radical defamiliarization and disidentification against unconscious forms of routine; the unearthing of hidden connections to politics and history in the simplest objects of daily life; and above all, the identification of the world of the everyday itself as the central space for investigation and transformation (figs. 5.21a and 5.21b).

5.21a and 5.21b (Left) Yoshimura Masunobu, Shinohara Ushio, and Masuzawa Kinpei on the Ginza, in the middle of a busy intersection, September 1960. (Right) Shinohara and Yoshimura (prone) attract a crowd on the street, September 1960. Photos courtesy of Ishiguro Kenji.





PART III

THEORIZING ART AND REVOLUTION

So far has the world of performance come in three decades that most "innocent" artists now live separate lives from those academics who, wizened by years of theoryspeak, are conditioned to regard every action as quivering with political significance and every work of art supercharged by revolutionary potential. There was a time when a performance just happened.

—BONNIE MARRANCA, "Performance History"

There is hardly any distinction to be made between the social order and the cultural order, both are of the same stuff. And it is not, as many people lightly think, that culture is a department of the social order, but it is on the contrary the social order that is a department of culture—an extension of culture's principles on the particular (very particular) ground of rules guiding social rapports. Hence, it follows that we cannot modify the social order (except in an entirely illusory and inoperant manner) without first modifying culture, from which it emanates.

—JEAN DUBUFFET, "Asphyxiating Culture"

To conceal the truth, it is not necessary to hide it, but to expose it. The lie is created, not by a mask or wrapping, but by an excess of illusion. Because the lie has a structural capacity to conceal by declaring what is truer than the true, and because the truth has an innate tendency to flee into appearance.

—DOMINIQUE G. LAPORTE, *Christo*

It doesn't matter whether one considers the result of this action to be art or anti-art. In the end, "everyday life" takes this nuisance and pushes it aside, filing it away into the category of art. So as not to have this everyday life damaged.

—AKASEGAWA GENPEI, "The Intent of the Act Based on the Intent of the Act—Before Passing through the Courtroom"

Metro, boulot, dodo.

—ANONYMOUS, graffito on Paris metro system, May 1968

HOW DO YOU RESTART POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN A TIME OF apparent uneventfulness? As the eventful year of 1960 receded, and the government's new strategies of legitimation through high growth and promised quotidian comforts instilled an apparent quiescence, artists engaged in explorations of the everyday world centered on the *Yomiuri Anpan* found their own growing political impulses at odds with their surroundings. Where had the protesters gone? And was there a way to direct their own practices to draw attention to troubling developments in daily life and somehow reenergize political activism? But by what means, and to what end?

The challenge was to take a set of practices derived from a playful competitiveness and somehow refocus their nascent political and critical potentials, leaving behind exhibit spaces and a more familiar art role to enter and operate upon the everyday world. Accomplishing this would require reflection upon their endeavors, interspersing their practice with explicit moments of theorization to grasp its potentials and adequacies and to redirect it toward their evolving goals.

If a discourse of action was already well under way in the activities of a committed avant-garde by the end of the 1950s, the critical exploration of what such activities might portend had lagged somewhat. The problems faced in creating an adequate critical vocabulary for this art were considerable. However provocative and revelatory, such activity was distanced from conventional political and cultural language not only by its status as art but also by the translation problem inherent in rendering into words the fitful results of a fundamentally nonverbal artistic discourse (as seen in Kudō Tetsumi's attempt to rally people to *akushon*).

Part III concerns the reconceptualization of artistic activity in the early 1960s to address the anarchistic concept of direct action by a group of associated artists and critics. It details the interplay between their experiments in instigating "events" and their subsequent reflections and self-critiques of their actions, including those reformulations and statements prompted by encounters with police, prosecutions, and a hostile media. All three chapters focus on the artists' own successive conceptualizations of their practice and of its potential as a new source of political energies and critical revelations within the routines of an "eventless" daily world.

Chapter 6 examines a key turning point in the career of several of these artists during a discussion held in late 1962 in which they considered the possibilities of direct action. The group weighed the publication of an aborted plan to raise a giant guillotine in the Imperial Plaza and a realized experiment, an improvised performance taking place in the cars and on the platforms of the Yamanote, the elevated train line orbiting central Tokyo. Directly addressing the question of timeliness, the group took heart in the conclusion that an absence of spectacular events might actually provide an effective moment for making visible the structures lying "below politics," the hidden forms of domination in the everyday world, as a basis for agitation and transformation. Convinced of the urgency of these goals, three of these artists in particular—Akasegawa Genpei, Takamatsu Jirō, and Nakanishi Natsuyuki—found common ground. Together they would establish the quasi-conspiratorial group Hi-Red Center the following year. Akasegawa himself would also commence his 1,000-yen note project shortly after the symposium, in part with the aid of one of the journal's editors and fellow discussion participant Imaizumi Yoshihiko.

Chapter 7 considers a specific moment in early 1964. Following the first visit of police investigators to his home and his interrogation, Akasegawa found himself the subject of an aggressively prosecutorial and distorting newspaper article. Responding rapidly to the article's slanderous depiction

of his work as counterfeiting (and indirectly to the police challenge as well), he wrote an analytical critique of the pseudo-reality of money itself, identifying it as an agent of hidden forms of domination supported by state authority as well as by the policing of commonsensical understandings of crime, of art, and of currency's reality. After explicating Akasegawa's dense essay, the chapter reflects back upon his work in the previous year to identify the development of elements of this critique within his practice. The second half of the chapter thus details events over the year or so in which Akasegawa and his compatriots in the nascent Hi-Red Center experimented with and refined the goals and possibilities articulated in the symposium. The chapter thus relates the evolving practice of Akasegawa and friends to its moment of theoretization in his "Theses on 'Capitalist Realism'" (February 1964). It connects this essay's analysis to both police intervention and to the artists' prior year exploring the possibilities of direct action.

Chapter 8 finds an exhausted Akasegawa responding defiantly to his indictment and upcoming trial with an essay for a special issue of the radical art journal *Kikan* devoted to the 1,000-yen note prosecution. This essay, "The Intent of the Act Based on the Intent of the Act," anticipates the trial's reduction of his work to one of two possible categories: the criminal or the artistic. Rejecting the distortion of his intentions presented by the prosecutor's indictment, Akasegawa instead affirms his commitment to a radical artistic practice for its capacity to generate "moments," interruptions in everyday life that allow glimpses of emancipatory possibilities. His argument recasts his practice in terms of a strong notion of freedom, affirming both the circuitous, elusive, experimental nature of his artistic investigations of the everyday world and its radical effects on consciousness. Whatever their results, Akasegawa argues, they are nonetheless a constitutionally protected exercise of freedom of thought intrinsic to a vital and engaged art. In a sense, then, the chapter returns to the moment with which this book began, explicating Akasegawa's self-understanding of his work and its possibilities just prior to the start of a frightening encounter with a trial court. If Akasegawa's career has provided a means by which to trace a wider history of the politics of culture, this final in-depth examination of the words of this artist testifies to the profound aspirations of this art conceived in relation to direct action, born of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* and its dissolution.

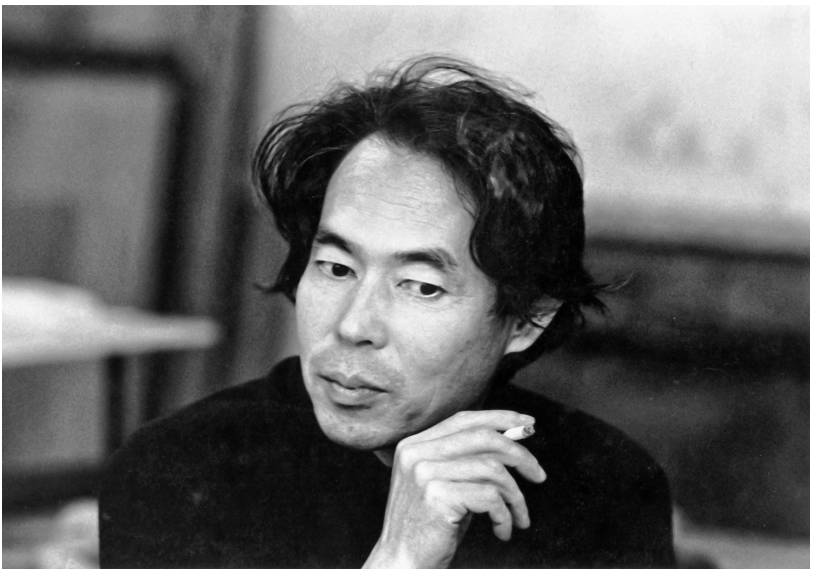
CHAPTER 6

BEYOND THE GUILLOTINE

Speaking of Art / Art Speaking

The failure of protest to prevent the revision and ratification of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Anpo) led some activists to question the basic assumptions and organization of their forms of political action. Politically engaged avant-garde artists were similarly moved to reconsider their own practices systematically, in answer both to the failure of activism in general and to perceived inadequacies of their art practice to the current situation. The specific motivations for such moments of reconceptualization varied, as did their particular grasp of the emerging post-Anpo situation, in which the eventfulness of Anpo seemed to disperse together with the vanishing street protesters.

This chapter considers the evolution of critical responses to the perceived situation after Anpo as artists strove to find the words adequate to articulate, clarify, and reconceive the nature and content of their artistic practice. In particular it examines a transformative moment in the conceptualization of practice by one group of artists associated with the *Yomiuri Anpan* who addressed art's possibilities for action during a time of apparent eventlessness.



6.1 The artist, critic, and future head of Bigakkō (Art School), Imaizumi Yoshihiko, circa 1970. Courtesy of Imaizumi Yoshihiko.

Shortly before the last *Yomiuri* exhibition in 1963, these artists gathered for a long symposium to consider and critique recent attempts at artistic action, in particular an event on October 18, 1962, on the central, roughly circular elevated train line in Tokyo, the Yamanote-sen. The symposium's members brought together event participants and observers, including Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Takamatsu Jirō, Kawani Hiroshi, and Imaizumi Yoshihiko, as well as an artist who knew of the event only by hearsay: Akasegawa Genpei.

This symposium came at a key time in these artists' practice: after further discussions and shared exhibition experiences (including the fifteenth and final *Yomiuri Indépendant*), Akasegawa, Nakanishi, and Takamatsu would come together several months later as the core of the radical art group Hi-Red Center; the discussion also occurred immediately prior to Akasegawa's commencing of his 1,000-yen project. The symposium thus not only marked a turning point in the participants' avant-garde artistic practice; it also appears to have been the very moment in which their practice was theorized and reconceived. Akasegawa in particular has credited this discussion, and its instigators, Kawani and Imaizumi of the art magazine *Keishō* (Image), with raising his and the other artists' consciousness of central aspects of their practice (and the practices coming out of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* in general) and thereby instigating discussions that led to the formation of Hi-

Red Center (fig. 6.1).[1] Imaizumi himself claimed to have had such hopes in mind when inviting the symposium's participants to Kawani's apartment in Ōmori to reflect upon their actions; planned as an exercise in synthetic critique (*sōkatsu*), it unfolded as a symposium for the magazine.[2] Akasegawa's presence was thanks to Nakanishi, who had suggested to Imaizumi that they include others; Nakanishi invited Akasegawa, who in turn brought his friend Kinoshita Shin (a participant in both Neo-Dada and Kyushu-ha, a similarly short-lived, revolutionary, and art-destructive group of remarkable members of the avant-garde from Fukuoka; members had begun entering the *Yomiuri Indépendant* orbit in 1957, the year of their group's formation, and had organized a pair of local *indépendant* exhibitions in Kyushu beginning in 1958).[3]

Central to the symposium was the elusive concept of an artistic practice that would effectively engage the intersection of art and the everyday world, one whose potentially transformative consequences were the source of both fervent hope and anxiety. The artists struggled to articulate the possibilities of artistic action, that is, the possibility of political intervention and agitation through an engaged practice, in what amounted to a conceptualization of both a new artistic practice and a new politics in the wake of the Anpo defeat. While the immediate focus for such an art was modest, it aspired to revolution.

From *Akushon* to Direct Action

In late 1962 the editors of the art magazine *Keishō* brought together several young artists for a symposium to discuss their recent performance-related art actions. The rather long discussion that resulted was published in issues 7 and 8 of the magazine under a title filled with radical connotations of revolution and regicide: "Signs of Discourse on Direct Action—Concerning One Experiment" ("Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi—Hitotsu no jikkenrei ni tsuite").[4]

The term *chokusetsu kōdō* had been made famous by the Meiji radical Kōtoku Shūsui as the translation of the anarchosyndicalist concept of direct action. Derived from Michael Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin, Georges Sorel, the Industrial Workers of the World, and others, it was conceived generally as the possibility of some form of direct attack on capitalism by workers and peasants. These attacks, envisioned variously as encompassing strikes and violence, were intimately linked to the concept (or perhaps fantasy) of the general strike, which would spontaneously break through theoretical, ana-

lytical, and organizational difficulties to actualize class warfare and shut down the system at a blow, simultaneously doing away with the state and its forms of authority. Kōtoku Shūsui was a champion of this line of reasoning in Japan; while his stance was syncretic, he was famous as an early advocate of establishing socialism not by agitating for suffrage, rights, political parties, and parliamentary procedures (the *gikai seisaku* strategy, which he saw as having poor results in other nations) but rather through direct confrontation, that is, direct action.

The reference to Kōtoku's "direct action" thesis, or *chokusetsu kōdōron*, in the discussion's title (likely by Imaizumi, who also contributed a piece with a similar title to the same issue) spoke to the complications and possibilities in the aftermath of Anpo. Anpo had been in one sense an attempt to confront the state, and by extension the postwar American-hegemonic, capitalist order in which it was bound up, through actions centered on the Diet compound. With the vast spectacle of this mass agitation, protesters sought to impress Diet members and carry the day by essentially an extension of parliamentary means. In another sense, the students who stormed the compound (and who were "betrayed" by the Japanese Communist Party, the bastion of the Old Left, which prevented other groups from coming to their aid once the riot police charged), as well as the workers in connected strikes around the country, were engaged in something that, although abortive, could resonate with a notion of direct action. Anpo thus echoed aspects of both sides of the socialism debates in Japan in the early 1900s. Its aftermath left the parliamentary politics model for political action in disfavor, with Anpo seen by many as the final gasp of the attempts at establishing the promise of postwar democracy.[5] Subsequent attempts at political action and organization flirted with a return to earlier anarchism theses as activists worked to reconceptualize the possibilities for meaningful action. Organization, authority, praxis, violence, and the like all came up for reconsideration and experimentation. Thus the title of the symposium in *Keishō* engaged both the promise and the threat of the repetition of Left-state confrontations earlier in the century.

As provocative as the specter of Kōtoku's direct action theses might be, the title's oblique reference to him brought in an additional element to raise the political stakes: his indissociability with the Great Treason incident, or the *taigyaku jiken*. This was the "uncovering" by police forces in December 1910 of a purported plot to assassinate the Meiji emperor with a bomb; twenty-four leftists, including Kōtoku, were arrested and, after a secret and brief trial, sentenced to death.[6] Kōtoku was put to death in January 1911;

half of the others had their sentences changed to life imprisonment by an imperial commutation. Setting aside the question of whether Kōtoku was rightly or wrongly associated with the plot (or whether the plot itself even existed), the trial and conviction that led to his execution remain inextricably linked with his name. Thus to invoke the language of his direct action thesis was by extension to raise the prospect of regicide or execution.

While such suggestions were always potentially explosive, the early 1960s presented an especially charged situation. In 1960 there was a furor over Fukuzawa Shichirō's short story "Furyū mutan" (Tale of the Elegant Dream), published in the magazine *Chūō kōron* (Central Review). The story featured a dream fantasy of a revolution, in which the imperial family are beheaded amid joyous festivity.[7] In retaliation for the story's perceived lèse-majesté, a rightist assassin went to the home of the magazine's publisher, Shimanaka Hōji, and in his absence stabbed his maid to death and wounded his wife. Subsequent to this "Shimanaka incident," the publisher and the magazine issued a retraction and apology for Fukuzawa's work.[8]

Keishō's editor Imaizumi Yoshihiko was incensed by the affair: first, by the rightist murder; second, at the apparent media reinstatement of the "Chrysanthemum taboo," preventing criticism of the emperor; and third, by the "newly human" emperor's failure to make a statement condemning the attack, even in the case of the utterly innocent maid. At the time he was also angry with the emperor for prolonging the war: Imaizumi blamed the emperor for his father's death in the Philippines in 1945, one month prior to the war's end.[9]

Imaizumi's first public response to the events came in the fifth issue of *Keishō*, in March 1962. "The Equipment Plan," published under the pseudonym Nagara Tō, proposes an art event which plays upon the well-known imagery of the Fukuzawa story.[10] The work is prefaced with a provocative, unattributed quotation from a work titled "Epilogue to a Terrorist": "For one who thinks that death is the final, and ideal, form resolving the self-contradictions of the living organism, and besides, the ideal form of personal salvation, execution is not the best policy for punishment: the greatest torture is to refuse to condemn the person to death, force them to confront their self-contradictions, and leave them bound to them."[11] This philosophical remark "to a terrorist" advocating a form of mercy as the greatest torture sets the stage for what is ambiguously an art project, a terrorist plan, or perhaps both.

The plan opens thus: "The later the discovery by the police, the better." What follows is a conspiratorial-sounding description of a plan to an un-



6.2 "To the Imperial Palace Outer Garden!" "Arise all workers, for Peace, Freedom, and Independence!" Poster by 22nd May Day Executive Committee (sponsored by Sōhyō) for May Day 1951. Courtesy of Walter P. Reuther Library.

known addressee, involving the difficult emplacement of something or other in an unnamed location where a certain number of police guards are present. The sense of conspiracy is heightened by references to others only by initials: *N*, *K*, and the like. While the exact details of the plan likewise remain suspiciously obscured behind oblique references to "this thing" and "that thing," it becomes clear in context that the "thing" being spoken of is a guillotine, and the location proposed for its setup is the courtyard right outside of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, on the grounds of the adjacent Imperial Palace Outer Garden (*Kōkyo-gaien*).[12]

In addition to serving as the scene of execution in Fukuzawa's narrative, the Imperial Palace Outer Garden had been one of the key contested spaces for postwar activism (see fig. 6.2). Once the site for Imperial Troop reviews, protesters declared it the People's Plaza, converging upon it by the hundreds of thousands for mass rallies (including the May Day and Food May Day protests discussed in chapter 2). As the campaigns and purges against unions, teachers, Koreans, Hisabetsu-Burakumin ("outcast" discriminated community descendant) groups, and the Left intensified in the latter part of the Occupation, protesters in the plaza during a rally on May 30, 1950, "roughed

up several off-duty GIs."[13] A decision in June 1951 by General Ridgway and the Yoshida cabinet barring the plaza to May Day protesters set the stage for a confrontation three days after the end of the Occupation, on May 1, 1952, when six thousand workers intent on occupying the plaza faced five thousand riot police (figs. 6.3 and 6.4). According to Takemae, two demonstrators were shot, 2,300 were injured, and over a thousand were arrested. The next year the Supreme Court upheld the state's right to ban freedom of assembly in the plaza.[14]

"The Equipment Plan" carefully surveys the area and the prospects for success at different times, speculating on walking patrols and noting the presence of a phone in one of the police boxes. It also lays out a contingency plan for placing innumerable small guillotines throughout the plaza if the original plan cannot be accomplished. The guillotine itself is described in detail; it seems to take inspiration in part from the dangerous-seeming art *objets* that were showing up at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*.[15] The mechanism is to have two rows of blade-teeth on both top and bottom, one composed of three or four shovel blades, the other of pickaxes; when activated, the mechanism runs these two parts together with a piston, essentially chewing the victim, referred to as the *ena*, to pieces ("dōsa o kurikaeshi ena o sundan suru").[16] The combination of pickaxe and shovel being the classic pair of implements for digging labor, the mechanism thus also would deliver an image of an emperor literally gnashed to death and devoured by a nightmarish concoction of laboring implements and mechanism in a semi-organic shape.

This plan is then subjected to a sort of aesthetic critique, which is in turn answered by new proposals for two possible alternative configurations for the guillotine, labeled A and B. The first suggests constructing the whole of glass, so that it will explode into fragments as it delivers its killing stroke; the second recommends supporting the whole of the device with a piano wire that is cut by the teeth once they hit bottom, again causing the mechanism to fall apart dramatically.

The work mixes moments of deadly earnestness with a certain amount of playfulness; discussing its possible alternative emplacement in the park near a statue of a medieval general on horseback (undoubtedly that of Kusunoki Masashige, whose legendary obedience and self-sacrifice for Emperor Go-Daigo became a symbol for exhorting imperial loyalty unto death in wartime), the narrator waxes rhapsodic, imagining the symbolic inversion as the dawn melds statue into guillotine: "In the rays of a dawn none before has ever seen, that four-meter-long [statue] metamorphosing into *that thing*; the head of the medieval general crowning *that magnificent thing*." This image



6.3 Police attempt to halt demonstrators heading to the "People's Plaza" (the Imperial Palace Outer Garden), May Day, 1952. U.S. Army photo, National Archives.



6.4 American military personnel's cars burn after being set ablaze by protesters, May Day, 1952, near the Imperial Palace and Far East Command Headquarters. U.S. Army photo, National Archives.

is followed immediately by the mundane and practical remark that there are no police boxes in that area, but one should check for the presence of police on foot ahead of time.[17] The plan includes a suggestion that the novelist Tanaka Eikō also be executed. Its tone remains suspended between serious conspiracy and parody: horrific descriptions of an emperor gnashed to death by a monstrous machine contrast with proposals for filling the square with tiny guillotine models. While some sections deal concretely with problems in carrying out the setup of the machine, the introductory quote suggests the possibility of doing so solely for the shock that it would deliver to the emperor. The ambiguities of presentation—the tone of the plan, the mix of practical and fantastic considerations, of seriousness and humor—suggest some of the conflicts Imaizumi may have experienced in rendering his abandoned plans into prose (as previously discussed in the introduction).

The aesthetic consideration of the fantastic guillotine suggests that the act is to be carried out by artists. The overall image is of a fantasy in which art carries out the intent of the Great Treason conspiracy in an artistic act of regicide—either symbolically or in actuality. In another sense, though, "The Equipment Plan" itself returned the actual plan for the incident to a more conventional aesthetic and contemplative frame. It was on these terms that the plan was criticized at the outset of the *Keishō 7* symposium (fig. 6.5). The plan was introduced into the discussion by Nakanishi as a foil for considering an artistic action that he and others had recently carried out: the "incident" of the symposium's subtitle, a series of actions planned and executed one afternoon on the Yamanote-sen, the busy train line ringing central Tokyo. Nakanishi calls the equipment plan a "failure," since "that sort of threshing machine [i.e., the guillotine] was rendered into writing, shall we say, since it was not actualized." Nakanishi himself had particular reasons for focusing on the equipment plan: its genesis lay in serious conversations between Nakanishi and Imaizumi in 1961. Subsequent to Fukuzawa's short story and the Shimanaka affair, Imaizumi and Nakanishi had engaged in extended discussions and planning, even contemplating unspecified measures more extreme than the guillotine project. Once abandoned for their unfeasibility, however, Imaizumi wrote up the idea the next year for *Keishō 5*.[18]

Responding to Nakanishi, "Satsu" (in fact, editor Kawani Hiroshi) suggests that by becoming writing, the plan had "become literary [*bungakuteki*]."[19] Nakanishi agreed, and added:

> It wasn't a plan for actually putting a plan into operation, but rather, once it had failed, was just a proposal tidying things up. . . . If you don't do it,



6.5 *Keishō*, issue 7, February 1963. The image borrows from the Yamanotesen event invitation. Courtesy of Imaizumi Yoshihiko.

> it's worthless. That is, if you don't do it, it doesn't have a bit of meaning. I think that no matter how literarily magnificent you say the plan is, it's just meaningless in the end. Without having put together a logic of action [*kōdō no ronri*] for a plan to be actualized, it's pointless for the equipment plan to set forth something like a confession. Rather than a logic for putting one's life on the line for action [*kōdō ni mukatte jiko wo kakete iku ronri yorimo*], it began and ended as a self-question and answer to the notion that this is what we're about to do. No date for an incident [*jiken*] in the space of actuality [*genjitsu kūkan no naka*]; all that's there is a date for that mental state, some day and month in 1962. The wreck of an action [*kōdō no keigai*] unexpectedly went and became literary in an abstract space. In such a case Freud's description of the artistic act as the libido's sublimation [*ribidō no shōka ga geijutsu kōi da*] still suits.[20]

The "literary" nature of the equipment plan was that it was play, completely abstract, beginning and ending as a staged internal dialogue. Despite its radical overtones, the rendering of the dead "skeleton of action" (*kōdō no kei-*

gai) into a written text signified its sublimation into a form of inaction—a criticism that borrows from the Freudian notion of the role of art in society as a substitute for unrealizable activity. Here the art referred to is literature, or more particularly a form of action manifested as mere linguistic representation. Nakanishi's commentary in the symposium thus begins a complex negotiation away from the unrealized schemes marked by the equipment plan to consider their recent experience actually carrying out a plan of their own on the Yamanote-sen.

As Nakanishi points out, the equipment plan followed in the wake of the major incidents around the time of the "Furyū mutan" controversy of 1960; these (the Shimanaka incident and others) had marked a time of "eventfulness" (*jikensei*). Groping for a way to describe the current situation, he then suggests that they are now in an uneventful time, and that their action (*kōi*) is an assertion of "[their] will, no, rather, it's something from the middle of absolutely nothing." He qualifies this as not "nothing" but "monochrome," a condition in which innumerable discrete events present themselves to consciousness, blurring together, losing their distinctiveness, and becoming a chaos devoid of accessible meaning:

> You spin a color wheel on a turntable and the differences between colors disappear, their individual characteristics vanish, and it becomes monochrome. In this we can see the problem of our being borne along atop time's rapidity [*jikan no sokudo*], with our cognition chasing after it. Even when some huge, incredible event occurs, a number of such events pile up one on top of the other, their individual circumstances assimilating together to appear monochrome.

Nakanishi's rhetoric becomes unclear, referring to the "event" that they made in this context as having been made to "speed up the velocity [of events] to make them monochrome," a suggestion at odds with his depiction of the difficulties presented by such chaos.[21] But then, latching on to the concept of a defect in the container (*utsuwa*) they live in, he comes to the notion of doing something with a radically different structure:

> What we tried to do was to stubbornly repeat events that did not belong to the structure [*kōzōsei*] of this container, add them to the events that daily gush forth, and speed up the velocity to make them monochrome—anyway, we had that sort of intent in mind. The equipment plan also had an agitating effect [*kakuhan sayō*], but although its concept seems to have much in common [with our action] the situation was utterly different. Or

> rather the interpretation of the situation was different, the one responding to events, while the other was without an event [to respond to]. Or rather, we made an event, that is, an act [*kōi*], that did not respond to events. (16)

Thus while the concept of agitation (*kakuhan sayō*, a concept repeated in Nakanishi's *Yomiuri Indépendant* entry for 1963) was common to both the equipment plan and the Yamanote-sen event, the latter was distinguished by its realizing an action. This action, or act (*kōi*), was predicated on the possibility of authoring or instigating events in a time of noneventfulness; such events might have a structure corrosive to their "container," that is, everyday life.[22]

There was a rich background to Nakanishi's consideration of action and eventfulness, of which no one else at the symposium was fully aware. Though he remained silent about his experience during the symposium, Nakanishi's central role in the Yamanote event followed after two failed attempts at action: not only the aforementioned discussions with Imaizumi on the guillotine project, but also a post-Anpo meeting with political activists. According to Nakanishi, he asked Gonda Manji (of the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association), a friend connected to the labor movement, to gather some people together informally at Gonda's house to discuss the sudden disappearance of protest after Anpo.[23] The small meeting was mostly of activists and individuals connected with either the Japanese Communist Party or Zengakuren (the common abbreviation for the Zen Nihon Gakusei Jichikai Sōrengo, the All-Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Organizations, a federation of the self-government associations of the various universities), including Tadokoro Izumi (also of the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association, who had faced legal trouble for most of the 1950s following his involvement in the May Day events of 1952). Though feeling out of his depth (having political sympathies but little experience in political activism), Nakanishi spoke of the sudden diminution of activism and asked whether it might be possible to create an occasion for its resurgence. He was coolly informed that protest had to wait for its moment, and that now was not the time.[24] Thus his discussions at the symposium of time and eventfulness and the potential for generating events and acts rather than awaiting a convenient moment speak to his turn to art as a means for realizing possibilities proscribed by conventional activism.

Responding to Nakanishi, Akasegawa spoke of the greater possibility of examining and uncovering things during quiet times, suggesting that major

forms of eventfulness tend to provoke a constriction of perspectives and thinking:

> *Akasegawa*: In the case of performing acts [*kōi suru*], it's rather the case that they are clearer when there are no events occurring, I think. Perhaps we've discussed this before.
>
> *Nakanishi*: Yes, when there are no events, right.
>
> *Akasegawa*: Yeah, at that time there was Anpo, right? And so you end up with overly neat and tidy reasoning, and things outside this pattern get hidden, I believe.
>
> *Nakanishi*: What exactly gets hidden?
>
> *Akasegawa*: Well, in consciousness, for example, regardless of what was done and how it turned out, things like Anpo show up from time to time, viewed from a biological perspective. Other sorts of things are always around, so it's not that symbolic events like Anpo happen too often, but rather that things are over-tidied away [*seiri saresugichau n da*]. And so it's rather that it's much more possible to pull the bark away and look at things during a time like this when there's nothing going on, I think. Not things beyond politics, but below it [*seijika*], perhaps. (16–17)

Akasegawa's contribution to the rest of the discussion was minimal, but here he hits upon a concern central to the 1,000-yen project, as well as to the actions of the Hi-Red Center group: directing artistic action to examining what might be concealed below the ostensibly political level of events.[25] He also sees a greater possibility of revealing and transforming everyday categories precisely during the sort of post-Anpo lull in spectacular events that so concerned Nakanishi—when there is in effect a lower level of police activity (in Rancière's sense), that is, a less vigorous reduction of all unfamiliar acts into simplified conceptions of supporting or opposing camps.

Takamatsu Jirō agreed, arguing that the mass media are to blame for presenting selected events such as Anpo in a distorted manner, while other phenomena slink away from sight. Using a natural science metaphor of multilevel ocean currents, Nakanishi suggested in turn that "the problem with Anpo [was] that it was a consciously, intentionally created event," artificially thrust up, instead of arising naturally from deep currents. Takamatsu replied that big and small events seem to miss deep movements taking place on a more fundamental level—a "more fundamental human level," Nakanishi confirmed (17). The artists concurred in recognizing the need for effecting seismic transformations of the everyday world.

Prompted by Akasegawa, the artists turn to considering the Yamanote-sen action in this light. Nakanishi first discusses the invitation (*annaijō*; plate 13) sent out to announce the event.[26] (During his trial testimony in Akasegawa's 1,000-yen note prosecution, Nakanishi later recalled their distributing perhaps seven hundred invitations to artists, poets, writers, and people chosen at random from the phone book.[27] Cards were also passed out to people on the trains.) A photo of one of these invitations is reprinted at the beginning of the *Keishō* discussion, right above the title. On the left half of the card, a text runs down the page; to the right, there is a circular diagram of the Yamanote-sen, with stations and event times marked. In the center of the circle a large hole has been burned through the paper. Below the diagram, the card notes the date of the event, October 18 [1962], and a title or label: "Counter-Clockwise around the Yamanote-sen" (*Yamanote-sen uchimawari*; 15).

Nakanishi describes how the outline of the project came together in the formulation of the invitation's text.[28] He considers the uncertainties of trying retrospectively to reconstruct intentions and plans, as well as the difficulties of explaining how a plan derived from consensus could still reflect diverse individual intentions and practices, despite his having been both the prime mover behind the event and the author of the invitation text:

> We didn't do it as a group. It wouldn't have been any good to do it with a group mentality. We had a lot of different thoughts [about it], I had my way of thinking about it, Takamatsu had his, others had theirs, and for the most part we'd been exchanging our individual opinions for the most part since last year. . . .
>
> Me, Takamatsu, the other guys, we all had our own motives for this thing. Bringing this all together, we went ahead and decided to do it on the 18th, and sent out invitations to everybody. I sure would like to hear what it was like to have received one of those invitations. . . . Anyway, first you pick a title. A title for what you're going to do. And more than a title, we set forth both the intentions of our acts [*kōi no ito*] and their methods [*kōi no hōhō*], etc. in their entirety, boiled down, on this invitation. (15, 18)

Nakanishi presents the decision to act as bringing together the sensed affinities among their diverse ideas. Having decided first on a date, they agreed to create an invitation, in effect a mini-manifesto, not only to communicate their intentions to others but also to provide a necessary minimum degree of coordination among the participants themselves.

The first half of the invitation presented a dizzying image of conglomera-

tion and flows in the everyday world, as all things blend together and are reconstituted:

> A storage locker filled with interpretations and definitions, the facial expressions of the multitude, useful things indiscriminately made, ready smilers, practical people, the Crown Prince, broken toys, gears, mainsprings, eggs, bones, hair, the various coquetries of tedious women, tableware, books, utterly artificial interiors and exteriors, words, characters (and to continue to write [this list] would require all of the paper in the world) . . . all meld together, become fluid, and begin to drift about. From there they free themselves of their original shapes, both presenting themselves "for the purpose of . . ." and flowing into new convenient molds, being born again (and ought we to ask what sort of molds there are!).

Within this dissolving and structuring flow, however, action might create a different space—a void from which new possibilities might arise: "In this meaningless present, we are impelled with the desire to swim about in this fluid, agitate, and make it a void [*kono ryūdōbutsu ni oyogimawatte kakuhan shi, kūhaku ni shite shimaō to iu yokkyū ni kararerul*]. From this void we must persistently attempt work that will give birth to a new, pure interaction." The invitation concludes with a vaguely scientific-sounding notion of generated collectivity, a "collective body," an aggregate, that concretizes and focuses ongoing agitation as it moves along the Yamanote train's circuit, which now stands in for the single field of flow within which all things circulate:

> There is a collective body [*shūgōtai*, literally, "aggregate"] of things that refuse to rest contented within these constructions, and attempt to be a point within this void that the fluid is pregnant with. As the movement of contraction and dispersion by this collective body unfolds, it moves about the circle drawn at the right [the Yamanote-sen]. Should you happen to come across this collective body in the circle, at the points fixed on the circle, at the times listed on the right, you will perhaps become a molecule agitated within this void, have your individuality wiped away, and collapse into the indistinguishable crucible [*rutsubo*] of you, me, us, and matter.[29] Or, should you be the type of person who favors hats, you could become the medium for facilitating this collective body's constricting, agitating movement.[30]

To the surprise of Nakanishi, the text itself proved puzzling to some of the recipients:

> I thought that for the most part, if you read it, if you were a person in a particular intellectual situation [*aru hitotsu no shisōteki na jōkyō ni ne, iru tokoro no ningen nara*] you would understand it to some extent. However, there were some who just didn't get it at all. "What the hell is this about?" The words that caused trouble were, for example, "agitating effect [*kakuhan sayō*]," "void [*kūhaku*]," "interaction [*taiwa*, literally, 'dialogue']," "constructions [*kōchikubutsu*]" and the like. If you could find a hint from this vocabulary, the rest could be understood readily.[31]

Since the act of making the invitation generated much of the shape of the event, it was perhaps natural for Nakanishi, as participant, planner, and author of the invitation, to project that felt coherency into his expectations for the card's recipients. Conversely the difficulty and ambiguity of the text might be seen as reflecting not only the incomplete planning of the event but also the inarticulable aspects of the planned act: the dimensions of this artistic practice that were still being articulated through practice and as yet lacked an adequate vocabulary. It was this emergent, experimental aspect in both invitation and event that attracted the artists to scientific language.

In this the text joins similar contemporary attempts to find adequate language for new artistic actions within the vocabulary of the physical sciences. The invitation's physics-influenced vocabulary of voids, aggregates, molecular attraction, and agitation, for example, echoes Tone's early essays on the Music group's activities (see chapter 5).[32] Akasegawa too would seek to borrow from cellular biology and medicine in conceiving of human determinacy in his "Spy Rules" (see chapter 3).[33] Looking for a way to describe their intentions outside of conventional artistic notions and stereotypical political language, artists turned to science to imagine the concrete possibilities of a reconceived artistic practice for exploring and interacting with the everyday world. And if this everyday world was only graspable as a bewildering, perpetual circulation and reconstitution of all things, the assumptions of this vocabulary—predictable physical and chemical interactions and outcomes, rational analysis as a route to mastery, a semblance of objectivity—could provide a reassuring promise of concrete results.

For the event, the attempt at agitation began from a refusal: according to the invitation, the assembly of a "collective body of things that refuse to rest contented within these constructions" as a point within the cleared space. The goals for this collective body are set forth elusively and modestly, yet contain the hopes that such an action might be the beginning of something larger—regardless of the humorous consideration of the preferences. As

Nakanishi elaborates in the symposium, their event was "like a boil erupting forth from some difficultly-constructed location within the structure of the container we live in," which in turn produces events not of that structure. In a sense, such noneverydayness expressed the artists' starting point: the gap between art and daily life. Their conceptual language of form, structure, and action might also be seen as an extension of the focus on form, structure, and practice common to the wider contemporary avant-garde practice. The many bizarre *objets* and installations at the *Yomiuri Indépendant* presented a continuing spectacle of semi-organic oddities brought forth from the circulating debris of daily life; prior investigations into the possibilities of action had also revealed structural and practical complexities. But here the artists aspire to agitation, and transformation, of the everyday world.

Nakanishi mentions that the project could have been terminated with the mere sending out of the invitations, without the event's having been actually carried out. But they rejected this idea out of hand:

> Now, having sent out the invitations and externally communicated our intentions, we could have had our fill with that, and done nothing afterward, but really, that's being done an awful lot lately. There's some apparently meaningful sign, and you go to check it out and there's nothing, like you hear about the one [promising to] sell "Yves Klein's space." It's work done to fabricate myths, and myths are rather, well, how should I put it, becoming a kind of style. The style of creating myths, that's what it's gone and based itself on. That sort of history, that goes round and round without getting anywhere, is just tedious. So while we simply could have just had the external commentary of the invitations, and finished without doing anything, we instead went and actualized the plan for the sake of the attempt and its revelations. (18)

As opposed to the "literary" equipment plan, Nakanishi rejects artistic practice without a practical, action component, no matter how provocative the advertised content, in favor of an interventionist and experimental approach. But what sort of action might be possible, and what might its consequences be? The symposium members discuss both questions in recounting their experience with the Yamanote-sen event.

Nakanishi begins this discussion when pressed to speak of the *objets* that he created specifically for the event, works he refers to as *Portable Objets* (fig. 6.6), clear polyester egg shapes enclosing any number of partially destroyed everyday objects, including hair, a broken watch, shoes, glasses, bulbs, and the like.[34] To these he attached short chains terminated with dowels so that



6.6 Nakanishi Natsuyuki with *Portable Objet* (1962) on the Yamanote train, October 18, 1962. The flashlight illuminates the items in the interior of the *objet*, which he grasps with a white-gloved hand. Photo by Murai Tokuji. Courtesy of Murai Hidemi.

they could be easily handled or suspended from the straps on the train. Nakanishi describes the process that generated such works:

> [The term *Portable Objets*] refers to things where you can grasp movement, handily portable things.[35] I wanted to make an *objet* that within the space of daily life [*seikatsu kūkan no naka*]—and not in some art museum or the like—that within the space of daily life would be caressed, reeled in and out, etc. . . . I thought about trying to emerge from structures by making "mobile" *objets* ["*kadōteki" obuje*]—mobile means that there is an energy within the object [*buttai*] itself. So it starts at first from your own work: [in my case], a kind of exhibition art, really. However, I tried to progressively break out of that, and began to make portable *objets* [*kadōsei no obuje*]. That was my starting point. (19)

These partook of both classic and contemporary modern artistic gestures, such as Duchamp's ready-mades or junk art, and are clearly part of the formal discourse of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. But they also repeat the distinctive

practical-philosophical concepts discussed in the text of the invitation—or rather, one might discern in them the conceptual thread connecting their making and the idea for the Yamanote-sen action.[36] In the case of Nakanishi's *objets*, the "eggs," as enclosed worlds of fluid, structure, and refiguration, display in miniature the invitation's description of both the macro view of the world and the notion of a creative void within it. The portability of the *objets* in turn allowed for any number of improvised rituals of viewing and interaction with the embryonic worlds of the formerly static works.

Takamatsu's *objet* work for this performance was his *Cord* (*Himo*; fig. 6.7), a work that, like Nakanishi's, was developed as part of an artistic practice beyond institutional boundaries.[37] The commonalities between the two forms were discussed in the symposium:

> *Nakamatsu*:[38] Inside those egg shapes (in Nakanishi's case), there was this incredible assemblage of miscellaneous stuff, so totally miscellaneous that it felt like everything you might imagine was in the things. *Objets* where the things were frozen within their transparent [forms]. In Takamatsu's case, a variety of objects were extended out in rope form; machine parts, bits of broken toys, odd scraps of cloth, balls, etc., all connected together in a rope form, so that they seem to disappear toward the end. The color was black, it was flexible. Thus it could be reeled in, dangled from things. . . .
>
> *Nakanishi*: If we compare Takamatsu's objects [*buttai*] with mine on that point, his were all painted black, whereas mine were thrust within plastic, inside of the plastic. In both cases, materials were transformed into something else—Takamatsu's were covered with a black wrap, mine were encased within a transparent form. It's just that mine was an egg shape, and his extended outward.
>
> *Takamatsu*: Perhaps a centripetal form and a centrifugal form. (19–20)

Both works conveyed dissolution, action and surprising refiguration, and unexpected connection. Here again the artists' accounts testify to the way the invitation's concerns with spaces, enclosure, structure, agglomeration, and reorganization closely track their departure from conventional notions of exhibition art. The encapsulation of mundane objects within an egg shape posed the implicit question of what this everyday detritus might hatch into and become; likewise with Takamatsu's *Cord*, the chaining together of the items in a long plastic rope presents agglomeration and extension arising from everyday object forms. These "centripetal" and "centrifugal" forms thus provided cues for an action that refigured both artists and their *objets* from

isolated display to an interactive, interpenetrating mode of contact with the everyday world. As much as the "mobile," "portable" aspects of Nakanishi's and Takamatsu's works allowed for the *objets* to be performed within the everyday, they also allowed the artists themselves to partake of the *objet*'s artistic, aesthetic charge to move their own practice from a preexhibition authorship to an engaged interaction and creative self-refiguration (fig. 6.8). The presence of mobile, interactive works would bring an essential noneverydayness to transform spatial practices and provide contextual clues to the action's significance.

Takamatsu asserted that the project required the practical disassembling of their very self-conceptions as artists:

> And so [the project] turns out to have begun with dismantling oneself [*jibun o barabara ni suru koto*]. Well, there was certainly that precondition. Not a matter of revolution done at a stroke [*ikkyo ni kakumei*], but rather, the foundation of the plan turned out to be having rejected the space that concretely bound our works together and begun making objects [*buttai*] that would enter into daily life and come alive. That is, we made objects [with which] we'd have to do those sorts of things, in that sort of a place. And so they were spontaneously generative. (19)

A similar sense of self-dismantlement and spontaneous action is developed further in fantastic detail in Akasegawa's later work, "Aimai na umi" (see chapter 3). In both cases, the problem of structural transformation is seen as requiring simultaneous transformations of self, objects, and practice.

The political content of these theoretical and practical considerations is touched on frequently throughout the course of the symposium. Time and again the participants recognize the potential links of such a transformed theory and practice to political transformation. Considering their discussions of destructuring and restructuring, Nakanishi interjects:

> At first, it was that I had all of these destroyed constructions [*kōchiku-butsu no hakai*]. The destruction of structurality [*kōchikuseihakai*] is not a spatial category [*kūkan no hanchū*]; when taken to its ultimate conclusion, it becomes revolution. Well, call it revolution, but there would be difficulties if it was to be linked directly to social revolution. Like expanding the range of habitats for humanity. Our limited lives simply cannot allow extended considerations of [questions such as] at what historical level we now stand.[39] It would be just as well not to speak of such overblown [notions]. (19)





6.7 Nakanishi Natsuyuki (left, in white makeup) and Takamatsu Jirō (right, with briefcase) on the Yūrakuchō Station platform, performing with Takamatsu's *Cord* (1962). Photo by Murai Tokuji. Courtesy of Murai Hidemi.

6.8 Kawani Hiroshi and Kubota Noboru manipulate one of Nakanishi's *Portable Objets* aboard the Yamanote train, October 18, 1962. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

Like Akasegawa's reference to acting "below politics," the concept of revolution advanced here is dependent upon a reconstruction of daily life and its categories. As if responding to his critics at that post-Anpo meeting at Gonda's home, Nakanishi rejects notions of timeliness and developmental stages in favor of a politics that would be more reflexive and more suited to immediate activity. But his words illustrate how tightly linked these aesthetic and practical considerations were to a radically conceived politics—indeed how they *were* a politics—yet one difficult to link to more usual expressions of politicality.

In explaining the choice of trains as a venue, Nakanishi elaborates upon the peculiar potential of this everyday space. He relates how they described this to their assistants before the event began (including a hired sandwichboard man):

> We completely set forth our definitions of the place and the meaning of the acts. We started with [our definition of] what the inside of the train is. Whether it's "inside of the train" or "train," these are things that people use, and—although there's the problem of the specific directionality in movement—the interior of the train is a gathering place where people have momentarily lost their goal-directedness [*mokutekisei*] while stopped within it. For example, a theater has the purpose of being a theater, and the people gathered within have deliberately come with that purpose in mind, to purchase some music, to kill some time, etc. Art museums are the same way. But the place where there's the least goal-directedness, the place where you might get some idea of what sort of work the person next to you does from their attire, but where people who have momentarily lost their goal-directedness are gathered together at the same time, is the inside of a train, isn't it? The individuals there of course have their work, their personality, but it's not as if they're all at the same level; rather, it's like they're all put into a box in no particular order. (18–19)

The artists had noticed the strange texture of this space: the curious in-between, paused character of this venue for the everyday activity of commuting,[40] where people might be closely packed together but for some other purpose, one that is deferred until the end of the ride. Thus, put in the artists' own terms, the train might become a promising void for their planned action. And if the gap between art and life was part of what gave their actions their transformative potential, the train allowed everyday life to meet the artistic act halfway: the noneverydayness of art was complemented by

the suspended, unorganized character of this everyday space, permitting unscripted interactions.

The artists struggle in the symposium to find the right language to describe the experience in a manner that captures this new outlook. Thus as they begin recounting their experience carrying out their action, Nakanishi resists the pressure to narrate the project in a work-oriented fashion; he and Takamatsu both comment overtly on narrative difficulties (19). Even without such comments, though, the artists' struggle is visible in the pages of circular dialogue generated in their attempt to begin such a narrative properly. Once they provisionally resolve the necessary, complex conceptual issues within which the project was conceived and executed, the discussion gratefully shifts to their recounting of their subjective experiences in carrying out their plans.

Overall the strategy at the roundtable seems to have been to focus closely on discussing the event and the artists' experiences in immanent terms; in establishing the conceptual preconditions regarding planning, the text they sent out, the role of *objet* works brought to the action and their connection to its conceptualization, events, action, and the like, the artists (particularly Nakanishi) repeatedly resist the temptation to shift to an abstract register that is not directly part of this action. One exchange is particularly telling. It begins as Takamatsu discusses his actions at one station:

> *Takamatsu*: One end of the rope was in my pocket, the rest in the satchel. And so, while walking away, I would drag it out [about the platform], and it would be noticeable that the rest was in the bag. While I was making the *objet*, it wasn't interesting in the least, even while hanging it about the room, and so it was an *objet* that demanded that something like this be done with it from the very beginning. Looked at from the beginning, in your case too, the separate image of taking eggs and breaking them, of breaking them on the *objet*, of breaking chicken eggs, came from that *objet*.
>
> *Akasegawa*: But also, whether such things could be harmonized within a tableau, or rather, because they could not be harmonized, that was why you decided upon doing it within a train. It wasn't just the plastic things; if you speak only about them, in the end you freeze [this whole performance].
>
> *Nakanishi*: Well, look, if we get into that, then [the discussion] will turn into questions about abstracting something from reality [*genjitsu*], as well as the question of whether [such abstracting] work is helpful at present. Let's put off the discussion of *tableau* and the like for now. (21)

As Takamatsu discusses his actions with the cord, he suggests that the potential and propensity for such action was inherent in the *objet* itself from its very beginning. Akasegawa objects to the limits of this *objet*-centered narration: for him, as for Nakanishi, the key to such phenomena is their basis within the action; descriptions such as Takamatsu's threaten to reinscribe the action into a work-based discourse of art.[41] Akasegawa thus reemphasizes both the space chosen for the action and the ways the action-element itself generated aspects exceeding anything that one could project from the involved works themselves. His objections concerning the space, however, come in terms of whether or not something might harmonize within a tableau, that is, whether or not it might be sufficiently incongruous to achieve a desired effect. His notion of exceeding the bounds of a tableau, or set dramatic situation, suggests an attempt to read more than mere performance into the action; it emphasizes the importance of some quality of transformative disjuncture.[42] However, Nakanishi reacts to this move into abstract spatial language, and this reflective pause in general, as threatening to derail their close consideration of the events; he brackets the issue, and the narrative returns to the events in the station.

The narrative of the events proceeds as follows. The participants wore everyday clothing: Takamatsu and Nakanishi in suits, Satsu (Kawani) in a leather jacket, others looking like teachers. They boarded the train in Shinagawa, but separately, and "began slowly." In addition to the *objets* (the various egg-forms by Nakanishi, as well as Takamatsu's *Cord*), they brought items to highlight their interactions: flashlights to illuminate the *objets* and white work gloves both for visual effect and their implication of purposeful action. As Nakanishi put it, "It wouldn't do to just set the things out; if we didn't peek at them, no one else would" (20). The rope was hung within the train; eggs dangled from straps, scratched at and lit with flashlights. The artists, however, do not go into great detail on these activities, possibly because most of them had been present, or possibly because they believed that single details of this action were unimportant when taken out of their context.

Some of the artists experienced a noneverydayness akin to performance, thanks in part to the makeup that they wore. The plan called for wearing white greasepaint on their faces; one artist boarded with it already on, whereas "Murata" (Murata Kiichi) began to put it on inside the train,[43] then walked over to Nakanishi, who was reading a magazine, and painted him as well (20). Nakanishi describes the surprising results of the face painting:

> The thing is, once my face was painted white, speaking for myself, it felt like I was somewhere else entirely. There's this vast number of ordinary folks, well, or rather, I ought to say that within a certain order [*aru chitsujō no naka de*], there's this single space within which we live our everyday lives. And once your face got painted white within it, it was like this. Like they do in a theater all the time, that sort of thing, put up a false front. . . . In terms of what we felt, there's this sense that [your face] is just stuck on. A curtain, that is, face powder. It felt sort of like peeping out from a spy window. And so once you put it on, it's like you can do anything with equanimity. (22)

For Nakanishi, a certain degree of noneverydayness, experienced on a very physical level, helped him to break from this "order" to engage in his action within the everyday space of the trains and train stations. It also led to some unforeseen results. Takamatsu had hired a sandwich-board man to assist him in carrying the *Cord*; this individual was not otherwise committed to the project and made it clear that at the first sign of police, he would disappear.[44] At one of the station stops, Nakanishi, emboldened by the face paint, decided to get Takamatsu's *Cord* and make use of it. He narrates the results:

> *Nakanishi*: Suddenly I remembered Takamatsu's, you know, long rope, the biggest thing [we had]; I remembered this pitch-black, long thing, and so I went over to the bench, where this old guy had it. And so I go to pull that rope out of the bag, and the old guy, you know, my face is painted white, and so he all of a sudden doesn't know what's going on. Stop it, stop it, he shouts, with all his force, while I try to pull it out. Then he checks himself, you know; that was pretty interesting. That all occurred by chance.
>
> *Akasegawa*: He looked upon it as his job, I suppose, since he was a sandwich-board man.
>
> *Nakanishi*: He kept saying stop it, stop it. I suppose he thought I was stealing it.
>
> *Akasegawa*: He probably realized that he was messing up once he figured out what was going on.
>
> *Nakanishi*: Maybe. He wouldn't even let me untie the bag.

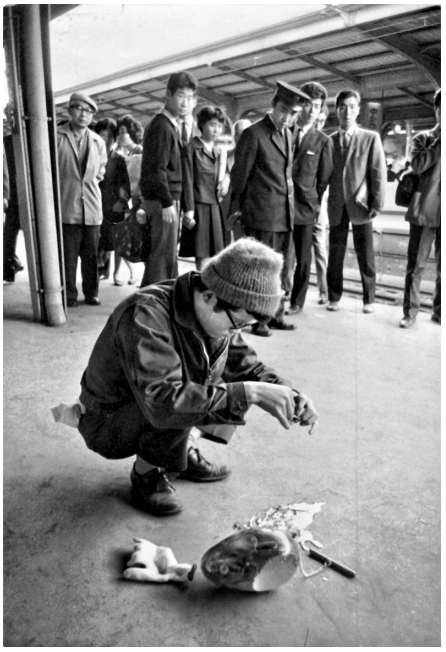
Even for someone hired and included in the planning, the cognitive jump outside of an everyday context proved to be difficult when directly confronted by an improvising white-faced artist (figs. 6.9 and 6.10). On the

other hand, the sandwich-board man, as someone hired to perform a task on the train and at the stations, was one of the few people apart from the artists who were not present in a state of "purposelessness" (in Nakanishi's terms).

At the time of the Yamanote action, terms such as *happening* had yet to achieve widespread usage, due not only to the novelty of the term but also to the uncommonness of the practice; few outside of a small artistic community (including its audience and critics) were either familiar with the term or had ever encountered such a performance. The Yamanote action thus preceded such categorizations, which would render such activities understandable and reinscribe them firmly within the boundaries of the art world. Here the newness of these activities allowed a greater potential range of effects. When a nervous Nakanishi, reading a newspaper, is suddenly painted by a white-faced individual, one can imagine other riders honestly wondering if he is in on the joke or if they might be next. The category that came to mind for the sandwich-board man, however, is crime; this is evident in his concern

6.9 Eggs applied to a *Portable Objet* attract attention, October 18, 1962. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

6.10 (From right to left) Kubota, Kawani, and the hired assistant pack *objets* after the Yamanote-sen event, outside the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan, October 18, 1962. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.





about police involvement and in his initial reaction to Nakanishi's taking out the rope. Such a reaction was far from atypical. As art crossed conceptual and practical boundaries, it consistently ran up against the catch-all category of crime—not out of "transgression" but in terms of its categorical otherness. In this the Yamanote action approached, from a different angle, the play with signs of criminality and conspiracy that the League of Criminals (Hanzaisha dōmei), Hi-Red Center, and Akasegawa's 1,000-yen project flirted with.

The space of action had its effects on the principal participants as well. Satsu arrived on the train with his own bagful of materials, surprising Nakanishi. Inspired by Nakanishi's egg-shaped *objets*, he had brought real eggs, as well as a chicken foot (figs. 6.8 and 6.9). He sat on the floor near Nakanishi and commenced his planned action, but was soon inspired to make spontaneous changes to it:

> *Nakanishi*: And so Satsu, well, someone had brought a weird satchel, and inside were eggs, real ones . . . a bit weird to add eggs to eggs (laughs).
> *Satsu*: I was a bit concerned about it.
> *Nakanishi*: Well, my image of "egg" is for the most part like that. It just showed up all of a sudden and so it took me aback. Anyway, so Satsu just quickly inferred raw eggs. Well, he looked pretty normal, wearing a leather jacket, carrying a satchel, so you wouldn't guess just looking at him. On the floor, weren't you?
> *Satsu*: Yeah, like this on the floor. On my flank was Nakanishi. I opened the zipper toward him. The eggs were wrapped in foil; I would take them out, peel the foil, and you see, I had a thermos, so I'd split them open and put them into the thermos. I got on meaning to do this action [*akushon*] as much as I could—opening the thermos, splitting them and putting them inside. I was really doing some sort of monochrome action as I repeated this. But the eggs themselves, with one of them being this guy's [Nakanishi's] egg-shaped *objet*, shared a kind of indexical comradery, and without noticing, I got into that, and so started doing things like putting egg goo onto the egg *objet* and things like that. (21)

Caught up in the space of the action, Satsu is inspired to add egg to the egg-form upon which Nakanishi is lavishing strange attention.

Nakanishi, on the other hand, appears to have been transfixed in the moment, unable to describe either what he did or what the effects on the other passengers might have been. He discusses this with Takamatsu:

Nakanishi: And so, well, I don't recall what went on first, but I have no idea of what the people's reactions to this was. I was totally absorbed in what I was doing. And so we proceeded to Yūrakuchō and got off.

Takamatsu: But hey, inside the train, people were laughing, smiling! I was with Urobon, both of us peeking at the egg. And when we did it, the inside of the train was fairly empty, and so everyone started giggling. (20)

Nakanishi's nervous intensity testifies to the strangeness of the action and to the difficulty he felt engaging in their planned acts, yet his divorce from his surroundings was also conditioned by the white face paint, which made him feel "like [he] was somewhere else entirely" (22). His sensation of "peeping out of a spy hole," by contrast, appears to have been related to his actions on an open-air train station platform (fig. 6.7), which he is much better able to describe—testimony to the different quality of that space compared to that generated within the train (22). Takamatsu's reports of laughter and nervous giggling confirm the felt oddness of the latter interior space, such strangeness being closely akin to humor in addition to crime.

The photos of the Yamanote-sen activities published together with the second half of the symposium reveal further details: one shows a white-painted Nakanishi, seated within the train, absorbed in reading a magazine, an egg *objet* dangling from the handgrip before him.[45] A second photo features a standing Nakanishi, intently shining a flashlight directly on the *objet* as perplexed passengers look on (while one stands pointedly turned away from him).[46] Another figure shows Nakanishi, Takamatsu, and "Urobon K." (Kubota Noboru) at the Yūrakuchou Station with egg *objets*,[47] just prior to the deployment of the *Cord*. Takamatsu, without face paint, stands in his suit, reading a newspaper while dangling the *objet* from his other hand like a giant watch; Urobon stands looking at Nakanishi, who crouches, licking the egg *objet* he cradles in two hands with an unsettling, lascivious expression of rapt attention and delight; below is a large stain on the platform, perhaps the aftermath of an "egging" by Satsu (Kawani) (fig. 6.11).[48] Nakanishi eventually takes Takamatsu's *Cord* from the bag; with one end stuffed into his back pocket (or "dangling from his ass," as Nakamatsu puts it in the symposium), Takamatsu walks about, the *Cord* following him, emerging from the bag "like a snake" (21). In the published photos, Takamatsu appears nonchalant, as if unaware that he is trailing the huge, lumpy black rope form.[49] In each shot of the action on the station platform, the other riders are noticeably observing the artists, but from a few paces back; one



6.11 Left, Kubota examines a chicken foot. Front, Nakanishi becomes intimate with his *Portable Objet*. To the rear, an otherwise unremarkably outfitted Takamatsu stands reading a newspaper, while dangling another of Nakanishi's *Portable Objets*. To his rear stands the hired assistant (right), gawkers, and photographers. October 18, 1962. Photo by Murai Tokuji. Courtesy of Murai Hidemi.

of those half-recoiling from the action is a conductor, who peers down at a squatting Urobon with a dumbfounded expression.[50]

The photos reveal a problem with the plan's execution, however, which the artists mention in the continuation of the symposium in the next issue of *Keishō*: the presence of photographers and their effect on the action.

> *Urobon*: I don't know why [it happened], but there were way too many [uninvited].
>
> *Satsu*: It turned into something like a location shot for a film. You do something, and they cluster around, the cameramen; [the action] gets surrounded, with us doing some sort of thing in the middle.
>
> *Takamatsu*: I think in fact all those people in the station thought it was a location shot for a science-fiction movie. I think it had that sort of character to it.
>
> *Nakanishi*: Once, when we were all together talking, a friend who was a news photographer came. . . .
>
> *Takamatsu*: Lemme shoot it [*shuzai sasero*], he said. Ultimately that's no good. Our starting intentions for the most part came out of taking the space of [everyday] life called a train and problematizing it, and so when cameramen formed a wall around us it just turned into something like a theater or a gallery.
>
> *Akasegawa*: If that's the form that you show up in, it results in the passengers looking on as spectators from a zone of safety. (13)

The spontaneous withdrawal of bystanders from the artists' immediate area, the interference of cameramen, and the possibility that the presence of the cameramen might have blunted the impact of the actions made for a somewhat different space on the station platforms than in the cars. As Takamatsu complains, the project may have lost some of its direct impact, becoming more like a performance or exhibition space, in contrast to the impact generated by the diffuse activities within the confined space of the trains. The presence of the cameramen in particular threatened to make intelligible or plausible the very strangeness that was the basis of potential agitation; it depended on the provocative suspension of intelligibility, the interaction between the content of their noneverydayness and the everyday space within which they performed. By appearing to be a "science-fiction location shot" or a news item, the action was in danger of becoming one of those nonevent events which the press circulated, thus losing its specific content and disappearing into monochrome at the very moment of its enactment (rather than later as reproduction).[51]

Despite the cameramen's interference, however, the action seems to have maintained a certain level of intensity and focus. Nakanishi speaks at Akasegawa's trial of an instance in which a woman on the train could no longer bear it and suddenly departed the train, apparently before her stop.[52] In fact at Ueno Station one of the artists himself could no longer bear the pressure:

Nakanishi: There were a number of different events, leaving behind [a trail of] ill will, doing stuff as we thought of it, and then at Ueno there was that accident.

Akasegawa: What happened?

Nakanishi: Well, that was a bit, you know.

Takamatsu: One of us, or rather, perhaps everybody, was just utterly exhausted emotionally or physically.

Nakanishi: I blew it. What got to me was that at that moment, I just completely lost track of, stopped understanding, what was going on. And so I go, "Let's get out of here!" I said that to Satsu, and ran right up the stairs, out of the station into Ueno Park.

Akasegawa: With the white face paint on?

Nakanishi: Right out into the park with the white paint. And then I got a bit lonely, just there by myself. I thought everyone would follow me out. The thing was, you go out to the park, and you can see the platform. And so I wait, and they don't come out. And so I'm looking, and the trains come on schedule. A brown one comes, and I think, oh, that's the Keihin-sen train, and the next one is a yellow one, a new one. I thought that they probably got on that one and left, so I go to where I can see the platform completely to make sure. I think, if they all went, maybe I'll get in a taxi and [meet them] in Shibuya or somewhere [on the plan]. And so I go to a place where I can see the whole platform, on the hill, and there they are. They're there [on the platform], doing something or other, as the trains go by.

Takamatsu: Getting into a crucifixion [pose], etc.

Nakanishi: Uh-huh, doing something or other. (22–23)

Nakanishi was not alone in feeling this pressure; though it was not mentioned at the symposium, in a later interview he recalled Murata reeling about like a drunken person merely from the accumulating sense of pressure.[53] In Nakanishi's case, the breaking point came after they had exhausted the written instructions loosely coordinating their activities, leaving the situation entirely freeform—and for Nakanishi, rapidly unbearable.

After Nakanishi's departure, the artists appear to have precipitously con-

cluded the action, abandoning the planned activities at Ikebukuro, Shinjuku, and Shibuya stations. This in fact derailed plans for the group to join with another two participants, Kosugi Takehisa and Tone Yasunao (of the Music group). Separately from the main group of artists, Tone and Kosugi arrived with mobile tape players and boarded the trains. They were to have combined with the main group when it made its way to a rendezvous at the Ikebukuro Station, but once it became apparent that something had gone awry, Tone and Kosugi completed a circumnavigation of the system on their own, interposing sound and the train environment.[54]

Revolution and Regicide Revisited

Nakanishi's narration of his panic at Ueno terminates both the narrative of the Yamanote event and the first half of the symposium. Published in February 1963, it was this portion, ending with Nakanishi's panicked exit, that was first given the provocative title "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi—hitotsu no jikkenrei ni tsuite" (Signs of Discourse on Direct Action—Concerning One Experiment), with its historical connotations of anarcho-syndicalist revolution and regicide. When the discussion resumes in the next issue, the topic of conversation briefly shifts to several other experiments before returning to the action on the Yamanote-sen.[55] An examination of the discussion and the event suggests that the title's reference, while perhaps a bit overdrawn and anachronistic, was not wholly gratuitous. The *Keishō* editors, particularly Imaizumi as author of "The Equipment Plan," were perhaps sensitive to the presence of such signs within the discussion, and decided to bring them forward in their choice of title. Moreover an understanding of those understated elements that approached a direct action thesis, and even regicide, may have contributed to the artists' nervousness, Nakanishi's especially (as Imaizumi's original guillotine coconspirator). Nakanishi's key role in drafting the invitation text and planning the event, as well as the frequency of his explanatory comments at the symposium, suggests that he would have been particularly attuned to the signs' nuances and implications. Some of these skirted dangerous areas: the invitation played with signs of conspiracy and with references to something akin to the "Furyū mutan" controversy of recent years.

The choice of the Yamanote-sen and the details of its representation on the invitation can also be read as provocatively referencing the imperial institution. The Yamanote-sen, then a national railway (*kokuden*), loops about the center of Tokyo. But, as Roland Barthes was to point out in his fantasy

text of 1970, *L'empire des Signes*, this center is in a sense "empty," occupied by the largely inaccessible grounds of the Imperial Palace, about which all traffic, both surface and subterranean (the subway trains which crisscross the rest of this center area), detours.[56] On the invitation, the representation of the Yamanote-sen as a perfect circle emphasizes the center orientation; rather more suggestively, the center of this circle is a charred hole burned into the paper (plate 13). The burned-out center provides its own counterimage of a void to that spoken of in the text: an actual hole cleared out by burning and marked with a charred boundary. Its location within the Yamanote-sen diagram provides a metonymical representation of some sort of fiery destruction within the very heart of the capital, Tokyo, and hints at a connection between the "agitation" spoken of in the invitation, the action on the trains and in the stations, and momentous political consequences. The hole has a specific content; it is not an "empty center" but a notion that connects this artistic activity's puncturing of everyday order with an imperial center burned to ashes.

Though not experienced as such by riders, a bird's-eye view reveals that the Yamanote-sen is more of an oval, within which the Imperial Palace is located a bit to one side. When the artists performed first at Yūrakucho, then at Tokyo stations, they were closest to it. In fact at Tokyo Station—the "emperor's own station," whose original design focused on a central entrance for the exclusive use of the imperial family—they were quite near the site proposed in "The Equipment Plan" for the emperor's spectacular execution.[57] Having spent time at both of these stations, the artists reached Ueno, and Nakanishi lost his nerve. It is plausible that the strain of participating in the actions in Yūrakucho and Tokyo stations added to the difficulties he experienced engaging in action in general.

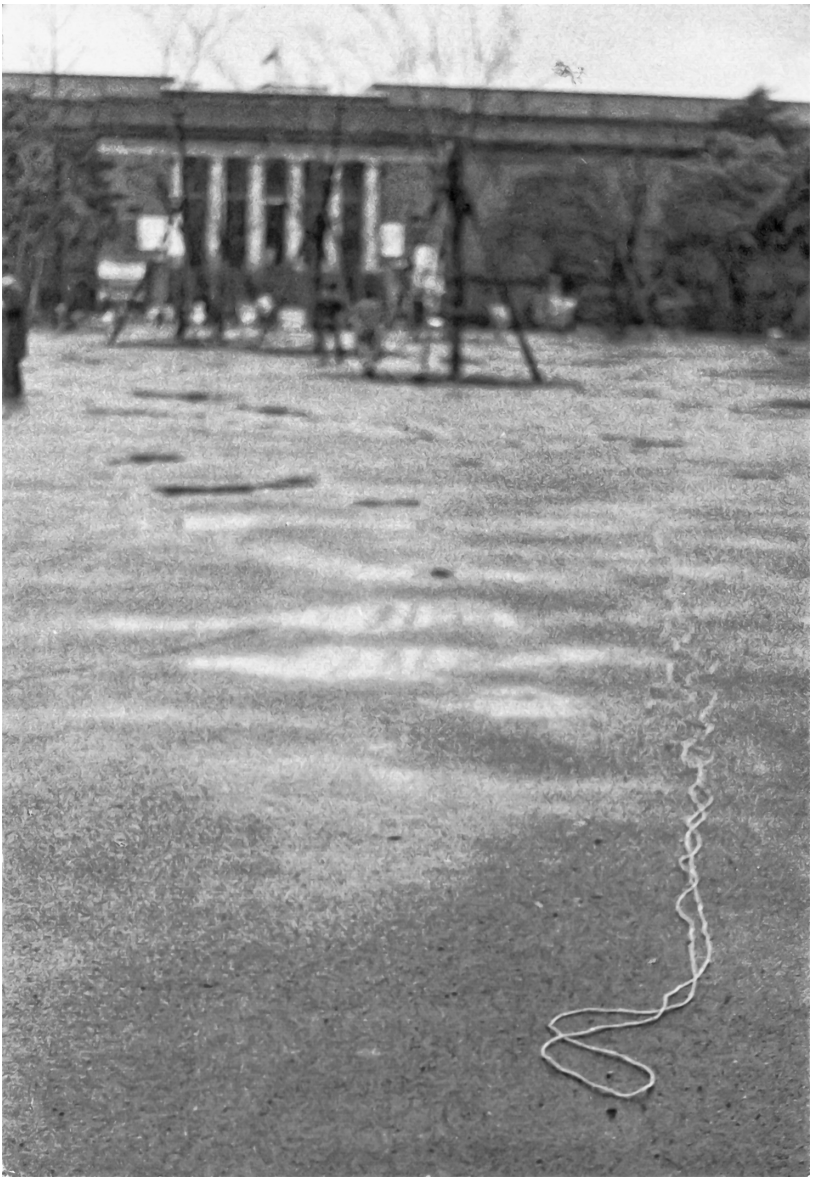
The crown prince is included in the list of everyday items that begins the invitation text, which casually reduces him by apposition to the level of "broken toys, gears, mainsprings, eggs, bones, hair," and the like. Such casualness suggests a radical leveling impulse, while, in its impression of randomness, simultaneously disavows any particular significance to that reference. Yet the specific mention of the crown prince adds to the impression that the burned-out center of the Yamanote-sen diagram refers to the Imperial Palace rather than other state institutions such as the National Diet compound or the prime minister's residence.[58] The invitation thus flirts both with the lèse-majesté that provoked recent rightist attacks and with the even more dangerous topic, broached by the "Furyū mutan" short story, of revolutionary, regicidal action. While distinguishable from "The Equip-

ment Plan" on many levels, the retention of this horizon for the potential results of radical action points to the shared concerns that had preoccupied Nakanishi and Imaizumi after Anpo and the Shimanaka incident, even as the focus of this practice turned from guillotines to the everyday world.

Yet it was not Tokyo Station but Ueno Station which agitated Nakanishi past the point he could bear. Dashing out through the Ueno Park exit, he took the route that precisely matched his route from his home in Ōimachi to his alma mater (Tokyo Geidai) until his graduation in 1958, and more recently to the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, the host site for the yearly *Yomiuri Indépendant*.[59] This would not be the final occasion marking a charged nexus between such art, the exhibition space, and Ueno Station. The following March, during the very last *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition, Nakanishi would approach the station from the opposite direction, attaching a string to the end of Takamatsu's *Cord* (now entered as an exhibit) and running the line from the end of the work all the way across Ueno Park to the very exit he used during the Yamanote performance (see chapter 5 and fig. 6.12). And of course, thanks to Nakanishi's submission in 1963, *Clothespins Assert Agitating Action* (his first and only in the *Yomiuri Indépendant*), a few unwary exhibit visitors no doubt also traveled onto the train with one of his clothespins affixed to their clothing. In both cases, surreptitious action, anonymity, and provocation marked the interactions with the everyday world.

Artistic Action, Artistic Agency

On one level, the concealment of some of the artists' identities behind pseudonyms and incomplete forms of reference can be related to their concerns about more provocative topics touched upon, however indirectly or obscurely, within the context of the action.[60] Such was much more likely to have been true for the involvement of the *Keishō* editors themselves, who, as the operators of a self-consciously radical publication engaged in critical agitation, were already committed to further acts of provocation.[61] They had already chosen to conceal themselves behind pseudonyms, in particular Imaizumi's adoption of Nagara Tō for "The Equipment Plan."[62] As evidenced by the symposium's title, the *Keishō* editors discerned regicidal, revolutionary implications, the *kizashi* (signs, hints) of a direct action thesis, lurking within the Yamanote-sen action as well (as much as the reference may have been tongue-in-cheek). Thus their participation in both the action (in the case of Kawani) and the symposium (under pseudonyms) fit within a pattern of playful deception and prudent dissembling. For Imaizumi and Naka-



6.12 The line attached to Takamatsu's *Cord* on exhibit at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, 1963 (at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum, rear). Previously stretched by Nakanishi (accompanied by Imaizumi) to Ueno Station, here pulled back well into the park near the museum in response to police demands. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

nishi, the extension of their ongoing debates seeking a "unified approach to politics and art" into the symposium (with mutual criticisms of their recent efforts) encompassed both levels.[63]

In the case of the other participants, the playful aspect appears to have figured more prominently. Or rather, more than an attempt at concealment, the pseudonyms and name alterations were meant to lend an air of provocative conspiracy to their action, raising expectations of what might occur:

> *Nakanishi*: We ourselves had an extremely vague and mysterious [*aimai*] aspect too. For example, we thought that if we were going to do this stuff, we ought to do it as pseudonymous acts. And so it ended up with "Urobon K." "J. Takamatsu" revealed his identity a bit.
>
> *Akasegawa*: I felt like "J. Takamatsu" was a bit symbolic when I got [the invitation].
>
> *Nakanishi*: "N. Nakanishi," "K. Murata," etc. . . . When it's presented like this, you're like, what Murata, what Nakanishi? But wait, didn't I see your name somewhere . . . ? And so the receiver gets that sense, and we get that sort of expectation created. . . .
>
> *Takamatsu*: It would have been better to do it for all four [names].
>
> *Satsu*: The sense pretty much was that it was received symbolically.
>
> *Nakanishi*: Really? Well, that's all right, then.

The relative anonymity of the signers of the text—the obvious pseudonym "Urobon K." as well as the atypical listing of given names by initials only with Takamatsu, Nakanishi, and "Murata"[64]—intimated unpredictable actions. At the same time, it diminished the usual pretensions to authorship, whose subjective assumptions went hand in hand with the sort of formal, works-based art from which the participants sought to distance themselves. The name play, the white face paint, the loosely coordinated action, and even the mediation provided by art itself, all served to enable the participants to create the proper space for their action within the everyday world, as well as subjectively facilitating their actually carrying it out.

The Yamanote-sen action itself, its theorization in the symposium, and the careful narrative explanation of the action all address the problem of agency in terms of action in the everyday world.[65] The degree to which such issues were successfully addressed in a sustained fashion in the symposium speaks to the timeliness of the *Keishō* editors' intervention. Akasegawa's attentive concern with the details and the language of the discussion of the Yamanote-sen action, in which he did not participate; the care with which Nakanishi, Takamatsu, and the other participants handle the conceptual issues as in-



6.13 Hi-Red Center's name card, listing Takamatsu, Akasegawa, and Nakanishi (Taka, high; Aka, red; Naka, center), 1963. Image courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

dissociable from the narration; the critical reflection upon all aspects of the action, from planning to execution, along with the subjective experiences of the participants—all point to the centrality of the artists' shared concerns with agency and effective action. The sustained reflection upon these actions here provided a key mediation in the artistic practice of these artists, most especially in the case of Akasegawa, who shortly thereafter commenced his 1,000-yen project and wrote his first critical piece, "Aimai na umi" (see chapter 3).[66] His group activities followed a parallel course; while he exhibits with Group Sweet, a last, loose collection of Neo-Dada participants which included at different times Kazakura Shō, Shinohara Ushio, Tanaka Shintarō, Toyoshima Sōroku, Yoshino Tatsumi, and Miki Tomio, and at the final *Yomiuri Indépendant*, Akasegawa joins Nakanishi and Takamatsu in forming the art action group Hi-Red Center in May 1963 (fig. 6.13).[67]

Reflecting the degree to which their dialogue at the symposium was directly continued in the group's formation, the artists came to adopt the Yamanote-sen action as part of the group's events, as a "pre–Hi-Red Center," despite Akasegawa's lack of direct involvement in the event itself. Hi-Red Center also adopted as a signature tactic the name-play pattern, in which the three principals, Akasegawa, Nakanishi, and Takamatsu, appear overtly in front of a shifting cast of suspiciously anonymous collaborators. (These included an occasional fourth member, Izumi Tatsu, but also at times the *Keishō* editors, Kazakura Shō, assistants such as Nakahara Yūsuke and Tone Yasunao, and numerous others.)[68] Such play was also in evidence in the very title of the group, which, while merely a combination of the English trans-

lations of the first characters from each of the artists' names (Taka, high; Aka, red; Naka, center), was vaguely suggestive of subversive activity and intended to imply something more menacing below the surface.[69] As in the Yamanote event, the significance of such implications was most apparent to the artists themselves: they had targeted themselves for a kind of reflexive agitation by their own actions.

From the time of the roundtable symposium forward, there is an evident shift in these artists' practice, again thanks to the consciousness-raising and critical insights gained through this continuing discourse. In the case of Hi-Red Center and of Akasegawa's individual critical and artistic production, the artists move away from simplistic fantasies of regicidal, classical direct action and toward a realizable form of direct action through the investigation and attack upon actual deployments of authority and force in the everyday world. This would come most pointedly in the form of Akasegawa's attack on the convergence point of all of these lines of investigation: paper money. In fact his peculiar short story "Aimai na umi," a key element in the theorization of this project, was intended as his own direct critique of the Yamanote action (see chapter 3). As he avers, "The direct action [*chokusetsu kōdō*] of the *Keishō* symposium became a sort of theme for me, and I became more and more conscious of what I was doing."[70] The continued development of this consciousness, and the continuing articulation of the revolutionary hopes and possibilities of *artistic* direct action within the everyday world, is the theme of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

NAMING THE REAL

On January 27, 1964, nineteen days after police investigators visited Akasegawa's home, and eighteen days after his first interrogation, an article appeared in the *Asahi Shinbun* concerning these inquiries. The story, "Artist Forges Old-Series 1,000-Yen Notes; Gets Three Merchants to Make Them; Monochrome, Finely Detailed; Distributed at an Exhibition; 'These Are Works'; *Chi*-37 Connection Pursued," described Akasegawa's works as criminal duplication and intimated that police were seeking a direct connection between him and the notorious *Chi*-37 counterfeiting incidents of the early 1960s, in which extremely high-quality 1,000-yen counterfeit notes were being discovered throughout the country:

> The Police Special Investigative Squad for the *Chi*-37 Incident has been conducting its investigations into suspicions of currency imitation [*mozō*], aware that counterfeits of the old series 1,000-yen notes, made with plates of the same size and same design, are circulating within a certain circle. Until the twenty-sixth of the month they investigated such

> suspicions concerning a young artist and self-styled ultra-avant-garde member who produced large quantities of such notes, without placing him under arrest.[1] Two plates and some tens of 1,000-yen notes were impounded. . . . On the basis of the resemblance between the plates to the *Chi*-37 counterfeit plates, police are thoroughly pursuing those connected, such as the businesses, with the expectation that they will find something that will lead to the solution of the *Chi*-37 incident.[2]

Beyond the *Asahi Shinbun* article's one-sided and conclusionary tone, the analysis relentlessly reimposes the very categories against which Akasegawa's art contends, reducing his art to a police perspective. In identifying Akasegawa, it strongly implies that an artist had been sought all along: "According to police investigations, this artist [*kono gaka*] is Akasegawa Genpei (27), residing at 1–856 Asagaya, Suginami-ku, Tokyo."[3] The term, *gaka* (painter) invokes the most conservative conventional notions of artistic practice while emphasizing manual skill and dexterity suitable for counterfeiting. The article also downplays Akasegawa's denials and comments regarding the notes' being art and takes little notice of the notes' features that would have made them unlikely counterfeits. In an indirect quote in which the police speak of *magireru osore* (risk of confusion) the article even invokes the *mozō* law's definition, "magirawashiki gaikan wo yūsuru mono" (a thing having an exterior confusable with [money]).

The inaccuracies in the piece were all prejudicial against Akasegawa and gave the impression of both guilt and possible involvement in additional crimes subject to a still unfolding investigation. This was especially true in the erroneous assertion that police had confiscated "two plates, absolutely identical [*sokkuri*] to the front *and back* of the old-series 1,000-yen note,"[4] since Akasegawa's works asserted their nonidentity with real notes primarily by being only single-sided copies. The statement conflates the first set of notes—whose printed reverse featured an invitation for the *Aimai na umi ni tsuite* (On the Ambiguous Ocean) exhibition in Shinjuku in February 1963—with the notes that were enclosed in issue 8 of *Keishō*: "It is suspected that [Akasegawa] supplied the imitation 1,000-yen notes included in a magazine on the occasion of a group exhibition in February in Shinjuku." By accident or oversight, the article gives the impression that the *Keishō* notes were complete, double-sided copies of the 1,000-yen note and that therefore some "self-styled ultra-avant-garde" artist was using an art magazine to distribute counterfeits. Once again Akasegawa's act is reduced to mere counterfeiting, mere criminality.



7.1 The official composite image of the *Chi*-37 incident perpetrator issued by police in December 1963. Note the gratuitous beret. Courtesy of Akasegawa / Nagoya City Art Museum.

The writers of the article had either been shown or read quotes from Akasegawa's statement to the police of January 9.[5] Such statements (*kyōjutsu chōsho*) were shorthand notes written by officials to record the suspect's responses to questioning; they come close to the status of confessions since the suspect is then made to sign this police account. Still, the *Asahi* story takes this one step further, effacing this distinction by speaking instead of Akasegawa's "confession" (*jikyō*). In support of this perspective, and much like a prosecutor rebutting defense testimony, the *Asahi* article dismisses Akasegawa's denials of any counterfeiting intent and assertions of his artistic purposes by simply enumerating the "facts" of his detailed copying and mechanical reproduction: "First, these were actual size notes, printed without police permission in large quantities,[6] and second, although monochrome, they were finely detailed. There was thus considerable risk that they might, in the dark, be confused with the real thing [*honmono*]. These were therefore no mere pranks, and the police investigated them under the sus-

picion of imitation [*mozō*]." The *Asahi*'s analysis thus mobilizes commonplace categories to provide an apparently matter-of-fact denial of Akasegawa's arguments, silencing his claims by concealing the gap between his near copies and mere counterfeits. Indeed by their logic, in the dark any piece of paper of a suitable size might be a counterfeit. Akasegawa's act is reduced to unproblematic criminality by the *Asahi*'s reassertion of a series of absolute distinctions between art and duplication, between originality and replication, between originals and copies, and between real things and counterfeits. These distinctions all underwrite the authority of that strange item, a copy with the status of an original: paper money. They assert and naturalize its "reality," concealing its ultimate source in state authority behind a pseudo-ontology. An art that departs from oil on canvas to explore this unquestionable reality could only be an unserious "prank" or, if serious, a criminal attempt at counterfeiting.

The *Asahi* would retract one of its insinuations, without apology, in a brief article on February 18. Announcing that the police had forwarded the case to prosecutors, the *Asahi* casually mentions—in the third paragraph—that police now know that Akasegawa is unconnected to the *Chi*-37 incident.[7] Otherwise the second article maintains the prosecutorial tone of the first, again enumerating the numbers of prints involved. The combination of police inquiries and continuing newspaper distortions, however, reinvigorated Akasegawa's interest in the previously stalled 1,000-yen project, spurring him to further critical reflection upon his practice and provoking his second critical essay.

Capitalist Realism

The next month, on February 24, responding to the *Asahi* article (and indirectly to the police intervention), Akasegawa replied to his accusers in a long article in the newspaper *Dokusho Shinbun*. The work was his first critical writing since the short story "Aimai na umi," published the previous June in the journal *Keishō* (see chapter 3). While the piece responds to his various accusers, an examination of this compact, complex text, "Theses on 'Capitalist Realism,'" also reveals continuing concerns from both "Aimai na umi" and his collage works of the early 1960s.

Akasegawa opens by questioning the status of the order of reality cited repeatedly in the *Asahi* article, namely, the distinction between real things, *honmono*, and imitations, *nisemono*:

> That imitations [or counterfeits, *nisemono*] have begun to peck at the flanks of real things [*honmono*] is certainly nothing new. Real things are not simply things; because they assert that they are real things, imitations appear. In principle, imitations are always aggressive toward real things, while real things always turn defensively toward them to protect themselves.
>
> This is because, just like the occasional unexpected photo taken from the side exposes that face of yours you are always seeing from the front in the mirror, imitations bear within them [*naizō shiteiru*] evidence [*shōgen*] that real things cannot refute.[8]

Akasegawa thus replaces the notion of an unproblematic ontological reality with a reality marked by a struggle over legitimacy: between real things, which both *assert* their status and struggle to defend it, and imitations, which attack that status in a way unanswerable except by some form of violence.

For Akasegawa, the *Asahi*'s surprising linkage of his art to the *Chi*-37 criminals was akin to the experience of Gregor Samsa, the protagonist in Kafka's "Metamorphosis," who awakens to discover his transformation into a giant and detested insect:

> In order to investigate what real things are, I have taken more than a little interest in imitations. And yet, in spite of everything, all of a sudden, what I ought to call an imitation of an imitation, a strange, inexplicable thing [*kimyō na shiromono*], nonchalantly showed up before me (ever since Kafka coined the phrase, "suddenly one morning [*aru asa, totsuzen ni*]" to describe the arrival time of such strange things,[9] they have been always showing up suddenly one morning).
>
> On the morning of January 27, it slipped in under the gap below my door. When I opened up that *Asahi Shinbun* morning edition and looked, I was utterly astonished. On the top of the [feature page], in huge type, was "The Young Artist and Self-Styled Ultra-Avant-Garde Member, Akasegawa Genpei (27), Offender in a Thousand Yen Imitation Connected to the '*Chi*-37' Incident."[10]
>
> I was assaulted by a completely bizarre sensation, as if suddenly one morning I had seen my older sister change into a giant tin toy. And, apart from my surprise, I worried about the future of the *Asahi Shinbun*.

By dramatizing the sudden arrival of the article as a fantastic inversion of his own "reality," akin to a Kafkaesque scene of sudden, unexpected meta-

morphosis, Akasegawa's narrative reveals the *Asahi*'s apparently objective characterizations as fraudulent constructions, while polemically asserting the normality and reasonableness of his own artistic investigations. In fact it is the *Asahi* that is the "self-styled ultra-avant-garde member" engaging in willful and capricious deception:

> They had taken the imitation of the 1,000 yen as material, and made imitation news connecting it to the *Chi*-37 incident, etc.; they had made a forgery of news superior to that of the *Chi*-37 forgery. I was printed in the paper, my face in the middle of the *Chi*-37 note like Shōtoku Taishi,[11] to be looked at with curiosity, and misunderstanding.
>
> What happened was that the *Asahi Shinbun* had taken the new method of imitation art [*nisemono geijutsu*] called "imitation art" from the art world and introduced it into the techniques of the press, debuting themselves as the "self-styled ultra-avant-garde member" of the newspaper world.[12] I worried how far the *Asahi* might continue their new work of "news forgery." While they're no Murata Hideo, once they decided to do it,[13] I hoped that they would bravely continue this work of news forgery despite the numerous obstacles they might encounter along the way. (25–26)

Though Akasegawa conceivably responds to the opinions of police inspectors as well as to the *Asahi*, directing his sarcastic commentary to the newspaper article alone allowed his wit free rein while providing a measure of protection against offending those still conducting the investigation.

In scientific-sounding language, whose reasonable tone continues to assert the facticity of his position, Akasegawa opens up an inquiry into the distinction between purportedly real and imitation things, framed as a problem of visual observation. As he phrases the problem, "To make an imitation, you must first look squarely at that which is called a 'real thing'; yet this is a thing which cannot be simply viewed straightforwardly [*kantan ni wa seishi dekinai shiromono*]" (27). In part, it is a problem of proximity: "Cameras have focal distances. If something exceeds that limit and approaches too close to the lens, it becomes unphotographable. For example, a thread, stuck to the lens, will never be revealed on the film, no matter how many times the shutter is opened. To take a picture of it, it must be removed to a set distance from the camera" (27). So too with eyes: though counterintuitive, "it is not always the case that the more familiar, the closer to the eye a thing is, the more its details may be seen." As Akasegawa mildly observes, "Humans cannot clearly see the undersides of their eyelids. To look directly

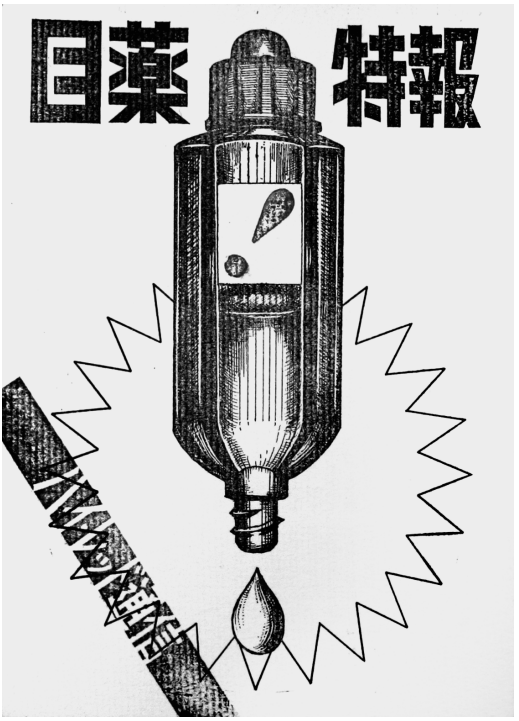
at them, they would have to be cut off and looked at. This would be accompanied by a degree of resistance from one's body, and this subject for viewing would not go without damage.[14] This is the Achilles' heel [*kimon*] in the procedure" (27).

Akasegawa's casually clinical tone is belied by his starkly brutal image of bodily dismemberment. Thus when he goes on to state that "currency such as the 1,000-yen note, which circulates through our breast pockets between our work and our meals, is also something like eyelids,"[15] he suggests that our familiarity with money actually entails both a radical misperception and an intimate, even bodily connection not easily severed or examined. He elaborates:

> Even if we know intellectually what the currency system is, the "perpetrator," currency, constantly shadows our persons, clinging to our labor and deeds like eyelids do to our bodies, and right before our eyes sneaks into our pockets [*futokoro*] and, aided by the speed by which it circulates despite our wishes, without time to look straight at it, it wraps us in the long cord [*himo*] that it drags, without time to even tug on this cord; and so this too becomes an Achilles' heel.
>
> Human eyes have this defect, which we might call a blind spot. (27–28)

Accused by the *Asahi* and the police of a crime, Akasegawa identifies a rather different "perpetrator" and criminal mystery (fig. 7.2).

Here, as elsewhere in the piece, Akasegawa's argument echoes his earlier short story's representation of capitalism, the "system of private property," as extending to the very cellular organization of the body. In the fantasy world of that work, the countersystemic agent, the "spy," escapes its grasp by dissection and reconstruction at a cellular level; here, however, Akasegawa's analysis points to an even more elusive role: currency circulates through our *futokoro* (our wallets, but also, literally, our bosoms, our very being). It "clings to our labor and deeds like eyelids," that is, in an intimate and indissociable manner that conceals itself while interrupting our vision. Moving too fast to be observed, it binds us, enmeshing us within connections Akasegawa represents with the image of the *himo*, a rope or cord. Such a concept was no doubt suggested by Takamatsu Jirō's continuing series of *Himo* (Cord) works. In the prior year and a half, from the time of the Yamanotesen event to the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition and on through the activities of Hi-Red Center (with Nakanishi, Akasegawa, and others), these works had been increasingly incorporated into an intensified artistic investigation (and agitation) of the everyday world, in which these and other *objets* (such



7.2 Hi-Red Center produced this *Eye-drop Special Bulletin* in obscurely satiric reaction to *Asahi*'s article on January 24, 1964, describing Akasegawa's questioning by police. The *Bulletin* echoes some of Akasegawa's themes from his written response. Image courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

as Nakanishi's egg-shaped *Compact Objets* and Akasegawa's 1,000-yen and *Wrapped* works) provided not only props but concretizations of elusive and otherwise invisible aspects of everyday life (see chapters 5 and 6). Akasegawa's article suggests that he had come to read Takamatsu's works and, by extension, the everyday itself as fundamentally being about capital's invisible, binding circulation through money and things, much as Marx spoke of the "invisible threads" with which individual consumption binds workers to return to the labor market through the very act of consumption (thus rendering the workers themselves into appendages of capital).[16] In Akasegawa's terms, the circulation of currency (the "perpetrator," the "currency system") binds our hearts and bodies with an invisible cord linking things and people together in perpetual, constricting entanglements—all of which goes completely unobserved, as if it were a defect, a "blind spot," on our eyes.

Akasegawa suggests that this situation is exacerbated in a time of developing peacetime prosperity:

> Trachoma develops in the eyelids from the infiltration of bacteria, and from its swelling, it becomes difficult to discriminate things; not only the

> eyes, but the whole body is assaulted with discomfort, and for the first time we notice this defect. But in our current, untroubled bodies, such a defect is overlooked. When we go to observe through human eyes incorporating this structural defect, a certain kind of "movement" [*undō*] is required, not only by the eye, but in our relationship of distance to the subject for viewing. (28)

The phrase "our current, untroubled bodies [*genzai no heiwa na nikutai ni oite*]" has the double meaning of referring also to our present bodies in peacetime, that is, the postwar world. Thus either the absence of crises or developing material improvements (and their erosion of support for political participation) leads us to overlook the very existence of the problem. Akasegawa's prescription of "movement" (*undō*), the term for political movements as well as simple translocation (and by extension, action), to solve both of these problems suggests a need for political mobilization while cautiously avoiding the kind of tired rhetoric that might have caused a post-Anpo reader to turn the page.

Akasegawa describes his own solution as a kind of forensic, police procedure:

> I arrested a 1,000-yen note that had leapt into my pocket before it could smoothly circulate away. To make certain of an unidentified chief culprit, one must first seize hold of clues from the perpetrator.
>
> With the aid of a magnifying glass, I analyzed the 1,000-yen note exactingly, and made a 200-times magnification copy of it upon a panel. This painting, which I copied down utterly without adding sentiment of any sort, was shit realism, not Socialist Realism, but what we may call Capitalist Realism. Not a design of a flag to be hoisted above my goal, but a casting [*igata*] of the road upon which we are now walking. And it was a kind of torture for this perpetrator we call money.
>
> However, this was but a way of observing, and not enough to discover the refuge of the chief culprit. (28–29)

For a young, nervous artist, suddenly confronted by the police and subject to an inquiry and an initial eight-hour interrogation (on January 9), there must have been a certain amount of pleasure in striking back fictionally in this way, turning the tables on his accusers to represent his artistic practice as an interrogation of the "perpetrator," money, in the service of locating the "chief culprit"—even if it came in the form of an indirect rebuttal to the *Asahi*.[17] Akasegawa's "torture" of the 1,000-yen note—a reference

to his production of the *Enlarged 1,000 Yen*, his first 1,000-yen work—fails to get currency to yield its secrets. It nonetheless constitutes a new form of realism: the "Capitalist Realism" of the article's title.

Akasegawa's early artistic output was marked by an attraction to Socialist Realism and then disillusion with its images of ever-larger upraised fists in the face of political failures (see chapter 4). If such fists constituted Socialist Realism's "realism" as an attempt to represent (and further) the truth of worker solidarity and the eventual triumph of the laboring oppressed in revolution, then the "Shit Realism" of his Capitalist Realism depicts the image of the capitalist present, a "reality" that points only to itself.[18] Since it presents a mystified form of appearance, it fails to disclose a truth beyond the apparent, instead providing only a "casting of the road upon which we are walking." Rendering the note in magnified form nonetheless constitutes a torment for this oddly sensitive object, since its doubling as art highlights the note's own doubled status as a "real" reproduction, one without an original. Since the very nature of this everyday present occludes even the most basic attempts at description and observation from the start, then to actually observe "a contradictory movement [*mujun shita undō*] in the observer is necessary."[19] For this Akasegawa proposes "the method of quarantine and suppression [*kakuri·inpei*] of the subject for viewing" (29).

"Quarantine" (*kakuri*) commonly refers to medical isolation, while "suppression" (*inpei*) refers to the concealing of evidence and the like; both are acts typically performed by the state through law and social hygiene—and in fact were inseparable from the late-nineteenth-century global expansion of the bureaucratic state itself. In Akasegawa's usage, the combination of the two operates by contradiction, in that isolating and concealing something paradoxically serves to starkly reveal it by its absence. Akasegawa gives the theoretical example of chairs:

> Were we to quarantine and suppress one of the many unobtrusive *objets* hiding within the everyday world, for example, taking all of the chairs in the world and quarantining and suppressing them, then people who had been seated upon chairs, facing desks (which are related to chairs), would find themselves half-kneeling looking at desks, and would have to lengthen the [desks'] legs to eat on them while standing, or cut off the desks' legs to do work while lying down. Or again, the number of straps on trains would increase; barbers would need stools; human legs would swell up; railings in movie theaters would multiply; while Ionesco's plays would decrease by one.[20] The worldwide arrangement up to that point

would be disrupted, and at the same time that the fundamentals of chairs were espied in their entirety based upon the transformation of human movement and desks, *the world system attendant to and controlling chairs would unavoidably become observed* [*Isu o kisei shite ita sekai no taikei o, iyaō nashi ni kansatsu suru koto ni naru*].

Conversely, to observe the world—including people—it would be enough to quarantine and suppress any species of object.

The quarantine of all clothing, the quarantine of all nails. (29)

In this description, the "world system" (*sekai no taikei*) is represented as a total process which integrates and relies on each and every one of its incorporated parts and which can therefore be traced back through any of them. Akasegawa elaborates:

> The "strike" looks at a glance like a struggle for higher wages, but as the quarantine of labor, it is an "act of observation" [*kansatsu kōi*]. But strikes nowadays fail to completely quarantine all of labor, and so they do not round up all of the principal offenders; the system [*taikei*] connected to labor does not appear: it is, in a word, *a model of a strike* [*suto no mokei*]. (29–30, emphasis added)

While the practice of Akasegawa and other related artists had departed quite a bit from direct action as classically conceived, here Akasegawa gestures to its origin in introducing his concept of the model (*mokei*), a sort of miniature stand-in for direct action, a partial act pointing to a full realization of direct action. Thus in this example the object for quarantine and suppression is labor itself, and while the imagined fulfillment of direct action, the general strike, would serve to successfully isolate labor in this way, the partial strikes of the present day merely act as its model. In consequence, then, and regardless of whether or not the participants in such a strike recognize the fact, they are involved in a representation, not direct action. Akasegawa implicitly compares conventionally "political" action with his artistic practice; and if both fell short of realizing direct action, his art at least took cognizance of its partial and representative status.

Akasegawa explains how his 1,000-yen works function as models:

> Just as the chairs upon which we ceaselessly sit, if the currency on which everyday life [*seikatsu*] depends and to which everyday life is functionally connected, all of the currency, were put away in a huge vault, and thus quarantined and suppressed, then the resting place of the monetary system for currency [*tsūka ni taisuru kaheiseido no zaseki*] (as desks are to

> chairs) would be gone, and the system of private property that thrived on it would crawl out in confusion like a mole coming out to the surface. (30)

Akasegawa's examples of quarantines and suppressions all potentially reveal *taikei* or *seido*, that is, "system(s)."[21] As he argues, "any species of object" so sequestered could allow one to "observe the world" by revealing hidden systemic operations. But labor and money appear to possess special potentials: while a chair quarantine may reveal the "fundamentals of chairs" and their attendant "system," only strikes (the "quarantine of labor") and currency quarantines are spoken of as potentially revealing a "chief culprit."

Akasegawa associates currency with two interrelated "systems" (*seido*). The first is "the monetary system for currency," which he again describes in vaguely anthropomorphic language: currency functions for this system like chairs do for people, as supports and transitory resting places during daily activities. The second system is capitalism itself, named as the "system of private property" (*shiyūzaisan seido*).[22] Were currency to be quarantined and suppressed, both systemic levels would be disrupted; with the loss of the "monetary system for currency," the system of private property would emerge like a blind, confused animal from its invisible existence, imagined as a mole crawling out from underground.

In Akasegawa's scheme, these two systems are organically linked, with capitalism dependent upon the monetary system but not reducible to it and representing the ultimate hidden form of domination. Thus for its ability to disclose capitalism itself—as the most ubiquitous determining feature of the everyday world, everywhere apparent yet fundamentally mystified, and so in effect invisible in its actuality—the quarantine of money would be the "very best way to observe the world." Capitalism is thus the fundamental principle to be located on the level of system, the "chief culprit," that is, the very structuring principle of reality itself, mystified by that reality's very self-presentation. The notion of making this system yield to observation provides a second, implicit meaning for Akasegawa's "Capitalist Realism."

Amplifying upon his example of the quarantine of currency, Akasegawa further refines his concept of the model: "If such a vault were possible, this would be the very best way to observe the world. And so a cash box with a welded padlock is a model of quarantine [*kakuri no mokei*], as a chair wrapped in craft paper and rope is a model for the quarantine of chairs" (30). In lieu of the impossibility of the vault for quarantining and suppressing currency, one can substitute a model, a miniature representation of the total procedure; thus for currency, a sealed cash box provides a metonymical

substitute; for chairs, a wrapped and bound chair. Here Akasegawa reworks the contemporary artistic concept of *objet* to suggest a political program for its deployment: *objet* as model, pointing to hidden, determinant systems in the everyday world, in an attempt to make their extent (and possible overcoming) thinkable. Though he does not discuss it explicitly, his examples also appear to reflect directly on his own artistic practice, in particular a chair wrapped in craft paper and carefully bound with twine that debuted at Hi-Red Center's *Fifth Mixer Plan* in May 1963 as part of a series of "wrapped" works.[23]

Akasegawa proposes an additional contradictory procedure for observing the world: the concept of quarantine by ubiquity.

> Moreover, neither a giant vault nor a bank note large enough to contain the whole world is the only means for quarantine; in fact, quarantine itself is not the only method of quarantine: an injection of increased quantities into the world may also function as a method of quarantine for observation.
>
> Produce a vast supply of chairs, until all the land on earth is packed tight with "chairs," leaving not a gap, and chairs that one can sit upon will disappear as an entity. (30)

This "injection of increased quantities" consists of overwhelming the limits of an object's existential boundaries, revealing its principles not by the physical elimination of the object but by flooding the discrete borders of the practices that ordinarily contain and define it. This procedure is envisioned in a particular and highly politically charged scenario: the overwhelming of the currency system by the private printing of huge quantities of notes. Interestingly, in the wake of Anpo and income doubling, he compares currency to nuclear weapons, and monetary accumulation to the arms race:

> The actually increasing quantities of nuclear weapons being produced are heading in the direction of a quarantine condition, as weapons which cannot be fired, despite the intentions of their manufacturers.
>
> It is the same for currency too, and to achieve that quantitative increase, making counterfeits would work well, as would producing real notes. The point is to inject a large quantity into the world. (30)

As with nuclear weapons, a sufficient increase in quantities of printed currency would render all of it unusable.[24]

Akasegawa's casualness and brevity here perhaps reflect a degree of caution prompted by the ongoing police involvement; to have forthrightly

advocated massive counterfeiting while under investigation could have easily landed him in jail. But it also would have given credence to police accusations of simple criminality. Thus Akasegawa adds, in parentheses, "I might point out in advance that the observer is the world's proactive onlooker [*sekai no sekkyokuteki bōkansha*]. And therefore, by making contact with the surroundings and agitating [*kakuran*] them, transformations in those surroundings occur, but this is not the goal for the active onlooker, who has no purpose other than to observe through this" (31).[25] His comment manages to assert the scientific objectivity and reasonableness of his artistic act (while denying criminal intent) and yet still affirms its potential as an artistic form of direct action; echoing Nakanishi's discourse of *kakuhan*, "agitation" (from the Yamanote-sen event,[26] the *Keishō* symposium, and his *Yomiuri Anpan* entry in 1963), Akasegawa declares that this art is to agitate and transform the world—but only as an effect, incidental to the modestly scientific and disinterested goal of "observation."

Having obliquely proposed the subversion of the currency system, affirmed an artistic version of direct action as a "proactive onlooker," and denied criminal intent, Akasegawa broaches his central concern in the text: the "reality" of money.

> If we set aside one's being a counterfeit and the other's being a real thing, what then exactly is the difference between counterfeits and real things? Is it just the difference between the maker being called a [government] mint or a print shop, or is it a difference in the user, with those with money using real notes, while the impoverished use counterfeits?
>
> In either case, when the observer looks at this in terms of quantitative increase, there is no great distinction between the two; they are both the same 1,000-yen notes. It is not that the real thing is an absolute, unconditional entity [*zettaiteki na mono de wa naku*]; it is that *it is a dictatorial system which forcibly asserts itself as a real thing.* (31, emphasis added)[27]

Akasegawa's facetious reduction of the difference between counterfeits and real things to a question of provenance (private or governmental printing) or users (the wealthy, literally "those with money," *kanemochi*, not the poor) explodes the unexamined basis for the conventional distinction between the two, and thus the presumptive ontological primacy of the "real things." In the case of two apparently identical notes (a scenario posed by the notes involved in the *Chi*-37 incident, which only experts could distinguish from real notes), two pieces of paper printed with an identical design, without *in-*

herent differences, the distinction between "counterfeit" and "real" cannot operate at the phenomenal level: it must be systemic.

Akasegawa goes on to distinguish his works from both, explaining how their differences put them in a third category, that of the model:

> At any rate, those printed items of mine that have, against my intent, become somewhat problematic legally, are not counterfeits: they are models of the 1,000-yen note [*sen'en satsu no mokei*]. Their difference with both counterfeit 1,000-yen bills and [official] bills is in the fact that they are models of a 1,000-yen bill shorn of its function as paper money—that is, in both the intent of the works and their inherent qualities, they are "unable to be used" [*shiyō fukanō*].
>
> Counterfeits are things which adopt the aspect of real things as much as they can; at face value they have the countenance [*kao*] of a real thing, and, sneaking in between real things, they begin to be used; while in the case of the model, it has a countenance differing from the real thing from the very start, and may be distinguished from the real thing. (31)

Akasegawa identifies the operative distinction between counterfeits and models in terms of their functions, which are visible on their "faces" (*kao*): one has the potential to be used, while the other is visibly "shorn of its function as paper money" by highlighting its own *imperfect* resemblance (discussed in chapters 1 and 3 as the *simulacral* aspect of his 1,000-yen notes, as opposed to *simulations*, counterfeits, which "have the countenance of real things" and "sneak in" among them to be used).[28] It is thus as harmless (and innocent of criminality) as the 200x magnification of the 1,000-yen note: "In a word, it is something like a shiv made out of balsa wood.[29] A useless white elephant, an undecorative decoration. It is a cast [*igata*] of the 1,000-yen bill to substitute for the cast of the road, an utterly pointless presentation of actuality. The point where it differs from the 200-times magnification copy is that it is a model of quantitative increase" (32). Here Akasegawa plays on the homology between the terms *mokei*, meaning both "cast" and more generally "model" (in the sense of a plastic toy made by extrusion), and *igata*, or mold, cast.[30] The model 1,000-yen note replaces the "cast of the road we are now walking" (28) with a cast, a model of the 1,000-yen note; in other words, it replaces a simple work of Capitalist Realism, the direct representation of the form of appearance of the capitalist present, with a work that interrogates the basis of that mode and appearance.

As before, the innocent-sounding term *model* (evoking children's toys)

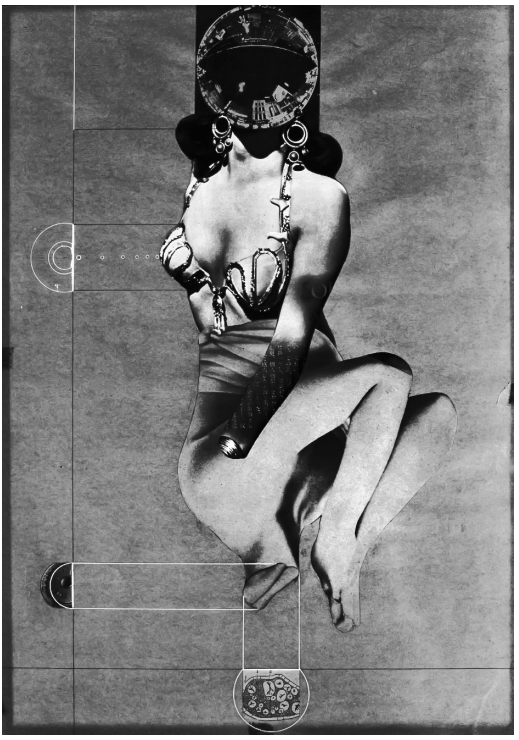
and the scientific language of *observation* continue to dissimulate the political intent of this work, even while its modeling of "quantitative increase" is, in effect, a plan for the subversion of the money system through the private printing of currency. As a model, however, it merely supplies a position from which to observe; it is a model for a dangerous practice, but not a dangerous practice per se: "The model itself lacks the ability to attack real things directly, but it provides a knothole through which to observe in the world of actuality the thrust and parry of real things and counterfeits and the trembling of the monopoly enterprise of 'real things,' and thus becomes a hint about how to observe" (32). Of course, the actual direct action of "quarantining and suppressing" the currency system is also described as a mere mode of observation, revealing the hidden aspects of this system by engineering its collapse. Both in fact are forms of direct action: the perspective of the model reveals the potential of the counterfeit, since counterfeits can reveal systems only if they are produced to a point beyond that which the economy of the thing simulated, and its supporting system, can sustain. Before that point, they merely participate in its functions and its associated structures of authority.

By recasting the terms employed by both *Asahi* and the state, Akasegawa's "Theses" frame the state's confrontation with Akasegawa itself as an active exercise of authority in the maintenance of this coercive system. Akasegawa's subsequent written works, and ultimately his trial testimony and courtroom artistic practice, would increasingly adopt such a heroic rhetorical strategy, as he was increasingly enmeshed in the state's police and penal procedures.[31] In the text, however, the state appears only by implication, in his characterization of the system of real things as "dictatorial," and metonymically, in the figure of "the law" which quarantines his models: "Ironically, the model 1,000-yen note for the purpose of observation was quarantined by the law, the models ahead of actual ones [*jitsubutsu*]. Whether [one is an] observer, artist, or scientist, misunderstandings and obstacles constantly follow along like a little dog" (32). "Actual ones," *jitsubutsu*, ambiguously refers here either to government currency to be quarantined by radical action or to the *Chi*-37 notes, the "real" counterfeits whose perpetrators had been sought unsuccessfully by the Special Investigative Squad that interrogated Akasegawa. The oblique comparison of the squad (and the state intervention in general) to a little pet dog trotting after the artist serves to express Akasegawa's contempt in a veiled fashion and rhetorically inverts the power relationship between the state's agents and the artist scientifically investigating the systemic determinants of the everyday.

Akasegawa concludes with a gesture to a theme in his earlier short story, "Aimai na umi": "Perhaps as the next option selected, a model human might appear, and imitation humans become injected in large quantities by counterfeiting. What would be quarantined and suppressed is the system of private ownership of consciousness and flesh, whose existence is, like that of the 1,000-yen note, like eyelids" (32). He returns his analysis to the union between the fundamental point of action in the everyday world, the human body, and the fundamental systemic determinant of that world, capitalism. In "Aimai na umi," as described in chapter 3, he presented a hegemonic system, ultimately identified as capitalism (termed "the system of private property"), which extends through everyday life right into the very constitution of human bodies and minds, organizing them down to the cellular level. Recognizing that such a system both constitutes humans and is reciprocally constituted by them, Akasegawa then poetically figures an impossible operation as a solution: a restructuring of the body through bodiless agency, freeing it of the present "system" through reassembly according to a different logic. Such a "counterfeit human" would be corrosive to that system, as it would lack those networks of order which ensure the reproduction of the status quo.

If we take the semifacetious conclusion to "Theses" seriously for a moment, we can discern Akasegawa rearticulating these concepts to new effect within the logical framework of this piece. A "model" human is to appear as a harbinger of "imitation humans" (*nise ningen*) to be produced by "counterfeiting" (*gizō*, the legal term for full-fledged counterfeiting). The mechanism for the resultant "quarantine" is not clear; the imitation humans might disrupt capitalism in a manner similar to that imagined in "Aimai na umi," by somehow engaging in a non-system-reproductive practice in sufficient numbers.[32] Yet in this piece, counterfeits are simulations, in other words identical, apart from the authorizing operations of authority, to the things duplicated. Thus it rather seems as if Akasegawa is suggesting the "production" of people to some point of systemic crisis. If we again take a cue from "Aimai na umi" concerning human duplication, their "imitation" or "counterfeit" aspect might be conceived of in relation to the contemporary experiments in "test tube" reproduction.

Thus here, as in "Aimai na umi" of nearly a year earlier, an exploration of capitalism and contemplation of possible methods for attacking it progresses from concerns with currency imitation to concerns with humans per se. As Akasegawa states in his interruption of the narrative near the end of "Aimai na umi," "There are among the spies activities related to the rejec-



7.3 Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi B* (The Ambiguous Ocean B), 1961. Collage, ink, paper. 38.2 × 27.2 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

tion of the system of private ownership: the destruction of the currency system (fig. 7.3). They possess suitably elaborate counterfeit bill manufacturing techniques to throw it into commotion [*sono kakuran no tame no nise satsu seizō de wa sōtō seikō na gijutsu o motte iru*]. But manufacturing counterfeit humans?"[33]

The primary point where "Theses" diverges from the prior work is in Akasegawa's interrogation of capitalism's form of appearance through a scientific investigation of its naturalized reality. Whereas in the short story, capitalism is named as "the entire system of private property [*shiyūzaisanseido*] which includes the body as well as the consciousness which accompanies the body,"[34] in "Theses" this is reformulated as "the system of private ownership of consciousness and flesh, whose existence is, like that of the 1,000-yen note, like eyelids" (32). In "Theses" Akasegawa refracts his concern with bodily systematicity through his newer appreciation of the veiled, or perhaps lidded nature of capitalism. Capitalism is identified both logically and metaphorically with eyelids; in the terms of the text, its very form of appearance is a form of invisibility, something that moves beyond sight, or interrupts sight, something intimate to one's body and yet immune to direct

observation. His meditation on optics in "Theses" reveals the dissimulated nature of everyday life itself, in contrast to the focus in "Aimai na umi" on agency within that everyday ("spies" and "ex-spies"). Rather than spies hidden in the everyday, he reveals the system hidden in appearances. Moreover consciousness and flesh are not just part of this system but are in fact its origin; Akasegawa goes from identifying capitalism as "including" consciousness and the body to identifying it directly with them: "the private ownership system of consciousness and flesh." Thus, along with refocusing on the role of the body, Akasegawa's brief concluding paragraph returns to the issue of self-constituting practice. As eyelids, we cannot "see" the nature of our bodily practical participation in the systems we nonetheless constitute through our activity.

In this brief and often comic article, Akasegawa identifies hidden forms of domination in the everyday world, supported both by state authority and by the policing of commonsensical understandings of crime, of art, and of currency's reality. If his seemingly absurd conclusion risked being recovered to a notion of art as gratuitous gesture (despite his meticulous avoidance of *art* or *artist* in favor of a language of experimental observation), it nonetheless promised continuing investigation and ambiguous provocation in the face of escalating state intervention. But this reference to his own practice might also draw our attention in a different direction: back to his activities in the prior year. Examining this work reveals how "Theses" in fact systematizes aspects of Akasegawa's direct action–oriented practices developed in the course of the prior year—and explains too how he could publish such a well-developed article less than a month after the *Asahi* article, despite the stresses of sudden criminal investigation and sometimes libelous publicity. The evidence thus strongly suggests that police intervention (and the *Asahi* story) worked to catalyze his ongoing considerations of these issues, while giving new energy and urgency to a project in which his interest had been flagging.

Hi-Red Center and the Practice of Capitalist Realism

For Akasegawa, as well as Nakanishi Natsuyuki and Takamatsu Jirō, the *Keishō* symposium on direct action was followed by months of intense activity, yielding mutually provocative solo works, including Akasegawa's 1,000-yen project and all three artists' submissions to the final *Yomiuri Indépendant*. The three artists came together as the principal members of the association Hi-Red Center.[35] Its very name echoed the symposium's (and the

Yamanote event invitation's) play with pseudonyms, suggesting some sort of ultra-left subversion ("high red") in a seemingly innocent English translation of the first characters of each of the artist's surnames (Taka, high; Aka, red, Naka, center). Without reducing the diversity of this work to a mere reflection of Akasegawa's later systematization in "Theses," a close look at his practice in 1963 reveals the middle terms between the concepts articulated in "Aimai na umi" and their refinement into an optics of Capitalist Realism. Examining his practice in the prior year discloses elements of this thinking emerging first in his works, well before the police intervention and the subsequent *Asahi* article, revealing more radical undercurrents to this playful work, and to Hi-Red Center, than are often acknowledged. This amounts to, I would argue, a nascent practice of Capitalist Realism avant la lettre.

Hi-Red Center achieved a fair amount of notoriety in Japan and internationally, both contemporaneously and in later retrospective art exhibitions, yet ultimately disappointed the aspirations of one occasional participant, Imaizumi Yoshihiko, who had hoped for less play and more direct action.[36] Akasegawa declared in his "Theses" that his "model 1,000-yen notes" had been "quarantined by the law, the models ahead of actual ones" (32), suggesting that this project had been cut short prior to its full realization. The actual situation was more complex, however; the involvement of the state spurred new activity on the stalled project, yet at the same time ultimately sapped Akasegawa of energy, provoked a near collapse, and redirected Hi-Red Center's attention to his legal confrontation.

Akasegawa's concept of the model generally echoes recent refinements in his and his compatriots' artistic practice, particularly from the Yamanote-sen action onward, where *objets* were brought forth as part of an attempt at artistic agitation in the everyday world. As discussed in chapter 6, the *objets* were an indissociable part of the overall thinking that led artists such as Akasegawa to explore the possibilities of direct action through art; moreover this relation itself was the subject of debate, as seen in the example of the artists participating in the *Keishō* discussions and their attempts to specify properly what this *objet*-action interrelation might have been in the Yamanote-sen activities.[37] Nakanishi and Akasegawa in particular argued against a works-based approach, one that would see the entire action prefigured in the *objets* themselves; instead their narratives trace the symmetries between concept, *objet*, and action. As I have argued, the artists' actions, the spaces chosen (train platforms and cars), and the *objets* deployed therein reveal convergences of thought and practice upon an evolving, tightly focused, critical understanding of these everyday spaces. From the standpoint of the

role of the *objets* in this multilayered practice of investigative artistic inquiry, the *objets* could thus be thought of as models, synecdochic figurings of the whole procedure, providing a miniature articulation of the conceptions of the spatial relations within the everyday world that were to be dramatized through action, and an additional clue for observers as to what these actions were about. This was strongly the case for both Nakanishi's *Eggs* and Takamatsu's *Cord*. Akasegawa's concept of the model thus articulates and expands upon this aspect of the ongoing *objet*-aided practical investigation of the everyday world.

Playing an even larger theoretical role in the "Theses" piece are Akasegawa's Capitalist Realism and his propositions regarding the investigative techniques of model, quarantine, and suppression. These might be traced to the intersection of two ongoing action *objet* projects from 1963: his 1,000-yen notes and his series of *Wrapped* works. As Akasegawa states in "Theses," "A cash box with a welded padlock is a model of quarantine, as a chair wrapped in craft paper and rope is a model for the quarantine of chairs." In fact, from the final *Yomiuri Indépendant* onward, he had been experimenting with various items wrapped in just such a way, including a chair wrapped with craft paper and rope.[38] These works constitute his *Wrapped* (*Konpō*) series, one of two signature varieties of *objets* incorporated in his Hi-Red Center practice (the other being his 1,000-yen works).[39]

The *Wrapped* series began with a pair of large canvases borrowed from a friend, brought to the *Yomiuri Indépendant* in 1963 and wrapped with craft paper and string on site, until the canvases were completely hidden within vaguely bulging wrapped canvas-shaped forms. Titled *Reality or Method?* (*Jijitsu ka hōhō ka I* and *II*), they were exhibited on either side of his incomplete *Enlarged 1,000 Yen*.

In discussing Christo's works, Dominique G. Laporte, a student of Jacques Lacan, argues that wrapping's function "is not to disappoint expectations but to suspend them, to keep the question perpetually open."[40] If we accept the logic of this functionalism, such works demand an interrogation of identity that spirals onward, necessarily generating a proliferation of readings. Akasegawa's wrapped works too share this aspect of ambiguity, but in the case of his wrapped canvases, the particular objects chosen for wrapping and the setting of the exhibition itself suggest a double referentiality. By presenting wrapped paintings, it is the artistic act itself—in terms of both painting and wrapped *objet* making, combined here in an artistic presentation of a refusal to present paintings—that becomes subject to this interrogation of identity.

The wrapping of the canvases displays a profound interruption or refusal of emotive, painterly communication. But is it a self-imposed choice, or an embodiment of the sort of oppressions that were to make 1963 the final *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition year? The works might be read as encapsulations of the trajectory of the practice born of the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, the progress from painting to *objet*, but represented as a closed circuit, in which ultimately the *objet* encloses the painting and forestalls communication, whether by active suppression, supersession, or practice running up against a limit or dead end. Taken as a refusal of painting, the bound canvases become yet another example of the thoroughgoing contemporary questioning of artistic expression itself, a broad and indeed international process, but one which was bringing Akasegawa and his associates to a practice of direct action. Conversely, read as an imposed silencing of expression in their *Yomiuri Indépendant* context, the works might point to the increasing levels of restriction and organized interference in the free, "independent" exhibition—which many in 1963 expected to be terminated, long before the official announcement of the decision to cancel the exhibition one month before the planned opening in 1964—and to the broader context of state-organized suppression and policing of expression.

Yet rather than flat and tightly wrapped canvases, Akasegawa's two wrapped paintings bulge outward from beneath their bonds. While this was physically a result of stuffing the package with paper to increase its mass, one might well have read it as bulging with the potential force of its contents, a kind of defiant, absolute assertion of artistic potential that nonetheless problematizes the artistic act itself.

Akasegawa himself has suggested in retrospect that the wrapped paintings manifested his desire to display something, despite having no leads for expression—a state of energy in which all adequate outlets are foreclosed.[41] The *Wrapped* series, like the contemporaneous 1,000-yen project, reveals his moving on the very edge of artistic activity, balancing a felt need for critical expression with a deep sense of the inadequacy of most of the likely avenues for such expression, and of the kind of artistic practice that they entail. From the standpoint of the artist, then, one might discern in the themes uniting Akasegawa's *Yomiuri Indépendant* works in 1963 some of his fundamental, self-reflexive practical considerations: the reduction of artistic emotive gesture to its zero degree and the interrogation of painting and artistic practice itself.

Attached to the wall here and there within Akasegawa's portion of the *Yomiuri* exhibit space, though not listed as actual titled exhibits, were a few

scattered life-size 1,000-yen prints; these were from his second set, printed on high-quality paper but without the invitation details of the first set on their reverse side. The entire exhibit—three large works, supplemented with the unlabeled prints—together frames a united presentation of Akasegawa's key avenues for artistic experimentation. Viewed through the lens of his later concept, the model, each provides variants upon shared themes. On the one hand, the wrapped works model a quarantine and suppression of artistic activity. On the other, the yen works, large and small, printed and drawn, model quarantine through their trespass into money's reality and the bounds of its replication. The *Enlarged Yen* confronts the everyday conception of money with a Doppelgänger not only of distended size but also possessing painted art's prerequisites of originality and expressiveness; the printed works provide the spectacle of the visibly imperfect, privately printed note.

If one takes the two wrapped canvases together with the *Enlarged Yen* as a single presentation (and such is the recommendation of Yamada Satoshi, curator at the Nagoya City Art Museum and an Akasegawa expert), one might even read this presentation as a series—wrapped object, *Enlarged Yen*, wrapped painting—and view it as a representation of Marx's circulation of commodities, C-M-C.[42] Whether such resemblance was accidental or intentional, it is a representational possibility not out of line with Akasegawa's theoretical preoccupations at the time. Such an interpretation is bolstered by the eventual conceptual convergences from both of these series of works in producing the theoretical ensemble of Akasegawa's "Theses on 'Capitalist Realism.'"[43]

Subsequent to the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, Akasegawa's *Wrapped* works evolved away from the apparent self-referentiality of canvases toward the wrapping of everyday objects. Beginning with the Group Sweet exhibitions in March and April 1963, and again at the debut exhibition of Hi-Red Center, the *Fifth Mixer Plan* (*Daigoji mikisā keikaku*) of May 7–12, Akasegawa presented a veritable explosion of wrapped *objets*, some recognizable through the wrappings (a chair, a coat hanger), others remaining anonymous, as bulging, bound packages. The first display of the wrapped *objets* as an apparently self-replicating, proliferating, vaguely threatening mass of nameless items was the second Group Sweet exhibition at the Shinjuku Dai-ichi Gallery on April 23–28.[44] The poster for the exhibition prominently displayed a wrapped *objet* on a black background between the group's name, photos of Miki Tomio's ear sculptures, and shots of Nakanishi's clothespin-covered face (from the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition the previous month).



7.4 Wrapped *objet* puzzles passerby outside of the *Sixth Mixer Plan* exhibition. Shinbashi, May 1963. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

The next month, the largest of the mysterious wrapped *objets* found their way outside, as part of the experiments with the everyday world by the newly formed Hi-Red Center during their second group exhibition, the *Sixth Mixer Plan* (*Dairokuji mikisā keikaku*) on May 28.[45] They experimented with various locations for the *objets*, including the platform of the Shinbashi train station (fig. 7.4), evidencing the members' continuing attraction to spaces of commuting and trains.[46]

During the same period, Akasegawa continued to work with his 1,000-yen prints; at Group Sweet's first exhibition at the Kawasumi Gallery, individual notes plastered the overhead flush tank of a toilet in the exhibit space, an oblique reference to Duchamp's *Fountain*, which, as the famous representative of his ready-mades, had provided a tremendous cue for the wider discourse of the *objet* (fig. 7.5).[47] It was possibly as early as this exhibition that Akasegawa produced his first combination of both the *Wrapped* and 1,000-yen projects; a photo reveals a coat hanger wrapped with twine and, instead of plain craft paper, sheets with multiple 1,000-yen prints on them (plate 14).[48] This was the first of what would become a series of yen-wrapped *objets*, which ultimately included a suitcase, a plaster mask, bottles, scissors, hammer, and a knife and spoon—all of which were ultimately impounded by the police (fig. 1.1).[49]

This first Group Sweet exhibition manifested aspects of the shared investigation of everyday spaces by these artists (fig. 7.6); here, instead of a commuting space, a kind of everyday interior space was re-created in the gallery, cluttered, as is typical of the small Japanese apartment, but cluttered with both common objects and *objets*: a desk with lamp, small everyday items, and the 1,000-yen-wrapped hanger dangling from the edge; a phone on a side table, with a wrapped *objet* hung above it; an armchair with wrapped *objet* packages on the seat and before it; a shelf stuffed with both typical items and Akasegawa's notes; Akasegawa's *Vagina Sheets* work and Toyoshima Sōroku's organic metal *objet*; a wicker armchair, wrapped by Akasegawa and suspended from the ceiling.[50]

Such interior spaces, particularly desks, show up later in Akasegawa's "Theses" as subjects for disruption by the quarantine of chairs; here the wrapped chair hung from the ceiling may be an early indication of this thinking. For artists such as Akasegawa, who supported themselves with graphics work done at home, desks in particular were signifiers of a world

7.5 The many afterlives of Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*. Summoned by Imaizumi to contribute to a performance by Hiraoka Masaaki and Miyahara Yasuharu's League of Criminals (Hanzaisha dōmei) during the Waseda festival in November 1962, Nakanishi Natsuyuki donned a lab coat and white face mask to paint the urinals and squat toilets red. Questioned by a student organizer who caught him in the act, Nakanishi reportedly passed it off as a new sanitization procedure. Photo by Takeda Atsushi. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.





7.6 Group Sweet, Kawasumi Gallery, March 1963. Left to right: Tanaka Shintarō, Kazakura Shō, Akasegawa Genpei, Kinoshita Shin, Shinohara Ushio, Toyoshima Sōroku (whose metal sculpture occupies the foreground). Courtesy of Toyoshima Sōroku.

of work never far from their art practice, into which a form of their creative labor was integrated, even as this labor provided the means to support their art. Depending on its furnishings, the desk represented either office work (to which graphical production was bound) or, in the case of those few favoring chair and desk furnishings, a direct extension of this world into the interior space of the home itself.

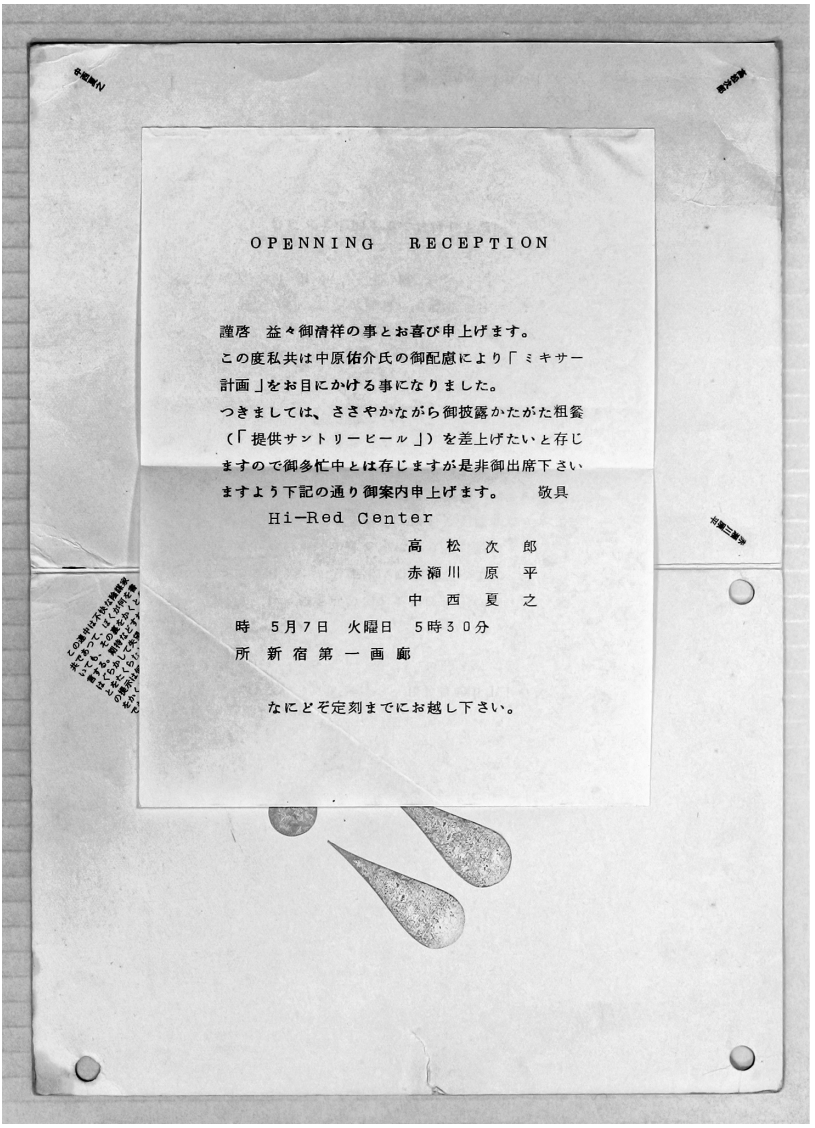
The cipher-like *objets* of Toyoshima, Akasegawa, and others populating this interior space, the wrapped anonymous shapes of Akasegawa's packages, and the yen-wrapped hanger, all speak to hidden processes at work in this everyday—whether of inorganic life and disembodied sexuality in the case of Toyoshima's work and *Vagina Sheets*, consumption in the case of the wrapped packages, or the fracturing and displacement of humanity into office work, as suggested by the cluster of packages, tubes, and other items on the desk's chair arranged in a vaguely human shape. In this context, Akasegawa's yen-wrapped hanger, the first of his yen-wrapped *objets*, can be read for a double link between individual objects, the invisible pathways of circulation, and our very being: the hanger, which supports the sport coats, suits, and collared shirts worn as the compulsory salaryman's uniform, displays its origin in the wages produced by the office work itself, and hence the perpetual circuit of labor power and its reproduction.

Photos from the second Group Sweet exhibition suggest that Akasegawa had narrowed his contributions down to plain versions of the wrapped *objets*. These, accompanied by a profusion of cardboard mailer tubes and paper tubes (in frames and as stand-alone *objets*) and the wrapped chair, crowd the exhibition space in the photos reproduced in *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*.[51] The gravitation of these objects to the walls and ceiling gives a sense of menace and intrusion to the bound forms and a sign of Akasegawa's practice anticipating the theme of quantitative increase that he describes in "Theses."

It was at the first Hi-Red Center exhibition, however, where Akasegawa, Nakanishi, and Takamatsu refined these investigations into interior spaces and articulated them against the fact of their status as exhibited art—a term that the group carefully avoided in all of its publications. Having formed their group with a name that Akasegawa later described as "as little art-related as possible, and for that purpose seeming a bit political, but also not, seeming a bit economics-related, but also not, . . . a manifest, positive vagueness," the group launched their first exhibition with an ambiguous invitation.[52] The invitations consisted of a blank folded card, with a small hole in each of three corners (fig. 7.7), through which the first character of each of the principals' names could be read, with small arrows pointing in three different directions (symbolizing the independent directions each artist continued to take while in the group). Inside, in addition to the tiny-print names of the artists, were two giant exclamation marks—the group's trademark symbol—and a brief text by the popular art critic Nakahara Yūsuke, which, thanks to a misprint, was elevated to something a bit more portentous:

> This group is an unpleasant conspiratorial association, and no matter what I write, they profess that they will outwit it. They say that they conspire to sidestep and disappoint expectations. The presentation of the works frustrates the [appearance of] not having much there; their limiting of them to the greatest possible extent appears to sidestep [the fact of] there being too many works in the world. They lay a trap for both the compulsory emotional reaction to art and for the apathy that is spreading like a disease. But then, if I put it that way, the group will inevitably outmaneuver me again, by putting it in terms of the emotional reaction spreading like a disease and the compulsory apathy. (104–5)

The word "unpleasant" (*fukai*) describing their association was a misprint; the original text called it *yukai*, a "happy conspiratorial association." The



OPENNING RECEPTION

謹啓　益々御清祥の事とお喜び申上げます。
この度私共は中原佑介氏の御配慮により「ミキサー
計画」をお目にかける事になりました。
つきましては、ささやかながら御披露かたがた粗餐
(「提供サントリービール」)を差上げたいと存じ
ますので御多忙中とは存じますが是非御出席下さい
ますよう下記の通り御案内申上げます。　敬具

Hi-Red Center
高松次郎
赤瀬川原平
中西夏之

時　5月7日　火曜日　5時30分
所　新宿第一画廊

なにとぞ定刻までにお越し下さい。

7.7 First Hi-Red Center invitation for the *Fifth Mixer Plan*, inside of invitation, May 1963. Nakahara's text is visible to the left, printed on the card underneath the invitation text. The names of the artists line up with the holes when closed. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

misprint pleased the Hi-Red Center members to no end, since the text lost the belittling tone that could also be heard, or misheard, in the original phrase, replacing it with something like a hint of threat or menace—or at minimum, coloring the critic's remarks with a kind of grudging recognition of their ability to frustrate.[53]

Inside this intriguing card was an insert with the invitational text itself, requesting the recipient's attendance at the "Opening Reception" (in English, together with the group's name, "Hi-Red Center"),[54] at 5:30 PM on Thursday, May 7, in celebration of a "Mixer Plan" (Mikisā keikaku). The invitation, signed by all three artists separately and by "Hi-Red Center," indicated that thanks for the Mixer Plan were due to the consideration of Mr. Nakahara Yūsuke and offered humble refreshments "thanks to Suntory Beer."[55] Its language was very polite, in a manner more commonly associated with a wedding invitation. With the exception of the reference to the location, the Shinjuku Dai-ichi Gallery, the invitation made absolutely no reference to art. This ultraformalism and politeness developed as one of the group's signature methods for combating expectations typically associated with art and art exhibitions, allowing the group to inject a measure of seriousness, surprise, and heightened expectation into the otherwise well-worn exhibition format. An overly formalized set of conventions were to be combated with an excess of formalism. As Nakanishi explains:

> Hi-Red Center wanted above all not to renounce conventional kinds of exhibition. On the contrary, it wanted to formalize these forms excessively once more, in the hope that this formality would thus make the form laughable. Therefore, we did not want to submit the established styles and rules to criticism; on the contrary, we readily accepted them, and wished to hew as closely as possible to them—until they became completely meaningless.[56]

The group also instituted innovations at the mixer to prevent casual reception of the works. In particular, to combat the tendency, when refreshments and art are mixed, for talk to devolve into "topics like fishing," the refreshments were placed in a separate room at a table along one wall. Mugs were provided, but on short chains; when one drank, one did it facing a bare wall and did nothing else (114).

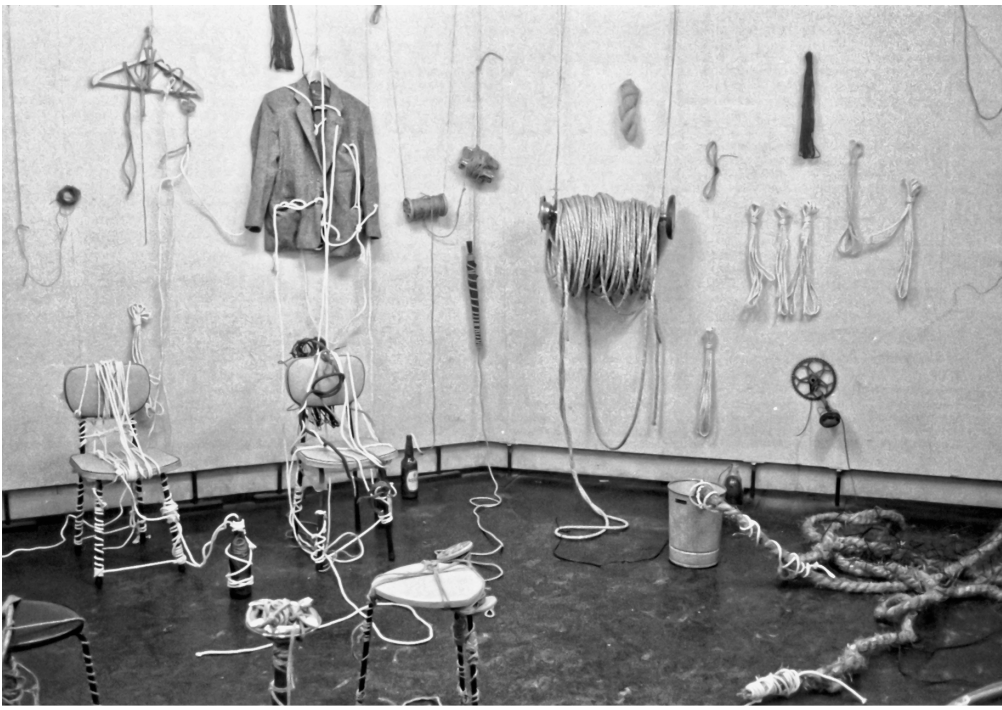
In Akasegawa's narrative of the Hi-Red Center group, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, he explains that the reason the group began with something as potentially conventional as an exhibition in a gallery space stemmed from the fact that sometime around March, Nakanishi had been offered the Shinjuku Dai-

ichi Gallery space free of charge by the art critic (and eventual group assistant) Nakahara Yūsuke. Nakanishi had refused, stating that he did not want to do a solo exhibition. Akasegawa suggests that Hi-Red Center formed in part to take advantage of the free exhibition space as an opportunity to do something together (and in Akasegawa's case, also from a thriftiness born of poverty), to combine their shared critical and practical concerns (100–101). Coming together just after the final *Yomiuri Anpan* exhibition, this example of a return to a fundamentally reconceived group practice in a sense brings Kaidō Hideo's hoped-for evolution of art full circle: out of a concern over conformist group practice, the free space of the exhibition had indeed provided a crucible in which individual artists could seek new forms of association and practice.

The works on display at the gallery were variants on current themes by each artist. By the entrance, a guiding menu identified the constituent parts of the exhibit with their artists: by Takamatsu's name card, a sample of rope; by Akasegawa's, a small wrapped *objet* and a 1,000-yen print; by Nakanishi's, a bit of cloth and a clothespin and an egg. These items were combined in linked displays throughout the exhibition space, all presenting variations on a central concept: investigating everyday reality though art.

Takamatsu presented coils of cords, cords unspooled and winding here and there, cords in tangled masses. In one area of the exhibit space, a suit hung on a wall, connected by cords to a chair on the floor, then to a hanger on the wall, to another chair, to a series of stools, and in and out of other items such as beer bottles, across the exhibit space and through a shoe, leading to a huge tangle of cords in a corner from ceiling to floor (fig. 7.8). Takamatsu, whose income-earning work actually demanded he join the ranks of suit-wearing salarymen (see figs. 6.7 and 6.11), recently had become acquainted with new aspects of these binding connections traced through the acts, items, and apparel of everyday life: married the day before the mixer's opening, he departed for his honeymoon the very next day (116).[57]

Akasegawa presented numerous wrapped works, including the chair, large packages, a huge wrapped canvas on one wall, and a "professional" example of wrapping: a crate containing the painting he submitted the previous winter to the competitive Shell Exhibition; mailed back to him in care of this gallery, Akasegawa simply left the crated work out with the other wrapped *objets* (120). Hung from the ceiling amid these works were four strips of Akasegawa's 1,000-yen prints, with cut-along-the-dotted-line marks (fig. 7.9); these had to be replenished during the exhibition, as people would cut the notes off and take them away. The cut-lines implying that the



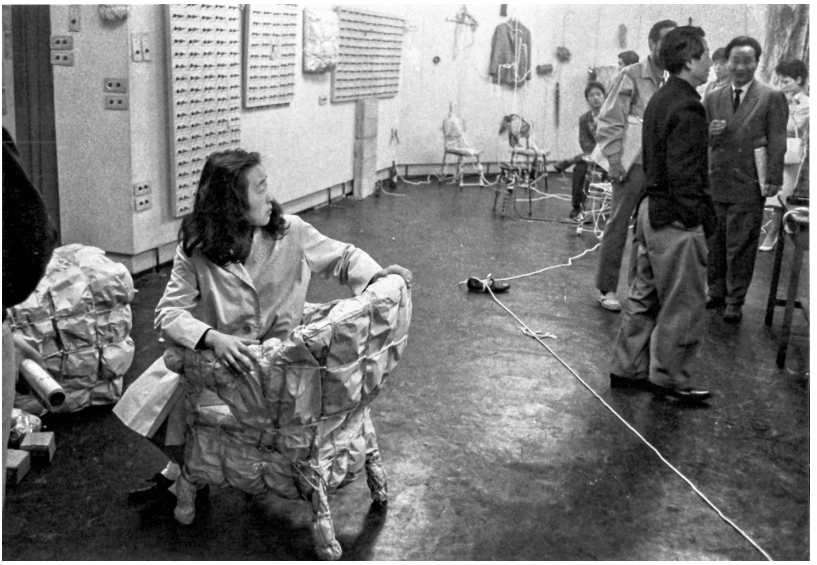
7.8 Takamatsu's *Cord* works, Hi-Red Center's *Fifth Mixer Plan* exhibition, May 1963. Photo by Hirata Minoru.

notes should be cut out and taken provide a variation on the notion of notes as models of counterfeiting: the lines request complicity by the observers through their cooperative completion of the private manufacturing process (by cutting and individual possession, giving them a final note shape and readying them for potential circulation).

As if to reflect the convergences of their thinking, the artists' various works crossed and intertwined in provocative combinations, converging in-between spaces of concentration featuring a single artist and single work theme, such as Takamatsu's collection of cords and Akasegawa's "wrapping corner" (fig. 7.10). Thus Akasegawa's wrapped *objets* appeared in clusters throughout the exhibition, as did his different versions of the 1,000-yen prints. In addition to the cut-away note strips, he presented panels with pairs of bolts driven through individual notes, mounted in rows upon a plywood backing; these appeared as both single bills and as large panels with over one hundred notes (see fig. 7.10, top left). In this bolted "arrest" of potential circulation, we might identify a precursor for his later discussion



7.9 Akasegawa's 1,000-yen notes printed in strip form, complete with *kiritorisen* (cut-along-the-dotted-line marks), 1963. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.



7.10 Akasegawa's *Wrapped Chair*, *objets*, and bolted 1,000-yen prints, and Takamatsu's *Cord* works on a wall and extending across gallery floor. After Okamoto Tarō sat in the *Wrapped Chair*, the wrapping failed to dissuade others from doing so. Hi-Red Center's *Fifth Mixer Plan* exhibition, May 1963. Photo by Hirata Minoru.

of "arresting" currency to halt its speedy circulation and enable its quarantine. This experiment with bolted panels nonetheless failed to satisfy him, reflecting both his continued interest in puzzling out the potentials of the prints and his growing dissatisfaction with the project (122).

He would try again on a television show on NET TV in early July: invited together with Nakanishi to contribute an artist's viewpoint to a televised discussion, Akasegawa appeared on camera instead of the nervous Nakanishi. While a student was speaking on the predetermined topic (on prosecuting murderers), after a sign from Nakanishi, Akasegawa donned the white makeup from the Yamanote event, and one by one, silently burned a number of 1,000-yen prints in an ashtray. Though the studio's phones had exploded in excited calls, (including from a police officer, as the grainy black-and-white broadcast made the notes look real), the episode had not felt particularly satisfactory to Akasegawa, and the note works would be absent from his submission to the *Fuzai no heyaten* exhibition a few days later (168–71). The missing ingredient would ultimately be provided by the state's intervention and the subsequent extension of the project into print and legal conflict, providing a renewed spark for his interest realized first in the dense, rapidly written "Theses."

In addition to the bolted panels, Akasegawa mounted his *Enlarged Yen* on a wall (fig. 7.11), surrounded by the blank space appropriate for displaying a painting. Around a corner, on a short span of the wall, he exhibited materials from the work's construction, including tracing paper with patterns, cut sections of cardboard for drawing border details, and newspaper clippings of the *Chi*-37 incident (fig. 7.12); the clippings confirm the importance of this counterfeiting episode by providing a hint and a provocative context for the project (130). These clippings included the beret-wearing composite sketch issued by the police in December (fig. 7.1).

Nakanishi's clothespin works roughly reproduced and extended his entry from the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition, *Clothespins Assert Agitating Action* (*Sentaku basami wa kakuhan kōi o shuchō suru*, 1963). The attacking swarms of metal clothespins originally clustered on canvases and about rents in fabric also made forays throughout the space, encircling bolted-down 1,000-yen notes and attaching to wrapped *objets*, to lend an atmosphere of immanent, dynamic potential to the exhibition and, in combination with the yen and wrapped *objet* works, providing a visual image of menacing, disarticulated alien life associated with objects and money. Their clustering about the hole torn in a wall-like partition of framed cloth, for example, gives the sense

that the clips themselves have torn the fabric and have only suspended their action upon the intrusion of the observer (fig. 7.13).[58]

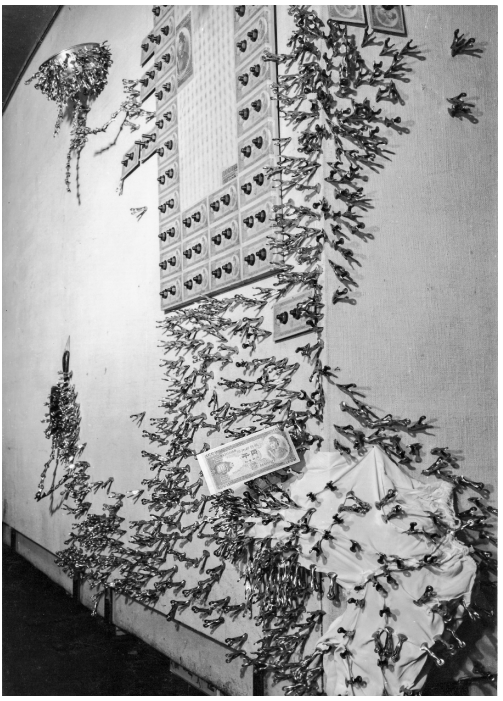
Nakanishi also provided a machine press that, after paying 20 yen, guests could operate to stamp out an aluminum clothespin. It was attached to a device that, simultaneously with the pressing of the clothespin, released a raw egg from overhead. The egg would fall on one of Nakanishi's egg-shaped *Compact Objets* on the floor, enacting in an automated form somewhat akin to the action that "Satsu Nitō" performed during the Yamanote-sen activities. Contextually the making of what would otherwise be an innocuous metal clothespin took on an aspect of profound though ambiguous significance: creating a clothespin within an exhibit where hordes of similar clips seemed poised to attack like strange killer bees and triggering, in the act of creation, some sort of final, irretrievable process of linkage and shattering with an actual egg dropping on an egg-shaped *objet*. The egg burst atop an egg form that, for Nakanishi, presented a microcosm of daily life though its suspension in clear plastic of items in an ambiguously embryonic form.

7.11 Akasegawa's *Enlarged Yen* is closely examined at Hi-Red Center's *Fifth Mixer Plan*, May 1963. Photo by Hirata Minoru.

7.12 The materials section of Hi-Red Center's *Fifth Mixer Plan*, May 1963. Akasegawa's portion displays news clips of the *Chi-37* incident (including the police composite sketch, bottom right). Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.







7.13 Nakanishi's *Clothespins* and Akasegawa's 1,000-yen prints (bolted on panels and loose) run together at the *Fifth Mixer Plan*, May 1963. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

Thus in an extension of the themes from the Yamanote-sen investigation of everyday spaces of interaction, a simple act of production revealed unexpected and portentous consequences and connections. For Nakanishi, this had additional, personal significance, since the clothespin press was in fact a machine produced by his family's business, the Nakanishi Corporation (Kabushikigaisha Nakanishi shōten; 127).

Whether or not Nakanishi or Takamatsu envisioned their intimations of a vaguely menacing and controlling everyday systematicity as being ultimately grounded in the practice and effects of capitalism itself, such a reading was certainly available to Akasegawa. It is this reading of Takamatsu's work, for example, that ultimately surfaces in "Theses" in Akasegawa's discussions of the "cord" dragged by money through our lives to bind us. Others, of course, might have made more limited interpretations of these representations and of the kind of practice in which these direct actionists were engaged, even when their constitutive radical political elements were explicitly recognized. Once again the chief recipients of their "agitation" were perhaps the artists themselves. In fact as early as May, Akasegawa directly associated the nascent Hi-Red Center itself with ambiguous, provocative engagement with money and the state. In his submission for the League of Criminals' book,

The Red Balloon, or the Night of the She-Wolf (*Akai fūsen arui wa mesu ōkami no yoru*), his untitled, enigmatic photos and illustrations unfold a series of images that often seem to anticipate his later "Theses"; these include a key going into a lock, a bank vault, and, on facing pages, an image of half of the obverse of the 1,000-yen bill opposite a photo of a grinning Prime Minister Ikeda (plate 15).[59] All of the images are signed with Hi-Red Center's obscurely urgent seal, the large red, diagonal exclamation point.[60]

While the remainder of the illustrations made for a rather more ambiguous impression (a scientific-seeming illustration of a frog being manipulated mid-dissection; a map of the Tokyo highway system; a female impersonator putting on a wig; a rear view of an individual wearing panties; a crossed-out text), the text was taken seriously by an unanticipated audience: the police. It was this book, and Akasegawa's contribution in particular, that set in motion the police investigation of him and his 1,000-yen project. Here too it seems as if the police were equal to the avant-garde in their enthusiastic interpretive appreciation of this art; the enigma posed by pairing Prime Minister Ikeda with the 1,000-yen note, coupled with the minimally discursive exclamation point, was sufficient to set the police apparatus into motion.

Room as Alibi, Art as Alibi

Akasegawa, Nakanishi, and Takamatsu contributed installation works to an exhibition at the Naiqua Gallery on July 15–27, 1963.[61] The exhibition, involving ten artists, was titled *Fuzai no heyaten*, translated into English on the exhibition invitation as the "Room in Alibi."[62] The invitation text by Nakahara Yūsuke touches upon two meanings of *fuzai*: "alibi," the defense that one was not present during a crime (in other words, an affirmative declaration of nonpresence), and "absence," discussed in the text as "nonbeing" (*hisonzai*).

The exhibition created a strange kind of room, where works from the Hi-Red Center exhibitions were refined into discrete units adding up to an unsettling whole. Along one wall, in a nook at ceiling height and dangling from strings, rested a number of Nakanishi's *Compact Objets*, including some opaque versions. In the middle of the room, in a set of works by Akasegawa, a wrapped chair sat atop a wrapped rug, the July heat unrelieved by the whir of a switched-on wrapped fan. A wrapped radio droned on. Behind this was a desk, chair, and lamp set by Takamatsu, his "masterpiece," according to Akasegawa. A black cord emerged from an ink bottle on the desk, wrapped an ashtray, extended from each line of a book by Sartre, and threaded its way around myriad other objects on the desk and onto the chair.[63]



7.14 *Fuzai no heyaten* (Room as Alibi exhibition) invitation (translated as "Room in Alibi" on the document), July 15–27, 1963. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

Beside the desk lay a bed by Shimizu Akira into which a stuffed hawk appeared to have dive-bombed, its wings and feet in the air, head submerged into the mattress, a work *(Recreation No. 1)* he had submitted in a slightly different form to the *Yomiuri Indépendant* that year (and originally in a solo exhibition the previous year). At the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, the bed had rested upon a giant time schedule for Shimizu's train station, with weekday train times on the right side, and on the left, labeled "Sunday" (in English), the bed with the hawk. This odd presentation of a dichotomy of everyday life split between home and work might equally well have been read as either a dreamlike flight of fantasy enabled in one's personal space—a self-referential reference to the space of art production—or, more pessimistically, as a reduction of home life to exhaustion and sleep, or to this very dichotomy itself. Shimizu, who worked at a factory at the time, was particularly aware of such dilemmas in his own life, where, like Akasegawa's and others', his art represented time stolen away from other activities.[64]

Nakahara Yūsuke's text for the invitation (fig. 7.14), while recognizing the play with putative reality evident in these and the other contributing artists' works, tends to reduce the shared critique of the everyday to metaphysics:

> There's not the least necessity to arbitrarily take an object from reality [*genjitsu*] where it unshakably exists, and, under the pretext of "art," reassert its reality. The various furniture-like things here are quite the opposite: a collection of objects chosen to obliterate, erase, and suppress reality [*genjitsusei*]; what is emphasized is not being, but nonbeing [*hi-sonzai*]. The desk is not distorted; rather, it is transformed into a thing of nonbeing [*hisonzai na mono to kashite shimau*].[65] That is, its quality of being like a "room" is but a method for demonstrating that it is not a "room." The concrete proof disputing its reality is the mass of pseudo-furniture gathered here.
>
> One is free to imagine, but it would be better if you did not engage in idle fancy [*mōsō*] any more than absolutely necessary. You are standing in the Room as Alibi [*aribai no heya*], and it is necessary to turn yourself to nonsense. That is because nonsense is one form of nonbeing.[66]

While Nakahara sees the interrogation of reality under way in these forms of artistic distortion, play, and transformation, he reads it essentially as a form of art predicated upon the distinctions between being and nonbeing, between art and reality—in other words, anti-art. Akasegawa would later critique this view as being bound to a constricted conception of art from which it cannot escape.

Again and again Nakahara registers profound insight into the artistic discourse here in evidence, both in his commentary and in his very concept of the exhibition itself, and yet he is unable to bring the pieces together into a coherent, critical whole. His line concerning "idle fancy," *mōsō*, echoes the quote with which his invitation opens: "We advise you not to waste your time in useless thought [*anata wa mōsō shite wa naranai*]." While unattributed, it is from Kafka's *The Trial*, a comment by one of the arresting guards:

> "And now I advise you," he added, "to go to your room, remain there quietly, and wait to find out what's to be done with you. We advise you not to waste your time in useless thought, but to pull yourself together; great demands will be placed upon you. You haven't treated us as we deserve, given how accommodating we've been; you've forgotten that whatever else we may be, we are at least free men with respect to you, and that's no small advantage."[67]

Detecting a play with criminality lurking on the borders of this exhibition and of avant-garde practice, Nakahara's citation of Kafka's world of subterranean and ultimately lethal processes was uncannily prescient, as Akasegawa

was later to plunge into a trial of his own whose resemblance to Josef K.'s ordeal he sensed as early as February 1964 (in his "Theses"; see also chapter 3). And yet even when Nakahara returned to comment on the exhibition (on July 30, just days after its end) in the *Dokusho Shinbun*, adding a subtitled reference to the artists as "gentle criminals" (*onkō na hanzaishatachi*) that he connected to his intuiting some sort of unspecifiable criminality at the last *Yomiuri Indépendant*, he stops just short of specifying what such "criminality" or its "alibi" might be about.

This newspaper piece, "'Room as Alibi Exhibition': The Gentle Criminals" ("'Fuzai no heyaten': Onkō na hanzaishatachi"), in which Nakahara provides a reading or review of his own exhibition, even goes so far as to connect the works to a critique of commodity fetishism: its last line reads, "Here the fetish of the commodity, having received a fatal wound, is gasping out its last breath." Although Nakahara's perceptions of elements of the artistic discourse are acute, it falls short of recognizing the full measure of this art's aspirations and import. Despite the artists' attempts to clear away expectations, even sympathetic critics such as Nakahara ultimately failed to conceive of the artworks beyond a classically restrictive conception of art, in which art's relative autonomy comes at the expense of consequence for anything but abstract reflection. It would take Akasegawa's "Theses" to begin the process of the coherent specification of their critical content.

CHAPTER 8

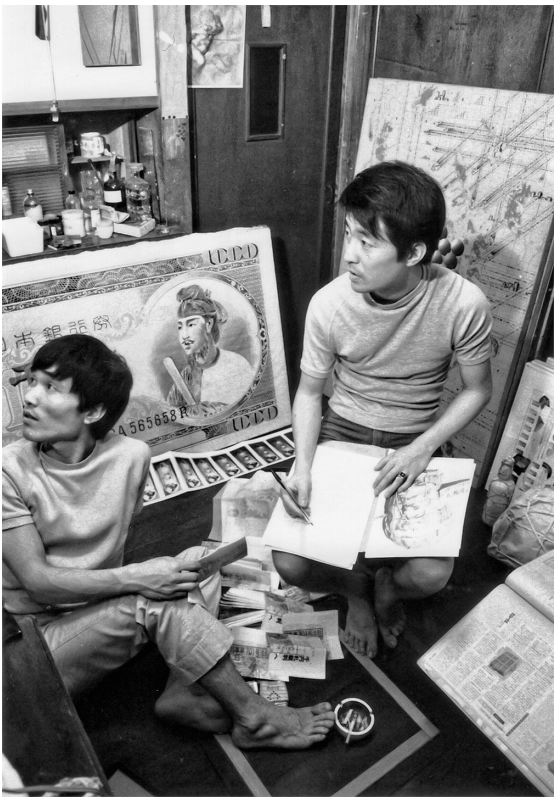
THE MOMENT OF THE AVANT-GARDE

Akasegawa began 1965 in nervous collapse, feeling that he had nothing else to express through art; his artistic output that year, compared to the previous several years of intense activity, fell off markedly.[1] On January 25 and February 2 he was questioned by Prosecutor Okamura Yasutaka, who took further statements and impounded some thirty artworks made with the 1,000-yen notes.[2] Although Akasegawa was given the impression that the case might conclude with this, he was left in limbo until October. Summoned suddenly to give another statement by a new prosecutor, Tobita Kiyohiro, he was formally indicted on November 1, 1965, the same month that he participated (with a contribution of stage art) in the remarkable performance by Hijikata Tatsumi's Ankoku Butoh group, *Rose-Colored Dance* (*Bara-iro dansu*).[3] The indictment was delivered, in true Kafkaesque fashion, by hand, the messenger wearing a combination of *wafuku*, or traditional Japanese clothes, and a sports cap.[4]

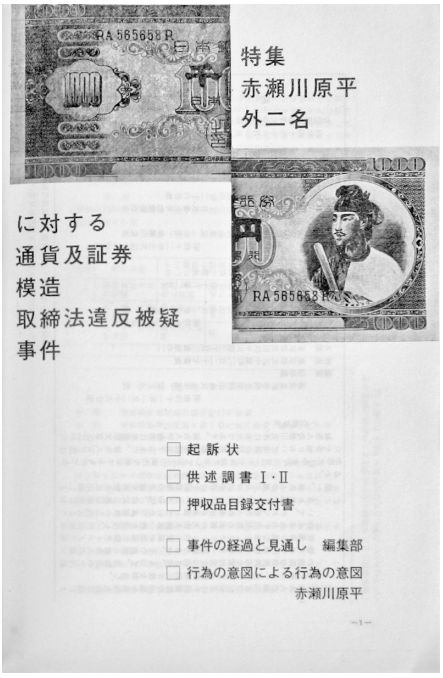
The indictment, much like the initial police visit and *Asahi Shinbun* article

in 1964, spurred Akasegawa into activity once again. He and his friends organized a strategizing group for the trial, fundraising events, and the supportive 1,000-yen Incident Discussion Group (Sen'en satsu kondankai), with Kawani Hiroshi of the journal *Keishō*, now renamed *Kikan* (Organ), as its head (plate 16; fig. 8.1).[5] This latter group met for the first time on January 10, 1966, but not again until April.[6] In December 1965 Akasegawa was introduced to an attorney, Sugimoto Masazumi, by Kawani Hiroshi; both Kawani and Imaizumi Yoshihiko (of *Kikan*) went with Akasegawa for his first case conference with Sugimoto.[7] Sugimoto presented Akasegawa with two choices: to have faith in the rectitude of his actions, defy the court with silent nonrecognition, and perhaps go to jail, or to put on an art trial and defend his acts as such. Conviction, either way, was a virtual certainty. Akasegawa selected the second option, which immediately presented him with the problem of needing to defend against both the ascription of criminality and the imposition of a constraining definition of art.[8] While his choice would not forestall the guilty verdict, his commitment would ultimately lead him away from nervous collapse to a newly reenergized critical practice.

Rapidly responding to the indictment, Akasegawa wrote an article attacking the state's actions and presaging his rhetorical strategies in court.[9] Titled "The Intent of the Act Based on the Intent of the Act—Before Passing through the Courtroom" ("Kōi no ito ni yoru kōi no ito—Hōtei o tsūka suru mae ni"), the essay reworks themes articulated in his "Theses on 'Capitalist Realism'" and "The Ambiguous Ocean" to address his imminent trial. It was published in *Kikan* on January 31, in a special issue devoted to his case; compiled and edited at astonishing speed by Imaizumi, the issue also reproduces Akasegawa's criminal indictment, the records of two of the police interrogations (*kyōjutsu chōsho*), a list of seized items, and comments by the editors (fig. 8.2).[10] The essay demonstrates his continued affirmation and refinement of his own practice, locating it now explicitly in a radical art with emancipatory potential. Published in company with the government's criminal charges in the journal that had nurtured the practice of direct action, it strongly rebuts the reductions evident in the indictment and interrogations, detailing his critique of extralegal policing of everyday life and thought in anticipation of "passing through" a trial process certain to impose conventional police categories of both art and crime in reaching its foregone conclusion.



8.1 Akasegawa Genpei and Kawani Hiroshi at Akasegawa's apartment in the summer of 1967 (after his June conviction), preparing printed appeals as part of the 1,000-yen Incident Discussion Group's efforts. Several brochures lie at their feet. Kawani appears to be working on the poster for the *Unfreedom of Expression Exhibition*, organized to support Akasegawa's appeal. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.



8.2 *Kikan* 10 special issue, *The Incident of Akasegawa Genpei and Two Others as Suspected Violators of the Law Controlling the Imitation of Currency and Securities* (Akasegawa's court case), January 31, 1966. Courtesy of Imaizumi Yoshihiko.

A Momentary Interruption of Everyday Life

In his essay, as if unshaken by the indictment and upcoming trial process, Akasegawa continues to elaborate his own distinctive approach to interrogating the world of the everyday. He begins the essay with a reformulation of the unmasking operation that had so interested him from the time of his short story "The Ambiguous Ocean" onward: "In the moment of its discovery, a counterfeit [*nisemono*] is no longer a counterfeit. Just as a spy in the moment of its exposure is no longer a spy. Simply put, it is just as a secret in the moment of its exposure is a secret no more. But there is that 'moment' [*shunkan*]. That's the problem to consider. Whether it lasts 0.001 seconds, or tens of hours, or decades" (33). Akasegawa thematizes this "moment" as not just an interruption but as a point of possibility, one which contains the hope of difference, of transformation of the everyday world of action and consciousness. Translated to Rancière's terms, it is the moment of politics: a break in the usual apportionments of daily life, affording new perceptions and claims. It is a politics made possible by Akasegawa's practice:

> Perhaps in that moment, everyday continuities and people's everyday decision making [*ningen no seikatsuteki handan*] come to a halt, and all things are restored to equal, undifferentiated substance. Useful tools halt, and perhaps even language does not compose. In this, there is the self that, having made this discovery, is left bewildered and robbed of its judgment, and that then moves to restore that judgment. Its boundary is the skin, set against the motionless outside world, where all suspicions are exposed. Rather than a kind of isolation, it is more of a relative thing whereby the world exists or can be sensed through the self's being, or it is something in the form of an onlooker. This is the moment. Nothing but a single moment before everyday life resumes, perhaps. (33)

The possibilities resulting from the moment proceed from the "dynamic self," the moving person, who, as in Akasegawa's conception of "movement" (*undō*) in "Theses on 'Capitalist Realism,'" critically investigates the everyday and potentially engages in broader political "movements."

Akasegawa returns to his formulation in "Theses" of the difference between "real notes," counterfeits, and simulacra in this context—the possibility of achieving a potentially transformative moment of unspecified duration in everyday life. Again considering the problematics of unmasking, he deconstructs the opposition of counterfeit to real by examining the status of the revealed counterfeit:

> The counterfeit in the moment of its discovery is no longer a counterfeit. It is an oppositional thing [*tairitsubutsu*], something opposed to so-called real things. A "Real Thing Z" in opposition to "Real Thing A." A, B, C . . . go once around through them, and you'll find them virtually back to back. They're so close as to be able to touch hands just by reaching out backward. A near resemblance separated by one lap. This is the position of the counterfeit: the shortest distance possible to spy on [*ukagau*] Real Thing A from the rear. (34)

Revealed as a counterfeit, a note which is nearly identical to a "real" bill achieves its own status as something else, some other real thing, which in concept is both the antithesis of the "real" object and yet is as identical to it as craft can make it. Akasegawa uses the analogy of an alphabet presented in a loop, where Z is as far as one can go from A and yet is adjacent to it. A discovered counterfeit thus ideally points directly to the lack of identifiable difference between it and the "real" thing—that is, the degree to which the real thing's status is a function of authority alone.

According to this logic, the ideal counterfeit would be one with no discernible difference from the "real" note, one made by government printing presses. Akasegawa elaborates on its potentials through his investigative concept from "Theses" of "quantitative increase":

> For example, just as trying to squash into one of our trains tens of times the number of riders as on the passenger limit—changing the shape of the passengers, changing the shape of the train—if you try to cram counterfeits into this world of real things (in which "government-printed currency" holds its position as the most sacred of real things) trying to crush them and change their shapes, there is nothing better than a counterfeit bill [*nisesatsu*] made by the manufacturer of "Real Thing A," the establishment's manufacturer, that is, authority. All the Bureau of the Mint has to do is limitlessly stamp out 1,000-yen bills day and night. If the ink runs out, they just buy more. . . . This is a "perfect counterfeit bill." All counterfeit bills, with the notorious *Chi*-37 1,000-yen counterfeit heading the list (we ought to put those counterfeits not yet discovered and currently still in use at the top of the list), are subordinate to this "perfect counterfeit." (34)

With this ideal form, a note produced by the same presses with the same materials, Akasegawa reduces the distinction between real and counterfeit notes to a nonphysical level, a function of authority alone.

Having established this point, Akasegawa examines the function of un-

discovered counterfeits as simulations, things that participate in the networks of order of the things they imitate:

> In the case of this perfect counterfeit bill, the act of using it does not trouble its user in the least; it is the same as a real thing because it is a "presently in-use counterfeit," and as long as it is not discovered, there is neither a suspension of decision making nor a laying bare of suspicions. There is not the least bit of "criminal consciousness" [*hanzai no ishiki*]. Just a "thing" quietly circulates, and as real 1,000-yen bills and counterfeit 1,000-yen bills [*honmono no sen'en satsu to nisemono no sen'en satsu*] intertwine and expand, only people are destroyed, passing away without altering their forms. In this, there is no "moment." (35)

It is only the revealed simulation that can produce the disturbance and the possibility contained in the "moment." Akasegawa links this moment to "criminal consciousness," referring beyond the legalistic term (concerning intent to pass counterfeit currency) to his own thought crime of looking into the structure of the everyday world. This is opposed to the everyday world in which order is preserved and people are destroyed.

As the title makes abundantly clear, Akasegawa's focus in the piece is on presenting his own explanation of his project in *Kikan* in anticipation of a criminal prosecution that will reduce the act to a single intention, one that will be read as mere criminality. Perhaps more perniciously, the intent will necessarily be reduced to the category of art as well, both by the structure of the prosecution and by the "art trial" defense strategy he and his attorney Sugimoto had already agreed on. In his "Intent of the Act," Akasegawa thus negotiates against both of these impositions with a freedom that he might have anticipated lacking in the courtroom, by identifying the "moment" as the key to the 1,000-yen project. As he states, "[The moment is indeed] our lead [or hint, *itoguchi*], both for my act, and for the printed model 1,000-yen note [*mokei sen'en satsu*]. The extended moment. The bronzed moment. But what sort of lead is it?" (35). The key to this moment, is, in turn, the status of the everyday life that the moment breaches.

More so than in any of his previous works, Akasegawa identifies the everyday world explicitly with the exercise of authority:

> The world in which real things and counterfeits collide with the greatest violence, in which the moment is most hidden, is perhaps a world which authority directly keeps in hand [*kenryoku ga chokusetsu te ni shite iru sekai*]. *This is the origin of everydayness* [*nichijōsei*]. This everydayness is

> on the one hand constituted, cultivated and defended by authority; also, it is because of it that authority exists and is able to fix its rulership [*Sono nichijōsei no tame ni kenryoku wa sonzai shi, sono shihai o ketteizukeru koto ga dekiru*]. (35, emphasis added)

Everydayness originates with the exercise of authority, but is not prior to it. Akasegawa sees everydayness as not only relying upon the operations of authority for the patrolling and defense of its structures but also enabling that very authority to be constituted in the first instance. Capitalism in general, which was so much the focus of his earlier writing, remains in the background in this essay, while he zeroes in on his point of attack: the ontological affixing of value, by fiat, to paper money.

Paper money is an *objet* of this world; in other words, it is a microcosm of the system that can reveal its structure: "One of the *objets* [of this], perhaps, is value-bearing 'money' [*kachi aru 'okane'*]. Yet currency has value only by virtue of its being fixed as 'a real thing,' and in reality doesn't even have the value of a potato. This is something that can exist only by virtue of the structure of real things and counterfeits; only within this can its everydayness as a real thing be defended with such unusual obstinacy by authority" (35–36). The "structure of real things and counterfeits" is the ontological distinction between the two, enforced by authority and operationalized in everyday practice. Thus in a world of putatively real things, money is "the most sacred of real things": its status is so strongly enforced that it exceeds its own real status to seem an *objet* in perpetuity:

> And so [currency] is [held to be] so sacred a real thing that it doesn't even seem to be a "real thing" [*da kara sore wa amari ni mo shinsei na honmono de ari, maru de "honmono" de sae nai yō da*]. It is a permanent object [*objet*], just like time's presence in everyday life. Within it that "moment" is concealed at an even profounder level. Even if I had not done it, it would surely have been necessary to print 1,000-yen bills. (36)

If unchallenged, the "sacred . . . ultra-reality of money" (34) forecloses the possibility of the "moment" interrupting the everyday.

Driven to adopt the term *art* for his court defense, Akasegawa proclaims his role in challenging such a putative reality, and everydayness, as the very mission of art:

> The nature of art at base is something that refuses everydayness, something opposed to the everyday [*nichijōsei o hanetsukeru mono de ari, hanseikatsuteki na mono de aru*]. This in itself is bound to anti-authority forms

> [*hankenryokuteki na keitai*] opposing that authority which secretes the mucus of everydayness into this everyday life. Art flees down an escape path away from everyday life, but from there, it nonetheless turns again to face it [*Seikatsu o dasshutsu suru michi o hashirinagara sono mukō de futatabi seikatsu ni tachimukau*]. (36)

Akasegawa turns around the conception and practice of art as a separate sphere to argue that art itself opposes the specific construct from which it is putatively excluded, the everyday world. He thus establishes a specific critical activism as the basis for artistic practice in anticipation of being forced to argue within a much more constrained definition of art at trial. For Akasegawa, this is the distinction between the openness of art as a practice and the restrictive category, *hanchū*, of art.

This practice of art provides the context for his assertion of the purpose of his act in creating the model 1,000-yen notes: an attack on the structure of consciousness and flesh that constitutes present-day humans—in other words, capitalism as constituted by and in human practice.[11]

> In the case of the model 1,000-yen bill as well, what I had in my sights was not something directly in the hands of authority, but rather the human interior, which could be in a "moment" thrown into confusion, and its magnified exterior. This is certainly a problem about humanism. *The model counterfeit bill is an extremely circuitous model human* [*Nise sen'ensatsu no mokei wa, hijōni mawarikudoi, ningen no mokei na no da*]. It is a thing that was chosen as *the model for all counterfeits* [*Subete no nisemono no tenkei to shite erabareta mono de aru*]. (36, emphasis added)

The model 1,000-yen note establishes a "moment" disrupting the human interior, consciousness, and its "magnified exterior," human practice. It is thus a "model" human, in terms of Akasegawa's concept of the "model" (*mokei*) from his "Theses," a blueprint for a procedure that would fulfill the demands of direct action if carried out, whose critical content points to such possibilities. The transfer of the locus of the potential effect of his work to human consciousness also prefigures one of the key rhetorical lines of attack in his ultimate defense of artistic "freedom of expression" in court. He would assert a freedom to agitate, reject the state's claim of criminal intent, and defend against the charge of allegedly harming society's "faith and confidence in currency," all by reworking the terms of the familiar abstract discourse on freedom of thought. All of these effects speculate upon a mental sphere that must remain outside of the purview of the state.

The Counterfeiting of Words and the Collage of Intentions

In "The Intent of the Act" Akasegawa anticipates the Herculean task he set for his defense team: to locate his act within its context in contemporary artistic practice and to convince the trial court judge either that his practice was not criminal or that his exercise of freedom of expression would warrant limiting the state's enforcement of a criminal provision in a way never yet recognized in Japanese legal practice (see part I). In pursuit of this goal, the work opens up an inquiry into the difficulty of either locating or communicating intent. Akasegawa's exposition reflects back upon his very act of writing and the difficulties that he has had in setting forth his artistic practice in adequate language.

He describes the beginnings of this fraught process in a caricature of his interrogations by the police and prosecutors:

> "With what intent?" "For what purpose?" Although they didn't all wear uniforms, I wonder how many times I was asked these sorts of questions by folks who seemed to be suffering from megalomaniacal feelings of responsibility. They would sit across from me, behind a desk, pen in hand, taking down all the words that came out of me. I had to fire off words about my intentions as accurately as possible, and in a manner best suited for [the questioner's] pen to take down. In the attempt, the more I tried to faithfully explain my intentions, the more they became something vague [*aimai na mono*], like an out-of-focus film. Part of this may have been from my wasting too much effort on trying, as accurately as possible, to explain my intentions in words that they might understand. Something like trying to dig a tunnel through a mountain-free area, with a scoop made of *kon'nyaku*.[12] Intentions and words. The vaguer they are, the more they seem clear, dammit. (36–37)

"Vagueness" (*aimai na*) in Akasegawa's language relates to an indeterminacy that may be resolved either in the possibility of transformation or the conservation of the given. The clarity of vagueness he refers to here is the latter, the clarification of ambiguity by the everyday, resolving the indeterminate and provocative in favor of its own police categories. The ostensible clarity and transparency of the everyday constitutes the bounds of a common sense across which the state and Akasegawa would ultimately contend in court.[13]

Akasegawa points to the inexactness of words and their fundamental systemic conservatism as a key to this problem:

> Words are fundamentally relative things [*sōtaiteki na mono*]. Within one system, a word might be able to exist entirely as itself, but cannot transfer between two different coordinate systems and maintain the exact same mass. Further, there is surely no "absolute word" that might conquer all of the coordinate systems. Thus even supposing one were able to make an imitation [*mozō*] with words of a concept that is thought at base without words, if these words from coordinate system A are brought to coordinate system B, they will no longer be that which included all of the content and meaning within A; they transmogrify even if their appearance [*gaiyō*] does not change. Words are packages, words are signs.
>
> Or perhaps, if one tried to approach an idea behind people's words even just a bit, you might pile together the pieces of signs, the various "words" which each contain part of its meaning, and possibly approach the concept behind those words bit by bit, yet the signs themselves would gather in countless groups replete with excess [meaning], and regardless of their editor's will, the signs themselves would assert themselves together, and become clamorous. (37–38)

Akasegawa describes the imprecise duplication of a concept, understood as particular, by words, understood as relative and not under individual control, as an act of criminal imitation, *mozō*. The distortion necessarily results from the transfer between "coordinate systems," the network of meanings and understandings that is framed mentally by words and orders each individually. Such coordination precludes perfect understanding from the outset; moreover, as Akasegawa reveals, it has an inherently conservative bias.

The circulation of words within their collective mass, manifesting and policing unexamined, predetermined meaning-bearing configurations, is the very world of the everyday:

> And yet words are used. Conveniently, boldly, in great quantities. This is "everyday life" [*seikatsu*]. Within it the sign packages are never opened one by one. In short, might everyday life perhaps be "the place where words can be applied"? There is clearly also a problem of technique. And yet taken in their entirety, words can become obstacles. If you look closely at the replacement of concepts or images with words, you can perhaps see their criminal counterfeit structure [*gizō no kōzō*]. (38)

The totality of these individual acts of "imitating" concepts conveys upon words this more pernicious role: the counterfeiting of concepts, that is, the presentation of a simulated, pseudo-transparent communication in place

of actual communication. The structure of the everyday's preordered understandings forecloses the communication of heterodox concepts; it even lends itself to making a pastiche of such concepts or actions, particularly at the hands of the megalomaniacs who seek to defend it. As Akasegawa describes:

> I was sat back down again into everyday life by state authority, and even tried to cooperate somewhat with the other's searching intent. [My interrogator] was the avatar of everyday life [*aite wa seikatsu no gonge de aru*]. He did not set one foot outside of its circle. And still, pen in hand to take down the report, he sat ready.
>
> "With what intent did you make this, sir?" (38)

Such a question conceals a hidden, pernicious, conservative structure of meaning based on an everyday world that works to intercept the assertion of dissent or difference, resolving the "vagueness" of difference in the clarity of the same. It also conceals the possibly unconscious role of this "avatar" in systematically distorting communication along the lines most conducive to maintaining that everyday world.[14]

Returning in part to the problematics of the first *Keishō* discussions concerning the Yamanote-sen actions, Akasegawa contrasts the legal fiction of a manifest intent of an act with a more serious contemplation of the transformative dialectics of action and consciousness. He describes the search by the agents of the state for a singular "intent" as similar to fantasies about life on Mars:

> Perhaps there are Martians on Mars. Time was that there were all kinds of fantastic sketches of Martians in kids' magazines—Martians as jellyfish-like creatures, as insectoid, etc. Nowadays they hardly appear. Based on recent observation data, it seems that there are no Martians. As far as my intention in printing my 1,000 yen goes, I cannot say for sure, either. I have no confidence in declaring it. The evidence is only memories. One cannot confirm memories of images. At this point it would be closer to an estimate, rather. (38–39)

The singular intent sought is thus a product of fantasies, fantasies with a definite ideological orientation:

> Anyway, the thoughts of those megalomaniacal pen-holding fellows across the desk were something like this. First, there was an intent. An evident purpose. Humans all drive headlong in that direction. By no

> means ever turning astray. As if they were just like Ninomiya Kinjirō. . . .[15] This is as if humans were like single, directional arrows. An arrow that makes its way along to arrive at death. No, certainly if one surveyed all of the deceased people, it's not that you couldn't say none went from birth to death like an arrow. Arrows one by one in space. Countless arrows in currency-like shapes. Yet do you think that there are people who upon being born, immediately fix their intent on death, have a program, clearly make death their aim? (39)

The fantasy is part of the attempt to impose conformity along with the needs of capital and the state. Akasegawa's image for the many who are bound to these dictates is that of living currency, "countless arrows in currency-like shapes," a further expansion of his notion of the model 1,000-yen note as an adequate model human.

Even in the case of those individuals who live according to this fantasy, moving like an arrow through life to their death, Akasegawa contemplates a kind of "moment" existing just after birth, in the interval between birth and the adoption of this singular direction for a conformist life. He frames this with a rhetorical question, asking if any newborns really aim at death (the ultimate direction of an arrow traveling straight through a life). The question of the "newborn's intent" (*eiji no ito*) becomes the prototypical, unanswerable form of the question of the relation of intent and action: "If we could but understand the still steaming 'newborn's intent,' the infant who has just taken that first step away from death, that perhaps might be the archetype for that which we call intent" (40).

In an assertion that Wittgenstein would have approved, Akasegawa declares the fundamental incommensurability of intent and act: "In intent, there's no such thing as a 'maximum permissible level / dose.' Therefore the nature of intent is such that it cannot be perfectly or completely realized in action. Intent appears to be something always turbulent, always spinning about as it moves forward. In other words, the beginnings of action cannot be entirely grasped through one's intent. That form can be readily confused with desire" (39).[16] His description of the formation of what might be called intent is vaguely astrophysical, echoing Nakanishi's physical-scientific language in the Yamanote-sen invitation's description of the cumulative effects of agitation:

> From that cloudlike, unclear mass that might perhaps be thought of as intent, that first clod laid hold of becomes an action [*kōi*] and moves, and due to its gravitational pull another small clod is sucked in and itself be-

> comes action. The two draw closer together because of the gravitational pull exerted by the accumulation of action, while intent, that unclear, cloudlike mass, also begins to close the distance. Or perhaps intent does not move on its own. Might action really set intent in motion? Or perhaps intent only seems to move? Regardless, from the standpoint of the acting person, intention swivels and moves forward. And through the motion of that action which attempts to realize intent, the cloudlike mass of intent scatters, and the grasped clod, too, is snatched away, and is again sucked in. And so what, then, is that action, that first extending of one's hand toward that cloudlike mass? The unconscious? An impulse of the flesh? Something that slams up against us from somewhere else? . . . It is a question not of which comes first, chicken or egg, but, rather, of the form in which the two relationships appear. (40)

Akasegawa's problematization of the relation between act and intent, on the one hand, presents philosophical, psychological arguments disputing the cogency of the state's version of human consciousness as treated within the criminal law, while, on the other hand, it simultaneously presents a model of the slow work of agitation in the dialectic of practice and thought. As in "Theses," the radical political content is camouflaged by the neutrality of his scientific-sounding language.

Akasegawa relates the incommensurability of intent and act to the very creative process which drives action along: "Intention has the shape of organic matter. Or something without a starting position. Particularly when we create something, we have some sort of poorly understood brain impulse, like intention or desire, and, although laying hold of it frustrates us, the action impetuously moves forward" (40). In this description of the conscious or practical realization of something new as the time in which something is created (literally, "when something is given birth," *nanka o umidasu toki*), Akasegawa extends his metaphor of the indeterminate "newborn's intent" to action per se. In contrast he identifies the attempt to fix this indeterminacy in the form of a graspable intention as, at best, speculative: "And yet there is an eagerness to lay hold of it. When we peep into it, either we are able to construct evidence [*shōko*] or it again recedes from us. That evidence, over-hastily constructed from actions, may perhaps contain some factors in common, even if they contradict one another, but whether or not any of these factors were consecutive is something no one can tell" (40–41). In his own particular case, Akasegawa contrasts the state's pastiche of such evidence to form a prosecutable "intention" with his own, more honest ac-

counting of his intentions through a partial narrative of the circumstances of his act.

The state, appearing as "authority" in the text, performs an operation upon Akasegawa's art that he compares metaphorically to two artistic projects: Takamatsu's *Cord*, imagined as lines trailing through our actions and practice in everyday life, and his own collage practice of 1961–63:

> Right now I have the first bit of evidence right before me. Authority took my action and cut away a fixed length of it. The first bit of evidence is from this amputated [*setsudan sareta*] "segment." This "segment" and the other bits of evidence that entwined about it were seized as "evidence." Perhaps at that time the mass of "cloud" like, vague intentions that gathered around also were snatched away and seized along with it. . . . It was the first model counterfeit bill [*mokei nise sen'en satsu*] that I made. (41)

The removal of the 1,000-yen note from its context within Akasegawa's practice is imaged as a bit of line severed from the long, winding, tangled continuum of intersecting practices; as exemplified by Takamatsu's intricate *Cord* creations (fig. 7.8), the image reveals the woeful inadequacy of such a procedure in doing justice to those actions. The uses to which such severed, cut-away pieces of "evidence" are put are compared to collage: these "pieces of evidence over-hastily constructed on the basis of action" provide an image through their repeated, forcible, and disfiguring extractions from context, arranged within a predetermined scheme. The state, in other words, is engaging in a kind of artistic practice by its legal process, assembling bits and pieces from Akasegawa's life into the collage image of his actions that they seek to portray.

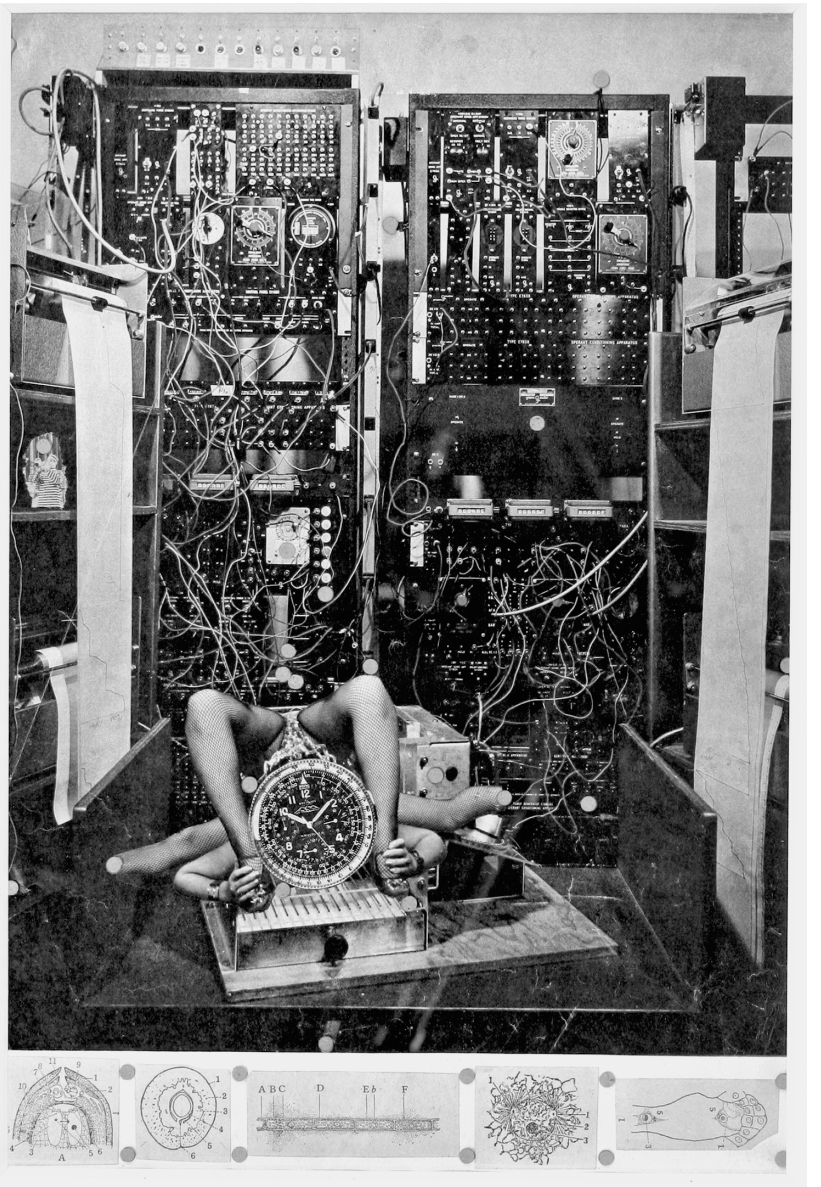
Akasegawa contrasts this to his own collage practice, which is figured as inherently self-deconstructive, and to his appreciation of the ambiguity and surprises that figured so strongly in the derivation of his project. He recounts:

> On the back [of the first 1,000-yen bill] was printed the following:
>
> > "The destruction of the system of private ownership of property/wealth, that includes the body as well as the consciousness accompanying that body." The sophistication of the methods and techniques of [the Akasegawa Genpei Co., Ltd.], which is concerned with the destruction of the currency system, is common knowledge. But counterfeit humans are extremely difficult to make, still technically

> impossible, so for the time being we will be counterfeiting the humans currently in print in the semblance of counterfeit humans.
>
> Up until then, I had been eagerly attempting to disassemble and analyze "human," or, amounting to the same thing, to make a sketch of the reverse of human, an antihuman, an antibeing, so as to throw [its systematicity] into disorder. Thus every night I was cutting collages. I exhibited the remaining dregs at a gallery. At the same time, I printed the first of the 1,000-yen notes. Only after I had made it was my gaze arrested by the power of my act as phenomenon, and all at once my gaze and thoughts were concentrated upon the 1,000-yen note. I had left myself totally at a loss as to the difference in the two "aspects" of my own acts. I had been unprepared for the difference between these two "aspects." [The collages were] full of freshness and vitality; [the printed 1,000-yen note] was but a printed object consigned to a thin, flimsy form [*keitai*]. The one was exhibited, the other mailed. (41–42)

Contemplating the origins of his 1,000-yen project, Akasegawa returns to the invitation text as a lead, revealing his interests, at that time, in systems that are identified with capitalism and manifested in the human body.[17] He identifies two linked artistic actions arising from these interests: collages which he was working on nightly and the first 1,000-yen note prints, made as invitations for his collage exhibition *On the Ambiguous Ocean* (*Aimai na umi ni tsuite*). Yet despite their common conceptual origin, he admits to being taken aback by the results of these acts of artistic production, once realized. The 1,000-yen notes captivate him with their unexpected power; the collages too take on an unexpected freshness and vitality, despite their origination in a process described as dissatisfying and lacking clear direction (fig. 8.3).

Akasegawa speaks of this process as "cutting collages [*korāju o kirikizande ita no da*]" and "exhibiting the remaining dregs at a gallery [*sono nokorikasu o garō ni chinretsu shita*]"; the former could mean the more usual cutting up of material to construct collages, but the latter suggests another possible interpretation. He seems to be speaking of a continuing process of destruction, literally cutting (completed) collages into bits, presumably to create collages from the remains but without a final sense of satisfaction or completion. Such an image of dissatisfied, successive collage creation, in which the orientations of pieces and the very shape and selection of the pieces themselves are continually rethought, contrasts radically with what he has been



8.3 Akasegawa Genpei, *Aimai na umi 10* (The Ambiguous Ocean 10), 1961. Collage, ink, paper. 35.5 × 24.5 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum.

describing metaphorically as the state's collage or pastiche of pieces of seized "evidence," fragments cut away from his actions, assembled into a single, clear scheme presenting an image of criminal intent. This reflection upon his and the state's practice is doubled: his tentative recounting of intentionality in his collage making describes a process of artistic assembly that mirrors the retrospective construction of intention itself. In Akasegawa's case, however, the collage process involved an unfolding process of discovery, replete with false starts, dissatisfactions, and elusive, inchoate goals. His description implies a correspondingly fugitive set of intents and interests in his overall artistic practice, similarly under constant reconfiguration. Thus any retrospective sketch of his intentions in these actions would be necessarily tentative at best—or rather, in Kristin Ross's terms, "confiscatory."

Akasegawa opposes his first-person yet speculative account of his fluid, evolving practice of collage to the state's own singularity of intent, both its single-mindedness in depicting his criminality out of a collage of contextually detached "evidence" and its underlying, dubious supposition that his intent itself might be a singular, discrete, identifiable phenomenon. He implies that the state agents' presumptions merely mirror their own practice: a single-minded intent and a travestied collage practice incapable of yielding any true discoveries. The state is a poor artist indeed.

The Womb of the Everyday

Akasegawa accounts for his surprise over the power of the printed 1,000-yen note in an extended cinematic metaphor:

> In this case, it had been that I, the person who made [the note], had been taken aback; perhaps seen from another angle, it was just a matter of the observers' position having changed. For example, you often see in films a blackmailer or interrogator tying the guy he wishes to directly threaten to a chair, thrusting a pistol to his chest, slapping his face, even cutting his arm with a knife, but the tough guy refuses to spill the beans. And if the blackmailer kills him, he will never find out the secret. So one day, he kidnaps the guy's wife, threatens her, and makes the guy listen to her cries over the phone. The guy of course can't just let her be killed. For a moment, he's silent on the other end of the phone. He's at a loss. Will it be the wife, or the secret? . . . And so, "Wait, don't touch my wife. I'll be right there." At this point the blackmailer is one step closer to the secret.
>
> In this case, it is the print of the 1,000-yen note that has kidnapped

> the wife and is threatening her husband, so to speak. The aspects of the guy and the wife are different. From the perspective of the person who does the threatening in order to expose the secret, however, they are the same. (42)

The description echoes Akasegawa's language of reversed interrogation from "Theses," but here a gendered component comes in with the film noir trope of the attack on the wife as the weak point that breaks down the otherwise impervious subject. Akasegawa finds unexpected power in the 1,000-yen print's ability to mount an indirect assault on its target through something that target holds near and dear, something that it cannot bear to have attacked. The relationship of capitalism and money takes on the aspect of husband and wife.

Akasegawa's recourse to gendered images continues in his description of the process of critical investigation:

> Everyday life [*seikatsu*] is indifferent to the means for its ends. But in everyday life you cannot just peel back and look under the thick flesh and everydayness [*seikatsu*] that covers humans. We must peel back and look under "the human," to peel back and look under everydayness. As much as we try not to show it to others or even look at it ourselves, we must hold back the everyday, that hidden place, that always aggravating thing, and expose the very privates of everydayness, which suck in the intention of the newborn baby trying to escape.[18] To do this, we need to threaten its wife, its daughter. (42–43)

While this passage amends his previous metaphor to include daughters as well, it adds a gendered physicalization of the everyday world. Following his argument which foregrounds the just-born "newborn's intent" as both a "moment" in itself and the paradigm for the elusive cognitive process and possibility behind action, Akasegawa depicts the everyday world as a second, disembodied womb, one which "sucks in" the baby (and, by extension, the person attempting to engage in action) back into a state of passivity and inaction. This thwarting of beginnings is a private secret that we are all implicated in concealing; these "privates of everydayness" must be exposed, despite our embarrassment.

There is considerable ambiguity in the gendering at play here.[19] The everyday world, previously represented as the husband or father being interrogated, is represented as having privates that suck a baby back inside, in other words, female sex organs. One might trace further ambiguities throughout

not only Akasegawa's artistic practice but across a range of works in the period. In Akasegawa's case, several referents stand out, particularly the *Vagina Sheets* series of *objets*, which displayed disembodied and ambiguously menacing vulval forms (such as the one which dripped acid to corrode a work placed below; see chapter 5). These were the works which he sewed in his tiny apartment, which, when brought outside, unfolded to many times the apartment's size, shocking the landlord; this moment resonates with the description in the short story "Aimai na umi" of the spy's fantasy of flesh flowing out of his apartment and covering the city.

Akasegawa's representations of aspects of actuality through *objet* and textual allusions to female body parts manifest complex and ambiguous implications. They range from the image here of a gendered or sexed everyday world of constraint, subject to embarrassing exposure, to a figuring of fleshy possibility and transformation through secret enterprise, as in "Aimai na umi" and the narration of the making of the first *Vagina Sheets* work (in *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*). The latter represent a process of creation and conception arising out of an artistic process giving disembodied life to the detritus of modern capitalist existence, as in the *Vagina Sheets* (and indirectly echoed, perhaps, in the egg images of Nakanishi and other *Yomiuri Anpan* artists). As *objets* the inverted inner tubes provided an endlessly fascinating, flesh-like material by which to figure both an obsessional object and an alien, unseen productivity, in turn prompting further unexpected reflections and works.

Art and the Conservatism of the Everyday

Returning from these musings on kidnapping and on exposing the "privates of everydayness," Akasegawa briefly considers the irrelevancy of the contemporaneous art critics' debate on art and anti-art: "It doesn't matter whether one considers the result of this action to be art or not, or, for that matter, anti-art or not. In the end, 'everyday life' takes this nuisance and pushes it aside, filing it away into the category [*hanchū*] of art. So as not to have this everyday life damaged" (42). By inadequately specifying its own critical content, and by never leaving an explicitly "art" conceptual sphere of activity, "anti-art" is as susceptible as the most conventional art to being disconnected from everyday activity and critique. Such a defense of the everyday world from artistic critique works by retaining a category ultimately premised upon a conservative conception of the potential of artistic activity. It

is precisely what Akasegawa anticipates taking place at trial upon his adoption of a defense predicated upon his work's status as art. In "The Intent of the Act" he is at pains to forestall this reductive confiscation—even as he adopts the largely discarded term *art* for this practice—by asserting that the essence of his act lies in the very exceeding of such narrow ascriptions and the "moment" it makes possible. He contrasts these possibilities to the conservatism of the system that his work targets:

> To "lead a life" is to keep and maintain the everyday [*nichijōsei*], to protect the system of one's own thoughts. When confronted with something that cannot be explained within that system, one gets confused on behalf of the conservatism of that everyday, and tries to resolve the disorder so as to fit back somewhere within that system, even if it requires some degree of distortion [*tashō no muri o shite de mo*]. And so, a new and even more indecipherable, flabby, grotesque, comical thing is tagged on to that system. The first newspaper articles to report on the model 1,000-yen bill incident would be examples of this, with the *Asahi Shinbun*'s leading the list; the reports drawn up by the police department, the first of numerous documents, would be another. And perhaps the trial which is about to start will amount to another. (43)

Akasegawa's language depicts the contemporary ideal of the upstanding member of society, the beneficiary of income doubling, as based upon a practice of conformism and intellectual cowardice. Individuals both within and outside of the state's formal apparatuses alike conform to and extend what Rancière terms the "police."

Conversely, the distortions resulting from these serial defenses of the everyday lay bare its supports and assumptions: "These things [the newspaper articles, the police reports, the trial] do us the favor of starkly disclosing everyday life for what it is. In these things we draw near to the recognition of the intensely gleaming circle of the everyday, and the fact that we are its members" (43). This would in fact be a key part of Akasegawa's trial strategy: to use the fact of the state's intervention to reveal its extraconstitutional defenses of the everyday world (see part I) and to further specify those structures in a public forum. Or as he would phrase it in "The *Objet* after Stalin" in October of 1967, "it is important to affirm that it is not only the courts that through national power can pass sentences and make judgments, but that fundamentally we are able to judge and pass sentence on the courts."[20]

Akasegawa distinguishes the action of the 1,000-yen note from this mode of revelation through reactionary distortion:

> The model 1,000-yen note, however, is an anti–everyday life *objet* of the everyday, capable of perplexing the "everyday" or the "everyday human." From the perspective of humans it is aimed at humans: it is an "antipersonnel" counterfeit 1,000-yen bill [literally, "antiperson," *"tainingen yō" no nise sen'en satsu*];[21] from the perspective of currency it is aimed at currency: it is a model for a counterfeit 1,000-yen bill equivalent to currency.
>
> Therefore it must not be something that can be used. For it to be a model, it must be stripped of its function as currency within everyday life. And further, it must resemble currency. The person taking it in hand must be struck with the "freedom of confusion." For this to happen it will not do for the manufacturer to have any intentions beyond this. For people taking it in hand, the model is summoned forth, and through this model they lift their heads and become confused by the dictatorial system of "everydayness" within them; it will not do for it to be something that exports confusion by force. (43–44)

As *objet* of the everyday world, the model 1,000-yen note holds the key to laying bare its actuality; it is corrosive of its supporting structures, attaining a precise, aggressive content, taking aim at currency and human thought alike. It is, as hinted at in Akasegawa's "Theses," a model for direct action. Returning to the language and imagery from his fantasy narrative of the spy's strange new weapon in "Aimai na umi" (the antipersonnel pistol), Akasegawa imagines the model instantly producing the moment in which the spy is unmasked as spy, or in other words, when the attack upon the authority and reality of currency is laid bare.

The triggering of this moment depends upon the note's being neither identical to nor unlike currency: the model must be an unusable simulacrum of currency. Here Akasegawa anticipates his trial strategy in two ways. First, he emphasizes the unusability of the printed note and the total lack of "use intent," thus denying his own criminal intent while simultaneously strengthening its potential as simulacrum by highlighting its difference from currency and thus its capacity to trigger a critical "moment." Second, he speaks of its effects in terms of unforced, purely mental, speculative conceptual freedoms, a "freedom of confusion." This presages his trial tactic of defending his actions as an exercise of freedom of expression. Without downplaying the radical potential of the "moment" that may be engendered, he presents this as a constitutionally protected matter of freedom of

belief and conscience. Like the serial distortions created by the defense of the everyday, his argument is gauged to reveal the state's own overstepping of constitutional authority (see part I).

Akasegawa first mocks the pretense of the state that someone might in fact attempt to use his obviously model 1,000-yen notes as real currency:

> To attempt to use the "model" as a "counterfeit bill," a person would need "use intent" [*shiyōsha to shite no ito*], since it is not a "current counterfeit 1,000 yen bill" [*genzai nise sen'en satsu*], and since it is stripped of its function as a circulating 1,000-yen bill. A person would need criminal bravery of the sort that would accompany the suffering of someone trying to commit seppuku with an edgeless wakizashi.[22] The act would be external to the severed manufacturer's intent, and would escape the manufacturer's intent. Further, it is itself perhaps already a reflection of the intent latent in the structure of the government-produced currency that intercepts all counterfeit things and defends the complete dictatorial system of "real things."
>
> From the standpoint of the manufacturer, everything beyond that severed [cut-out] intent is unclear, and an enigma. Both the model and the work in the moment of their making ignore the intent of the manufacturer, and assert their independence; the manufacturer is no longer the work's commander, but rather is in its audience. That model counterfeit 1,000-yen bill, without reference to my intentions, dragged me off into the absolute center of everyday life, into the police department, into the prosecutor's office, into court—inside these structures veneered with rationality. (44–45)

The notion that Akasegawa's notes would somehow be used as counterfeits, a spurious fear first raised in the *Asahi* article in 1964 (and probably suggested by the anticounterfeiting Third Investigative Squad in an interview with the writer of the article), is lampooned as requiring a kind of self-destructive lunacy. Akasegawa disavows the idea in a stroke, disclaiming any intent after printing as itself enigmatic and unknowable. In contrast, Akasegawa locates the prosecutor's collage of his "cut-out" actions as criminal intent ultimately in the very structure of currency. Rather than the intent of independent state agents, it is the real thing's own propensity to intercept challenges and defend itself that undergirds the state's action. Conversely, his own prints, subsequent to their production, similarly took on their own sort of independent intent, with results surprising to their creator, who found himself taken to "the absolute center of everyday life" (where "real"

notes and "counterfeits" contend), and thence into the putatively rational legal system, which intervened in support of this "reality" (see plate 17).

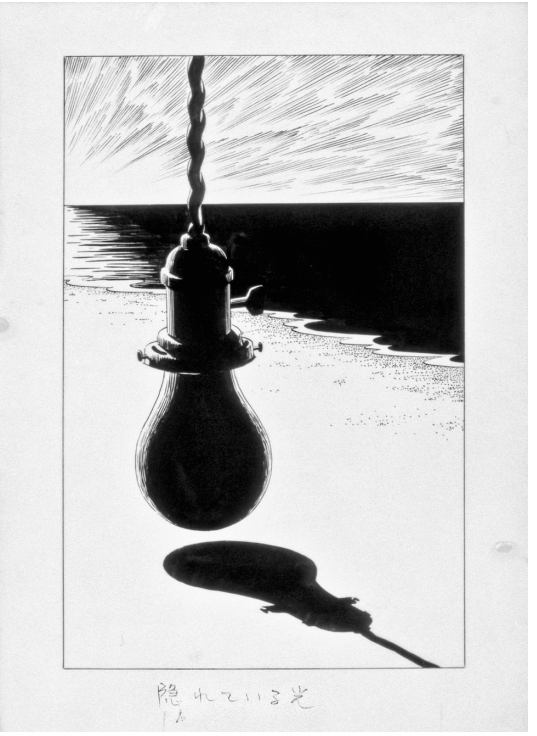
Movement, Hope, and the Moment

Akasegawa's concluding paragraphs in "The Intent of the Act" continue his forensic attack on the unexamined assumptions that confront him in his prosecution, firing off a barrage of questions to weaken these assumptions and to point to the actual content of the work, and the trial:

> The problem is confusion. The person's internal savings [*tainai no chokin*] in a moment return to nothingness, and go bankrupt. Penniless and propertyless, lost on the road. The system of judgment, the continuing agreement, the laws of consciousness are all scattered, and then are enclosed again. Is it a 1,000-yen note? Is it paper? Is it a counterfeit bill? Is it a print? It's not a real thing, yet neither is it a counterfeit [*nisemono*]. A useless white elephant, something outside of the everyday world [*nichijōteki na sekai*]; it is something that opposes that world of everyday life [*seikatsu no sekai*], a model of an unseeable antiexistence. It cuts away the manufacturer's intent,[23] finally attempting to exceed communication, yet even as it exceeds communication, it tries to retain a connection to the world of everyday life. (45)

Returning to the formulation of capitalism as the "system of private property," Akasegawa presents the effect on consciousness of the 1,000-yen note as a model for an "unseeable antiexistence." He provides an intuition, for a moment, of the collapse of the entire structure of capitalist-induced consciousness, that is, of the terror and vertigo of a sudden loss of all conceptual property ("internal savings") and of the liberating and daunting spectacle of the end of the private ownership of wealth.[24] This is his image of the results of the conceptual confusion his notes might induce, taken to their furthest extent: the possibility of an existence in which the structures of real things, chiefly currency, are shattered and become nonexistent. While this might indeed presage liberation, the short-term fears that such a moment entails—of poverty, of the loss of one's conceptual grounding—motivate mental defenses against such revelations. These defenses arise from an anxiety-producing conservatism built right into the conceptual structures of everyday life itself—the flip side of the government's championing of doubled incomes and creature comforts.

Akasegawa recognizes that the conservatism of capitalist everyday life,



8.4 Akasegawa Genpei, *Kakurete iru hikari* (Hidden Light), 1970. Pen, paper. 27.3 19.8 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

the resistance of its conceptual and practical categories to critique, and the power of its active defenders in the person of state agents all militate against the likelihood of his art's success in engineering measurable transformations in the world (let alone the likelihood of his acquittal). Foreseeing this, he nonetheless maintains a defiant stance: "From the standpoint of art [the model 1,000-yen note print] is anti-art; from the standpoint of currency it's anticurrency. A double-edged blade, a two-sided mirror. In the end, perhaps, anti-art is filed away as art [*geijutsu ni kurikomare*], and anticurrency is filed away as currency. And yet the end alone is not the whole of its 'form' [*sugata*]. The end is but one aspect of movement. The trial as well" (45). Akasegawa's practice, supplementing his critical art with critical writings and with a vigorous defense in court, maintains heroic hope against its total suppression. A similar hope in regard to movement was articulated by Theodor Adorno in his phrase "Thinking has the momentum of the general."[25] Akasegawa's hopes rest upon his concept of movement, carried over from his "Theses" in its ambiguous reference to a critical conceptual mobility (that might lead to agitation) and to a broader mass political movement—a mobilization of the politics effected by his art.[26]

The basis for this resilience originates in the same conceptual lack of fit, or ambiguity (in Akasegawa's language, a "vagueness") that in turn makes his art vulnerable to state-authored "collage." He alludes to this in the conclusion of the essay, where he addresses his authorship of the work and the work itself:

> Or rather, isn't this more than something that I alone constructed? I didn't go to the print shop with a proof. I just gave someone the direction "please make me a monochrome print of the face of the 1,000-yen note." And so the print shop merely made a print based on receiving a request in the ordinary course of business. So who the heck made this thing? Or rather, isn't it that there is intent but no actual thing? Explaining intention through words, and explaining action through words, is fundamentally a redundant act, an extravagance that ends up having been done in vain. It's like making a pool in the middle of the ocean. Clearly an extravagance that would have been rejected by Ninomiya Kinjirō. It doesn't help to reread it. What is intent? What is art, for that matter? Like a clod of intent, there is only a lump of words, like a cloud. And yet words are never so accurate as when they are vague. (45)

Both "ocean" and "vagueness" return us to the poem and short story "The Ambiguous Ocean" and its figure of the ocean as a limitless anarchical reserve of antisystemic potential, a liquid imagery that resonates in the Yamanote-sen invitation's agitation imagery of voids within fluids and "swimming about." Against this potential, the fixing of intention and action by words—as the state proposes to do through judicial ascription—is represented as ineffective, a "pool in the middle of the ocean."

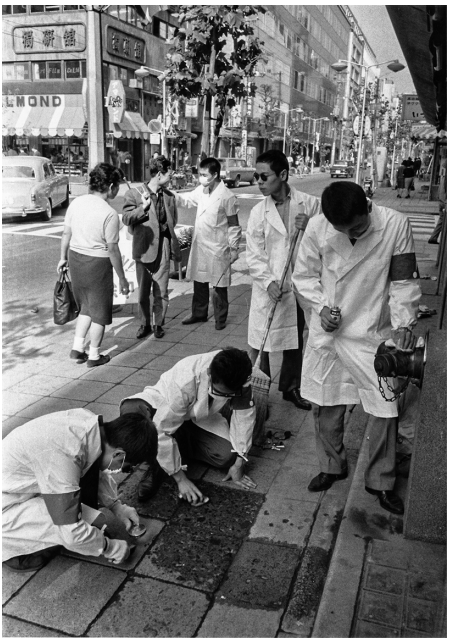
"Words are never so accurate as when they are vague." Akasegawa thus encapsulates the thrust of his project, whose calculated vagueness and provocative indeterminacy energizes a moment of confusion and enables critical activity, and the defense of the everyday, in which vagueness is confiscated by a constellation of commonsense interpretations and conceptual conservatism. Returning to the ambiguities with which he opened the piece, his rhetoric thus suspends the fate of his inquiry indefinitely between these two points, prior to its likely forcible resolution through the agency of the court—and in a broader sense, by the police. Akasegawa's essay both articulates and holds open the critical categories and possibilities of the moment, anticipating movements to come.

The Historical Moment of the Avant-Garde

If *avant-garde* is a category that implies a temporal deferment, a relation to something that comes after, its importance lies in the practical creation of the critical moment of anticipation. As Akasegawa suggests in his essay (written just prior to commencing four years of trials and appeals), hope for transformative change resides in the moment enabling the practical establishment of critique and in the moment of possibility opened up by that critical activity.

After the guilty verdict of June 1967, Akasegawa began years of appeals (see part I), and commenced a prolific writing practice, combatting the state's attempt to silence him by continuing to explicate the critical possibilities of this encounter.[27] And in the first of these efforts a few months later, "The *Objet* after Stalin" ("Sutarin igo no obuje"), he presciently identified the transformative moment for a rekindled activism in the wake of the First Haneda Incident of October 8, 1967—and the essence of the struggle in the battle for recognition as a legitimate voice of dissent, rather than crime or noise.[28] Drawing from his own experience, Akasegawa's October essay connected this struggle with the critical practice of *objet*, and its suppression with law and everyday. He describes how confrontations between protesters and police generate critical *objets*, which are in turn "brought into the court in a condition of enforced silence" as "lethal weapons" and exhibits associated with a crime.[29] He reaffirmed that rebellion originates in the renunciation of the authority governing oneself from within, that is, through *objet* consciousness, seen as the crucial intermediate step between pop bottle and Molotov cocktail, between everyday and movement. And returning to the continuing importance of his 1,000-yen note as a practice of *objet*, and recommitting himself to political practice, he declares his intent to construct a real zero-yen note to continue this struggle (plate 17).[30]

This book has related the history of an earlier prescient encounter, when an avant-garde (in the sense of both "art" and "early") yielded a critique of an everyday world and a practice designed to alter it. This microhistory adds to our understanding of the 1960s as a global moment, and of the problems of conceiving of its distinctive forms of politics. As Guy Debord argued in 1961, across the globe and with no cognizance of the simultaneity of the thought, "With such a detail, as with everyday life as a whole, alteration is always the necessary and sufficient condition for experimentally bringing into clear view the object of our study, which would otherwise remain uncertain—an object which is itself less to be studied than to be altered."[31] Like most criti-





8.5a Hi-Red Center's *Shutoken seisō seiri sokushin undō* (Campaign for the Promotion of Sanitation and Order in the Capital, aka Ultra-Cleaning Event), October 1964. Descending upon the fashionable Ginza shopping district in lab coats, complete with white masks and gloves, and armbands adorned with Hi-Red Center's signature exclamation point, the group proceeded to meticulously clean sidewalks laid for the Olympics (then in progress), as well as street furniture and passersby, with brushes, bucket and cloth, household cleansers, dusters, soap, cotton swabs, and so on. From left to right, front: Kawani Hiroshi, Takamatsu Jirō, Izumi Tatsu (with broom), Tanikawa Kōichi; rear, Nakanishi Natsuyuki brushes a pedestrian by their "Be Clean! *Sōjichū*" (Cleaning in Progress) sign. Akasegawa is out of frame. Photo by Hirata Minoru.

8.5b One of several encounters with police during *Shutoken seisō seiri sokushin undō*, October 1964. The event gestured toward the government's mass "Beautification of the Capital Campaign" and, by extension, to the multilayered investments in a sanitized image, ranging from mandated lighting levels in coffee shops after Anpo (for surveillance), to venereal disease tests for workers associated with the Olympics by the Tokyo Metropolitan Hygiene Office, political repression, and the broad campaign to present a new Japan untainted by associations with war. Thus event participants were surprised to receive not interference but expressions of gratitude for their efforts from police and passing leftist students—both perhaps unified in a literal approach to phenomena. Photo by Hirata Minoru.





8.5c Members of Zero Dimension in vacant-eyed plastic masks (cast from an art school instructional bust of Agrippa), waving *Hinomaru* flags emblazoned with "Celebration of Imperial Japan Zero Dimension Day" on February 11, 1967, the day established to celebrate National Foundation Day, *Kenkoku kinen no hi*. See also plate 18. Photos courtesy of Katō Yoshihiro.

8.5d The group proceeds through the snow by Nijūbashi and the Imperial Palace.

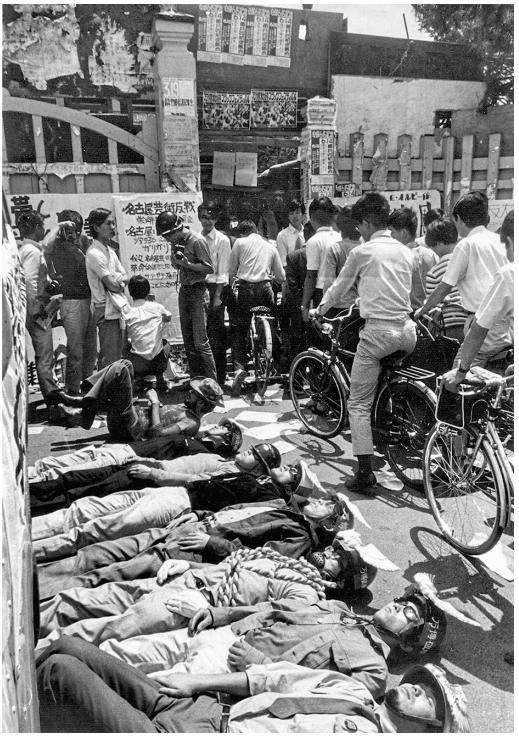
cal accounts of such histories, although the end of this story does not feature a grand event, some glorious march upon a latter-day Bastille with the artists in the lead, historical reflection on these events nonetheless finds a spark of hope in their unexpected activism. In their critical investigations of a newly refigured high-growth Japan centering the promise and rewards of the emerging boom economy in a model of state-sponsored prosperity, we hear voices from a moment when the possibilities of the everyday world did not seem to lie merely in a choice of forms of consumption under paternalistic state sponsorship.

Although the ultimate fragility of this emergent prosperity would be intimated by the oil shocks of the early 1970s and made abundantly clear in the stagnation following the rupturing of the bubble economy in 1990, the state's administrative guarantee of prosperity's anticipated benefits nonetheless achieved a thoroughgoing depoliticizing effect just after the Anpo demonstrations in 1960. While others were taken aback by this unforeseen shift in governmental strategy, artists were among the first to consider the significance of the nascent boom economy and identify its associated, peculiar political effects. They struggled with its unfamiliar forms and transformations of daily life and sought to rally a dispersed and quiescent populace to take collective action against a hidden form of domination. While others slept or wandered, a particular kind of play with *objets* and performance yielded a politics. If the path from this politics to its kindred of the late 1960s is neither straight nor simple, its unexpected arrival earlier in the decade deserves our consideration and attention. Following its fraught genesis and uneven path redirects our attention to overlooked yet central moments and forms of political contestation, legitimacy struggles, and the postwar politics of culture.

Cultural activism in this period came in many forms and political orientations, as numerous as the genres that such activism crossed; in addition to those represented here, film, photography, music (ranging across contemporary, folk, jazz, avant-garde, and classical genres), traditional arts, dance (including Ankoku Butoh),[32] theater, street provocations, and performance, the complex derivation of the "little theater" movement, all were scenes for wide-ranging explorations in an experimentation that energetically crossed, combined, and quoted previously distinct genres, in part as an effect of its primary rejection of given categories. As large-scale protest returned in the second half of the 1960s, a discourse of direct action in the everyday world was taken up in a variety of forms, including by the protest movement participants themselves. A politics of art and performance engaged in com-

plex moments of dialogue and conjuncture with more conventional political activism and worked to energize a broader sense of political imminence and potential that fueled the period's spontaneous political subjectivation and stunning expansion of political participation.[33]

In parallel to university occupations and eruptions into Kanda and other adjacent areas in Tokyo and throughout the country, performance groups engaged in tactical seizures of public spaces. Such tactics included brief interventions and provocations echoing the happenings of the early 1960s, occasionally by groups in operation since that time, such as Zero Dimension (figs. 8.5a, 8.5b, 8.5c, 8.5d, and plate 18).[34] They also encompassed more substantial engagements, such as the Folk Guerrillas' prolonged takeover of the West Gate plaza of busy Shinjuku Station and the newly itinerant mobile tent theaters of the Situation Theater (Jōkyō gekijō) and Theatre Center 68/69 and their temporary transformation of open spaces into sites for their intense dramas.[35] Artists and performers performed within the "liberated spaces" of barricaded campuses seized by students, lending their own particular charge to the spaces even when their provocations clashed with the concerns of some activists (figs. 8.6 and 8.7, plate 19).



8.6 Members of Zero Dimension perform in front of the Kyoto University gate in 1969, their winged helmets proclaiming "Banpaku hakai" (Destroy Expo!). Zero Dimension, together with the artist (and later Tokyo mayoral candidate) Akiyama Yūtokutaishi, Itoi Kanji, and others, engaged in a variety of interventionist forms of abjection, outrage, and provocation in opposition to the upcoming Expo '70 in Osaka. Behind them, a student is painting a poster for a group called Nagoya Art Against War. Photo by Hirata Minoru. Courtesy of Katō Yoshihiro.



8.7 Art and film: one of the salon gatherings at the VAN Film Science Research Center (Van kagaku eiga kenkyūjo) brings together activist artists and filmmakers alike in Tokyo, 1963. From left to right, front to back: Shinohara Ushio, Izumi Tatsu (sometimes called the fourth member of the ostensibly three-man Hi-Red Center), Akasegawa Genpei (reclining), Takamatsu Jirō (smoking, in a white shirt), Kawani Hiroshi, Koike Ryō (later of Kosugi Takehisa's Taj Mahal Travellers), Kazakura Shō, Ōishi Shōji, and Asanuma Tatsuji (a core VAN member along with Jōnouchi Motoharu and Adachi Masao, not pictured). Photo by Hirata Minoru.

Yet despite such conflicts and apparent differences, this cultural activism and the wider student-centered politics (focused on local practice and its imbrications within structures of domination and violence) in a sense resonated with the explorations of the earlier 1960s, when artists turned their practice to the everyday world, and in so doing opened a space for a political project aimed at reconstituting practice and daily life—and reenergizing political protest itself. It has thus been my goal to take a discrete portion of those diverse, interconnected practices of cultural activism and specify their fugitive historical moment in all of its complexity, and in turn, to account for the very derivation of a politics.[36] In the three parts of this book, I have attempted a fine-grained historical account of these practices across overlapping and mutually reinforcing fields of empirical inquiry to open up a broader and more complete picture of the contests of this period beyond that yielded by analyses of more conventional political agents—and by more-conventional chronological narratives, which would exclude history as a dimension of the present. I also hope to have provided strong evidence against a view that would separate considerations of politics from culture (narrowly defined) by revealing the underexamined politics of this avant-gardism as one of the period's most prescient and potent critical voices. A microhistorical inquiry into the practice of a group of artists uncovers a rich terrain of action and contestation in the politics of culture after the Second World War, one which identified the everyday world and its representations as the central political arena for dissent and for policing.

EPILOGUE

The trial court convicted Akasegawa in June of 1967; the Tokyo Higher Court denied his first appeal in November of 1968, and the Second Petty Bench of the Supreme Court issued the final denial that upheld his conviction in April of 1970. His actual punishment, a suspended sentence, was in a sense minor. All of his artworks were returned to him, with the sole exception of the printing plate for the 1,000-yen obverse.[1]

Years later, in 1979, as his career as a popular writer was taking off, Akasegawa won the new fiction prize from the popular magazine *Chūō Kōron* for his short story, "Hada zawari" (Touching the Skin). He used the pen name Otsuji Katsuhiko.[2] As the competition's judges did not read the authors' personal information before making their decision, they were unaware of Akasegawa's identity until after they had selected his work as their winner. According to Maruya Saiichi, who adjudicated the competition with two other noted authors, Yoshiyuki Junnosuke and Kōno Taeko, this fact did not shock them, beyond their surprise at the stylistic skill and sense of unforced flow that Akasegawa's writing demonstrated.



E.1 Akasegawa Genpei, *Tekuragari no uchū* (Space in the Shadow Cast by One's Hand), 1978. Pen, watercolor, paper. 33.2 × 24.0 cm. Courtesy of Akasegawa Genpei / Nagoya City Art Museum / SCAI THE BATHHOUSE.

In a short piece in the catalogue for the Nagoya City Art Museum retrospective on Akasegawa's works in 1994, *The Adventures of Akasegawa Genpei: The Grand Strategy for Developing a Resort in the Mind* (*Akasegawa Genpei no bōken—Nōnai rizōto kaihatsu daisakusen*), Maruya recounts meeting Akasegawa at the awards ceremony a bit prior to the official proceedings. He introduced himself and complimented Akasegawa on his winning work, whereupon Akasegawa said, "In thanks, I'd like to give you some money," and passed him an envelope. Maruya refused to take it, whereupon Akasegawa explained, "Don't worry, to tell the truth, it isn't *money* exactly. Take it out and see for yourself." Obeying, Maruya found himself looking at the blank back of one of Akasegawa's 1,000-yen prints. "I was forgetting that this Otsuji Katsuhiko was in fact Akasegawa Genpei," he recollected. Maruya recounts that when Akasegawa repeated the procedure with Yoshiyuki and Kawano, he seems to have carefully explained the nature of the contents first, only then passing over the envelope; only Maruya was subjected to the full shock, and the relief in the next moment, of being given only a simulacrum of money.

NOTES

Introduction

1 The glass guillotine was not the only option he considered; he also imagined some sort of chewing machine that would potentially gnash the emperor with teeth composed of sets of the classic pair of worker's implements, the pickaxe and shovel.

2 Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives*.

3 This was part and parcel of identifying "everyday life" itself as an analytical and critical category, that (in the words of Guy Debord) "everyday life is right here" ("Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life"). Rob Shields has associated Lefebvre's concept of *le quotidien*, "the everyday," with that of the Surrealists. Shield distinguishes Lefebvre's concept's specific, critical reference to an alienated and banal life—that is nonetheless the site potentially for authentic engagement—from general references to "daily life" and from critical but allegedly nondialectical conceptions of the latter by Debord (Shields, *Lefebvre, Love and Struggle*, 66–80). I use the general terms throughout this study, however, to render equivalent Japanese terms and explore the development of their own evolving, critical content in specific circumstances, discussions, and writings.

4 My concept of the 1960s as a global moment includes events overlapping the decade's numerical boundaries—that is, a "long decade of the sixties."
5 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 3.
6 Rancière, *Disagreement*, 29–30.
7 Fasolt, *The Limits of History*, 16. On the constituent "heresy" at stake in democratic subjectivation and historical narration, see Rancière, *The Names of History*, 88–103. See also Osborne, *The Politics of Time*, on modernity itself as a "form of historical consciousness, an abstract temporal structure . . . totalizing history from the standpoint of an ever-vanishing, ever-present present" (23).

1. The Vision of the Police

1 Article 60 of the Criminal Code provides that two or more persons acting in concert in the commission of a crime are all to be treated as perpetrators of the principal offense.
2 "Kisojō," 2–3.
3 Takeuchi, Matsuo, and Hiroshi, *Shin hōritsugaku jiten* 1381; see also Nihon Daijiten Kankōkai, *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten*, 290.
4 The *gizō* code provisions (Title 16, Articles 148, 150, 152, 153) all specifically require that the counterfeiting be done for the purpose of using the counterfeits as money. Wagatsuma and Toshiyoshi, *Roppō zensho*, 1412.
5 Umemori, "Modernization through Colonial Mediations," demonstrates that in the case of police, prisons, and criminal statutes, many of these mechanisms were adopted from European *colonial* practices (such as those in Hong Kong) and thus amounted to willful "internal colonization" by the Meiji oligarchs.
6 "The fundamental principle of the 1889 Constitution was the idea of imperial sovereignty, as stated in Article 4: 'The emperor is the head of the Empire, combining in himself the rights of sovereignty.' In accordance with this provision, the Constitution dealt with the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government as if they were three aspects of the unitary imperial sovereign power" (Maki, *Court and Constitution in Japan*, xvi–xvii).
7 In Akasegawa's language, "spies" and "ex-spies" (see chapter 3).
8 Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives*, 2; Rancière, *Disagreement*.
9 See *Shihō tōkei nenpō*, 1967, 250–51; *Shihō tōkei nenpō*, 1968, 362–63.
10 Sugimoto, "Bōtō chinjutsu," 156. Other future members of Hi-Red Center and associates of Akasegawa were connected to this Waseda University group, whose principals included Hiraoka Masaaki and Miyahara Yasuharu. The name perhaps references the secret society the League of Outlaws, a progenitor of the League of the Just, and the Communist League, for whom Marx drafted the *Communist Manifesto*. See Wheen, *Karl Marx*, 98–99, 108–13.
11 Miyahara, *Akai fūsen arui wa mesu ōkami no yoru*, 50. If police had not already been aware of the work for other reasons, the League's book likely would have attracted police interest for its inclusion of a number of conventionally prohib-

ited "hair nudes," or nude photos displaying pubic hair, by Yoshioka Yasuhiro (for which the book was originally banned). Two extreme close-up photographs of genitals would have been less recognizable, as the experience of a similar exhibit by the artist at the *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition in 1963 testifies (see chapter 5). Akasegawa has indicated that the League was under police surveillance at the time of the alleged shoplifting incident. Akasegawa, phone interview by the author, December 4, 2000.

12 While the exclamation point echoes earlier Constructivist graphics, the orientation would also evoke those many exclamation points, repeated diagonally for urgency, seen on the pages of radical leftist handbills. As for the date, according to Imaizumi, who arranged for the artist contributions to the work, the submissions were given to Hiraoka Masaaki in May (see "Hanzaishadōmeiin no manbiki ga gen'in de Akasegawa sen'ensatsu saiban no maku ga kitte otosareta"). The reference to August in the extensive chronology within the superb Nagoya City Art Museum retrospective catalogue documents the final publication date (Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 199).

13 *Dokyumento gosen'en satsu gizō jiken*, 211, 227.

14 The B-series 50-, 100-, 500-, and 1,000-yen notes had all been introduced between 1950 and 1953. During the decade following its introduction, due to postwar inflation, the 1,000-yen note became much more common among average Japanese citizens. The C-series 5,000- and 10,000-yen notes had entered circulation previously (Yamaguchi, *Nihon no Shihei*, 86, 143).

15 Sugimoto, "Bōtō chinjutsu," 156.

16 Ibid., 156–57.

17 Akasegawa, "Kisai Akasegawa Genpei nōnai rizōto tanbō," *GQ Japan* (February 1995): 33–34.

18 Ibid., 34; Akasegawa and Mokuma, "Taidan," 25.

19 The *kyōjutsu chōsho*, or statements taken by Furuishi, as well as those taken later by the prosecutors, are all in accord on this point. See Furuishi, January 9, 31, and February 8, 1964; Okamura, January 25 and February 2, 1965; and Tobita, October 27, 1965, in unpublished police and prosecutor documents, courtesy of Sugimoto Masazumi and Akasegawa Genpei.

20 Sugimoto, "Bōtō chinjutsu," 157.

21 *Outline of Criminal Justice in Japan*, 25; also noted in the District Court opinion in Akasegawa's trial, June 24, 1967, reprinted in *Bijutsu techō*, no. 287 (September 1967), 76, citing article 248 of the Laws of Criminal Procedure.

22 Sugimoto, "Bōtō chinjutsu," 157.

23 Ibid.

24 See Tobita, October 27, 1965; also Furuishi, January 31, 1964. The latter recounts how Sugita told Akasegawa in March that the prints might take until May "due to the current ruckus about counterfeit notes," whereupon he offered her the excuses that he had received police permission (a lie) and that nothing had happened as a result of previous printings (5).

25 Both as a matter of law and by the terms of the District Court's subsequent holdings.

26 Rancière, *Disagreement*, 28.

27 Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives*, 22–23.

28 Rancière, *Disagreement*, 30.

29 See Ross's account of "event," blending Badiou's category of event into the larger context of police order and a much broader chronological frame for May 1968 (*May '68 and Its Afterlives*, 26).

30 Ross notes that Rancière's very theoretical formulation of police and politics is itself a "trace" of May 1968 and its "aftermath" (ibid., 2, 7, 24).

31 Ibid., 23.

32 Something akin to Old Bailey Courtroom 1 in London, Courtroom 701 was the venue for trials of Red Army (*rengō sekigun*) members, and even of Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei. "Petty Bench" refers to a partial panel of judges, not the full Grand Bench of the Supreme Court.

33 Because Japan has a civil law system, the status of case law is different than in common law countries. Nonetheless judicial precedents are respected, and a ruling's inconsistency with past precedent constitutes grounds for appeal.

34 *Koyama et al. v. Japan*, 11 *Keishū* 3 at 997, Sup. Ct. G.B., March 13, 1957; citations hereinafter to *Chatterley* are to page numbers in the publication "Judgment upon Case of Translation and Publication of Lady Chatterley's Lover and Article 175 of the Penal Code," *Series of Prominent Judgments of the Supreme Court upon Questions of Constitutionality*, 1–38, unless otherwise cited. *Ishii et al. v. Japan*, 23 *Keishū* 10 at 1239; citations to *de Sade* hereinafter are to the page numbers in its translation in Itoh and Beer, *The Constitutional Case Law of Japan*, 183–217, unless otherwise cited. The *de Sade* decision was made after the lower court verdicts but before the Supreme Court Petty Bench's decision, where it was cited. The case names I have supplied do not strictly follow Japanese legal referential practice but are an adaptation to an American style of legal citation. The *de Sade* court adds to its *Keishū* volume and page citation of *Chatterley* the parenthetical reference, "the so-called Chatterley Incident decision [*iwayuru chiyataree jiken no hanketsu*]." 23 *Keishū* 10, 1242.

35 Article 21 holds that "freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression are guaranteed. No censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated." JAPAN CONST. [Kenpō], art. 21, para. 1. See also Moore and Robinson, *The Japanese Constitution*, RM481.ART21.P1. Whenever possible, citations will also be made to this exceedingly convenient electronic document collection, using the "RM id" system (see Keith Handley, "Referring to these Documents," *The Japanese Constitution*) in addition to standard citations. Minister of State Kanamori Tokujirō, a key spokesperson for the draft Constitution on behalf of the Yoshida administration during its debate in the Diet, asserted specifically that artistic free expression was to be guaranteed under this article (then Article 19). See *Dai*

kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiinkai kaigiroku (Proceedings of the House of Peers Special Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 5, September 5, 1946, p. 29 (RM437.PM.SP17.P12). In his later capacity as president of the National Diet Library, Kanamori would become a star witness for the prosecution in the *Chatterley* trial.

36 See *Chatterley*, 3, 7–9; *de Sade*, 184–86. On the complex politics of the *Chatterley* trial itself, see Sherif, *Japan's Cold War*, 54–84; Cather, "The Great Censorship Trials of Literature and Film in Postwar Japan."

37 See Beer, *Freedom of Expression in Japan*, 348–49.

38 "Nisesen'en mozō wa waisetsu ka," *Shūkan Manga Times*, November 5, 1966.

39 Again it was the shoplifting of a de Sade work that purportedly began the chain of events leading to Akasegawa's discovery and prosecution.

40 The Court of Cassation was the highest court under the Meiji Constitution; its power, unlike that of the postwar Supreme Court, did not extend to judicial review. There is some debate over the degree of judicial independence at the time; what is clear, however, is that the courts were not entitled to encroach upon imperial privilege. John M. Maki points out that as the Meiji Constitution was presented as the gift of the emperor, "it would have been illogical and in contravention of the concept of imperial sovereignty for the courts—clearly only the mouthpiece of the sovereign—to have been empowered to rule on the meaning of the Constitution" (*Court and Constitution in Japan*, xvii–xviii). The case of 1918 is Second Criminal Division, June 10, 1918, Case No. 1918 (re) 1465 (First Petty Bench, 5 *Hanreishū* 6 at 1026).

41 MEIJI CONST. [Meiji Kenpō] art. 29, para. 1., emphasis added.

42 See, for example, Meiji Kenpō, art. 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, and 32.

43 As a historical matter, the conflation of the political with the obscene in state censorship even predated the Meiji Constitution, and from the beginning reflected the trumping of politics by a paternalistic state acting through extralegal authority. As Jay Rubin notes, it came during a moment of crisis for the nascent state: "in trying to suppress the call for an invasion of Korea raised by Saigō Takamori and other disaffected samurai," the state forbade publication of "anything that might tend to 'agitate the hearts of the people or incite lewdness.' From this would develop the virtually inseparable pairing of public peace and public morals" (*Injurious to Public Morals*, 20–21). Rubin discusses how the prewar censorship apparatus was founded upon a variety of extralegal powers: an extralegal system of consultations between police and publishers (27–29), bannings that continued irrespective even of a not guilty court verdict (24), and the Great Court of Cassation's holding that the government's authority to ban predated its formalization within positive law (22). The extralegal and indeed extraconstitutional character of the Meiji State in turn derived from the association of the state with the emperor himself, whose authority predated and exceeded the state's: the emperor putatively bestowed the Constitution as a gift, in which, according to Maki, the three branches of government were treated "as

if they were three aspects of the unitary imperial sovereign power." Maki, xvi. From this same imperial fount flowed both extralegal powers and the coloring of state paternalism over obscenity as imperial paternalism.

44 *Chatterley*, 3, emphasis added.

45 Typically this is phrased in reverse in free speech cases: a state is seen either to uphold the citizen's constitutional right to free speech in a given instance or sets limits upon this right. To keep clear the consequences for the practice of state authority whose implications are set forth above, I would prefer to examine it the other way around, in terms of the state's rights and its self-imposed limits (and decisions to disregard or abrogate such limits).

46 Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, 112.

47 Ibid., 114–15.

48 Satō Tatsuo Papers, National Diet Library, number 601 (RM215.2.P6, RM215.1.P5).

49 Satō became the de facto principal negotiator for the Japanese government when Minister of State Matsumoto Jōji fled the acrimonious atmosphere. See also Koseki, *Court and Constitution in Japan*, 116; Satō Tatsuo Papers, National Diet Library, number 601 (RM214.2.P4).

50 Satō, "Nihon kenpō seiritsushi," 46–47, quoted in Koseki, *Court and Constitution in Japan*, 120, emphasis added.

51 Charles L. Kades, interview by Dale Hellegers, 1973, Prange Collection, Kades Papers, University of Maryland at College Park, McKeldin Library, Part B (RM221.SP80CLK), emphasis added.

52 Ibid. (RM221.SP82CLK). The issue appears to have resurfaced during discussions on April 2, 1946; the draft memorandum of April 6 on the meeting records, "After discussion [of Chapter III, Article 21], during which the operation of the similar provision in the U.S. Bill of Rights was discussed, the Japanese came to the decision that it was unnecessary to insert any saving clause to permit censorship of obscene publications, etc." Alfred Hussey Papers, University of Michigan Library, Microfilm reel 5, 28-A-4–1 (RM262.PB).

53 *Murakami v. Japan*, 1947 (re) No. 19, Supreme Court Grand Bench decision of March 18, 1948, 2 *Sai-han Keishū* 191. This case is cited in *Chatterley*; see Itō, "The Rule of Law," 227n61.

54 1948 (re) No. 1308, 3 *Sai-han Keishū* 839. *Takahashi* is discussed at length in Itō, "The Rule of Law," 229–30.

55 Itō, "The Rule of Law," 229.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., 229–30.

58 Maki, *Court and Constitution in Japan*, 123.

59 Ibid., 124.

60 These articles speak to freely choosing and changing one's residence and the right to property, but "in conformity with the public welfare."

61 See Itō, "The Rule of Law," 227n61, for the complete citation list, including *Takahashi* and *Murakami*.
62 Hidaka, *Sengoshiryō*, 169, translation mine, emphasis added.
63 *de Sade*, 186, emphasis added.
64 As asserted in *Chatterley*. See *Chatterley* court decision reprinted in Hidaka, *Sengoshiryō*, 168.
65 Itō, "The Rule of Law," 221–22, emphasis added.
66 Ienaga, *Saiban hihan*, 128, quoted in Johnson, *Conspiracy at Matsukawa*, 262, emphasis added.

2. The Occupation

1 The draft provision held, "All forms of expression other than speech and press shall be accorded the same essential freedom, but legal measures for the suppression of indecent or degrading literature, plays, moving pictures, radio broadcasts, and exhibitions shall be permissible for the protection of youth and the maintenance of high public standards." Draft Civil Rights Articles, SCAP-GS, in Hussey Papers, reprinted in Congressional Information Service, *Framing the Constitution of Japan: Primary Sources in English, 1944–1949* (microfilm by University Press of America for CIS; Bethesda, Md., 1989), 3-b-209 (RM173.ART34.P134). Of course, SCAP censorship would continue unabated under the new Constitution, regardless—including the censorship of the very existence of Occupation censorship.
2 Ruth Ellerman, "Second Meeting of the Steering Committee with Committee on Civil Rights (original draft)," February 9, 1946, in Takayanagi, Ōtomo, and Tanaka, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 208–16 (RM174.P55).
3 The second part of the provision read, "This freedom shall not be interpreted to permit slander, black-mail, libel, the deliberate spreading of falsehoods or malicious rumors, nor the deliberate excitation of hatred against any law-abiding group, nor the wanton incitement of disturbance or violence. All persons shall be held accountable for the consequences of their words or actions." Draft Civil Rights Articles, SCAP-GS, art. 14, para. 2 (RM173.ART14.P2). For the text of the article as submitted to the Japanese Cabinet on February 13, 1946, see "(Draft) [as submitted to the Japanese government by the General Headquarters, SCAP, on February 13, 1946] CONSTITUTION OF JAPAN," art. 20, para. 1, in Takayanagi, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 266–303 (RM189.ART20.P1).
4 Milo Rowell, "Report of Preliminary Studies and Recommendations of Japanese Constitution," December 6, 1945, in Takayanagi, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 6 (RM132.ANNEXA.2.P1), emphasis added.
5 Article 57 provided, "The Judicature shall be exercised by the Courts of Law according to law, in the name of the emperor." MEIJI CONST. [Meiji Kenpō] art. 57, para. 1 (RM005.ART57.P1). Rowell's review of Kenpō Kenkyūkai's draft Consti-

tution on January 11, 1946, specifically recommends this power for the courts. See Rowell, "Memo: Comments on Constitutional Revisions Proposed by Private Group," in Takayanagi, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 32 (RM102.8.P1). He was ultimately well able to enact these goals: in addition to his position on the Steering Committee, Rowell served on the subcommittee which drafted the judiciary provisions. See Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 277.

6 "Summary Report on Meeting of the Government Section," February 4, 1946, Kades Papers, Prange Collection (RM144.0.P1). The term is by Col. Charles Kades in his edits to General Whitney's instructions to Government Section, charging them to form a "Constitutional Convention" for the next week (February 4, 1946).

7 Of paramount concern was the Soviet Union, whose input in forging a postwar Japanese Constitution was definitely to be avoided.

8 See Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 274–76, 279–81; Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 362–64, 375–79. In the event, this meant protecting both the imperial institution and Hirohito himself, who had been under pressure to abdicate. See Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 545, 605–7; Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, especially 320–29; Takemae, *Inside GHQ,* 204, 216–17, 258–60, 280–84, 519.

9 "Summary Report on Meeting of the Government Section," February 4, 1946, Secret, in Takayanagi, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 102; Kades notes to ibid., in Kades Papers; "[Three basic points stated by Supreme Commander to be 'musts' in constitutional revision]," SCAP Files of Commander Alfred R. Hussey, Document No. 5, NDL (RM143.1.1.P0, RM144.0.P1., RM141.1.P1, RM144.1.P1, RM143.1.1.P1, RM142.1).

10 Kades, Rowell, and Hussey, "Record of Events," in Takayanagi, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 320–36 (RM191.P3).

11 Ibid., 322 (RM191.P2.Q1.P1).

12 Ibid., 327–28 (RM191.P11.Q1.P2). This position was later reiterated by Kades in a discussion with Minister of State Kanamori in July over language introduced during the Diet debates that apparently reintroduced premises of the Matsumoto draft. See Satō Tatsuo, "Memorandum," July 17, 1946, Satō Tatsuo papers, NDL (RM358.SP1.P1).

13 See Harootunian's discussion of Hirohito's "recovered memory" in "Hirohito Redux," 616–19.

14 Kades, Rowell, and Hussey, "Record of Events" (RM191.P16.Q1.P1).

15 Ibid., 328 (RM191.P11.Q1.P4), emphasis added.

16 Ibid., 334 (RM191.P18). See also Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 375.

17 Ibid. (RM191.P18.Q1.P1).

18 Ibid., 324 (RM191.P5). While this was an unsubtle threat, it was a symbolically complex statement nonetheless. See Igarashi, "The Bomb, Hirohito, and History," in *Bodies of Memory*, 19–46, on the conflation of MacArthur, the emperor, sun imagery, and the atomic bomb—and its consequences for historical emplotment.

19 Ultimately the FEC had little power over American wishes, and there was precious little power sharing. It made a convenient threat nonetheless. See Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 96–99.

20 Letter from Whitney to Shirasu Jirō, February 16, 1946, SCAP Files of Commander Alfred R. Hussey, Doc. No. 16, NDL (RM193.P7).

21 Whitney, "Memorandum for the Record," February 18, 1946, Top Secret, in Takayanagi, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 370 (RM196.P4.Q2.P1).

22 As conveyed by Matsumoto on February 22, 1946. Matsumoto, "Kaikenki" ([Sangatsu muika happyō kenpō kaisei sōan yōkō] no uchi), Irie Toshio Papers: 15, NDL (RM201.SP1). Matsumoto renders these terms as *konponshugi*, glossed as *fandamentaru purinshiparu*, or "fundamental principles" (though more normally "fundamentalism"), and *konpon keitai*, glossed as *bēshikku fōmusu*, or "basic forms."

23 According to Ashida Hitoshi's diary entry. Ashida, *Ashida Hitoshi Nikki vol. 1*, 76–77 (RM198.P5).

24 Ibid., 78 (RM200.P1.Q2.P1). The Australian's list of one hundred possible war criminal indictees included Emperor Hirohito. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 592.

25 Ibid., 78 (RM200.P1.Q2.P2–3).

26 For similar reasons, Allied propaganda before the end of the war had stressed the emperor's innocence and manipulation by "militarists"—the very script by which the war crimes trials would be conducted, with Japanese governmental cooperation. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 281–86. This is not to deny, however, that a diversity of separable interests were combined in this perspective, including the business and government interests that would become the "Japan lobby," MacArthur and his own imperatives, and the like.

27 Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), *Summation of Non-military Activities in Japan and Korea*, 35. The language here for MacArthur's achievement interestingly echoes Truman's public announcement of the Manhattan Project on the day of the Hiroshima atomic bombing, August 6, 1945, which he described as "the greatest scientific gamble in history."

28 Ibid., 154.

29 MacArthur to Eisenhower, Secret, Priority, January 25, 1946, *FRUS* (1946), vol. 8, 396 (RM054.P2). Richard B. Finn indicates that the message was drafted by MacArthur's acting chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Richard J. Marshall, but bearing "traces of the thinking of MacArthur's psychological warfare expert, Brig. Gen. Bonner F. Fellers, about the role of the emperor." Finn, *Winners in Peace*, 72, 337n26.

30 Perhaps this is why MacArthur was seemingly unable, or unwilling, to make a distinction between the institution of the emperor and its current occupant, even in the context of discussions in the Japanese press's calling on Hirohito to abdicate the throne. The existence of discussions of abdication even within the imperial family was revealed the following month in an article in the *Yomiuri Hōchi*. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 320–24; Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 572.

31 MacArthur to Eisenhower, Secret, Priority, January 25, 1946, *FRUS* (1946), vol. 8, 396 (RM054.P3).

32 Ibid. (RM054.P3). See discussion of this document in Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 324–25.

33 Fearey, Memo to State Department, February 11, 1946, in Congressional Information Service, *Framing the Constitution of Japan*, 1-c-36 (RM117.2.P6), emphasis added. The memo's date, ironically, is Kigensetsu, the national holiday commemorating the beginning of nation and history with the ascension of the first emperor and divine progenitor, Jimmu.

34 Michael Schaller notes, for example, that at war's end "some ten *zaibatsu* families controlled nearly three-fourths of Japan's industrial, commercial, and financial resources." These *zaibatsu*, giant conglomerates or monopolies, in the words of the Edwards report of 1946, were "among the 'groups principally responsible for the war and . . . a principal factor in the Japanese war potential.'" See Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 39; see 29–41, 108–20 for his account of the half-hearted, partial attempts at *zaibatsu* dissolution and the effective preservation of this huge concentration of wealth after the war.

35 Fearey, Memo to State Department, February 11, 1946, in Congressional Information Service, *Framing the Constitution of Japan*, 1-c-36 (RM117.2.P9). Fearey had in fact been personal secretary to the "dean" of the Japan Crowd, former ambassador Joseph C. Grew. He was also a prime mover in pushing a program of agrarian reform for the purpose of undercutting radical movements in Japan. See Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 151, 203, 340–41.

36 As Schaller puts it (partially quoting John Maki, a former Government Section member), "Whether or not MacArthur and the United States had intended it, their actions had 'created an identity of interest between the Occupation and the government'" (*The American Occupation of Japan*, 46).

37 As Bix and Dower both argue, shielding the emperor included the continued, careful orchestration of war crimes trial indictments and testimony to avoid implicating Hirohito—a joint project of GHQ and the Japanese government. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 325–27; Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 582–618. Harootunian refers to these pronouncements of innocence as Hirohito's "recovered memories" ("Hirohito Redux," 616). "Shokuryō mēdē" was the popular name for the Hanmaikakutoku jinmin taikai demonstrations of May 19, 1946. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 262–64; George Atcheson Jr., Dispatch No. 453, "Demonstrations and Growing Tendency towards Violence in Japan," Enclosure No. 4, "Summaries of 20 Incidents in Japan involving violence or threatened violence (September 12, 1945 to May 19, 1946)," in 740.00119/6–1046, Box 3804, Office of the Department of State, Central Decimal Files, 1945–49, stack location 250/36/23/04. Most newspapers estimated that some 250,000 participated in the demonstrations. Dower notes that the irreverent, critical tone of the protests was in turn subverted in the adoption on May 19 of formal petitions entreating the emperor's aid in respectful language. Nosaka Sanzō of the Com-

munist Party had appeared on stage to specifically recommend such a course during the demonstration. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 263–64. The vast majority of people were hungry and threatened constantly with starvation at the time; in fact a municipal court judge willfully starved himself to death in November 1947 by refusing to supplement his ration with black market foodstuffs (a moral decision not to pass judgment hypocritically on others for this ubiquitous crime). Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 90–97, 99–100.

38 One eyewitness, Mark Gayn, reports that by April 7 demonstrations were "so commonplace they no longer make news" (*Japan Diary*, 164). May Day featured huge turnouts; according to official police estimates—generally assumed to be well short of actual totals—over 1.25 million people took part nationwide. In Tokyo perhaps half a million jubilant participants flooded the Imperial Plaza. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 261.

39 Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 197. Tokuda was one of the over 65,000 Japanese arrested by the "thought police" or Special Higher Police (Tokubetsu kōtō keisatsu, or Tokkō) under the Peace Preservation Laws; he survived eighteen years in prison before his release on October 10, 1945. Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 296.

40 See Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 229–30.

41 The prosecution, defense team, the Imperial Household, GHQ, and the Japanese government all participated in this effort to protect the emperor.

42 Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 265–66. Though the law was revoked in October 1945, and though there was a similar imperial amnesty in December of that year, those convicted under its provisions retained their criminal records. See Matsumura, *More Than a Momentary Nightmare*, 150. As Dower notes, contrary to the tone of MacArthur's pronouncement, the Occupation's confidential intelligence summation "stated that '[d]espite the large number of demonstrations the Home Ministry reported a complete absence of mob violence or disorder throughout Japan'" (*Embracing Defeat*, 594, n15).

43 Quoted in Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 265–66. As Dower points out, it appears to have been instrumental in the successful formation of the Yoshida Shigeru cabinet.

44 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 316.

45 Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 266; Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 315; Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 217–18. Dower describes this characterization as a "cavalier, contemptuous, and soon-to-be conventional dismissal of any serious radical expression." Gayn reports that the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section had in fact closely examined the document and indicated "no possibility" of foreign origin—in contrast to the language of the new Constitution. Such slanders were far from uncommon and, as Gayn notes, made little sense, particularly considering the participation of aggressively anticommunist, right-wing Socialists in the protests. Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 199.

46 Rancière, *Disagreement*, 29–30.

47 "Shōsho / Kokutai wa goji sareta zo / Chin wa *tarafuku* kutte iru zo / Nanji jinmin

uete shine / Gyomeigyoji." Occupation documents translate this as, "Imperial rescript: The polity of our country has been maintained. We are fed to our stomach's full satisfaction. Ye subjects, die of hunger. Sealed and signed, Hirohito." See "Reasons for Jokoku [*sic*] Appeal by Defense Counsel Fuse Tatsuji for the accused Matsushima Matsutarō," undated translation, in "Index to Case Files to Liquidation of Takeda City Nagakai" folder, Box 1463, "SCAP, Legal Section, Legislation and Justice Division, Case Files 1947–1951," RG 331, National Archives, College Park, Md. (hereafter NACP), and "Concerning Lese-Majeste," Ministry of Justice, undated attachment to September 18, 1946, "Memorandum," Alfred C. Oppler (Division Head), "Lese Majeste" folder, Box 1497, "SCAP, Legal Section, Legislation and Justice Division, General Alphabetical File, 1946–1952, Land Registration to Petition," RG 331, NACP. The above-referenced Ministry of Justice's submission to SCAP on the matter notes too that the placard's reverse also contained the attribution, "Tanaka Seiki cell of the Japan Communist Party." The above files document SCAP's careful observation of these events and court proceedings. Matsushima did not go so far as to forge an imperial sign and seal, but instead wrote out the last line ("Imperial sign and seal") in *katakana* characters. The reverse of the placards read, "Why must we starve no matter how much we work? Answer, Emperor Hirohito!" Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 565n17, translation slightly modified.

48 Alfred C. Oppler, "Memorandum for the Chief, Governmental Powers Division," October 22, 1946, in "Lese Majeste" folder, NACP.

49 Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 267. The delay added to the ambiguity of otherwise seemingly clear signals such as MacArthur's commending the Japanese government for dropping lèse-majesté charges in a case against the editors of the Japan Communist Party organ, *Akahata*, on October 9, 1946. See RM487, and below.

50 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 243, 389–90. David Conde, head of the Motion Picture Division, was involved in the labor dispute at Toho Educational Film Co. Ltd. and left his position to become a Reuters reporter. After another conflict with General Willoughby, he was removed from Japan. A CI&E Information Division, Administrative Branch document on the labor dispute (broken up by three thousand police in 1948) states that Conde was an American Communist Party member and co-conspirator and alleges that the film company facilitated North Korean spying. Factually inaccurate about even the dates of Conde's work in SCAP, it remains a testament to the fate of many of the more reform-minded. See "Present Condition of Toho Educational Film Co. Ltd.," undated memo, in "CI 1950 A-V Information G-22" folder, Box 5227, "SCAP CI&E Information Division, Administrative Branch, Decimal File 1947–50, Press Release to Radio," RG 331, NACP.

51 For discussion of popular indifference, rumors, and rude jokes directed toward the emperor ca. late 1945, see Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 302–8.

52 The preamble states: "Having, by virtue of the glories of Our Ancestors, ascended

the Throne of a lineal succession unbroken for ages eternal; desiring to promote the welfare of, and to give development to the moral and intellectual faculties of Our beloved subjects, the very same that have been favored with the benevolent care and affectionate vigilance of Our Ancestors; and hoping to maintain the prosperity of the State, in concert with Our people and with their support, We hereby promulgate, in pursuance of Our Imperial Rescript of the 12th day of the 10th month of the 14th year of Meiji, a fundamental law of State, to exhibit the principles, by which We are to be guided in Our conduct, and to point out to what Our descendants and Our subjects and their descendants are forever to conform. MEIJI CONST" [Meiji Kenpō] preamble, para.1 (RM005.PRE.P1).

53 Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 267. See also Tanaka, Nomura, and Satō, *Sengo seiji saiban shiroku*, 73–96. The Supreme Court held that the court of second instance had illegally disregarded the amnesty by holding a hearing, but since it ultimately had dismissed the charges (because of the amnesty) even while finding the defendant guilty, its decision had "in the end" been correct; thus the Supreme Court rejected the appeal (89).

54 Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*, 164. The promulgation had also been celebrated with direct gifts of money to the elderly.

55 The Supreme Court held that since the amnesty had voided the right of prosecution (*kōsoken*) the case could only be dismissed, and no appeal could be considered—specifically, the defendant's appeal of his conviction. See ibid., 74.

56 Alfred C. Oppler, "Memorandum for the Chief, Governmental Powers Division."

57 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 160, 171–72.

58 Ibid., 172.

59 See Haley, *The Spirit of Japanese Law*, 71, 221; Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, 228–32. The other major changes to the Criminal Code were the revision of wartime laws, "those provisions predicated upon the right of the state to fight the enemy, of the provision relating to crimes concerning foreign aggression," and the abolition of the article criminalizing adultery by a wife (but not by a husband). *Outline of Criminal Justice in Japan*, 7.

60 These included Kumazawa Hiromichi, alleged heir to the Southern Dynasty, the legitimate imperial line (against Hirohito's Northern Line); Tokuda Kyūichi of the Japanese Communist Party, and the editors of *Akahata*, *Minshū*, and *Jimmin Shinbun*.

61 SCAP, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948*, 759 (RM487.P1.Q1.P1).

62 Ibid. (RM487.P1.Q1.P2–3).

63 Ibid. (RM487.P1.Q1.P3). Indeed with lèse-majesté statutes—with death penalty provisions—remaining on the books, this imperial permission was more than mere encouragement.

64 Ibid. (RM487.P1.Q1.P4).

65 SCAP No. Z-22117, cited in "Section II: Counter Intelligence," in USAF, Pacific

Military Intelligence Section, General Staff, Civil Intelligence Section's *Periodical Summary*: *Civil Censorship, Counter Intelligence, Public Safety Summation* 5, 68, reprinted in Kawashima, *Senryōgunjian*.

66 Alfred C. Oppler, "Memorandum for the Chief, Government Section," December 11, 1946, in "Lese Majeste" folder, NACP.

67 SCAP, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948*, 679–80 (RM506–7), for the texts of the letters. They are also included in the "Lese Majeste" folder, NACP.

68 SCAP, *Political Reorientation of Japan, September 1945 to September 1948*, 679–80, and "Conference in Government Section on 23 September 1947," in "Lese Majeste" folder, NACP. Kades tells two Diet representatives, the chairmen of the Judicial Affairs Committee and the Legislative Bureau, to reject the proposed legislation "unconditionally" as unconstitutional.

69 "Article 4 is GHQ's demand." *Kizokuin, Teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiin shōiinkai, Teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiin shōiinkai hikki yōshi* (Summary Notes of the Subcommittee of the Special Committee of the Draft Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 1, September 28, 1946, p. 2 (RM473.1.AM.SP8.P2). Kanamori candidly revealed the origins of many of the articles during the secret House of Peers subcommittee, according to the Summary Notes (first made public in 1996).

70 See Meeting of General Whitney, Colonel Kades, Commander Hussey, Lt. Col. Rowell with Dr. Matsumoto, Mr. Yoshida and Mr. Shirasu, February 22, 1946, SCAP Files of Commander Alfred R. Hussey, Doc. No. 20, NDL (RM203.2.SP1–6). This dissimulation was carefully followed in Diet debates. See, for example, Nosaka Sanzō's exchange with the Speaker, who begs for silence amid outcries over his comparisons of the "Japanese version" and "English version" of the draft Constitution, *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 8, June 28, 1946, p. 12 (RM322.AMPM.SP59).

71 Foreign Minister Yoshida again stressed the need for secrecy in the discussions. See Meeting of General Whitney, Colonel Kades, Commander Hussey, Lt. Col. Rowell with Dr. Matsumoto, Mr. Yoshida, and Mr. Shirasu (RM203.8.SP13.P1).

72 MEIJI CONST. [Meiji Kenpō] preamble, para. 2 (RM005.PRE.P2).

73 This meeting included General Whitney, Colonel Kades, Commander Alfred R. Hussey, and Colonel Rowell.

74 Meeting of General Whitney, Colonel Kades, Commander Hussey, and Lieutenant Colonel Rowell with Dr. Matsumoto, Mr. Yoshida, and Mr. Shirasu (RM203.2.SP6-RM203.2.SP8).

75 Ibid. (RM203.1.SP9.P1). The Japanese government concurred in this interpretation in their presentations in the Diet; see, for example, RM333.AM.SP3.

76 Ibid. (RM203.2.SP10–11). A much briefer recollection of the meeting is recorded in Irie Toshio's documents, in this case apparently from notes taken by Matsumoto himself. Matsumoto, "Kaikenki," Irie Toshio Papers: 15, NDL.

77 Ambassador Chu Shih-Ming to Acheson, October 25, 1946, in Box 2088, RG 331, NACP (RM493.P1).

78 See Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 563.

79 Comment from Allied Missions on New Japanese Constitution. G-2, in Box 2088, RG 331, NACP (RM495).

80 See Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 98.

81 Ibid., 69. Inoue analyzes the American draft as by contrast having an "inconsistent or ambiguous illocutionary force" (81, 102–3) arising from confusion over who was enjoining whom from what within the context of its drafting. Although Inoue's linguistic analyses are often insightful, I take strong issue with her frequent recourse to culturalisms (e.g., in formulations such as "The Japanese") and ahistorical assumptions about the state of popular support for the government's position on the emperor (see 188–89, 192–93). Thus she ignores the role of both the Occupation and the Japanese government in creating the fiction of a powerless, innocent, manipulated emperor and stifling criticism. Similarly she repeats this gesture by rejecting criticism of the imperial institution as "un-Japanese." For example, Nosaka Sanzō, the Communist Party leader who had in fact softened the Party position on the emperor, is described as expressing "a very un-Japanese minority opinion" when he questions the government's stance that the monarchy "is rooted in the feelings of the people" as a "new theory of divine right" (195–96). At the core of this is perhaps her acceptance of the notion of the emperor as a figure of peace: "Had [the Occupation] properly understood the emperor's position, they might have insisted that the emperor have the power to give or withhold consent [to the wishes of the Cabinet], *since it was the unchecked power of the Cabinet that had led the nation into war*" (171, emphasis added).

82 Ibid., 103.

83 Ibid.

84 See Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, 122, 179–81. Inoue notes that the original translation of the Occupation's draft by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rendered "people" as *jinmin* (*MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 189). As Dower notes, *jinmin* had been the typical term used to translate such uses in documents like the U.S. Constitution (*Embracing Defeat*, 381). Though not the exclusive province of the leftist parties, the word typically referred to those outside of governance, and was thus available to imply resistance to, as well as separation from, that authority. It was subsequently replaced in drafts as *kokumin*, a term that conflates nation and people, and indeed prioritizes national consciousness and patriotism (*Japan's Modern Myths*, 23); *kokumin* might perhaps best be rendered as "nationals." It also retains none of the sense of separation from authority inherent in *jinmin*. Inoue suggests that the significance of the choice of term seems to have eluded Occupation officials, despite other concerns over the expression of popular sovereignty (*MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 208). Kanamori's brief remark, recorded in the Summary Notes of the secret House of Peers subcommittee, that "GHQ finds this [Article 10] acceptable be-

cause it is 'harmless,'" in fact suggests that the significance of this oversight was appreciated at the time. *Kizokuin, Teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiin shōiinkai, Teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiin shōiinkai hikki yōshi* (Summary Notes of the Subcommittee of the Special Committee of the Draft Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 1, September 28, 1946, p. 2 (RM473.1.PM.SP1.P2).

85 See, for example, *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 8, June 28, 1946, p. 27; ibid., July 1, 1946, p. 12; ibid., July 3, p. 7, 9 (RM322.AMPM.SP10.P2, RM325.PM.SP35.P1–3, RM329.AM.SP26–8, RM329.AM.SP39.P2). By August 1946 Kanamori's rhetoric appears to have taken this point as a basic assumption, requiring no separate argumentation; see *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 23, August 26, 1946, p. 21 (RM421.PM.SP5). As Inoue points out, the emperor was tendentiously included within *shuken zaimin* by reading the *min* of *zaimin* as standing for *kokumin* (*MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 214–17, 219).

86 Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 191. Inoue's analysis here is drawn from accounts by Satō Tatsuo, then of the Bureau of Legislation.

87 See Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 194–205. Inoue notes Nanbara Shigeru's disparagement of the government's linguistic sleight-of-hand in claiming that "unlike [the idea of] popular sovereignty universally accepted in the world, the Japanese idea of sovereignty has not changed, and that it resides in the people including the emperor" (204).

88 The official translation: "Article I. The emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power." See JAPAN CONST. [Kenpō], art. 1. Inoue renders it as "The emperor is the Symbol of the State and the unity of the People, and this position is founded on the will of the People, in whom sovereignty resides" (*MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 212).

89 Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 552.

90 Harootunian, "Hirohito Redux," 628, 630.

91 Yamada Hisatoshi, Memo, August 5, 1946, Satō Tatsuo Papers, NDL (RM390.3.P1.11). Kades purportedly stated GHQ's concern that by the terms of the proposed revision, "there is a danger that including in the private profits of the Imperial Household their huge bond holdings would make it into a zaibatsu" (RM393.P5.22).

92 Irie, *Nihonkoku kenpō seiritsu no keii*, 372 (RM393.P1.Q1.P1). See also Review of Subcommittee Revisions, Memo for Record, August 6, 1946, Satō Toshio Papers, NDL (RM392.5.P1.Q1.P2).

93 Ibid. (RM392.5.P3).

94 Ibid. (RM392.5.P1.Q1.P2).

95 Harootunian, "Hirohito Redux," 627.

96 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Pro-

ceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 10, July 11, 1946, p. 5 (RM342.PM.SP21.P2).

97 The theoretical incoherence of this position (whereby the emperor ultimately symbolizes himself) was pointed out in the Diet debates, in commentary passed over by Kanamori. See, for example, *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 4, July 3, 1946, p. 7 (RM329.AM.SP27.P1); *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers Special Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 6, September 6, 1946, p. 8 (RM439.AM.SP31.P1); Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 197–98.

98 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers Special Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 10, September 11, 1946, p. 13 (RM448.PM.SP54.P2).

99 Ibid., p. 20 (RM448.PM.SP55.P2). See also ibid., p. 12 (RM448.PM.SP50.P3).

100 "State" here should be understood as referring to the notion of a continuous "state" of Japan stretching back through history.

101 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 26, August 29, 1946, p. 13 (RM428.PM.SP2.P21).

102 "Shōchō no honshitsu wa tennō wo tsūjite nihon no sugata wo miru koto ga dekiru." From point 3 of "Kanamori roku gensoku" (Minister Kanamori's Six Principles on Constitutional Reform), recording a summary of points from Kanamori's meeting with Colonel Kades on July 17, 1946. In this meeting, Kanamori attempted to alleviate Kades's concerns that his recent assertions about the new Constitution not changing the "national essence" (*kokutai*) might lay the groundwork for maintaining an unchanged imperial, chauvinistic, authoritarian sovereignty. The official translation renders *sugata* as "picture," but "figure" I think more accurately captures the body, form, and appearance-related implications of the term. The original Japanese memo and the accompanying (and rather loose) English translation are available online at http://www.ndl.go.jp.

103 See Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, especially 509–10, 523.

104 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 26, August 29, 1946, p. 13 (RM428.PM.SP2.P21). The nightingale's (*uguisu*) association with spring is a poetic convention; it is a *kigo*, one of the words marking a spring setting in traditional Japanese poetry. Such words, collected in poetry almanacs (*saijiki*), are thought to be part of the key unification of the poet's intention and affectivity with nature through the word; they also mark seasonal repetition and thus reference timelessness. Kanamori's reference invokes a deep nativist poetic ideal and ideology.

105 See Harootunian, "Hirohito Redux," 627–32. Harootunian points out that sub-

sequent revelations about Hirohito's wealth prompted calls from the Right for his abdication, as it tainted him with another, real abstraction: the commodity form.

106 Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 560–61.

107 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 7, July 6, 1946, p. 2 (RM333.AM.SP3.P1).

108 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers Special Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 6, September 6, 1946, p. 4 (RM439.AM.SP28.P3). Kanamori distinguished emperor-based *kokutai* as "primary or fundamental concept" from "the political structure built upon it" in the name of better reflecting historical realities, namely the long centuries in which emperors were effectively displaced from rule. This distinction might also, he argued, protect the emperor from "exploitation" and political threat (as the official version of war responsibility would have it). Ibid., p. 5 (RM439.AM.SP28.P9).

109 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 11, July 12, 1946, p. 19 (RM346.PM.SP69.P2), emphasis added.

110 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiin shōiinkai, Teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiin shōiinkai hikki yōshi* (Summary Notes of the Subcommittee of the Special Committee of the Draft Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 1, September 28, 1946, p. 2 (RM473.1.AM.SP8.P2).

111 See Yamada Hisatoshi, Memo, August 5, 1946, Satō Tatsuo Papers, NDL (RM390.2.P1.22, RM390.4.P2-P3.33, RM390.5.6.P0-P44).

112 Others recognized this situation at the time. As Inoue notes, in September 1946, the Tokyo University Anglo-American legal authority, jurist, House of Peers member, and defense counsel in the Tokyo Tribunal of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, Takayanagi Kenzō, offered the interpretation that in the draft Constitution, "it is not the case that the emperor has no connection with the government. He formally participates in legislative, executive, judicial, and diplomatic affairs. The emperor promulgates amendments to the Constitution, laws, cabinet orders, and treaties. In other words, enactment requires the emperor's promulgation." The requirements for "advice and approval" in all of these acts in another sense ultimately reinforced the power of his claim as concrete symbol of the people's unity: "All the people have become the advisory organ [*hoyoku kikan*], rather than a handful of individuals" (quoted in Inoue, *MacArthur's Japanese Constitution*, 178–79). Takayanagi would later chair the 1957–65 special Cabinet Commission on the Constitution.

113 Kanamori explained: "In order further to enrich this Imperial status, appropriate functions, not too many and not too few, have been ascribed to the Imperial position, as shown in the amendments bill, every pain being taken to eliminate

all possibilities of the emperor's virtues being prejudiced, or the conduct of State affairs placed in an undesirable light owing to some untoward occurrence. . . . Viewing it from all angles and with an impartial eye, the *new emperor system* is characterized by the fact that it is quite well-grounded theoretically; [it] properly respects national sentiment, and is calculated to eradicate such a political system as nearly brought us to utter destruction and to protect us from such" (*Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* [Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet], August 29, 1946, p. 13 [RM428.PM.SP2.P20, emphasis added]).

114 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 11, July 12, 1946, p. 3 (RM346.AM.SP15, emphasis added). Kanamori repeated this claim in his October commentary on the Constitution, stating, "what should be called national polity [*kokutai*] in Japan lies mainly in the proposition that the people are united, with the Emperor as nucleus, and the State is formed on this basis." Appendix 6, "Commentary of Minister of State Tokujirō Kanamori on the Constitution," History of the Nonmilitary Activities of the Occupation of Japan, 1945 through December 1951, [vol. 7] Constitutional Revision, HNA-1 Roll No. 2, NDL.

115 See, for example, *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 5, June 25, 1946, p. 12; no. 2, July 1, 1946, p. 1–4; *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 6, July 5, 1946, p. 3; no. 7, July 6, 1946, p. 2; no. 9, July 9, 1946, p. 2; no. 10, July 11, 1946, p. 8; *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers Special Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 6, September 6, 1946, p. 4–5 (RM317.PM.SP11.P6, RM325.PM.SP4.P21, RM330.AM.SP11.P1, RM333.AM.SP3.P1, RM337.AM.SP17.P1, RM342.PM.SP41, RM439.AM.SP28.P6–9).

116 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 8, June 28, 1946, pp. 12–13 (RM322.AMPM.SP64.P1, RM322.AMPM.SP66.P5–6).

117 Bix discusses a variety of examples in which these and other practices manifested emperor ideology in practice (*Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 632–34).

118 The celebrations six months later, on May 3, 1947 (when the new Constitution came into effect), were so marked by the imperial presence that Hirohito's youngest brother, Prince Mikasa, wrote a public critique. As Dower relates, the prince objected to the emperor's entrance with full fanfare (and three *Tennō Heika Banzai* calls led by Prime Minister Yoshida) and to the continued use of honorifics reserved for the imperial family—all more appropriate to an enthronement cere-

mony. Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 401–2. Dower finds the prince's comments "droll and iconoclastic," but Mikasa had been one of the many voices in early March 1946 calling for Hirohito to take responsibility and perhaps abdicate the throne. Bix suggests that such familial pressure had helped finally secure the emperor's acceptance of SCAP's draft Constitution. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 571–72.

119 (Draft) Constitution of Japan, February 12, 1946, SCAP Files of Commander Alfred R. Hussey, Doc. No. 12, NDL (RM189.ART11.P1-ART12.P1), emphasis added.

120 Dale M. Hellegers views the reduction of the terms to "public welfare" as examples of a number of editorial interventions to improve "clarity and ease of interpretation," with the public welfare language "occasionally undercutting the original intent but usually improving clarity." Hellegers, *We, the Japanese People*, vol. 2, 541–42. Two reports by the U.S. State Department's Office of Research and Intelligence, however, took note of the language of Article 11 (future Article 12), warning, "Given the Japanese tradition of subordination of the individual *to whatever may be the current concept of the welfare of the state*, this provision might well become the justification for fairly severe restriction of freedom of speech, press, and association." Interestingly neither report appeared to know that the draft of the Constitution published on March 6 was the product of a joint SCAP–Japanese government editing marathon. See "Situation Report—Japan, Comments on Current Intelligence," Department of State, Office of Research and Intelligence, Division of Far East Intelligence, No. 3479.6, March 20, 1946, 7, and "The Problem of Civil Liberties in Japan," April 1, 1946, Department of State, Office of Research and Intelligence, No. 3440, 39, in OSS / State Department Intelligence and Research Reports, II, Postwar Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia, reel II, documents no. 23 and 24, emphasis added (both documents feature the quoted phrase in identical language).

121 See Ruth Ellerman, "Meeting of the Steering Committee with Committee on Civil Rights," February 8, 1946, in Takayanagi, *Nihonkoku Kenpō seitei no katei*, vol. 1, 196 (RM172.2.P1-RM172.2.P4) for the abandoned draft Article 4 discussion.

122 This issue was raised in the Diet debates as well, based on the desire to avoid the American "bitter experience" with this conflict. See *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), July 2, 1946, p. 4; *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* [Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet], no. 24, August 28, 1946, pp. 1–8 (RM326.AM.SP19.P2, RM423.AM.SP2.P28).

123 These translations form the core of the Moore and Robinson CD-ROM document collection (RMMETHOD.1.P6). The originals are available on microfiche: Congressional Information Service, *Framing the Constitution of Japan*. As Moore and Robinson note, some documents were made publicly available in Japanese only in 1995 (e.g., the records of the Privy Council deliberations) and some in 1996 in

either language (the Summary Notes of the House of Peers four secret subcommittee meetings, RM473).

124 Congressional Information Service, *Framing the Constitution of Japan*, 2-b-4 (RM295.PM.SP2.P1.I11-RM295.PM.SP3.P1.I22), emphasis added; *Sūmitsuin Iinkai Kiroku*, Irie Toshio Papers, Document 31, NDL. See also *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 9, July 9, 1946, p. 11 (RM337.AM.SP51). Irie served on the Supreme Court from 1953 until 1972.

125 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 8, June 28, 1946, p. 9 (RM322.AMPM.SP28.P2, emphasis added). See also p. 12.

126 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), July 2, 1946, p. 8 (RM326.PM.SP9.P1).

127 On academic freedom, see *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), July 16, 1946, p. 4–5 (RM352.PM.SP94). On freedom of religion, see ibid. (RM352.PM.SP41–42.P1); and *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 23, August 26, 1946, p. 11 (RM421.AM.SP6.P2). In the former, Kanamori asserts, "Inasmuch as it is unthinkable from its very nature that religion itself will conflict with other public welfare, I think it substantially approaches absolute freedom"—despite the immediately preceding history of the state's surveillance and suppression of any number of religious groups. On freedom of publication, see *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 3, July 2, 1946, p. 13 (RM349.PM.SP57.P3). On labor rights, see no. 16. July 18, 1946, p. 16 (RM360.PM.SP45.P1). On freedom of thought and speech, see *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 23, August 26, 1946, p. 11 (RM421.AM.SP6.P2).

128 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), July 2, 1946, p. 19 (RM349.PM.SP57.P3, emphasis added). See also *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin teikoku kenpō kaiseian tokubetsuiinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers Special Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 15, September 17, 1946, p. 10 (RM458.AM.SP67).

129 Interpellation in the sense of interrogatory or expansive commentary, not in an Althusserian sense; each commentator in the Diet offers an interpellation on the Constitution.

130 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai kizokuin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Peers in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 8, June 28, 1946, p. 21 (RM322.AMPM.SP64.P2, emphasis added). A similar question was posed, albeit more tentatively, by Representative Fujita Sakae of the Socialist Party: "Elimination of despotism of the majority party by utilizing freedom of speech depends solely on recognition as to whether or not such freedom is contrary to the public welfare." Kanamori replied that the Supreme Court would have final review on public welfare as a standard for censorship. *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), no. 9, July 9, 1946, pp. 10, 11 (RM337.AM.SP50, RM337.PM.SP5).

131 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin honkaigi kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet), no. 8, June 28, 1946, p. 15 RM322.AMPM.SP71.P11. Takemae notes that "conservatives outnumbered progressives by a ratio of seven to three" (*Inside GHQ*, 265).

132 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), July 12, 1946, p. 16 (RM346.PM.SP34.P1). On the old regime of police controls, see the précis in Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 296.

133 *Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin teikoku kenpō kaiseian iinkai kaigiroku* (Proceedings of the House of Representatives Committee on the Bill for Revision of the Imperial Constitution), July 12, 1946, p. 16 (RM346.PM.SP40.P1-RM346.PM.SP41.P1).

134 Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 264–65, emphasis added. See also SCAP, *Summation* (May 1946), 31.

135 As Bix notes, Hirohito appears to have been convinced by his own ideology on this point, remarking to MacArthur on several occasions during 1946 that "the Japanese people were like children" (*Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 623).

136 Ikeda, *Nihon shakai fukushi-shi*, 164. Ikeda sees this inherent in the very language of the Charter Oath (Gokajō no Goseimon) on April 7, 1868, the nation-founding act of the Meiji emperor, an address to Emperor Meiji's *kami* ancestors that was reproclaimed by Hirohito in his New Year's rescript of January 1, 1946 (the alleged, "Declaration of Humanity" codrafted and approved by SCAP). See *FRUS* (1946) vol. 8, 134–35 (RM.096).

137 See Ikeda, *Nihon shakai fukushi-shi*, 163–68.

138 Takahashi, *The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 44. This version of the family state ideology differed significantly from its Meiji predecessor in assigning a large role to mobilizing mothers in the service of the state. But if it is true that, as Yoshiko Miyake writes, the "Shōwa mother was regarded as the mother of the nation," the father was never in doubt. Miyake, "Doubling Expectations," 277.

139 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 407.

140 Mutsuko Takahashi notes that in this case, the idealism of the Occupation officials far exceeded the actual practice of such policy in the post–New Deal United States (*The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 58).

141 SCAPINs, 404 and 775, specifically; Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 406–7.

142 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 407.

143 Ibid. See also Takahashi, *The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 58; Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 77.

144 The later softening of some of the measures in this law in its revision of 1950 was in turn enabled by a less ominous material and political situation (from the perspective of the government).

145 Takahashi, *The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 60–61; Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 408.

146 Takahashi, *The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 61, Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 407–8.

147 Takahashi, *The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 60; Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 407.

148 Itō Shūhei, *Shakai hoshō-shi*, cited in Takahashi, *The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 61.

149 Takahashi, *The Emergence of Welfare Society in Japan*, 66. Article 25 provides, "All persons shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living. 2. In all spheres of life, the State shall use its endeavors for the promotion and extension of social welfare and security, and of public health." JAPAN CONST. [Kenpō], art. 25, para. 1. In a sense, the criticism of the emperor for failing to provide relief, or care about the welfare of his subjects, in the case of Matsushima and the placard incident, invokes an expectation of universal state obligation to its citizens—but does so by indicting the sovereign for a failure of compassion manifest in the concrete policies of the government. Thus while calling the emperor to account, it also reinvokes an expectation of imperial benevolence, albeit negatively. This too may be an aspect of the political (in the Rancière sense) demand for equality as discoursing subjects I discussed earlier.

150 This political content is elided by Lawrence W. Beer in favor of a culturalist approach to exploring the Supreme Court's "public welfare" rulings (e.g., "the group-oriented nature of Japanese sociopolitical life"). See Beer, "The Public Welfare Standard and Freedom of Expression in Japan," 205–38.

3. The Process of Art

1 Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives*, 4.

2 *Jōkoku* appeals allege that a lower court verdict violates or misinterprets a constitutional provision, or contravenes established Supreme Court precedent. See Maki, *Court and Constitution in Japan*, xxvi–xxvii; *Outline of Criminal Justice in Japan*, 43.

3 This interpretation renders practices into a field of "radically external" knowledge, semiotically organized but external (for the most part) to the knowledge, thoughts, and intentions of the actors. See Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, especially 24–26, 30–38, on the "as-if" structure of this ideological fantasy in practice. This approach comes with a number of benefits for interpretation: practically constituted, instantiated "beliefs" might be referred to as systems without entailing the usual problems posed by arguments for structures independent of practice.

4 Akasegawa Genpei, interview with author, October 18, 1997, Tamagawagakuen, Tokyo, Japan.

5 Kafka, *The Trial*, 4, emphasis added.

6 Ibid., xxv.

7 Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, 44.

8 Ibid., 37.

9 Given the notoriously low acquittal rate (less than 0.01 percent for 1966, according to the 1970 White Paper on Crime (Hōmu Sōgō Kenkyūjo, *Hanzai hakusho*), the Kafka analogy seems especially apt, reflecting the reality of what one retiring criminal court justice, Ishimatsu Takeo, called the "empty shell" of public trials, in which "the proceedings in open court are merely a formal ceremony" confirming the indictment and the investigator's fact finding. While Ishimatsu noted efforts during the 1960s to "strengthen fact-finding in court" in an attempt to make the trial more than a mere "receipt of investigation documents," Akasegawa's case suggests a particular pedagogical, policing dimension to such "formal ceremonies," and what Daniel H. Foote has called the "benevolent paternalism" of criminal justice in Japan. Ishimatsu, "Are Criminal Defendants in Japan Truly Receiving Trials by Judges?," 143–44; Foote, "The Benevolent Paternalism of Japanese Criminal Justice," 317–90.

10 Article 31 provides that "no person shall be deprived of life or liberty, nor shall any other criminal penalty be imposed, except according to procedure established by law."

11 All quotations from the Petty Bench's holdings in Akasegawa's case are from my draft translation of the opinion of April 24, 1970, as reprinted in *Saikō saibansho saibanshū*, 221–23.

12 See Kim, "Constitution and Obscenity," 255–83. As Kim points out, Article 175 was only occasionally invoked before 1945, since the government's censorship apparatuses regularly exercised separate regulatory and punitive authority, radically reducing the opportunity for court involvement. The postwar courts nonetheless followed both this earlier statute (which, under the Meiji Constitution, contemplated no limitations upon state authority to determine obscenity) and its 1918 court interpretation. Ibid., 256–57. See chapter 1.

13 Hidaka, *Sengoshiryō*, 168, emphasis added.

14 The court's ruling in some ways resembles an inversion of postwar antisystem rhetoric, declaring that "the present system" grants them such authority.

15 Hidaka, *Sengoshiryō*, 168.
16 Ibid., 169.
17 "Byōheidaraku ni taishite hikakuteki taidō o motte nozomi, rinshōteki yakuwari o enjinakereba naranu no de aru." Ibid., 168, emphasis added.
18 23 *Keishū* 10, 1248.
19 Note again the medicalization of the state's views of reality both here and in the court's "clinical role" language above.
20 Harootunian, "Hirohito Redux," 628, 630–32.
21 See *de Sade*, 184.
22 The majority held, "This court cannot entertain arguments which, by emphasizing the artistry and intellectuality of a work, hold that works with artistic and intellectual value cannot be liable to punishment as obscene writings, or which contend that in determining the presence or absence of a crime of obscenity, legal interests damaged by obscenity in a written work should be balanced against its public benefits as an artistic intellectual writing, on analogy with a legal principle used in relation to crimes of defamation" (*Chatterley*, 184–85).
23 Ibid., 212, emphasis added. In discussing the actual translation in the case, however, the justice's language reverts to the notion of obscenity nullified by artistry: "Although there are sexually stimulating elements in places, it may not be too much to say that their effects are completely deadened and erased if one looks at the work as a whole. . . . In the final analysis, the translation in the present case does not titillate sexual sensation and does not stimulate and arouse sexual desire" (217). Justice Irokawa was possibly motivated by the content of *Juliette*, arguably the most violent and shocking of all of de Sade's works.
24 *Chatterley*, 213.
25 Ibid.
26 When in 1980 the Court adopted similar language, it signaled not a boon to free speech but an indication that the state no longer felt any threat coming from this direction. See Beer, *Freedom of Expression in Japan*, 353, for commentary on the holdings.
27 Hidaka, *Sengoshiryō*, 167.
28 Emphasis added.
29 Emphasis added.
30 "Aimai na umi" is reprinted in *Obuje o motta musansha: Akasegawa Genpei no bunsho*, 205–19. The book's title is *The Proletarian* (literally, The Man without Property) *Who Possessed Objets: The Writings of Akasegawa Genpei*.
31 Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 21; Akasegawa, "Akasegawa Genpei jihitsu nenpyō," 81: "I intended a discourse on our direct action expressions, but by the time the writing finished, it had become a short story."
32 Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 21–22.
33 See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 55–59, for surviving examples of these collages.
34 I translate *nikutai* as "flesh" in this story, although "body" is also possible. I favor

the former here due to the emphasis on dissolution, and in contrast with the also possible *shintai*, which Akasegawa does not use. All quotations from "Aimai na umi" are from my own translation.

35 A saline solution including salts of potassium and calcium invented by Sydney Ringer (1834–1910), chiefly used to preserve cells and tissue apart from bodies for laboratory purposes. Akasegawa apparently consulted with a physician about some of the technical details of this story, further evidence of the extent to which he was excited by these notions at the time. Akasegawa, interview with author, October 18, 1997, Tamagawagakuen, Tokyo, Japan.

36 There may be a somewhat autobiographical component here too: Akasegawa speaks elsewhere of a near-drowning experience in 1959 during typhoon-related flooding, when he was trapped and the flood water rose to just below his nose (*Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 6).

37 The infamous Peace Preservation Law (Chian iji hō) of 1925, which became the government's chief legal weapon against leftist opposition (and ultimately against all political opposition, or "thought criminals," *shisōhanzaisha*), in its first article prohibited organizing any association disavowing "the system of private property" (*jiyūzaisanseido*) right alongside of its more famous criminalization of attempting to alter the *kokutai* (the National Body or Essence). The remaining seven articles criminalized discussing, instigating, and aiding others in either endeavor, even outside of Japan's legal jurisdiction. (This and other laws were suspended by the Occupation on October 15, 1945, following an attempt by the Home Ministry to suppress a photo of the emperor with MacArthur.) Thus the descriptive inadequacy of the term might have been well compensated for by its attachment to the rich prewar history of opposition, critique, and state oppression.

38 Breton, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism," 125–26. Breton defends the violence and seeming simplicity of this act in an extensive footnote.

39 I understand "avant-garde" here as a revisiting of the historic avant-garde's aspirations to trigger thoroughgoing revolution. While the activities of groups such as the Dadaists and Surrealists also radically expanded the institution of art, I see this as an effect, not a primary goal. I would depart from Peter Bürger's classical formulation of "avant-garde" on several points, particularly in his insistence on art as a kind of totality. For Bürger, "the avant-gardists proposed the sublation of art—sublation in the Hegelian sense of the term: art was not to be simply destroyed, but transferred to the praxis of life" (*Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 49). Viewing the relative autonomy of art and the art institution as a totality in itself rather than as mediately related to the social totality that is capitalism prompts Bürger's recourse to an *Aufhebung* of art—instead of allowing avant-garde practice to arise from art but depart from its limits. Even as sublation, Bürger's formulation—"What distinguishes [the avant-gardists] from [the aestheticists] is the attempt to organize a new life praxis from a basis *in art*" (49, emphasis added)—returns the avant-garde to art itself. In a sense, Bürger's theorization produces a return of the art institution that is his principal complaint

about the "neo-avant-garde," which "institutionalizes the *avant-garde as art* and thus negates genuinely avant-gardiste intentions" (58). On capitalism as a social totality and the object of Marx's critique, see Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination*, 183–85, 388.

40 Akasegawa was quite terrified by his experience of direct political action during the Sunagawa River protests and his witnessing of the results of police violence ("people with their eyes hanging out of their heads"). Akasegawa, interview with author, Tamagawagakuen, December 21, 2004.

41 Akasegawa had received the plate from a print shop where an acquaintance of his was working. The printer prepared the plate but balked at making prints from it. When Akasegawa went to receive the printer's regrets, his acquaintance gave him the plate. The *Kyōjutsu chōsho* present several variants on the exact details. See, for example, Tobita, October 27, 1965; Furuishi, January 31, 1964. This may have to do with Akasegawa attempting to conceal the involvement of his friend Imaizumi Yoshihiko, who had a business association with one of the print shops (it printed his journal, *Keishō* [Image]) and who later declared that he had fooled a young woman at the print shop into believing that police permission for the project had been granted. See Imaizumi, "Yomiuri anpan no daikanban ni yonshaku hodo no bō ni hake o tsuke 'shisu' to okiku kaita."

42 Akasegawa, interview with author, October 18, 1997, Tamagawagakuen, Tokyo, Japan.

43 Akasegawa, "Kisai Akasegawa Genpei nōnai rizōto tanbō," 33.

44 Allegedly to the point of stomach convulsions, according to Akasegawa (interview with author, October 18, 1997, Tamagawagakuen, Tokyo, Japan).

45 The title of the work echoes Akasegawa's short story. The spy is a spy out of "a desire for a grand revenge [*yūdainaru fukushū*]," the "eradication of the entire population of humankind."

46 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 86, 122.

47 See ibid., 62, 69, 71 for photos of the work as displayed at these exhibitions, and 61 for a color photo of the final version.

48 As suggested in Sugimoto's description ("Bōtō chinjutsu," 165).

49 The *Enlarged Yen* was never the subject of any part of the *mozō* prosecution.

50 A reproduction, ultimately, without an original—the printing process of money is authorized by an authenticated machine process, not by any "true bill."

51 "Kisojō," 2.

52 All translations from the text of the invitation are my own. A legible reproduction of the invitation face of the bill may be found in Akasegawa, "Akasegawa Genpei hijitsu nenpyō," 81. Both sides are reproduced in color in Tomii, "*Geijutsu* on Their Minds," 56.

53 See especially the collages A-9 through A-14, and A-17, in Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 58–59.

54 "System of private property" is *jiyū zaisan seido*, which can also be rendered as "the system of private ownership of property or wealth."

55 Among the reprinted samples in Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, see figures A-1, A-4, A-5 (1961), A-12, A-10, A-15 (1963), 55–59. Another likely reference was the egg-shaped works of Akasegawa's friend Nakanishi Natsuyuki, employed in a performance the previous October (see parts II and III).

56 These further variants on his yen project were printed, two-sided zero-yen notes, created entirely by Akasegawa. He maintained that these were real but valueless—real notes of a zero denomination—which he advertised and sold for 300 yen. Cash or coins would be sent to him, and he would return zero-yen notes. His notion in so doing was to gradually replace all currency with his real but valueless currency.

57 See Deal, "Hagiography and History," 316–22.

58 Okakura, *Ideals of the East*, 42. Okakura echoes Ernest F. Fenollosa's assessment of Prince Shōtoku as "among the great creative sages of Eastern Asia," crediting him with creating the Horiuji Kannon statue, "the first great creative Japanese work of art in the matter of spiritual power" (Fenollosa, *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, 55–56, 64).

59 The portrait thus would have been on the 100-yen note cast as the sympathetic narrator and protagonist in Dazai Osamu's short story, "Kahei" (Currency) in *Dazai Osamu zenshū*. These documents were classified "secret." In the memo from Lt. Col. Donald R. Nugent (the new chief of section for CI&E and a chief mover in the subsequent Red Purge), the eleven other figures given official approval were scholars, cultural figures, scientists, and statesmen from the Tokugawa and Meiji eras. Shōtoku Taishi ("literally meaning the Crown Prince of Saintly Virtue," as his brief but effusive biographical sketch explains) is the only imperial figure on the approved list. Empress Kōmyō, though included in the Ministry of Finance's original proposal to SCAP, is not included among the final group. See "Memo" from Lt. Col. Donald R. Nugent, CI&E, to ESS/FI, July 19, 1946, "000.4 Arts and Monument" folder, Box 5097, "SCAP CI&E Administrative Division, Confidential Decimal File, 1945–52," RG 331, NACP. "Prohibition of Certain Subjects in Designs of Japanese Postage Stamps and Currency" (SCAPIN 947) was issued by CI&E on May 13, 1946.

60 Furuishi, January 9, 1964.

61 Akasegawa had previously experimented with the nature of the artist's signature as early as 1958. His first submission to the *Yomiuri Indépendant* that year was a silhouette work, an abstract sort of self-portrait, with a "signature" in mechanical typeface, larger than the image. See Akasegawa, "The 1960s," 86.

4. The *Yomiuri Indépendant*

1 Portions of chapters 4 and 5 appeared in my articles "Political Aesthetics" and "Sounding the Everyday: The Music Group and Tone Yasunao's Early Work."

2 The catalogue of exhibits in 1955 added "Yomiuri" in a different color above the title, making it the *Yomiuri Nihon Indépendant*; in 1956, for the eighth exhibition,

the name was finally changed to *Yomiuri Indépendant* on the catalogue, reflecting long-established popular usage. See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 41–42; Kaidō, "Taisei=anpan shoki no episōdo," 6; Kaidō, "Interview by Murakami Kishirō," 400–401 (Kaidō mistakenly identifies the exhibition of 1957 as the first to reflect the de facto name change); Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 276.

3 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 3.

4 For his own part, Akasegawa strove to present the *Yomiuri Indépendant* in as close to a documentary style as possible. Akasegawa, interview with author, October 18, 1997, Tamagawagakuen, Tokyo, Japan.

5 Rancière, *Disagreement*, 58–60.

6 See Havens, *Artist and Patron in Postwar Japan*, 130–35.

7 Government and semiprivate foundation support for the arts, virtually nonexistent after the war, took over three decades to surpass this private sponsorship in the mid-1970s. The national culture agency, the Bunkachō, was not formed until 1968, combining a cultural office formed in 1966 with a cultural properties protection committee at work since 1950, all within the *Monbushō* (Ministry of Education); the Japan Foundation (Kokusai kōryū kikin) was established in 1972.

8 Danto, *After the End of Art*, 23.

9 The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

10 Havens, *Artist and Patron in Postwar Japan*, 131.

11 Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 74. As Shōriki's 1957 hagiographical, subsidized English biography notes, his appointment as director of the secretariat of the Metropolitan Police Board meant that "he dabbled in numerous political secrets. His job was to liaison between the police and the cabinet, parliament and the political parties. He was charged with assembling for the Metropolitan Police Board all political information and data on labor affairs and Korean affairs. He had to keep watch over the Socialist, Communist, and anarchist groups currently gaining strength in Japan. He had direct access to the Home Minister and the Chief Cabinet Secretary." He also acted as lobbyist for the Metropolitan Police Board, and "was with politicians almost constantly during his workday." Uhlan and Thomas, *Shoriki: Miracle Man of Japan*, 61, 67. This biography was produced soon after Shōriki began purportedly cooperating with the CIA to promote nuclear power in Japan, including as sponsor of the traveling Atoms for Peace exhibition in 1955–56, through Yomiuri newspaper articles and broadcasting on his Nihon Terebi Hōsōmō (NTV) and radio network, and in his public career from Diet member (1955), minister in the Hatoyama cabinet (1956), and director of the Science and Technology Agency (1957). The relationship appears to have grown from U.S. support for Shōriki's push for television in Japan for cold war purposes. See Arima, *Genpatsu, Shōriki, CIA*; and *Nihon terebi to CIA*; on Shōriki and television, see also Partner, *Assembled in Japan*.

12 "Report to GHQ AFPAC, Office of Chief Counter Intelligence, Civil Communication Intelligence Group—Japan, Press Pictorial Broadcasting Division, Research Section, from Yomiuri Newspaper," unpaginated and undated report (ca. Sep-

tember or October 1945), "Personal Profiles—Yomiuri Shinbunsha" folder, Box 5148, RG 331, NACP.

13 Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 74–75; Uhlan and Thomas, *Shoriki: Miracle Man of Japan*, 78. Shōriki had ingratiated himself with Gotō and the future prime minister (and master maneuverer) Konoe Fumimarō while director of the Cabinet Secretariat, purportedly by reporting on the activities of the peers. He was also later implicated in several incidents of corruption for equally large sums. See Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 75–76. The names of the major *Yomiuri* shareholders, however, remained a secret.

14 Masuyama, "Lecture by Tasuke Masuyama," 23.

15 Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 76.

16 The paper is described in SCAP files as having been the chief army organ; Shōriki himself is described as having had "very close connections with the German embassy and to be one of their chief propaganda outlets in Japan." International War Crimes Prosecution Division, LS, GHQ, SCAP, "Reclassification for Trial of Fifty (50) Major Japanese War Criminal Suspects [Secret]," (June 3, 1947), 40, RG 331, Box 1434, "SCAP Legal Section, Law Division, Misc Classified File, '45–52," "Class A War Criminals at Sugamo" folder, NACP. At this late date, the Prosecution Division was still recommending further investigation of Shōriki as a Class A war crimes suspect. Shōriki's credentials in the wartime state were impressive: he was an organizer and director of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, a member of the Thought Investigating Committee of the Education Ministry, and a councilor for the Cabinet Information Board itself in 1943. See the confidential report, "The Yomiuri Shimbun Case: A Significant Development in the Post-Surrender Japanese Press," OIR Report No. 4247, March 10, 1947, Department of State, Division of Research for Far East, Office of Intelligence Research, 5–6, in "Labor Rels: Disputes—Newspapers, Yomiuri Case [Confidential]" folder, RG 331, Box 8499, NACP.

17 SCAP records that the *Yomiuri* newspaper "communicated with Honolulu the night before 'Pearl Harbor,' supposedly for the purpose of obtaining weather information." "Reclassification for Trial of Fifty (50) Major Japanese War Criminal Suspects [Secret]," 40. If true, it would distinguish Shōriki for having top-level connections to *both* the army and the navy—a rare category of person indeed, given interservice rivalries.

18 "The Yomiuri Shimbun Case," 5–6. Shōriki officially lost his Diet position during the Japanese government's purges in March and November, 1946. See the confidential "Situation Report: Japan No. 3479.42" (December 19, 1947), Department of State, Division of Research for Far East, Office of Intelligence Research, 8, reproduced in *OSS/State Department Intelligence and Research Reports, Postwar Japan, Korean and Southeast Asia*, ed. Paul Kesaris (Washington: University Publications of America, 1977), Reel V. These impeccable political credentials also allowed Shōriki to safely stand up to demands for national newspaper ownership consolidation, preserving his ownership of the paper at the expense of submit-

ting the industry to all other state controls by December 1941. See Kasza, *The State and Mass Media in Japan*, 210–15.

19 Magazines were cut at a slower pace, from 16,788 in 1937 to 10,420 in 1942, but then the number was slashed to 3,081 in 1943 and 942 in 1944 (Kasza, *The State and Mass Media in Japan*, 224). Shōriki's *Yomiuri Shinbun* became the *Yomiuri-Hōchi* in 1942, absorbing Miki Bukichi's *Hōchi Shinbun*, a smaller, sports-oriented Tokyo weekly that initially opposed consolidation of local papers. The *Yomiuri*, like the *Asahi* and the *Mainichi*, profited from the decimation of local papers; centralization appears to have been shaped not only by the urge to silence criticism but also some degree of connivance with the major publications (192–93, 212).

20 As Gregory J. Kasza notes, not much critical writing remained, except from those even further right—since the Left had long been silenced—and so in this last phase of intensified censorship, rightists joined hypercautious, mainstream journalists and editors as targets for the censors (ibid., 226–31).

21 The demands had previously been presented orally to Shōriki on September 13, according to Masuyama ("Lecture by Tasuke Masuyama," 30–32).

22 These actions followed the demands for reform and the resignations of the president and several members of the board of directors at the *Asahi Shinbun* and were contemporaneous with similar actions at the *Mainichi Shinbun*. In both cases, in contrast to the *Yomiuri*, the demands were successful. At the *Asahi*, the initial resistance was overcome by employee seizure of several posts; following the resignations on November 6, no new board members were appointed. A State Department report notes that "many of the wartime press executives who were removed were not career journalists but men selected by the military clique to control the press to its advantage." "The Yomiuri Shimbun Case," 4. This was certainly the case with the *Yomiuri*. Beyond Shōriki himself (who attended every editorial board meeting), his "spokesman," Vice President Takahashi Yusai, was a former governor of Kagawa Prefecture (1931) and a ten-year police veteran who had risen to the post of chief of the Police Bureau (1923) and chief of Police Affairs Department (1925) in Shizuoka Prefecture. Kobayashi Mitsumasa, the director and head of the General Department, served as police inspector (1917) and as an administrative official in colonial Korea (1920) prior to joining the editorial staff of the *Yomiuri* in 1925. He subsequently maintained connections to the paper while serving as chief secretary of the Police Board (1927), governor of Aomori and Kochi Prefectures, and the chairman of the Greater East Asiatic Research Committee (1943), before returning to head first the Research and then the General Departments of the Yomiuri. See "Report to GHQ AFPAC, Office of Chief Counter Intelligence, Civil Communication Intelligence Group—Japan, Press Pictorial Broadcasting Division, Research Section, from Yomiuri Newspaper."

23 See Coughlin, *Conquered Press*, 73–79. Conflict quickly erupted at the *Asahi* and the *Mainichi* as well. For a concise account of postwar Japanese production control, see Moore, "Production Control," 4–48.

24 Takemae notes that *Yomiuri* strikers were "following prior Italian and French examples of worker self-managed production" (*Inside GHQ*, 313); however, the Japanese production control cases took longer, involved more participants, and ranged throughout the country. One of the pamphlets in the GI Roundtable Series prepared by the American Historical Association discusses production control in Italy after the war, explaining to its expected GI audience that the phenomenon was an unintentional midwife to fascism. It relates how in the north of Italy, absent land reform and with much discussion of revolution, workers under socialist leadership seized factories. At this moment in which revolution seemed possible, the leaders failed to call for revolt (due to their moderate tendencies and outright fear of revolution), the movement went into decline, and order was restored. But Mussolini, as editor of a Milan newspaper, was able to take advantage of the specter of revolution, even though it was no longer a possibility, and rise to power by decrying the socialist menace and calling for "law and order." This account would have had ambiguous significance for the Japanese case, and for the *Yomiuri* in particular. See "What Is the Future of Italy?," www.historians.org, accessed August 31, 2007.

25 Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 257.

26 Masuyama, "Lecture by Tasuke Masuyama," 48. As production control escalated through June 1946, the *Yomiuri* staff were frequently asked for their advice by other labor activists and even traveled to offer assistance to other struggles (47).

27 See Moore, "Production Control," 18.

28 SCAP actually stands for Supreme Commander, Allied Powers, and thus technically refers to General Douglas MacArthur. As a prefix GHQ, or General Headquarters, refers to MacArthur's different commands. In much the same way that MacArthur has become metonymic for the Occupation, GHQ and SCAP have come to generically designate the entire Occupation administration. GHQ / SCAP, with its mix of military and civilian staff (40 percent of which were native Japanese), was responsible for the civil administration of occupied Japan, working indirectly through the Japanese government and through the military, primarily the Eighth Army. The latter was under the jurisdiction of GHQ / AFPAC, which was entirely military. See Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, xxvii–xxx for an overview.

29 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 313.

30 GHQ / AFPAC, Civil Information and Education Section, APO 500, Advance Echelon, "Memorandum to Brigadier General Ken R. Dyke" (November 23, 1945), 5, RG 331, Box 5255, "SCAP, CIE, Information Division, Press and Publications Branch, Press Releases and Reports 1945–51," "Consolidated Report of CIE Section Activities 10 Oct 45–1 Dec 45, Closed File" folder, NACP. Emphasis added.

31 Ibid. For a succinct account of the crucial role played by the imperial bureaucracy in shaping postwar policy in ways that retained authoritarian powers (even, and especially, when implementing social reforms), see Garon, "The Imperial Bureaucracy and Labor Policy in Postwar Japan," 441–57.

32 See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 321, 385–86.

33 Moore, "Production Control," 18.

34 The loosely construed term *liberal* was applied to Yoshida Shigeru as well. Moore describes Baba as a "right-wing Socialist" ("Production Control," 18). On deferment, see Ienaga, *The Pacific War*, 104. Suzuki was a 1922 graduate of Tokyo Imperial University's Economics Department; he joined the paper in 1935 as vice chief of the Foreign Section, rising to chief of the Editorial Section by 1941—so he had firsthand experience (and participation in) the paper's wartime editorial policies. "Report to GHQ AFPAC, Office of Chief Counter Intelligence, Civil Communication Intelligence Group—Japan, Press Pictorial Broadcasting Division, Research Section, from Yomiuri Newspaper." The report notes that Suzuki was then "Secretary of the Free Discussion Club."

35 According to a restricted SCAP special report in 1947, "Suzuki was generally recognized to be a Communist sympathizer"; this conclusion is retroactively justified in its supporting footnote: "Suzuki was a candidate for governor of Niigata Prefecture in April 1947, running on a communist ticket." "Some Aspects of Labor Organization in the Press and Radio in Postwar Japan, Special Report Prepared by Information Media Research [Restricted]," Sept. 23, 1947, 14, "Yomiuri" folder, Box 5151, RG 331, NACP. On June 5, when questioned by Maj. Daniel Imboden (the notorious executive officer of the Press Division, Civil Information and Education Section), Suzuki denied being a communist and asserted his (and the editorial board's) support for establishing a republic, "restricting the power of the emperor, and the operation of a democratic state along Swiss and American lines." Daniel Imboden, "Weekly Report of Press and Publications Unit for week ending 8 June 1946 [Confidential]," RG 331, Box 5255, "SCAP, CIE, Information Division, Press and Publications Branch, Press Releases and Reports 1945–51," "Activity Reports" folder, NACP.

36 Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan*, 32–38.

37 Ibid., 36–37. Koschmann notes that the Party's early conservatism, including calls at the February 1946 Congress for cooperation "not only among various segments of the 'people' but between workers and capital," seemed retrograde in comparison to the context of flourishing production control and spontaneous organization, demonstrating the promise of a radical democracy already in motion (39). In fact under the influence of Nosaka and others, the Japanese Communist Party rejected production control itself as anything other than a temporary dispute tactic. See Moore, "Production Control," 28.

38 See Coughlin, *Conquered Press*, 82–97.

39 Moore, "Production Control," 14, 30. In the case of the *Yomiuri*, support by GHQ for absolute editorial control by the publisher directly contravened the GHQ-brokered agreement of the previous December, which recognized union sharing in editorial policy (Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 234–36, 243–44).

40 Gayn records Suzuki as specifically joining calls for Yoshida's ouster and a new, democratic government (*Japan Diary*, 227). The previous expected successor to Shidehara was Hatoyama Ichirō, president of the Liberal Party; however, he was

purged by GHQ the day before he was to take the premiership, following revelations of his past "fulsome praise for Hitler and Mussolini," and he had to wait until December 1954 to become prime minister. See Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 162–64; Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 268–69, 615–16n58. Yoshida accepted Hatoyama's request to take over leadership of the Liberal Party on May 13, 1946, and received MacArthur's blessing on May 15. Following the Meiji Constitution's procedures, he was directed by Hirohito to form a cabinet on May 16 and was struggling to do so at the time of these protests (Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 223).

41 Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 229–30. More than seventy thousand protesters at some point marched from the Imperial Plaza demonstration to the prime minister's residence; on this occasion, the compound was guarded by "four jeeploads of American MPs, and the demonstrants made no effort to enter it" (228).

42 Ibid., 230. Suzuki was also a speaker at the mass demonstration in Hibiya Park on April 7, 1946, against the government's inadequate food programs and labor policy. This demonstration too marched to the prime minister's residence and in fact occupied its inner courtyard. Suzuki was also a member of the delegation that met with Prime Minister Shidehara; the meeting ended with a scuffle when protesters reacted to the presence of armed secret servicemen. See George Atcheson Jr., Dispatch No. 453, "Demonstrations and Growing Tendency towards Violence in Japan," Enclosure No. 4, "Summaries of 20 Incidents in Japan involving violence or threatened violence (September 12, 1945 to May 19, 1946)," 3–4, "740.00119/6-1046" folder, Box 3804, Office of the Department of State, Central Decimal Files, 1945–49, stack location 250/36/23/04, NACP; Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 169–71.

43 Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 230.

44 See Ibid., 231–32; Coughlin, *Conquered Press*, 86.

45 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 317.

46 Quoted in "Some Aspects of Labor Organization in the Press and Radio in Postwar Japan, Special Report Prepared by Information Media Research [Restricted]," 17, emphasis added. For the October offensive, see Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 328–36.

47 The House of Peers voted in favor on October 6; the House of Representatives approved it on October 7. On the police action, see Gayn, *Japan Diary*, 335–38.

48 In 1950, while American forces pushed out from their landings in Inchon, Korea, the president of the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association, Baba Tsunego, proclaimed the third year's slogan: "Newspapers are the best security for a democratic society." See "Draft Signal to Reorientation Branch on Shimbun Kyokai Message" (September 25, 1950), RG 331, Box 5154, "SCAP, CIE, Administrative Division, decimal file 1950," "Baba" folder. This "democracy" of course had a particular history, defined by the reduction of unwelcome dissent to "foreign elements" and noise.

49 In fact it was Kaidō who first got Takiguchi to begin writing commentary on current art events with an invitation to contribute to the newspaper in 1950. See

Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 405; Takiguchi, "Takiguchi Shūzō jihitsu nenpu oyobi hoi," 498. Kaidō frequently played a similarly critical, behind-the-scenes role in the art scene. In the case of the Experimental Workshop (Jikken Kōbō), a major innovator in multigenre art and music in the 1950s, Kaidō gave the group its first public exposure, as part of the festival connected to the *Yomiuri*'s Picasso Exhibition in November 1951. In this, their first group event, the Experimental Workshop provided production and stage design for the ballet *Joie de Vivre*. Kaidō decided to promote the group after Takiguchi took him to visit sets by a member, Kitadai Shōzō. See Fukuzumi, *Jikken Kōbō to Takiguchi Shūzō*, 26, 135.

50 Kaidō recalled visits by the artist Okamoto Tarō and the writer Noma Hiroshi and considerable assistance from Uchida Iwao and Hongo Shin during the conflict. The latter two were among the three representatives from the Nihon Bijutsukai who came to the *Yomiuri* offices to complain over its theft of *Nihon Indépendant* as the name for their exhibition (Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 399, 400).

51 His "red purging" occurred some time prior to the infamous purges of 1950, as the *Yomiuri Indépendant* was announced on September 26, 1948. Kaidō was indeed a member of a communist cell at the paper, which turned out to have a spy, and resulted in the dismissal of all members. Kaidō's infrequent attendance at the meetings, however, kept him from permanent banishment from the newspaper. See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 104; Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 399.

52 Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 399.

53 "I had no hand in this," declared Kaidō, speaking sarcastically of its "big influence and great success" (ibid., 400).

54 Ibid., 399. Although after the war the "New" prefix would have typically identified the topic as left-oriented, these debates would have oddly echoed, as well as rebutted, wartime discussions such as that in *Mizue* in 1941 on art and Prime Minister Konoe's "new order," or "new embodiment," as Bert Winther-Tamaki argues ("Embodiment / Disembodiment," 145–80).

55 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 102.

56 It had also previously been referred to popularly as the Kanten, a reference to bureaucrats, or *kanryō*.

57 The unprecedented holding of two exhibitions in one year followed the failure to hold an exhibition in the fall of 1945.

58 Previously the Imperial Fine Art Academy (Teikoku Bijutsuin), the Imperial Art Academy (Teikoku Geijutsuin) was established by Imperial Order No. 280 in 1937, reflecting a broadening beyond the fine arts to literature, music, and performance; the postwar organization was formed by amending this order with Cabinet Order 254 in December 1947. See Uchiyama, *Nitten 100-nen*, 10. In addition to sponsoring the *Shin Bunten*, the Imperial Art Academy participated in the celebrations of the 2,600th anniversary of the divine founding of Japan in 1940

with an Arts Festival in Celebration of the Year 2600 of the Japanese Era. They also sponsored the 1944 *Special Wartime Culture Exhibition*. Both were likewise held at the Tokyo Municipal Art Museum in Ueno Park. Interestingly, during the wartime period, participation in *Shin Bunten* broadened in comparison with the previous *Teiten* exhibitions (165).

59 The Japan Arts Academy budget was appropriated by the Ministry of Education, with their business managed by the Arts Section of the Ministry. See Arts Section, Ministry of Education, "Concerning the Japan Fine Arts Exhibition" (June 21, 1948), RG 331, Box 5863, "SCAP, CIE, Religion and Cultural Resources Division, Arts and Monuments Branch, Research File and Publications 1946–1950, Japan Art Academy to Libraries," "Government-Sponsored Art Exhibitions–Nitten" folder, NACP. The Ministry resumed its *Nitten* sponsorship in 1950.

60 Sherman E. Lee, Memo to Chief, Religions and Cultural Resources Divisions (June 16, 1948), 1, RG 331, Box 5863, "SCAP, CIE, Religion and Cultural Resources Division, Arts and Monuments Branch, Research File and Publications 1946–1950, Japan Art Academy to Libraries," "Government-Sponsored Art Exhibitions–Nitten" folder, NACP. See also Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 43; Havens, *Artist and Patron in Postwar Japan*, 59, 112–18. The nepotism and narrowness of *Nitten* got so bad that in 1957 a complaint was raised in the Diet by a member; the organization resolved yet again to "develop democratic principles and develop fresh and healthy art." *Nitten* again became a target in 1969, this time for students. Most of the exhibits at the *Nitten* are purchased, and award-winners can indeed parlay their certifications to national prominence and a professional art career (at which point they no longer exhibit at the Japan Exhibition, lest a subsequent failure to win a prize amount to a decertification).

61 Lee, Memo. Lee would return from the Occupation to serve in multiple distinguished museum directorships, while publishing extensively on Asian art.

62 "Tenryōka nitten e," *Shin Nihon*, November 12, 1949. New members included Watsuji Tetsurō, a member of the "so-called Kokoro group" after the war that, Harootunian argues, revisited a fascist ideological theme opposing the emperor (and Japanese cultural essence) to materialistic desires. In its postwar variant, propounded by both the state and writers such as the Kokoro group, war and defeat are blamed on the materialistic corruptions of the populace, while the throne—as the source of enduring values—is absolved of responsibility. See Harootunian, "Hirohito Redux," 623.

63 Clark and National Gallery of Australia, "Surrealism in Japan," 209. Two prominent members, Fukuzawa Ichirō and Takiguchi Shūzō, were arrested in March 1941 and held until November; waves of arrests of regional surrealist artists followed in December of that year. The Surrealist Takenaka Hisashichi was arrested in August 1942 while on military service in China by the *kempeitai* military police.

64 Takiguchi, "Geijutsu to jikken," 6–11.

65 Kawakita, *Modern Currents in Japanese Art*, 150.

66 Ibid., 122, 150; Uchiyama, *Nitten 100-nen*, 165.

67 Havens, *Artist and Patron in Postwar Japan*, 59.

68 Clark and National Gallery of Australia, "Surrealism in Japan," 210.

69 Andrew Gordon notes that their resurgence was predicated upon their refraining from criticism of either the bureaucracy or the military or challenging the state's monopoly on invoking the name of the emperor (*Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan*, 306–8, 316–17, 321–22). These were the conditions, for example, under which the Social Masses Party had a notable performance in the elections of 1936–37. Labor union activity was tightly controlled and increasingly reorganized by governmental organizations modeled on the syndicates and "councils of trust" of Germany and Italy.

70 The attempt to avoid distinctions and promote equality extended all the way to the decision to forgo issuing a catalogue; instead there was merely a list of exhibitors and exhibits (Kaidō, "Taisei=anpan shoki no episōdo," 7). The proposal for the exhibition generated considerable concern over basics, such as whether or not the exhibition would be workable and whether or not it could draw worthwhile artists; the final decision in its favor was characterized by Kaidō in retrospect as "Why don't we just go ahead and try it, anyway?" (Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 103).

71 Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 400. It is unclear from Kaidō's account whether he objected directly to party affiliation and Socialist Realism per se (which he acknowledges as a strong influence after the war) or if he felt simply that the Nihon Bijutsukai's advocacy of a single approach was too limiting and against the free spirit of an *indépendant*.

72 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 42–44. As Kaidō notes, although there were any number of new groups formed between 1947 and the early 1950s—including Yoru no kai, Seiki no kai, Nihon avan-gyarudo bijutsuka kurabu, Āto kurabu, Jikken kōbō, Zen'ei bijutsukai, plus Gutai and Demokurāto bijutsuka kyōkai (Democratic Artists Society) in the Kansai region—the new trends in art at the time were not well reflected in the early *Yomiuri Indépendant*. The first exhibition included major establishment artists such as Masamune Tokuzaburō, Sugiyama Yasushi, Ihara Usaburō, Nakamura Ken'ichi, and Mukai Junkichi, along with Okamoto Tarō, Abe Nobuya, Murai Masanari, and Kitadai Shōzō (Kaidō, "Taisei=anpan shoki no episōdo," 7).

73 Language which is in fact echoed in the *Chatterley* obscenity decision. See chapter 3.

74 This is not to argue that this leftist journalism was without its willful blind spots, dogmatism, and underexamined orthodoxies. But as described earlier, the paper nevertheless briefly enjoyed a heyday of critical journalism during the period of employee control.

75 See Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, 540–41. Ishiwara was the ideologue and formulator of the Manchurian incident in 1931, the staged bombing that provided the pretext for imperial troops to roll through Manchuria and

establish the state of Manchukuo. His co-conspirator, Itagaki Seishirō, was executed as a Class-A war criminal in 1947.

76 See Sakaguchi, "Discourse on Decadence," for Seiji Lippit's superb rendering of the work in English. Sakaguchi's "*Zoku darakuron*" of December 1946 extends these reflections, further underlining the cynical manipulation of the emperor as symbol from ancient history to wartime and his contemporary moment, and renewing his call for discarding such illusions to face reality. Sakaguchi, "Zoku darakuron." Dower characterizes Tamura Taijiro's related glorifications of *nikutai* as a sensuous form of lèse-majesté, centering *nikutai* (flesh, the individual carnal body) over *kokutai*. See Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 157–58.

77 On labor cultural production and its limitations, see Gerteis, "The Erotic and the Vulgar," 3–34. During the struggles at the *Yomiuri*, a number of sympathetic artists donated works and signatures for sale at union-sponsored events to raise money.

78 There were also limited opportunities for exhibition at galleries catering to avant-garde works, such as Takiguchi Shūzō's Takemiya Gallery, which provided the first space for individual exhibitions for Yamaguchi Katsuhiro, Kawara On, Kano Mitsuo, Kusama Yayoi, Ai Ou, and hundreds of others. See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 97. Rental galleries provided exhibition space for a cost; impromptu spaces, when available, also played a role.

79 As the critic Imaizumi Yoshihiko put it, the exhibition "was overflowing with Socialist Realism–styled paintings. The atmosphere was such that it seemed like you'd be told that your work wasn't a painting, if it wasn't [Socialist Realist]" ("Sōdai de no hanzaishadōmei shusai no engeki shō to pure HRC no kankei ni tsuite").

80 Akasegawa complains in a retrospective essay, "The 1960s" (85), of his depression over seeing these cartoonishly distorted fists during his participation in the *Nihon Indépendant* in 1956 and 1957.

81 Support for both the reportage style and the Japanese Communist Party itself was also eroded by contemporary events, particularly Khrushchev's revelations about Stalinism and repression in Hungary in 1956, which contributed to fracturing the Left and tainting Socialist Realism by association. The U.S. government's efforts in Europe—the covert and overt promotion of Abstract Expressionism and a simultaneous negative effort against Socialist Realist art and Soviet-sponsored organizations such as the World Festival of Youth and Students—created echoes in the art trends in Japan as well. Contrasting with Imaizumi and Akasegawa's impressions, Minemura Toshiaki argues for a 1950s development of a more nuanced "Social Realism" [*shakaiteki riarizumu*] version of reportage, drawing from Hanada Kiyoteru's "documentarism" ideas, a post-Courbet Realism and Surrealism. Minemura, "Shokkaku no riarizumu," 112.

82 See Koschmann, "Intellectuals and Politics," 403–4.

83 Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 153.

84 See Ibid., 145–89.

85 For a succinct account of these transformations and their causes, see Gordon, "Contests for the Workplace," 373–94. On covert support for Japanese politicians and the imperfect documentary record, see Wampler, "Japan and the United States."

86 On U.S. pressure, see Watson, *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense*, 630. Pressure had gone hand in hand with assistance, with the United States contributing some 98 percent of the weaponry for the Japanese forces and training some three thousand officers in the United States. See Welfield, *An Empire In Eclipse*, 111. For details on the Diet's intentionally ambiguous structuring of Article 9 to allow for precisely this possibility, see Koseki, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, 192–208, on the "Ashida Amendment" (which he argues might more accurately be called the "Kanamori Amendment"). The details of these specific Diet negotiations were, Koseki suggests, deliberately classified in 1956 (upon the establishment of the Commission on the Constitution) to conceal the record and support government interpretation of Article 9 (197–98).

87 On May 25, 1960, Supreme Court Chief Justice Tanaka Kōtarō thundered against the "organized forces under the influence of powers outside the country which attempt to overthrow by revolution the democratic system of Japan" and their "resort[ing] to violence in the fields of politics and labor." Undated translation, Department of State, RG 59, Tokyo Embassy Records, Box 70, "350 Japan July–Dec 1960," NACP. Justice Tanaka called upon the courts to assert their powers vigorously against these threats. (On the politics of "violence" and the legitimacy of protest and state action in the 1960s, see Marotti, "Japan 1968.") Previously, as Yoshida's education minister, Tanaka had taken the lead in the defense of the Imperial Rescript on Education and argued at the plenary session in the Lower House on the Constitution on June 27, 1946, "[The Rescript] forms the foundation of a human morality infallible for all ages and true in all places. In it we perceive no elements of militarism or ultra-nationalism" (*Dai kyūjukkai teikoku kokkai shūgiin honkaigi kaigiroku* [Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Ninetieth Imperial Diet], no. 7, June 27, 1946, p. 11 [RM320.PM.SP21.P1]; see also Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 351, 358–59). In 1950, as chief justice, he had created an uproar when, in an interview with the *Asahi*, he declared "Marxism inconsistent with the Japanese constitution." He also purportedly passed on verbal instructions from General Whitney to the lower courts that "courts could not question management's designation of Communist. Anyone so designated by management was to be considered per se a Communist and the courts were not to touch his case. The story is that anyone named by management as being a Communist or 'associating with Communists' would not be touched by the courts." Tanaka's instructions, like Whitney's, were to have been entirely oral. See Letter from Valery Burati to Philip B. Sullivan [Labor Advisor, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Dept. of State], "22 August 1950 and after," 1, and Letter from

Valery Burati [Labor Div., ESS, GHQ / SCAP] to Philip B. Sullivan, August 14, 1950, 15, both in "1-12 Japan; Corres.—General 1950" folder, Valery Burati Papers, Walter P. Reuther Archive, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

88 L. B. Lipscomb, an attorney in SCAP's Legal Section, notes that Kishi "was one of Tojo's most trusted and co-operative civilian assistants. . . . The ministries with which Kishi was so closely associated were instrumental in effecting the policy to employ Prisoners of War in defense industry and were further responsible for the implementation of the Chinese slave labor program." "Memorandum to Chief, Legal Section, SCAP, subject: KISHI Shinsuke [*sic*]" (March 30, 1948), RG 331, Box 1434, "SCAP Legal Section, Law Division, Misc Classified File, '45–52," "Class A War Criminals at Sugamo" folder, NACP.

89 The right-wing racketeers Kodama Yoshio and Sasakawa Ryōichi were simultaneously freed. Kishi had befriended his cellmate Kodama (later a major, though corrupt and unreliable, G-2 and CIA source) during their incarceration at Sugamo. Kishi was notorious for his ties to rightist organizations, which blossomed again during his administration; of concern in themselves, their resurgence also alarmed many as yet another sign of a return to the violent politics of the 1930s. Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 247; Schaller, *Altered States*, 124–25, 155, 157; Petersen, "The Intelligence That Wasn't," 208–11. Kishi was close with the former finance minister and convicted Class-A war criminal Kaya Okinori; pardoned in 1957 and elected to the Diet in 1958, he became one of Kishi's (and later, brother and Prime Minister Satō Eisaku's) closest advisors, and—as recently released CIA files reveal—a CIA conduit and informant on internal security matters. The paltry releases of documents on Kishi, however, have neither clarified nor confirmed strong suspicion that he too was a CIA source and a recipient of substantial funding from the agency in support of his and his party's election in 1958. See Petersen, "The Intelligence That Wasn't," 219–22; Schaller, "America's Favorite War Criminal."

90 Yoshikuni Igarashi argues that Kishi's political maneuvers and notorious use of police force even within the Diet rendered him "a stand-in for the military regime as well as for the humiliation that this regime brought to Japan." He points to the reduction of the Security Treaty issues to formulations of "Democracy or Dictatorship" by leading intellectuals such as Maruyama Masao and Takeuchi Yoshimi as evidence (*Bodies of Memory*, 136–37).

91 Packard, *Protest in Tokyo*, 242–51. It was in this atmosphere that Kishi famously dismissed the protesters in favor of a silent majority purportedly in solidarity with his views: "I think that we must also incline our ears to the voiceless voices. What we hear now are only the audible voices, that is all." *Asahi Shinbun*, May 28, 1960, translated in Packard, *Protest in Tokyo*, 245.

92 Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory*, 140–42; Schaller, *Altered States*, 159–61.

93 Price, *Japan Works*, 214–18.

94 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 236, 238–39. Then only two days old officially, GHQ / SCAP was also under pressure from press reports and Korean activist groups concern-

ing the continued abusive detention of political prisoners in the wake of Miki Kiyoshi's death in the Tokyo Detention House on September 26.

95 The economic take-off was already well under way at the time of Ikeda's speech, according to Nakamura Takafusa. Ikeda's move was not to create the boom so much as to publicize and champion it, all the while putting the government's stamp on it and displacing recent political conflict. Ikeda's public "declaration of confidence" did help encourage capital investment following the fitful growth in the 1950s through a series of booms and recessions (Nakamura, *Lectures on Modern Japanese Economic History*, 209–10).

96 See Gordon, "Contests for the Workplace," 375–77, for details of the strategic American promotion of industrial productivity through the joint U.S.-Japan Japan Productivity Center and other organizations.

97 Discussed in MacArthur to Herter, August 31, 1960, and the confidential memo of September 1, 1960. See generally Department of State, RG 59, Tokyo Embassy Records, Box 70, "350 Japan July–Dec 1960" for a variety of opinions of U.S. and Japanese officials and citizens concerning Ikeda's prospects.

98 Monty Hall was the long-serving host and developer of the television game show *Let's Make a Deal*, which debuted on NBC in 1963; the eponymous "Monty Hall Paradox" in mathematical probability is based loosely upon the show's procedures. The "deal" aspect of Ikeda's plan seems often to elude commentators averse to critical theory. Partner recognizes that the "income doubling" plan was not responsible for doubling incomes, nor was even Ikeda's originally. He acknowledges its "power" as an "ideological slogan," but his use of the term *ideological* is never explained, and here appears merely to note the term's ability to enable Ikeda to claim credit for largely independent economic phenomena already in progress (Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 186–88, 232). The economist Nakamura Takafusa characterizes the plan as "Ikeda trying to bring Japan out of its political climate . . . into a new season of economics. . . . Prime Minister Ikeda had in effect declared that current, or even higher, growth levels remained possible. It was in this public declaration of confidence, I believe, that the real significance of the National Income Doubling Plan lay" (*Lectures on Modern Japanese Economic History*, 211). While I would agree that the significance of the plan was chiefly representational, or ideological, I give a darker interpretation of this spurring of public "confidence" than is usually associated with this term. We might note the intersection between this sort of confidence in the "new season of economics"—as part of an ugly bargain, described earlier (quotidian comfort for administrative politics)—and the confidence (*shin'yō*) in currency that Akasegawa's 1,000-yen project was found by the trial and appellate courts to imperil.

99 MacArthur to Herter, September 1, 1960.

100 On the particular vulnerabilities of Anpo opposition to such tactics, see Takabatake, "Citizens' Movements." For an illuminating exploration of the politics of everyday life in a contemporaneous situation, see Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*.

101 See Aso, "Sumptuous Re-past," 7–38; Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory*, 143–63. Igarashi

points out that this nonetheless proceeded with frequent recourse to a vocabulary of personal sacrifice straight from the Second World War.

102 The question of how this tactic could be effective, despite its obvious connections with protest issues, again highlights the Anpo protests' organizational and conceptual vulnerabilities.

103 On the administrative state, see Herbert Marcuse's epilogue to *Reason and Revolution* for an early but concise formulation of his analysis of postwar administrative conditioning (439).

104 *Yomiuri Shinbunsha*, "Dai ikkai nihon andepandan ten mokuroku" (February 1949), 1. Sawaragi Noi has speculated over the possible involvement of Matsuo Kuninosuke in both drafting the statement and launching the exhibitions. Matsuo had been in Paris during the war, and after returning, had contacts with the anarchist-associated Liberation Youth League and was a principal member of the Liberal Club, all while serving as a deputy editor at the *Yomiuri Shinbunsha*. While such connections are intriguing, absent direct evidence I am more inclined to see the commonalities between Matsuo's speeches and the exhibition statement (and conception) as part of a broader set of themes linking a range of critical voices and struggles at the time—and would suggest caution against the urge to reduce such complexities to a single line of transmission from a returnee. See Sawaragi, "Matsuo Kuninosuke to Yomiuri Andepandanten," parts 1–3. In passing, we might note again the irony of the February 11 opening date—Kigensetsu, or National Foundation Day.

105 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 22–23.

106 As discussed by Morishita Masaaki, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum was founded in 1926 (as the Tokyo Prefectural Art Museum, until 1943) as an "empty museum," housing third-party exhibitions on a rotating basis, without its own curatorial staff or collection. Expanded in 1928 and 1958, it was rebuilt entirely in 1975 in part to accommodate an actual permanent collection and curator offices, maintaining these until their transfer to the new Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, in 1995, when the museum reverted again to a collectionless space. See Morishita, "Struggles between Curators and Artists," 89, 97–98.

107 Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 401.

108 Ibid., 405. This also enabled him to make the decision to focus the exhibition on Japanese artists, despite the attention given to the special foreign section at the third *Yomiuri* exhibition in 1951 (featuring works by forty American, one Swedish, and thirty French artists, including Pollock, Tanguy, Ernst, Dubuffet, Rothko, Reinhardt, and Magritte). Takiguchi Shūzō introduces the works in the exhibition catalogue, "Dai sankai nihon andepandan ten: Kaigai shuppin mokuroku." Kaidō continued to put on exhibitions of foreign artists separately, and notes that the sponsorship of international contemporary art by newspapers took off following their introduction at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 405.

109 Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 403. Akasegawa also focuses on 1955 as a transformational moment: the date in which Yoshimura Masunobu, as well as Shinohara Ushio, Tanaka Fuji (later of the Time Group, Jikan-ha), and Sawada Shigetaka, first exhibited at the *Yomiuri*. In Akasegawa's case, there was a personal connection here too, as Yoshimura's presence likely attracted his junior schoolmates, including Akasegawa (Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 67).

110 Takiguchi, "Shinjin no mondai—andepandan e no hansei," 50.

111 *Sunekajiri*, or dependent in the sense of sponging off one's parents. Takiguchi may have moderated his criticism of the *Yomiuri Indépendant* here, since this article originally appeared in the *Yomiuri Shinbun*.

112 Kaidō's recharacterization of Takiguchi's comments is that even while the artists continued after the war to discuss the shape of a different sort of art, they went on exhibiting the same sort of works, and this practice was meaningful; in other words, the production and the theorizing diverged, with the practice reaching an accommodation and a stasis. Kaidō, "Taisei=anpan shoki no episōdo," 7.

113 *Netsu*, or feverish passion, is also employed along with *enerugi*. Takiguchi's usage of these soon-to-be-stock terms was both early and interesting; he spoke of the exhibition's "taking on a kind of strange, feverish passion [*isshū iyō na netsu*] that he could feel after one tour"; of "something like energy squirming about"—his words recognizing both the unusual nature of the production and the difficulty of putting a name on it ("something *like* energy"). He also specifically identified the energy as not limited to art alone ("Hyōgen no kiken–daikyūkai yomiuri andepandanten," 51). On Takiguchi's struggles with this "energy" and the problem of the "anti-art" label, see chapter 5. See also Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 74–78.

114 See note 4; Kaidō, "Taisei=anpan shoki no episōdo," 7. While *anpan* does abbreviate *andepandan*, it is also the name for little, ubiquitous bean cakes. The association of "Indépendant" with "democratization" contrasts sharply with the sense of play in the punning abbreviation, and its use at the time would have strongly resonated with the specific developing contrasts with the *Nihon Indépendant* as a result. Separated from practice, however, its retrospective use perhaps also makes for good marketing. When reissued in paperback in 1994, Akasegawa's book on the *Yomiuri Indépendant*, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, was retitled *Hangeijutsu Anpan* (Anti-art Anpan).

115 See Hariu, "Sengo Bijutsu ni okeru neo-dada no isō," 13; Terada, *Japanese Art in World Perspective*, 158; Stiles and Ferguson, "Uncorrupted Joy," 258–59.

116 Hariu, "Sengo Bijutsu ni okeru neo dada no isō," 13, referring to his *Mizue* article of January 1957.

117 The period in which the artists of the *Yomiuri Anpan* were developing a direction for this "outpouring" was precisely the period in which Takiguchi began to encounter difficulties in writing art journalism. Although such difficulties reflected his own evolving feeling about criticism and writing as an occupation, perhaps

the object of such writings was presenting intransigent difficulties for his contemporary evaluation. See chapter 5 and "Takiguchi Shūzō jihitsu nenpu oyobi hoi," 500; Kaidō, "*Objet* to and from Rose Sélavy," 737.

118 Akasegawa, "The 1960's," 86.

119 This secret savings is a point on which Akasegawa dwells with awe and admiration in his semiautobiographical, Akutagawa Prize–winning short story, "Chichi ga kieta" (a title inadequately captured by a literal translation, "My Father Is Gone"). Akasegawa speculates that the Musashino Art School was originally a barracks, subsequently refurbished. Unlikely, given the school's origins in 1929 as the Teikoku Bijutsu Gakkō (Imperial Art School; it became Musashino Art School in 1948), but right or wrong, the description gives a sense of his impression of the school facilities at the time.

120 The protests concerned the proposed expansion of a U.S. airbase runway, but also served as a rehearsal for Anpo, attacking the Security Treaty and bases in general; 6,500 protesters were confronted by 2,000 riot police. Akasegawa still recalls his own terror at seeing a protester's eye dangling from its socket after a blow from a policeman and his abrupt realization that he personally was not cut out for street fighting. Akasegawa, interview with author, Tamagawagakuen, December 21, 2004. In March 1959 the Tokyo District Court acquitted seven defendants who entered the base during another protest in 1957, which set off shockwaves by calling into question the constitutionality of the bases themselves and the Security Treaty per Article 9. On December 1959 the Supreme Court rescinded this ruling, remanded the case for retrial, and declared the American military bases to be consistent with Japan's right to defend itself under the Constitution. For an unsympathetic but detailed account, see Packard, *Protest in Tokyo*, 131–34; and especially Oppler, "The Sunakawa Case," 241–63.

121 Akasegawa's formulation is that of the ever-enlarging, ludicrous fists discussed earlier (in relation to Socialist Realism and the prospects for postwar democracy).

122 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 67–68. A key contemporary term among these artists, *immediacy* (*chokusetsusei*) implies both freedom from mediation and directness. It also resonates with a discursively related term: *chokusetsu kōdō*, or direct action. See chapter 6.

123 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 68. *Kaigoroshi*, or care of a pet until death, suggests either care for a toothless, farty old dog (or similar animal) come to the end of its days, or, metaphorically in business, an employee who is deadwood.

124 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 66.

125 Ibid., 20–21.

126 See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no Bōken*, 20–21 for examples. Only a limited number of works have survived flooding, poverty, intentional destruction, and a lack of proper storage. Akasegawa recalls that Yoshimura's atelier was full at this time of pictures of masses; gradually, as his involvement shifted toward the *Yo-*

miuri Indépendant, the figures of people began to disappear as his works headed toward abstraction. See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 63, 67.

127 See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 24.

128 They were images with a socialist outlook, but prior to orthodoxy—really part of the prehistory of Socialist Realism and of tremendous influence to the German proletarian artists of the 1920s.

129 Akasegawa, interview with author, October 18, 1997, Tamagawagakuen, Tokyo, Japan.

130 There was a rather modest commercial angle as well; many of the more experimental invitational galleries selected artists for exhibitions on the basis of the displays. In general, however, the prospects for sales for the unknown artist were effectively nonexistent.

131 While the *Yomiuri Indépendant* provided the space to create this "crucible" of very visible avant-garde activity, for much of the exhibitions the majority of *Yomiuri Indépendant* works were done by artists described by Akasegawa as "Sunday painters," who painted scenery, still life works, and the like, or artists who submitted works elsewhere for competitions or for sale. One would see a number of portraits of popular figures, including Masada Michiko (wed to Crown Prince Akihito in a widely viewed televised ceremony in 1959; she is the current empress of Japan), popular singers such as Mihashi Michiya and Misora Hibari—essentially, portraits of the famous faces from that year, and typically one male and one female. Akasegawa does not disparage the works of these artists; rather he credits them with giving the exhibition a free, honest, and unpretentious atmosphere, one which young artists and groups were able to push in a radical direction. Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 64–66.

5. The *Yomiuri Anpan*

1 Writing on Conceptual art, Peter Osborne points out that thanks to the renewed reception in the 1960s, "'Duchamp' is largely a retrospective effect of the 1960s" (*Philosophy in Cultural Theory*, 87). The strangeness and radical scrutiny of objects as *objets* is itself inherent as a possibility within capitalism, whereas Postone argues, "objects . . . are 'thingly' things that *have* meaning" (*Time, Labor, and Social Domination*, 173n114).

2 Ehara Jun, "Seimei fukikomu gishiki: 'Nibanme no purezento,'" reproduced in Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 242. Ehara credits this and similar works of the Neo-Dada Group's individual artists with "breathing independent life into the dead husk of art" (242). See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 41, for a photo of the work hanging at the thirteenth *Yomiuri Indépendant*, and 29 for a partial reconstruction in 1994 (minus the floor *objet*, a toaster with a number of long nails jammed into it, which was slowly corroded by acid during the course of the exhibition). See also Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 63–64. Beginning with this ex-

hibition, his first *Anpan* after his experience in the Neo-Dada Group in 1960–61, Akasegawa (b. Akasegawa Katsuhiko) submitted entries using a new name: Akasegawa Genpei. Years later the other half of his birth name would be incorporated in his pen name for his fictional works, as Otsuji Katsuhiko.

3 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 155–56.

4 Ibid., 156.

5 For Akasegawa's description of his work on this piece, see *Tōkyō mikisā keikaku*, 64. The translation from "Aimai na umi" is mine.

6 Kazakura Shō, "Ano koro no Akasegawa Genpei," in Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 46.

7 The reconstruction in 1996 of the work featured one bag labeled in a similarly ambiguous fashion, "Digestive Organs." See *Neo-Dada Japan 1958–1998*, 111.

8 Toyoshima Sōroku, interview with author, New York City, March 24, 2010. The work was exhibited at the first Neo-Dada Group exhibition, Ginza Gallery, March 4–8, 1960. See Kuroda, *Ryūdō suru bijutsu III*, 26, 32, for photos of these works, and generally for discussion of the Neo-Dada Group and the subsequent activities of its participants.

9 Nakahara Yūsuke, "Sōon no hāmonī: Toyoshima Sōroku, 'Sōru no bansan,'" *Yomiuri Shinbun*, March 3, 1961 (evening edition), reprinted in Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 241.

10 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, March 3, 1961, reprinted in Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 241; Toyoshima Sōroku, interviews with author, New York City, November 23, 2006, March 24, 2010.

11 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, March 5, 1963, reprinted in Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 273. Toyoshima's own recollection is that the inclusion of the electrical connections was meant to suggest just such a systemic dimension. Toyoshima, interview with author, March 24, 2010.

12 See *Neo-Dada Japan 1958–1998*, 215.

13 It was also in the 1960s that Japan's economic connections to Southeast Asia came to reduplicate those present during the Second World War, fulfilling an American strategic goal from the late 1940s but also adding another layer of connections to wars past and present. See Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan*, 179.

14 Yoshioka would serve as the cameraman and cinematographer for numerous films by Teshigahara Hiroshi and Oshima Nagisa (Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 160–61). On Itoi's three submissions in 1962 being summarily removed by the museum for indecency ("a picture of a masturbating young woman painted over twenty stock certificates pasted onto a mat board, a trunk with an image of a nude couple in '69' inside, and another of his peep-show boxes displaying sex scenes"), see Hariu, "Sengo bijutsu ni okeru neo dada no isō," 15. Itoi's submission in 1960 is the first mentioned by Tōno Yoshiaki in his article recommending the anti-art of the exhibition that year "for those a bit tired of the portentous 'art' of the greats at *Nitten*" ("Garakuta no hangeijutsu," in Segi, *Nihon ande-*

pandan ten, 227). This article of Tōno's is conventionally credited with introducing the critical catch-phrase "anti-art" to contemporary Japanese art debates. Much like Toyoshima's later recollections, Tōno's piece also connects junk art directly to children's play in the debris immediately after the Second World War rather than to the economic expansion, although he does also suggest that the anti-art pieces will "strike you rather more directly than 'artworks' closed off within the exhibit boxes of museums, *without connection to your daily life today*" (227, emphasis added). Doryun Chong points out that, though little remarked upon, Kudō Tetsumi was using the *anti-art* term in his performances as early as 1957 (Kudō and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudō*, 28). Considering that anti-art itself dates back to Duchamp and the interwar avant-garde, and considering too the ways in which questioning the status of art itself was internationally essential to this moment in art practice (see, for example, Danto, *After the End of Art*, 29, 34; Osborne, *Philosophy in Cultural Theory*, 87), I am struck by the frequent recourse to a strange cultural particularism, or even nominalism, in the treatment of both Tōno's doubtlessly important critical intervention (and associated debates) and the practices associated with this label. I would provisionally suggest that some of this search for origins displaces the difficulties of accounting for the art onto the attractive, ersatz coherency provided by the labels themselves. On Tōno's piece and the anti-art debates, see Tomii, "*Geijutsu* on Their Minds," especially 36–38. Tomii's essay carefully contextualizes the major Japanese debates and the explosion in the critical use of the term following the twelfth *Yomiuri* exhibition in 1960, yet all the same gives a (to me) frustrating positivity to anti-art and nonart. It also mischaracterizes Takiguchi's 1960 reflection on the term as an endorsement, whereas it in fact reflected his sense of its inadequacy, and his own continued perplexity at finding adequate words for these developments: "Here I'd like to be restrained in speaking of things as bound to such contemporary fashionable catchwords as Neo Dada or 'anti-art.' I too probably can't avoid saying something about 'anti-art,' but rather than defining this ready-made term, we really must instead frankly recognize the tempestuous energy of the thought and expression emanating from this group of artists" (Takiguchi, "Hitotsu no sōwa," 117). Takiguchi's essay also records Takiguchi peeking through the window at the *Neo-Dada* impromptu exhibition at the Muramatsu Gallery in March and wondering if a group would arise from this get-together; this was in fact the inaugural moment for the Neo-Dadaism Organizers, soon renamed Neo-Dada (at Takiguchi's suggestion).

15 "Kokusai seinen bijutsuka-ten de taishō o eta Kudō Tetsumi," *Asahi Shinbun*, February 18, 1962, quoted in Doryun Chong, "When the Body Changes into New Forms: Tracing Kudō Tetsumi," in Kudō, Tetsumi, and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudo*, 29.

16 Kudō Hiroko, interview with author, Tokyo, July 8, 2009; Michel Tapié, "Sekai no naka no Nihon no wakai geijutsuka," *Yomiuri Shinbun*, April 3, 1958 (trans. Haga Tōru). My thanks to Doryun Chong for generously sharing his Kudō-related materials, including a copy of this article.

17 Kudō Hiroko, interview with author, Tokyo, July 8, 2009. The catalogue records three entries for 1960: *Proliferation Chain Reaction "1"* and *"2"* (*Zōshokusei rensa hannō* 1 and (2) and *Fusion Reaction in a Planar Cyclic Form* (*Heimenjunkantai ni okeru yūgōhannō*, 1958–59), but Tōno's essay, "Garakuta no hangeijutsu," and the accompanying photo clearly reference *Proliferation Chain Reaction (B)*, suggesting a diversion between exhibit card and catalogue (perhaps "2" for "B," or a letter to distinguish it from the similarly titled oil). Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 220, 227; Nakamura and Kudō, *Kudō Tetsumi Kaikoten*, 126. The oil work of 1959 is depicted in color in Kudō and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudo*, 69. A superb photo-and-text survey of selected works of Kudō's from this period, including all of the works referenced earlier and discussion by Kudō Hiroko, may be be found in Kudō and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudo*, 200–15, with color images on 70 to 72.

18 Kudō and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudo*, 209. Similar features occurred in his earlier planar works but excited observers in their new, freestanding *objet* forms, which ran to six works, in X, H, doughnut, tree, rectangle, and flat or horizontal shapes. *Yūgō hannō* (conventionally rendered as "Confluent Reaction" in translations of Kudō's titles) ambiguously suggests both biology and nuclear physics; it might also be rendered as "Fusion Reaction." The "punch" element, and its associations with action and artistic intervention, might be compared to the boxing painting of Shinohara Ushio, discussed below.

19 Kudō and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudo*, 214. The latter were replaced by white string after complaints from the museum staff; the work was likely responsible for two of the several prohibitions issued subsequently that year by the museum against using food items or hanging objects from the ceiling.

20 See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 25, for a photo showing both columns.

21 Nakamura and Kudō, "Kudō Tetsumi," 12–13. Kudō's 1962 *Yomiuri* entry is referred to by Kudō Hiroko alternatively as *Philosophy of Impotence* in Kudō and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudo*, 212–15. A different installation work was featured by Kudō in a solo exhibition by the same name in 1961 (ibid., 211).

22 Kudō Hiroko, interview with author, Tokyo, July 8, 2009. Chong concurs that Kudō's philosophy was "less erotic than ascetic," seeking to free humanity from (quoting Nakamura) "enslavement to the preservation of seeds." Kudō and Chong, *Tetsumi Kudo*, 29. Kudō's sophisticated approach to impotence (*inpo*) contrasts markedly with Toyoshima's casual reference to *Impotenz*, yet both are identifiably within the same practical and artistic orbit. Kudō Hiroko recalls that artists were indeed in the habit of spying on each other prior to the exhibition, in a spirit of competition—at one time, Shinohara snuck into their residence to see the work in progress, and left a note: "Mine's better." Kudō Hiroko, interview with author, Tokyo, July 8, 2009.

23 As was typical for one of these large works, Yoshimura discarded the entire installation after the exhibition. Yoshimura Masunobu, interview with author, Hadanoshi, Kanagawa-ken, June 19, 2008. On the exhibition categories, such as painting, and the propensity of artists to travesty the categories in their sub-

missions, one might consider Noriko Aso's observations on the Tokyo Olympic Arts Festival of 1964 (the first Olympic cultural festival to showcase the arts of the host country). In her analysis, Aso argues that the very canonical, naturalized aesthetic categories for art exhibition in Japan were thoroughly integrated within the state's hegemonic cultural politics ("Sumptuous Re-past"). On this level, artistic practice at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*—and many other contemporary Japanese avant-garde performance practices—acquired a further political charge in their conspicuous disregard of these settled categories.

24 Shinohara Ushio, interview with author, New York, June 2, 2004; Yoshimura Masunobu, interview with author, Hadanoshi, Kanagawa-ken, June 19, 2008.

25 Shinohara Ushio repeats, as rumor, the mythologized version in *Zen'ei no michi*, 95.

26 One of the women taking part in the action was Kishimoto Sayoko, formerly of the Neo-Dada Group. During Neo-Dada she was particularly known for taking part in actions rather than creating formal works (Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 169, 196). Katō maintains that the group also occasionally engaged her in the sort of nude and abject performances for which it would later become notorious, including here at the museum, again without discovery by museum officials. Katō Yoshihiro, interview with author, Tokyo, July 6, 2009.

27 This was perhaps only their third "ritual" performance. On the actions of this group and its performance vocabulary, see Kuroda, "The Rituals of 'Zero Jigen' in Urban Space," 32–37. For a photographic survey of their activities, see Hirata, *Zero jigen*.

28 Removed, ultimately, by the museum officials, this work was apparently never officially entered prior to its "exhibition." Nakazawa had submitted individual entries to the prior two exhibitions in 1960 and 1961, as had other group members. See Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 225, 37.

29 The work was entered as a sculpture. See ibid., 253.

30 While all members exhibited at the *Yomiuri*, the group made its collective debut two months later, issuing its manifesto at the Satō Gallery in May 1962. The critic Nakahara Yūsuke served as their unofficial advisor.

31 See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 168.

32 Tone Yasunao, another latecomer to the *Yomiuri Anpan* (but part of the network of artists associated with the exhibition), states that he was responsible for encouraging Nakanishi to exhibit. Tone, interview with author, New York City, September 29, 2006.

33 For a photo of the original work, see Munroe, *Japanese Art after 1945*, 153; Nakanishi, *Nakanishi Natsuyuki*, 10. Note that these catalogues' translation of *kakuhan* as "churning" misses the title's political significance.

34 Such planning was not unique; at one point in 1960, artists from the Neo-Dada Group seriously debated blowing up the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (the host site for not only the *Yomiuri Indépendant* but also the *Nitten*, the center for the patronage networks of the art establishment, and a periodic recipient of imperial visits). See Yoshida, *Kaitaigeki no maku orite*, 96, 103.

35 Ōoka Makoto and Nakahara Yūsuke both commented on this strange assertion of life by the clothespins in their reports on the exhibition for the *Yomiuri Newspaper*. See Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 269–70.

36 The title of the *Rhyme* series of paintings was in tribute to Karlheinz Stockhausen's music. Nakanishi's gallery showing of these works in the Ginza corresponded to the climax of the Anpo demonstrations in June 1960, including the death of Kanba Michiko. Nakanishi Natsuyuki, interview with author, Izukōgen, November 10, 2008.

37 Though he requested that they refrain from doing so, Nakanishi's friends also attached clips to other works at the exhibition. See Imaizumi, "Takamatsu, Akasegawa, Nakanishi o temochi no kādo ni shite yomiuri anpan ni shibō senkoku o!" I should note that Imaizumi's reports are not mere recollections of a key participant but are based on his detailed, contemporaneous diary entries.

38 Born Hashimoto Masakazu in Oita, Japan, in 1936.

39 Katō Yoshihiro, interview with author, Tokyo, July 6, 2009. Akasegawa refers to this performance as Butoh, a fair statement of the blurred boundaries of art, performance, and dance from which Butoh emerged as a recognizable genre (Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 188). For a discussion of these relations, see Marotti, "Nihon no 1960 nendai zen ei geijutsu undō to Hijikata Tatsumi, sunawachi Hijikata Tatsumi no butō o hyōka suru shomondai," 48–53.

40 Yoshimura Masunobu, interview with author, Hadanoshi, Kanagawa-ken, June 19, 2008. According to Shinohara, Yoshimura added "organizers" for its political connotations. Shinohara Ushio, interview with author, New York, June 2, 2004.

41 Members at various times included Akasegawa, Arakawa Shūsaku, Ariyoshi Arata, Ishibashi Betsujin, Iwasaki Kunihiko, Ueda Jun, Kazakura Shō, Kishimoto Sayoko, Kinoshita Shin, Shinohara Ushio, Tanaka Shintarō, Tanabe Santarō, Toyoshima Sōroku, Hiraoka Hiroko, Masuzawa Kinpei, Yoshino Tatsumi, and Yoshimura, with Miki Tomio and Kudō Tetsumi as associates. Participants in group activities also included Hijikata Tatsumi and the aforementioned Isozaki Arata (a nightly visitor), among others; Yoshimura married an avant-garde dancer in Hijikata's troupe. The Shinjuku White House was effectively Arata's first realized architectural design, based on a sketch he gave to Yoshimura when the two were participating in the New Century Group (Shinseikigun) in Oita, Kyushu; the distinctive name came from the whitewashed mortar with which Yoshimura finished the exterior of the building. The structure was effectively a five-meter cube, with a small bathroom, tiny kitchen area, and small upstairs loft. See Isozaki, "1960 no kokuin," 10. Yoshimura's older brother had funded its construction; Yoshimura would later sell the atelier to fund a plane ticket to New York, in search of work. Yoshimura Masunobu, interview with author, Hadanoshi, Kanagawa-ken, June 19, 2008.

42 Stiles and Ferguson, "Uncorrupted Joy," 289. As Yoshino Tatsumi recalled, lots of so-called junk art would still maintain the "aroma of fine art," but in the case

of Shinohara's works, for example, this was completely absent. Yoshino Tatsumi, interview with author, Tokyo, June 9, 2008. On Shinohara's *Boxing Painting* performances and his *Yomiuri Indépendant* entry of the same title in 1960 (created, though, with dropped bundles of ink-soaked cloth, not with punches), see Lee Mina, "Bokushingu peintingu no rireki o megutte," and "Bokushingu peintingu rireki," in Shinohara, *Shinohara Ushio*, 84–85, 114–19.

43 Kuroda, *Ryūdō suru bijutsu III*, 5–6, 28–29; Yoshino Tatsumi, interview with author, Tokyo, June 9, 2008; Yoshimura Masunobu, interview with author, June 18, 2008; Yoshida, *Kaitaigeki no maku orite*, 96–98, 103.

44 Shigenobu's translation of the former was published in 1958.

45 Tone, interview with author, January 17, 2006; personal communication with author, February 2, 2006.

46 In English, see Gennifer Weisenfeld's *Mavo*. Tone also recalls Murayama's other claim to fame: his prewar Ninja pulp serials, which might be credited with the later boom in Ninja-related works after the Second World War.

47 Interviewing Kitazono was especially notable, as he has only a single published interview from his long career. Tone's best friend had chosen Hori Tatsuo's work for a thesis topic. As Hori had been influenced by Philippe Soupault (with Breton and Aragon, one of the three founders of the magazine *Littérature* in 1919), he was thus able to write on Soupault as well, while still satisfying the Japanese literature concentration. Realizing that such a strategy would allow for additional latitude to take up broader research in his thesis, Tone cast about for a suitable topic. He later reflected, "I struck on the idea of doing a literary history of Japanese Surrealism, and perhaps with that all of my preferences to date were born (laughs)." Tone, unpublished interview by Takashima Naoyuki and Shimazaki Tsutomu.

48 Tone, personal communication with author, January 24, 2006. Takiguchi was a key translator and critical interlocutor of Breton in Japan. Miryam Sas more charitably describes Takiguchi's complex negotiations with Breton as "moving toward and away from Breton at once" (*Fault Lines*, 120).

49 Tone, "Interview," 7; Tone, *Yasunao Tone*, 4.

50 Koizumi was an expert at the time in both South Indian and Japanese traditional music forms. He joined the Geidai faculty full time in April 1960. Such positive support made a deep impression on Tone, especially Koizumi's kindness in giving the group free reign in the studio with its valuable instruments. Tone, interview with author, January 17, 2006. Mizuno's home was the other principal rehearsal space.

51 Tone, unpublished interview by Takashima Naoyuki and Shimazaki Tsutomu.

52 Tone, "Interview," 7; Tone, interview with author, January 17, 2006. This frustration nonetheless echoes that of many within the visual arts who were making a contemporaneous search for a practice adequate to their time.

53 Tone, "Ōtomatizumu to shite no sokkyō ongaku ni tsuite," 15. Subsequent quotations to this work are cited parenthetically in the text.

54 The event, held on September 26, 1960, was sponsored by Nijū seiki buyō no kai, a group of critics and directors. In addition to the newly named Music group, the event featured Wakamatsu Miki, Tsuda Nobuaki, Ishizaki Midori, Yokoi Atsuko, Sugata Keiko, Nara Kamiya, Aoi Yōko, Ichikawa Akira, Fujī Kō, and the Kuni Chiya Dancers. The group had performed publicly for the first time the previous year, in support of the Kuni Chiya Dancers at the Toshima Kōkaidō in Ikebukuro, but without a name.

55 Kuni Chiya was of the Neue Tanz school of dance; her husband was in the upper ranks of the Socialist Party.

56 Our retrospective view of this activity must not reduce it to the confines of genre. Tone emphasizes that this was an interaction not between musicians and dancer but rather, according to the group's conception and practice, between artistic productions that both featured visual and sonic components in their performance. Tone, interview with author, January 17, 2006.

57 *Gutai ongaku*, rubied in *furigana* as "*myūjiku konkurēto*" (*musique concrète*).

58 Blanchot, "Reflections on Surrealism," 92.

59 In another reference to the visual arts, this is Tone quoting Tōno Yoshiaki's criticism of Miro's pure spontaneous method.

60 The work may be heard on Group ONGAKU, *Automatism (ōtomatizumu)*.

61 Tone, "Ōtomatizumu to shite no sokkyō ongaku ni tsuite" 16; Breton, *Conversations*, 43.

62 Blanchot, "Reflections on Surrealism," 88, emphasis added. Echoing Blanchot's postwar characterization of the broad politics of the movement—and its resonance for Tone—Robin D. G. Kelley has argued for the African diaspora's deep engagement, coeval participation, and even centrality within the Surrealist legacy, and the continuing productivity of its particular political openness. See Kelley, "Keepin' It (Sur)real."

63 Tone, unpublished interview by Takashima Naoyuki and Shimazaki Tsutomu.

64 Tone criticized the postwar reception of Surrealism, in particular the work of members of the Surrealism Study Group (including Tōno Yoshiaki, Ōoka Makoto, and Iijima Kōichi, all Tokyo University graduates roughly five years older than Tone), for neglecting—by intent or by ignorance—the centrality of Freud to Surrealism. Tone had attempted to join the group in the late 1950s but was refused admission.

65 As Tone puts it, "The best stuff was disparaged, called frivolous, without value as thought. So I thought I'd like to become frivolous." By the same token, although Tone had political concerns, he disliked literature that got too "political," that wore its politics cheaply. Tone, unpublished interview by Takashima Naoyuki and Shimazaki Tsutomu.

66 Such valorization would have been reinforced by Shigenobu's confiding to Tone his disappointment in the other students' appreciation of automatic writing; he echoed Blanchot's supreme valuation of the practice and intimated that Tone had achieved an initiate's perspective—a compliment that Tone still recalled

nearly four decades later. Tone, personal communication, December 5, 2005; Tone, "Interview," 7. Fellow group member Shiomi Chieko (Mieko) was similarly discovering interests in the visual arts while at Geidai and experimented with drawing, collage, and a kind of action painting. Shiomi, *Fukukusasu to wa nani ka?*, 60.

67 Tone added "group" to avoid the confusion that might result from referring to the group as just "music" (*ongaku*), since Japanese permits no capitalization. Tone, interview with author, January 17, 2006; Tone, unpublished interview by Takashima Naoyuki and Shimazaki Tsutomu. It is for this reason that I have abandoned the common practice of referring to the group as Group Ongaku (or group ONGAKU, as on their CD), as the nontranslation of the Japanese word for "music," *ongaku*, obscures this central relationship to music as a whole while supporting a neonativist notion of linguistic cultural identity. My idiosyncratic capitalization also follows the first announcement of the group's name in September 1960 in the fifth issue of *20th Century Dance* (*Nijū seiki buyō*), where the name is given as "gurūpu 'ongaku,'" or "the 'music' group."

68 Breton stresses the contemporaneousness of Dada and Surrealist practice in this formative period, as evidenced in this and other magazines ca. 1919–20 (*Conversations*, 44). The magazine's title was by Valéry, in ironic quotation of the last line of Verlaine's "Art Poétique": "And all the rest is literature" (*Conversations*, 34).

69 Breton, *Conversations*, 43.

70 Blanchot, "Reflections on Surrealism," 90.

71 Tone, "Ōtomatizumu to shite no sokkyō ongaku ni tsuite," 16. Tone explicitly speaks of their aspiration to go beyond Pierre Schaeffer's and Pierre Henry's practices of *musique concrète*.

72 The note is abstract. As Tone wrote in "Han'ongaku no hō e," 1961, "The pure musical note—it is not sound, but rather the concept of sound [*oto no gainen*] itself. That is because it is nothing but a point in a coordinate system. Compared to the sounds of the natural world that encloses us, it is like a deformed pet animal that we have made over the years."

73 Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 253. Again, all exhibits had to be submitted under conventional categories, no matter how bizarre their form. Thus Kazakura Shō's aforementioned *Sairen* (Siren), a wall-mounted air-siren that would inflate and blow an attached plastic bag around with its fan when switched on, was entered as a painting (250).

74 The tape, unfortunately, was stolen during the course of the exhibition, at which point the work became silent. Tone, unpublished interview by Takashima Naoyuki and Shimazaki Tsutomu.

75 Takiguchi, "'Sakuhin' no kiki," 431.

76 See Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 273.

77 Kawasaki, *Nihon no denshi ongaku*, 130–31; Akasegawa, *Akushon*, 188; Okamoto Takako, personal communication, July 15, 2008.

78 Like Kosugi's entries, the name was in English (Segi, *Nihon andepandan ten*, 268).

Tone also participated in the unofficial stunt of the "miniature restaurant" with Akasegawa, Kosugi, Nakanishi, Tanikawa Kōichi, and Kazakura Shō. See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 196–97. Tone did notice Jasper Johns appreciating his work; this was the year that Johns proclaimed the *Yomiuri Indépendant* "the liveliest group performance in the world." Tone, "Interview," 8.

79 This was the actual mold used to generate the plates for printing the paper. Tone had planned to produce one of these for each day of the exhibition, but it turned out to be too much trouble to repeat the gag. Tone, interview with author, January 17, 2006.

80 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 150–51.

81 See Oguma, *"Minshu" to "aikoku,"* 516–17; also Sherif, *Japan's Cold War*, 198–201. The group's organizing principles of dispersed organization, flexible membership, and contribution based on ability echoed those of their contemporaries in the Society of the Voiceless Voices (Koe naki koe no kai). The group is incorrectly labeled the New Japan Group in Akasegawa's account (*Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 150–51).

82 *Kōi* refers more to the moment or totality of an act or acts (as in, for example, "intentional act"), whereas *kōdō* describes action as a process. In these circumstances they tended to be used fairly interchangeably. See chapter 6.

83 He did join the protest by cultural workers a day or two after the death of Kanba Michiko on June 15, 1960, in which the famous television star Hongō Jun (son of the stage actor Hongō Shin) purportedly screamed "Murderers!" at the charging riot police. Tone, personal communication with author, February 2, 2006.

84 "It doesn't [really] sound like a protest. On the highway, people don't pay attention, so it's not very effective (laughs)." Tone, interview with author, January 17, 2006.

85 As Tone reflected, "If someone had asked us then we probably could have explained much more clearly, but now it's so remote" (ibid.).

86 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 210; Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 410. For an incredible chronicle of the life cycle of a *Yomiuri* exhibit, see Akasegawa, *Akasegawa no bōken*, 47–51; there a photo essay charts Akasegawa's work *Patient's Prognosis* (*Kanja no yogen*, 1962) from its installation at the museum to its disassembly and burning. The piece was laboriously reconstructed in 1994 for Akasegawa's retrospective exhibition and is in the collection of the Nagoya City Art Museum.

87 Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 210.

88 See Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 404n4 for the regulations. The editors also note here that some twenty years after contributing to the suppression of this art, this same museum staged a retrospective show on the 1960s and invited numerous *Yomiuri Anpan* artists to contribute.

89 Previous entries in this series included, for example, a box with a rope inside and a pair of gloves, with instructions for the viewer to put on the gloves and take out the rope—according to Akasegawa's recollection. Akasegawa and Kikuhata,

"Taidan," 20. See chapter 7 for subsequent examples. Some confusion surrounds the title of this work. Akasegawa in *Tokyo mikisā keikaku* identifies it as *On the Anti-reality of the Curtain* (*Kāten ni kansuru hanjitsuzaisei*), and this is duplicated in some of Takamatsu's exhibition catalogues. Both Segi (*Nihon andepandan ten*, 267) and the original exhibition catalogue, however, list two different entries entirely, *On the Anti-reality of the Trunk* (*Toranku ni kansuru hanjitsuzaisei*) and *On the Anti-reality of the Table Drawer* (*Tēburu no hikidashi ni kansuru hanjitsuzaisei*, with the *zai* omitted, likely a misprint).

90 In fact according to Imaizumi, he and Nakanishi conceived the caper; Nakanishi brought the string (of the type used for tying packages), and Imaizumi stretched the tail of Takamatsu's work into the next room; and Shinohara attached the line and ran it from the work to the lobby area. Nakanishi (accompanied by Imaizumi) then took it through the lobby, down the steps, around the fountain, round and round throughout a grove of trees, and forcibly between people talking in the park, stretching the line all the way to Ueno Station. Returning to the museum, they found the line had come undone; the two reattached it, whereupon Takamatsu finally discovered the embellishment and found it pleasing. See Imaizumi, "Yomiuri anpan de Takamatsu no himo o Ueno eki made nobashita no wa watashi da." When a complaint was lodged by a passerby getting entangled in the string, a policeman followed the line all the way back to its point of origin at the *Yomiuri Indépendant*. The officer forced the removal of the string extension, and, since Takamatsu was not present that day, Shinohara Ushio had to run through the park collecting it. See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 187–88.

91 The term in the magazine's title, *Keishō*, can encompass multiple related meanings: figure, form, and shape, as well as image.

92 See Imaizumi, "Yomiuri anpan de Takamatsu no himo o Ueno eki made nobashita no wa watashi da."

93 *Neo Dada Japan 1958–1998*, 279. Nakajima is sometimes identified as a disciple of Itoi for his influence in encouraging Nakajima in performance work.

94 Reactions varied, and indeed some artists had already made extensive preparations for their next *Yomiuri* exhibits. Akasegawa, for example, describes the efforts of Tateishi Kōichi (later "Tiger Tateishi" as a *manga* artist), who had designed a giant Mt. Fuji out of tin to take up an entire room at the exhibition. Visitors would have had to skirt the slopes of the thing—with considerable difficulty—to get to the next room (*Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 12–14). Sawaragi Noi comments on the issue of artist "surprise" or lack thereof in "Ne[k]'kyō to 'netsu'rikigaku," 8–13.

95 Murakami, *Senryōki no fukushi seisaku*, 404.

96 See Imaizumi, "Yomiuri anpan no daikanban ni yonshaku hodo no bō ni hake o tsuke 'shisu' to okiku kaita."

97 Aso, "Sumptuous Re-past," 13. As Aso discusses, affirmative cultural production was especially typified by the ancient arts exhibition organized by the Commission for the Protection of Cultural Properties and held in 1964 at the Tokyo Na-

tional Museum during the Olympics. Aimed at both international visitors and the domestic population, one measure of the exhibition's importance is the astronomically complex logistics entailed by obtaining nearly half (429) of the 877 exhibited works from overseas collections (20). This was the first time the Olympics featured a host nation–centered arts festival (17), a policy continued in Mexico's "cultural Olympics" in 1968.

98 For the exemplary case of the film, *Salt of the Earth* (1954, Herbert J. Biberman, director), see Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 309–58. For the politicized support for ostensibly apolitical Abstract Expressionism, including covert funding and extensive use of patronage networks, see Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*; for a critical response to Saunders on this issue, see also Wise, "Spook Art," 160–64.

6. Beyond the Guillotine

1 Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 20–21, 23. "We talked about a lot of things, and it was the first time that I was made conscious of them and really thought about them [*hajimete ishikika sarete kangaeta no ne*]."

2 Imaizumi, "'Yamanotesen enkan kōdō' wa uenokōen de yukikurete shimatta." *Keishō* (subtitled *Bijutsu o meguru shisō to hyōron*, "Thought and Criticism concerning Art") was at the time supported with money from three of the editors: Imaizumi, Satō Kazuo, and Endō Akira; a fourth editor, Kawani Hiroshi, lacked funds and could only contribute time.

3 Akasegawa's shyness led him to bring Kinoshita, according to Imaizumi (ibid.). The symposium was also Imaizumi's first meeting with Akasegawa. Initially debuting in 1957 as Group Q, Kyushu-ha's membership and group identity is itself contestable. As Kuroda Raiji discusses, Kyushu-ha might be argued to have existed for some ten years, but its fractures and fissures most likely would point to a shorter time scale (see Kuroda, "Appendix: An Overview of Kyūshū-ha"). Kuroda charts three periods of activity: a painting-focused phase from 1957 to 1959; an *objet*-based period between 1960 and 1962; happenings and installations from 1962 to 1964; and a two-part dissolution thereafter. Kuroda separates the members into four clusters: the key founders Sakurai Takami, Ochi Osamu, Matano Mamoru, and Ishibashi Yasuyuki; the core members Tabe Mitsuko, Chō Yoriko, Owari Takeshi, Obata Hidesuke, Ōguro Aiko, Ōyama Uichi, Miyazaki Junnosuke, Obana Shigeharu, Yonekura Toku, and Taniguchi Toshio; and an anti-Sakurai faction of Yamauchi Jūtarō, Kikuhata Mokuma, and Hataraki Tadashi. Kuroda locates Kinoshita in the fourth, peripheral cluster of the group, with others such as Kuroki Yōij and Terada Ken'ichirō. The Fukuoka-shi Bijutsukan's *Kyūshūhaten* catalogue provides twenty-eight biographical sketches; the poster for the group's 1961 Ginza Gallery exhibition shows nineteen members, including infrequently included members such as Nakanishi Kazuko. For more on the group in English see Kuroda Raiji, "Kyūshū-ha as a Movement." See also the excellent retrospective, Fukuoka-shi Bijutsukan's *Kyūshū-ha ten*.

4 "Discourse" might also be rendered as "theses," a more likely translation for Kōtoku's work. See below. In issue 8, "II" substitutes for the subtitle. The possible date of the symposium's recording is limited by the necessity that it antedated the Yamanote-sen action of October 18, 1962, and by the publication of the first part in February 1963. Thus Akasegawa's recollection that it took place in 1962 and his conclusions about its effect on his work match the other known elements of the chronology. See Akasegawa, *Ima ya akushon aru nomi!*, 187; Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 21; Imaizumi, "'Yamanotesen enkan kōdō' wa uenokōen de yukikurete shimatta."

5 Many connected the Japanese Communist Party's previous adherence to parliamentary political strategy with its betrayal of the students in the Diet compound, viewing the latter as a logical extension of its core failings. See, for example, Oshima Nagahisa's film *Nihon no yoru to kiri* (Night and Fog in Japan, 1960), which dramatized and critiqued this act of bad faith on the part of the Old Left.

6 On the incident and its publicity, see Rubin, *Injurious to Public Morals*, 145–94; Hane, *Reflections on the Way to the Gallows*, 51–74. Twelve of the twenty-four defendants had their sentences reduced to life imprisonment by imperial clemency.

7 In the dream sequence the narrator arrives too late to see the execution of the emperor and empress, but he witnesses that of the recently married crown prince and his wife. In a notorious dramatic sequence, the two are decapitated with a saw, and their heads roll away with an odd, metallic sound. See Treat, "Beheaded Emperors and the Absent Figure in Contemporary Japanese Literature," 103.

8 Mishima Yukio, a noted rightist, novelist, and cultural gadfly, helped Fukuzawa get published; fear of a similar attack on himself and his family purportedly left Mishima patrolling his home with a sword for some period of time following the incident. Fukuzawa himself had to go into hiding; his story has never been republished. See ibid. for an in-depth analysis of both story and context, particularly Fukuzawa's attack on an emperor-centered aesthetic hierarchy with scandalous travesties of imperial *waka* poetry. Interestingly no reprisals followed Fukuzawa's earlier article on the wedding of the crown prince to a commoner in 1959, in which he bemoaned the expansion of the imperial family's gene pool, since he was looking forward to "continued inbreeding that would produce a royal family with small heads, bodies like wasps', limbs like those of hairless rabbits, and a need for thick glasses" (ibid., 109). The image of regicide echoed a rumor from the early days of the Occupation, which asserted that a gallows was being erected in front of the Imperial Palace to execute the emperor. This and similar rumors prompted an expansion of the Imperial Guard to four thousand (Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 304, 599n3).

9 Imaizumi, interview with author, Tokyo, December 22, 2004; Imaizumi, "60-nen anpo tōsō ato no nashikuzushi no jōnetsu no naka de nani ka ga umaretsutsuatta."

10 Imaizumi (as Nagara Tō), "Ekuipumento puran" (Equipment Plan), 5–9. The

piece was republished in the eleventh volume of *Kikan*, a special issue of collecting works by and about Imaizumi.

11 Ibid., 35.

12 The plan calls for the guillotine to be set up in a gravel-paved area with four police boxes (a matter of some concern), from which "two bridges" (*futatsubashi*, a recognizable stand-in for the Nijūbashi or "double bridge") are visible. If this location is not feasible, the area with a bronze statue of a "medieval-era samurai general" astride a horse is proposed as a secondary site, undoubtedly Takamura Kōun's statue of Kusunoki Masashige (installed before the palace in 1900). Though Imaizumi does not mention it, an anarchist group called the Guillotine Society (Girochīn-sha) existed briefly in the 1920s; members unsuccessfully attempted to assassinate a general implicated in the murders of the anarchist Ōsugi Sakae; his partner, Itō Noe; and his six-year-old nephew.

13 Takemae, *Inside GHQ*, 476–85, 493–99. A key agency, the Attorney General's Special Investigation Bureau, was headed by Yoshikawa Mitsusada, a famous former *tokkō* (thought police) officer, who replaced Takiuchi Reisaku (a defender of those accused of political crimes). By August 1952 the organization "included many depurged police officers" (493).

14 Ibid., 494–95.

15 The text ironically references Albert Camus, a noted opponent of guillotine use in France, for a description of the classic device's height (two meters). The plan then opts for a more dramatic five-meter height. Imaizumi, "Ekuipumento puran," 7.

16 The code word for the emperor, written in *katakana* phonetic characters, is *ena*, the term for placenta or afterbirth. The suggestion is that the emperor is organic dross, a byproduct that has become impossibly elevated. Ibid., 7.

17 Ibid., 6.

18 Imaizumi, interview with author, Tokyo, December 22, 2004; Nakanishi Natsuyuki, interview with author, Izukōgen, November 10, 2008; Imaizumi, "Kōkyo mae hiroba ni gōjasu na girochin o!"

19 "Satsu," or perhaps "Fuda" Nitō, a pseudonym. *Satsu* refers to paper money; *fuda* are labels, chits, tags, and the like. *Nitō* is simply "two swords," as in the two-sword set worn exclusively by the samurai class.

20 Nakanishi, Jirō, Akasegawa, Satsu, and Nakamatsu, "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi," 15–16. All translations are my own. Subsequent citations appear parenthetically in the text.

21 The ambiguities captured within the discussion format (typically done by mere transcription of a taped recording), while occasionally perplexing, allow the reader to see the actual derivation and clarification of the artists' thinking regarding their practice. In this the *Keishō* discussion resembles a process similar to that which yielded Akasegawa's critical short story, "Aimai na umi," but here one can see an instance of that very process, the search for critical perspective, captured in progress.

22 Nakanishi does not discuss how the distinctions between agitation, action, and literariness might be sorted out in his example of "Furyū mutan," the work that, while undoubtedly *literary*, also precipitated a series of events in consequence.

23 Nakanishi, interview with author, Izukōgen, November 10, 2008. Gonda was also the first purchaser of Nakanishi's art, a canvas from the *Rhyme* (*In*) series.

24 Ibid. Nakanishi recalled being chided as well for his "individualistic impatience."

25 Here again we see the process of critical reflection at work that yielded these projects, as this discussion closely preceded the 1,000-yen work's creation.

26 I refer to the document as an "invitation," though the term *annaijō* also connotes an orientation, perhaps more appropriate for those puzzled individuals who received a copy during the event itself.

27 Nakanishi, "'Sen-en satsu saiban' ni okeru Nakanishi Natsuyuki Shōgenroku I," (Record of Nakanishi Natsuyuki's Trial Testimony in the "1,000-yen Trial"), 96. Akasegawa was among the recipients; his invitation is in the collections of the Nagoya City Art Museum. See Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 20.

28 Nakanishi, interview with author.

29 The image of a crucible generating new forms was duplicated by Akasegawa years later, who used the term to describe the *Yomiuri Indépendant* itself (see part II).

30 The invitation is signed "Urobon K., J. Takamatsu, N. Nakanishi, K. Murata." The text is reproduced in *Keishō* 7 (February 1963): 15; *Bijutsu techō*, no. 347 (October 1971): 95–96 (Nakanishi trial testimony); and Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 33–34.

31 Nakanishi, "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi," 18.

32 See Tone, "Ōtomatizumu to shite no sokkyō ongaku ni tsuite"; Tone, "Han'ongaku no hō e." As discussed in chapter 5, this repurposing of scientific discourse echoes a similar tendency in the historical avant-garde.

33 Akasegawa again has recourse to similar language in conceiving of his wrapped works. See Akasegawa, "The 1960s," 89–90.

34 These have also been exhibited under the title *Compact Objets*.

35 Nakanishi refers to them as "*pōtāburu no obuje*" (portable *objets*) (19).

36 And yet Nakanishi actually submitted work to the *Yomiuri Indépendant* only in its final year, 1963, after prompting by Tone Yasunao. That his works were so well oriented to those dialogues is testimony to the extent to which the discourses originating at the exhibition had spread across contemporary avant-garde practice.

37 This work became part of Takamatsu's entry in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* in 1963. As if to emphasize both the work and the exhibition's aspirations beyond the museum, unseen hands (Nakanishi and Imaizumi) attached a line to it that extended it out of the museum all the way to Ueno Station, one kilometer away (see chapter 5). Unlike Nakanishi, however, Takamatsu had participated in every *Yomiuri Indépendant* exhibition from 1958 to 1963, with the exception of 1960.

38 "Nakamatsu" was one of the pseudonymous participants in the discussion, along with "Satsu Nitō" and "Urobon K." They included the *Keishō* editors Imaizumi

Yoshihiko and Kawani Hiroshi, as well as Kinoshita Shin, a participant in the *Yomiuri Indépendant* from 1958 to 1963, and a former Neo-Dada Group member. See Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 20. Satsu is identifiable in photos as the leather-jacketed Kawani; he also makes clear in the discussion that he was a participant in the event; Nagara is Imaizumi, present but peripheral to the Yamanote action; Urobon K. is Kubota Noboru, the glasses-wearing participant. Perplexingly both Nakamatsu and Nagara seem to have at least witnessed events; thus perhaps Imaizumi takes the Nakamatsu moniker for the first half of the symposium and reverts to his previous "Nagara" for the continuation in issue 8, where "Nakamatsu" disappears.

39 In other words, if they get into such a discussion, their precious lives will be wasted (without anything happening).

40 Commuting is part of the "compulsory time" noted by Lefebvre as defining a large part of the everyday lived experience, one that Lefebvre saw as increasing relative to leisure time. See Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, 53. Lefebvre identifies compulsory time as a third temporal category, distinguished both from the "pledged time" of professional work and the "free time" of leisure: "Compulsive time is part of everyday life and tends to define it by the sum of its compulsions." Here, however, the artists stress the relative *absence of compulsion* within a space that is nonetheless part of this compulsory time. Kara Jūrō similarly addressed his theater to the potentials of these spaces, early on engaging in improvised street theater and harassment of commuting salarymen.

41 Akasegawa's intentness on descriptive adequacy is remarkable, considering that he was neither a participant nor an observer in the action. Kinoshita Shin also was not present at the Yamanote event.

42 This should not be understood as disparaging performance forms of artistic endeavor; such concerns as were voiced by these artists were in fact confronted in a similar fashion at the time by a wide variety of performers. These sorts of issues were precisely what dramatists, actors, and dancers were also struggling with, namely, how one might break out of the confines of the expectations and structure of conventional performance forms to engage directly and meaningfully with one's audience and the world at large. They thus share in the critique of the conventional "theatrical" that is voiced by the artists here.

43 Nakanishi, interview with author, November 10, 2008.

44 At first, according to Nakanishi, he was interested in the pay, but he almost quit when he saw the text of the invitation, and he ended up "just barely coming along." Nakanishi speculated that he was, quite reasonably, in fear of losing his regular job, which required the use of public spaces like trains (21). In fact a number of those involved in the avant-garde paid their bills by working as sandwich-board men at one point or another, including Akasegawa, Arakawa Shūsaku, and Yoshida Yoshie.

45 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 31, features a similar but not identical view.

46 Nakanishi, Akasegawa, Satsu, Takamatsu, Urobon K., and Nagara (Imaizumi), "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi II," 5.

47 Nakanishi, interview with author, November 10, 2008. "Urobon" is Noboru, romanized backward.

48 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 28; Nakanishi et al., "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi II," 8.

49 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 31; Nakanishi et al., "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi II," 16. Despite the provocative discord between Takamatsu's salaryman-like appearance (he was, in fact, a salaryman at the time) and actions, Takamatsu decided that he needed something more. Somewhere around Shinbashi, he told Imaizumi to get him some sunglasses; Imaizumi rushed to a store, bought a pair of ladies' sunglasses (all that were available, since it was October), and met up with the group again at Tokyo Station. Imaizumi, "'Yamanotesen enkan kōdō' wa uenokōen de yukikurete shimatta."

50 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 22.

51 Nakanishi remarks that it might as well have "just become something hidden within a tied up bundle of newspapers at a salvage yard" (14).

52 Nakanishi, "'Sen-en satsu saiban' ni okeru Nakanishi Natsuyuki shōgenroku (I)," 95.

53 Nakanishi, interview with author, November 10, 2008.

54 The details of their actions remain unclear, even in Tone's memory. He vaguely remembers recording and playing train noises, but it is unclear whether a suitable portable recording device existed at the time. Tone suspects that they used a radio in some way. Tone Yasunao, personal communication to author, August 5, 2005. Though not a direct witness, Nakanishi's memory of discussions afterward accords with Tone's recollection of these separate events. Nakanishi, interview with author, November 10, 2008.

55 These included a performance on August 15, 1962, at the Kunitachi Community Hall, a more conventional event space, whose conventionality was explored by selling 100-yen "dinner tickets" to an event instigated by Yoshida Yoshie entitled *Art Minus Art (to Commemorate the Defeat [in the Second World War])*. Hungry ticket holders discovered they were instead *witnesses* to artists eating a banquet in front of them, in an experiment in agitation by double-crossing expectations. At the moment the spectators rose to leave, individual artists began a variety of spontaneous performances (as the others munched away). Performers included Kosugi Takehisa, Tone Yasunao, Hijikata Tatsumi, Kazakura Shō, Yoshimura Masunobu, and Akasegawa Genpei.

56 Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, 30.

57 Coaldrake, *Architecture and Authority in Japan*, 225; see also Fujimori, *Kenchiku tantei no bōken tōkyō hen*, 141–45.

58 In our long interview, Nakanishi specifically recalled having the palace in mind when designing the burned hole.

59 While events began after the rendezvous in Shinagawa, Nakanishi had boarded at Ōimachi. Nakanishi, interview with author. Up until this point, of course, Nakanishi had only attended the exhibitions; his first submission would come the following final year, 1963.

60 The same might be supposed concerning the use of face paint, especially Nakanishi's sense of liberation in its anonymity.

61 If the adoption of such pseudonyms was motivated not just by a sense of play and mystery but also by fear, such concerns are readily understandable. The role that the emperor played in a rightist utopian imaginary (or in a cynical ideological deployment to that effect by those within the blurred spectrum of rightist-mobster activities) meant that a perceived affront could trigger violent, personal repercussions, as attested to in the Shimanaka incident following the publication of "Furyū mutan." This incident itself occurred in a general context of rightist violence, including, most famously, the assassination in 1960 of the Japan Socialist Party chairman Asanuma Ineijirō during a televised political rally.

62 Apart from reasonable fears in the wake of the Shimanaka incident, Imaizumi was soon sought by police pursuing inquiries into the League of Criminals and the *Akai fūsen* book. Imaizumi had assembled the artists for the work, which was printed at the same print shop used for *Keishō* and for Akasegawa's 1,000-yen note project. According to Imaizumi, his inclusion of an Akasegawa 1,000-yen note—complete with convenient cut-along-the-dotted-line marks for detaching it—might even have triggered a counterfeiting prosecution; thus Akasegawa and others attempted to conceal his involvement whenever possible. It was also Imaizumi who had originally tricked the young woman at the print shop into believing that police permission had been granted for the printing of the 1,000-yen notes. Imaizumi, interview with author, Tokyo, December 22, 2004; Imaizumi, "Hanzaishadōmeiin no manbiki ga gen'in de Akasegawa sen'ensatsu saiban no maku ga kitte otosareta"; Imaizumi, "Yomiuri anpan no daikanban ni yonshaku hodo no bō ni hake o tsuke 'shisu' to okiku kaita."

63 Imaizumi, interview with author, Tokyo, December 22, 2004; Imaizumi, "60-nen anpo tōsō ato no nashikuzushi no jōnetsu no naka de nani ka ga umaretsutsuatta."

64 See Nakanishi et al., "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi," 18.

65 It is this everyday commuting setting that distinguishes the discussion of the Yamanote-sen action from that of the events in the Kokuritsu Kōminkan, featured in part 2 of the symposium.

66 Originally "Supai no kiyaku" (see chapter 3). Akasegawa considers 1962 the year the Neo-Dada Group ended (although the Sweet [Suito] exhibitions of March, April, and May 1963 were loosely connected to it). See Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 20.

67 In Nakanishi's case, with the exception of the Yamanote-sen action (a nongroup group), and the loose collective of Group Ei (Sharp), this was his first participation in group artistic practice.

68 Izumi Tatsu's name appears on some iterations of the Hi-Red Center's name cards, including the card for the "Shelter Plan" event. The assistants also had name cards identifying their "official" status. Tone, interview with author, January 7, 2006.

69 Akasegawa adds that it was to puff them up, in the minds of others as well as their own. Akasegawa Genpei, phone interview by the author, December 2000. According to Weisenfeld, The seminal interwar avant-garde group MAVO similarly was said to have been named through throwing the first letter of the principals' names into the air. The name was intentionally enigmatic, designed to attract attention and add mystery to their work. Weisenfeld, *MAVO*, 63–64.

70 Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 23.

7. Naming the Real

1 The addition of "self-styled" and "ultra" denote pretentious behavior, far from the norm, to be belittled and held in suspicion. The absence of a direct reference to art in "avant-garde" also implies some sort of Red-tinged radicalism.

2 "Gaka ga kyūsen'en satsu o mozō," *Asahi Shinbun*. I render *mozō* here as "forges" instead of "imitates" because the article is clearly referring to a criminal act. See chapter 1 for the distinctions between *mozō* and *gizō* as criminal offenses and categories of money resemblance.

3 Note the gratuitous beret on the police's composite image of the perpetrator, issued in December 1963.

4 "Gaka ga kyūsen'en satsu o mozō," emphasis added. As discussed in chapter 3, Akasegawa's notes were single-sided, reproducing the front of the 1,000-yen note only. The second plate was for the invitation (*annaijō*) for the *Aimai na umi ni tsuite* exhibition and in no way resembled the reverse face of the bill. The photo of one of Akasegawa's notes reproduced in the *Asahi* article shows a person lifting a corner of the note; shadows obscure whether there is printing on the back. The photographed note is in fact the one included on the front of issue 8 of *Keishō*, attached with dotted lines to cut along. Printed with green ink on craft paper, this note was blank on the reverse. See *Keishō* 8 (June 1963), unpaginated attachment and 1. The *Keishō* text is visible below the lifted note and is in fact the continuation of the "Direct Action" symposium.

5 The article appeared in advance of the second interrogation of January 31.

6 It is alleged that Akasegawa was able to convince one shop to make them by claiming that he had received advance permission from the police.

7 "Sen'en satsu mozō; Yonin o shoruisōken; Chi-37 to wa mukankei nisesatsu," *Asahi Shinbun*, February 18, 1964. Although the title announces the lack of connection to the *Chi*-37 notes, it still calls the works *nisesatsu*, or counterfeit money.

8 Akasegawa, "'Shihonshugi rearizumu' ron" (Theses on "Capitalist Realism"), 25. Page numbers are to the reprinted version; subsequent citations are inserted

parenthetically in the text. My translation, included in Marotti, "Politics and Culture in Postwar Japan," as Appendix B, profited from a previous anonymous translation (possibly by David Goodman): "Capitalist Realism," appearing in *Concerned Theatre Japan*; in several cases I retain the original translation text.

9 The Japanese phrase is conventionally associated with Kafka's short story "Metamorphosis" to describe the narrator's sudden, horrific awakening as an insect, but in fact is from the first sentence in the translation of *The Trial*, describing Josef K.'s sudden arrest one morning and transformation into a criminal suspect. Here it refers to Akasegawa's unexpected, libelous condemnation by the *Asahi* as a participant in a major criminal conspiracy, combining aspects of both Kafka works in Akasegawa's sense of unrecognizable metamorphosis through accusation (the sister as "tin toy").

10 A paraphrase of the splash of headlines from the *Asahi* article.

11 The face on the B-series 1,000-yen note, the one featured in Akasegawa's works and the *Chi*-37 incident.

12 *Jishō chō zen'eiha*, the same term used for Akasegawa in the newspaper's headline.

13 An indirect quote from the *enka* song by Murata Hideo, "Life's Theater" ("Jinsei gekijō"): "Yaru to omoeba, doko made mo yaru sa. Sore wa otoko no tamashii ja nai ka [If I decide to do it, I'll do it all the way! That's what it is to be a man" (literally, that's a man's spirit, isn't it?)]."

14 *Hishitai* (subject for viewing) is a neologism based on *hishatai*, a photographic subject.

15 *Tsūka* (passing through) echoes its homonym, *tsūka* (currency). I thus render it as "circulate." *Futokoro* (breast pockets) refers metaphorically to money circulating through our very bosoms.

16 Marx, *Capital*, 719.

17 Akasegawa found the interrogations in particular to be rather frightening, if also a bit unreal. Akasegawa, interview with author, October 18, 1997, Tamagawagakuen, Tokyo, Japan.

18 Both Akasegawa's works and his concept of Capitalist Realism compare instructively with the contemporary efforts of Gerhard Richter (along with Konrad Lueg and Sigmar Polke): both the Capitalist Realism exhibition by Lueg and Richter (*Leben mit Pop—Eine Demonstration für den Kapitalistischen Realismus*, October 11, 1963, of which Akasegawa was unaware) and Richter's painting from photographs—the latter an attempt to eliminate "conscious thinking"—interrogate apparent objectivity and present the frightening abstraction lurking in supposed normality. See Richter, *The Daily Practice of Painting*, 18–21, 30–31.

19 *Mujun* etymologically carries a sense of impossibility as well; thus Akasegawa's phrase also might be read as an "impossible movement."

20 *Les Chaises*, 1952.

21 The ambiguity results from the numerically indeterminate nature of Japanese nominals; in this case, either term may be understood as singular or plural.

22 Again, there is a disjunction between Akasegawa's language of an older and less sophisticated socialism, concerning the "currency system" or the "system of private property," and his representation of capitalism as extending to consciousness and flesh. As I suggested in chapter 3, this may have been related to the peculiar history of the Left and its suppression in Japan.

23 See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 70–71, 75, 82–83, for images of the chair at several exhibitions in 1963. The chair appears to be given increasing prominence in its display, although its wrapping did not keep Okamoto Tarō and other visitors from actually sitting on it.

24 In a sense, this was the actual effect of the *Chi*-37 incident counterfeits on the B-Series 1,000-yen note: it had to be replaced with a new series.

25 It is precisely the political ambiguities of categories such as "onlooker" that came to especially trouble the Japanese state circa 1968: the border between observer and participant in activism began to break down, as thousands of people found the motivation and means for political engagement. On the details of this process, and its origins in a shift in activist tactics in late 1967, see Marotti, "Japan 1968."

26 On Akasegawa's copy of the Yamanote-sen event invitation, *kakuhan* is handwritten in Kanji just below the printed *katakana* characters in the original's text, possibly reflecting his own particular interest in the term.

27 Again, because of the ambiguity of nominals in Japanese, Akasegawa's term, *honmono*, is possibly "real things," but in context it principally appears to refer to one object, currency. At a minimum, currency is at the apex of a descending order of "real things" asserting their status.

28 Akasegawa's term, *kao*, is a pun on the "face" of a note (as in the obverse side of the 1,000-yen note, the side his notes duplicate) and a human face, again oddly personifying and corporealizing the monetary system.

29 Actually paulownia; I have substituted a more readily recognizable, similarly weak wood. Shiv, or *dosu*, refers specifically to the long knife used notoriously by *yakuza* and rightist assassins, such as the murderer of Socialist Party Chairman Asanuma Inejirō.

30 Concealed by the romanization here is the fact that the final characters in both compounds are the same, read differently as *kei* and *gata*.

31 Particularly heroic in this regard was Akasegawa's decision to fight his prosecution rather than issue an apology, accept culpability, and avoid risking serious penalties and difficulties. In reflecting on this decision, it should be kept in mind that the Japanese trial system at the time, lacking juries, had a conviction rate at trial approaching 100 percent.

32 In such a fantasy we might discern the figure of the general strike, transformed almost beyond recognition.

33 Akasegawa, "Aimai na umi," 218.

34 Ibid. *Nikutai* is here rendered as "body" instead of "flesh."

35 Nakanishi Natsuyuki insists that Hi-Red Center was not a group, but rather

a means for anonymity, "in much the same way that Rose Sélavy was not Duchamp's pen name." Nakanishi, interview with author, Izukōgen, November 10, 2008.

36 Imaizumi, interview with author, Tokyo, December 22, 2004; Imaizumi, "Yomiuri anpan no daikanban ni yonshaku hodo no bō ni hake o tsuke 'shisu' to okiku kaita."

37 See especially Nakanishi et al., "Chokusetsu kōdōron no kizashi," 19, 21. In chapter 6 I trace the relations between these two elements and a third component, the text of the invitation for the events (as do the artists in the symposium).

38 In several published photos, Okamoto Tarō demonstrates his failure to perceive the intent of "isolation" by sitting on the wrapped chair. See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa no bōken*, 71.

39 *Konpō*, rendered here as "wrapped," might also be read as "packed," or "packaged." Akasegawa's works were contemporaneous with Christo's wrapping experiments, which notably include *Two Wrapped Wooden Chairs* (1961). Akasegawa was reportedly made aware of Christo after beginning his own wrapping works: shown a picture of his *Wrapped Motorcycle* (1962), he rejected Christo's tendency to allow part of the wrapped object to remain visible. (In that work, the cycle is bound in polyethylene and rope, with wheels and kickstand sticking out from the translucent bindings.) See Laporte, *Christo*, 17, 33, for images of these works. Yoko Ono also later engaged in a wrapping performance project, which included a chair partially wrapped in gauzy cloth (*Wrapped Chair for London* as the performance, *Wrapped Chair / Hide Me* as the resultant work, 1966). Her wrapping performances began in 1961 before a trip to Japan, according to an interview in 1997. See Ono and Iles, *Yoko Ono*, 67–74.

40 Laporte, *Christo*, 48.

41 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 86. Similar frustrated figurations include, for example, Toyoshima's framed works (discussed in chapter 5).

42 Yamada, interview with author, Nagoya, December 24, 2006. Yamada was in fact the cocreator of the reproductions of the two wrapped canvas works (with Akasegawa) for the occasion of his comprehensive retrospective of Akasegawa's works in 1995. For images of the complete exhibit (suggesting C-M-C), see Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 85, 87. Conversely a small photo from the *Fifth Mixer Plan* depicts a wrapped object between two panels covered in bolted-down 1,000-yen notes, suggesting a version of M-C-M, Marx's formula for the circuit of capital (119). On the distinction between the two circuits, see Marx, *Capital*, 249–53.

43 See ibid., 85–87.

44 Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 65. The Group Sweet participants varied from exhibition to exhibition: the first included, in addition to Akasegawa, Kazakura Shō, Kinoshita Shin, Shinohara Ushio, and Tanaka Shintarō; the second, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Toyoshima Sōroku, Shinohara, Tanaka, Yoshino Tatsumi, and Miki Tomio. Akasegawa himself did not participate in the third Group Sweet

exhibition by Shinohara, Tanaka, and Yoshino. In addition to the wrapped objects and 1,000-yen notes, one of Akasegawa's *Vagina Sheets* works appears to have made an appearance, as well as the plate for printing the invitation to his collage exhibition, mounted on the cover of a book.

45 Note here again the careful absence of references to either art or exhibitions in the names and announcements of events by Hi-Red Center.

46 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 146–48. In another instance, the large wrapped *objets* were made to protrude from the gallery window, to be visible from the nearby station. The other experiment during this exhibition with interactions in the everyday world consisted of Nakanishi wearing an eyeshade mask, balloons clipped to his arms, and covered with metal clothespins painfully clipped all over his face, hair, and body, led outside by Takamatsu and Akasegawa into the square in front of Shinbashi Station. This area was typically filled with people hanging out, commuting, betting on horses, and the like. Nakanishi's spectacle was also visible from the elevated tracks (136–43).

47 See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 64, for exhibition photos. Yoshino Tatsumi's *Rainbow Plan* of 1963 similarly provides a painted homage to *Fountain*. In this, Japanese artists were part of the worldwide rediscovery of Duchamp and elevation of the importance of *Fountain*, in particular.

48 See ibid. for a photo of this item. The sheets used came from a poorly printed set in which several 1,000-yen images appeared on low-quality paper—likely the third set, printed on craft paper. There is some question of the identity of the photographed exhibition, however: identified in the catalogue as the Kawasumi Gallery exhibition, the pictures show a work by Toyoshima who, according to the *Neo-Dada Japan, 1958–1998* catalogue, participated in the Dai-ichi Gallery exhibition, not the first exhibition at Kawasumi.

49 See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 102, 105–6, 111, 199.

50 In their exhibit *Living with Pop: Program for a Demonstration for Capitalist Realism* in Düsseldorf in October of that year, Gerhard Richter and Konrad Lueg similarly investigated interior spaces. The exhibition featured otherwise ordinary everyday interior furnishings and items on pedestals; the artists took the additional step of entering their exhibit and acting as living *objets*.

51 Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 55.

52 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 104. Subsequent references are cited parenthetically in the text.

In 1983, Nakanishi described the thought behind the name Hi-Red Center in terms of a productive ambiguity: "Our concern with this simple method of choosing a name was to try to remove from it any reflections of specific thoughts or conceptions. The name was simply *a gathering up of things which already existed*. By this nomenclature, we would proactively obscure *both the nature of the connection and arrangements between Takamatsu, Akasegawa, and Nakanishi as a group*, as well as the purpose of the group itself. And yet in fact this very lack of clarity

would go on to give versatility and varied purpose to the activities of these three individuals" (Nakanishi, "Hai reddo sentā ni tsuite," 43).

53 Akasegawa's description of the events leaves one wondering how accidental this misprint actually was (106–7).

54 "Red" is capitalized here, but not on the group's first business cards. The second set of cards includes the mystery member Izumi Tatsu as the "fourth member of the trio."

55 The beer was provided free by the just-opened Suntory Beer company as part of a promotion (108).

56 Nakanishi, "Hi-Red Center" (draft translation by Sean Gilsdorf), 28.

57 Hence, perhaps, Takamatsu's casual pose as salaryman transformed during the Yamanote-sen action.

58 Akasegawa retrospectively comments on this effect in a photo caption: "You worry that if you were to just touch them, the mass of them would all jump into life" (125).

59 Miyahara, *Akai fūsen arui wa mesu ōkami no yoru*, 49–56; Imaizumi, "Hanzaisha-dōmeiin no manbiki ga gen'in de Akasegawa sen'ensatsu saiban no maku ga kitte otosareta."

60 Again, their trademark evoked the intensity of radical leftist tracts, which often punctuated urgently felt sentences with several of these exclamation points, put diagonally for emphasis—a kind of exclamation point in italics. These marks were issued on a variety of projects and invitations, including stickers ("seals"). See, for example, Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 84–85, 88–90.

61 The Naiqua Gallery was, until its transformation into a gallery, the Miyata Internal (*naika*) medicine clinic; *naiqua* is an older version of the romanization of *naika*.

62 The other artists were Shimizu Akira, Ochi Osamu, Tanaka Shintarō, Tateishi Kōichi, Yoshinaka Taizō, Suga Keisuke, and Fukuoka Michio. See Akasegawa, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*, 83, for the invitation.

63 Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 158–62.

64 See Kaido and Elliott, *Reconstructions*, 70.

65 Or perhaps an unreal thing.

66 Nakahara, "'Fuzai no heyaten,'" 203–4, my translation. A full translation of the piece by Reiko Tomii may be found in Munroe, *Japanese Art after 1945*, 384. I follow Tomii's more accurate translation of the title, despite the English title provided in the exhibition's invitation, "Room *in* Alibi" (see fig. 7.14).

67 Kafka, *The Trial*, 9–10.

8. The Moment of the Avant-Garde

1 Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 27–28.

2 *Kyōjutsu chōsho*; see chapter 1.

3 The term *ankoku* in the dance troupe's name has a number of referents: it can

refer to a pitch-black color; to darkness, either literal or figurative, as in the Dark Ages (*ankokujidai*); to an underworld (especially of a criminal nature, as in *ankokugai*); or to a substratum or hidden world that remains apart from change. The troupe's name undoubtedly was intended to play on all of these meanings.

4 As Akasegawa states, "It wasn't by mail. That was Kafka[esque]. I felt like it would have been just as well for it to come by mail, and yet [it showed up] by an entirely different, subterranean route." Akasegawa, "Kisai Akasegawa Genpei nōnai rizōto tanbō," 34.

5 *Kikan* (organ) can mean, variously, a bulletin, a means or instrument, or an engine or mechanism. Participants who included their names on the group's newsletter, *Sen'en satsu saiban e*, differed between issues but included Kawani, Akasegawa, Nakanishi Natsuyuki, Tone Yasunao, Takamatsu Jirō, Imaizumi Yoshihiko, Ishiko Junzō, Sugimoto Masazumi, Takiguchi Shūzō, Nakahara Yūsuke, Hariu Ichirō, Yoshida Yoshie, Ōshima Tatsuo, Tōno Yoshiaki, and Miki Tamon.

6 Imaizumi, "Imaizumi o shōnin ni tateru to, Akasegawa no sen'en satsu ga gizō yōgi ni naru to Sugimoto bengoshi ga odokashita." For details of some of the group's contentious discussions in print during the trial, see Tomii, "State v. (Anti-)Art."

7 Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 27–28.

8 The argument had to take the form of affirming Akasegawa's act within the category of contemporary art; this would allow an argument for freedom of expression and also expand the definition of art itself (ibid., 35). Sugimoto's willingness to frame the trial as a contestatory process and to launch a defense which presumed and asserted (against both standard practice and the implications of an acquittal rate less than 0.01 percent) a fact-finding role for the open court proceedings places him in the minority of activist defense lawyers engaged in such practices in the 1960s. See Ishimatsu, "Are Criminal Defendants in Japan Truly Receiving Trials by Judges?," 144.

9 Akasegawa, "Kōi no ito ni yoru kōi no ito." All translations from this essay are mine. Subsequent references are cited parenthetically in the text, referencing the reprinted essay in *Obuje o motta musansha*. My abridged translation may be found in Chong, *From Postwar to Postmodern, Art in Japan 1945–1989*.

10 Imaizumi allows that in fact the issue may not have emerged until March, but considering that the indictment was only delivered on November 1, 1965, his editing and Akasegawa's essay were completed with remarkable speed. See Imaizumi, "Imaizumi o shōnin ni tateru to, Akasegawa no sen'en satsu ga gizō yōgi ni naru to Sugimoto bengoshi ga odokashita."

11 Akasegawa makes this identification earliest in "The Ambiguous Ocean"; it is stated most clearly in his "Theses." See chapters 3 and 7.

12 A jelly with a vegetable starch base.

13 See part I for the discussion of the state's assertion of its right to adjust *shakai tsūnen* in the courts.

14 Rancière's "police" partakes of both senses in its ambiguous relation to sociological determination and to "empirical" agents.

15 Ninomiya Sontoku was the perennial paragon of the straightforward, upright life, didactically presented in contemporary elementary school textbooks.

16 *Magirawashii*, the modern form of the adjective from the *mozō* statute, *magirawashiki*, speaking of a thing with a "confusable exterior," *magiwarashiki gaikan*.

17 This is similar to the path that was taken in my reconstruction in chapter 3 of the immediate circumstances of Akasegawa's 1,000-yen note, upon which subsequent chapters have elaborated.

18 Note that everydayness is here gendered as a womb.

19 One might easily look further back to works such as Gustave Courbet's *L'Origine du monde* (1866) for earlier examples of similar obsessions. Such images echo what Susan R. Suleiman has identified in Surrealism as the tendency of the avant-garde to make the female body its "obsessional object" in targeting an assault upon reality. In her argument, it implies a normative, male-gendered subject position for this practice, posing problems for women's participation in both theory and practice ("A Double Margin," 151–53, 159, 165). The overwhelmingly male-dominated (though ambiguously sexual) art scene in Japan in the early 1960s and the wide range of art obsessed with the female body certainly seem to point to an analogous situation. To the extent that such art assumes a male-gendered subject, it would also be of a piece with much of the oppositional political discourse of the time in Japan. Yet this rather overlooks the particularity of the discourses of flesh and system (such as by Akasegawa or Kudō) and the ambiguously shifting gender tropes within the broader contemporary avant-garde. The complexities of the contemporary discourse of Eros and liberation—ranging from obvious misogynists such as Mishima Yukio to the ambiguous presentations of Ankoku Butoh dancers such as Hijikata Tatsumi, Ohno Kazuo, and Ohno Yoshito, and mediated by theoretical readings of Bataille, de Sade, Lautréamont, Genet, Marcuse, and premodern Japanese texts—pose real challenges for identifying its precise gender and sexual codings and configurations. This discourse would include the valorization of underground gay sexuality, itself an intensely complex discursive field. For example, the *bara* (rose) trope, while leading to the notion of the "rose tribes," *barazoku*, also contains references to occult and secret society practice (such as described throughout the writings of Shibusawa Tatsuhiko and echoed in graphic art by Yokō Tadanori, as in his poster for Hijikata Tatsumi's *Rose-Colored Dance*).

20 Akasegawa, "Sutarin igo no obuje," 72–73.

21 Compare with the "Aimai na umi" "antipersonnel pistol." See chapter 3.

22 *Seppuku* is the classical ritual of taking one's own life by disembowelment with a *wakizashi* (short sword).

23 A third example of cutting, this is the severing of intent from reception or effect.

24 Here too we see an echo of the anarcho-syndicalist origins of the discourse of direct action. On Akasegawa's adoption of this highly traditional Marxist term,

despite his more complex (and even Marxian) analysis of capitalism, see chapter 3.

25 "Thinking is actually and above all the force of resistance, alienated from resistance only with great effort" (Adorno, "Resignation," 175). Adorno's radio address was in response to attacks on him by members of the German student movements in the 1960s, charging them in turn with fetishizing the transformative potential of practice without forethought and engaging in "pseudo-activity." Akasegawa's work, by contrast, as art, necessarily engaged in a dialectical relationship with practice.

26 The word for both senses of "movement" (*undō*) is the same in Japanese, just as it is in English.

27 Akasegawa and Kikuhata, "Taidan," 28.

28 The First Haneda Incident involved members of the Three-Faction Alliance, or Sanpa, fighting riot police and private security guards to attempt to block Prime Minister Satō Eisaku from departing to Saigon. I argue in "Japan 1968" that this began a process that ultimately catalyzed mass activism in 1968 and created a space for dissent. Key to this process was a perceptual shift: the movement of protest from noise to voice, from criminality to rationality, and a perception of the legitimacy of protester force, and the illegitimacy of the riot police. See Marotti, "Japan 1968." Akasegawa is doubly prescient here, both in recognizing the importance of this event and in identifying the crux of the struggle in a battle between silencing and voice, between police and politics.

29 Akasegawa, "Sutarin igo no obuje," 68. As Akasegawa phrases this contention, "a tear gas grenade, a clod of earth and rocks, a nightstick, a pop bottle, handcuffs . . . we can see all of these things as *objets*. Yet these would all be referred to in a courtroom as 'exhibits' [*butsu*, literally "things"]" (68). Through the hard-won insights of his own critique, he presciently identifies this key transformative political struggle of the late 1960s as preeminently a contention over perception, over openness to activist claims and the status of violence, on the one hand, and a systemic reduction of all dissent to mere criminality, on the other.

30 Ibid., 70–71, 73. Akasegawa wryly notes how Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917) involved a liberation of both urinal and consciousness in the same year as the Russian Revolution; he also recalls the Eighth Army of the Chinese Communists unknowingly put toilets to use to wash rice (69–70).

31 Debord, "Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life," 68. We might also note that Jacques Rancière's particular theorization of police and politics itself originates from 1968, as an attempt to grasp adequately the uprisings as a rupture. Rancière, *Althusser's Lesson*, xiv, xix.

32 For an analysis of the particular links between Ankoku Butoh and this art, see Marotti, "Nihon no 1960 nendai zen'ei geijutsu undō to Hijikata Tatsumi, sunawachi Hijikata Tatsumi no butō o hyōka suru shomondai" (Hijikata Tatsumi and Japanese Avant-garde Art Movements of the 1960s, and Problems in Evaluating Hijikata Tatsumi's Butoh), 48–53. Akasegawa has compared his own efforts

to Hijikata's, in particular, with a great deal of self-deprecation and humility; I would argue, however, that Ankoku Butoh's evolving experiments owed a great deal to *Yomiuri*-centered art experiments (as well as to the direct contributions of many artists, including Nakanishi, Akasegawa, Kosugi, and Kazakura). See also Hijikata Tatsumi Kinen Shiryōkan, *Bijutsu to butō no Hijikata Tatsumi ten*.

33 On the particular creation of a moment of political possibility in 1968 as a result of a complex politics of violence, and for a microhistory of this mass political subjectivation, see Marotti, "Japan 1968." As an example of the links between the new cultural activism and that of Akasegawa and his contemporaries, one might consider the photographer Nakahira Takuma and his search for cracks and fissures in a seamless urban landscape of capitalist domination and the state. Indeed, Nakahira contributes a closing image in his signature style of Akasegawa in motion on the copyright page of Akasegawa's *Obuje o motta musansha*. On Nakahira's distinctive textual and photographic language, see Prichard, *Ruined Maps*.

34 In an essay considering the "rituals" of the group Zero Dimension, the critic Kuroda Raiji (aka Kuro DalaiJee) has argued that the "individuals and artists in the performance field . . . inherited in a more direct way the lawlessness that was inherent in the Yomiuri Indépendants" ("The Rituals of 'Zero Jigen' in Urban Space," 32). I agree, but (as I argue above) would also expand his list beyond art groups to include a wider range of provocative performances (including theater, music, dance, and film) and associated politics. For an example of one of these wider linkages, see the discussion by the experimental filmmaker and radical activist Adachi Masao of his connections with Akasegawa and Hi-Red Center in Harootunian and Adachi, "Cinema / Revolution," 93–95.

35 In the case of the Situation Theater, one particular incident stands out: on January 3, 1969, after the company was ejected from their space at Hanazono Shrine, and after the metropolitan government refused to grant a performance permit, the group performed a play in Chuo Park (west of Shinjuku Station and the only other open ground in Shinjuku). Their tent was surrounded by three hundred shield-bearing riot police. The playwright, director, and performer Kara Jūrō and founding members Ri Reisen and Sasahara Moshu (then of Theater Yakōkan) were arrested. Theater Center 68/69 announced their manifesto in June 1969 for a mobile theater, "Plan No. 1 for a Mobile Theater" ("Idō engeki keikaku daiichiban") in a news poster, "Communication Plan No. 1" ("Komyunikēshon keikaku daiichiban"). See Kuwahara and Sasame, *Japan avangyarudo*, 48.

36 I thus end at the takeoff point both for renewed activism and for Akasegawa's articulations of the critical potentials of his work, reflecting on the active and remarkable legal combat within Municipal Courtroom 701 with which this work begins. As a guide to those and subsequent events involving the artist, I would recommend Akasegawa's own witty retrospective writings as an excellent beginning, and of course the catalogue by the curator Yamada Satoshi for his exhaustive retrospective exhibition, *Akasegawa Genpei no bōken*.

Epilogue

1 The photos of the works in police possession (with evidence tags attached) by Hanaga Mitsutoshi were in fact taken due to Akasegawa's real anxiety that, as criminal exhibits, the works would subsequently be destroyed after trial. Akasegawa, Kawani Hiroshi, and Hanaga made a special trip to the evidence room to preserve the works on film. Akasegawa, *Tokyo mikisā keikaku*, 278.

2 In fact both of his names, Akasegawa Genpei and Otsuji Katsuhiko, are equally "real" and pseudonymous; his birth name was Akasegawa Katsuhiko.

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WILLIAM MAROTTI is associate professor of history at the University of California, Los Angeles.

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