

When War Becomes Peace: Ruination and Transvaluation in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace
Memorial Parks

by

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ABSTRACT

In postwar Japan, “peace” has become the memorial scaffolding that structures the collective national orientation towards the legacy of the Asia-Pacific War, in large part owing to the devastating bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Yet the atomic catastrophes endured by the two cities have become subsumed into what Anne McClintock terms the “administration of forgetting.” The traumas associated with the bombs have been construed in Japan as an experience of national victimhood and a moral lesson for humanity, in the process obfuscating histories of imperial terror that I argue are carried forward in significant formal continuities, transvalued in a discourse of peace. Peace, in this regard, becomes a mode for asserting a clean rupture and justifying political amnesia.

Peace is the directive of the memorial landscapes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and peacemaking was the process by which ruination became the pretext for social, political, and urban reinvention. The Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Memorial Parks, both unveiled in 1955, manifest the ways in which dominant public discourses of peace-making and nuclear remembrance were actualized through the reconstruction of the post-atomic cities.

The processes behind the making of the two parks and their approaches to remembering atomic violence trouble the perception that the memorials are shaped solely by the circumstances of the bomb and the postwar milieu of liberal democracy. These sites, I argue, are intimately informed by a constellation of transwar aspirations, wartime representational practices, bureaucratic tensions, as well as urban and regional histories that span beyond the moment of 1945.

In its dual focus on the spatial narratives of Tange Kenzō’s plan for Hiroshima and the material and bodily politics of Kitamura Seibō’s Peace Statue in Nagasaki, this study also addresses the persistent marginalization of Nagasaki in the discourse of nuclear disaster. A close study of these two sites makes evident the need to take seriously the transmutation and transvaluation of representational modes across shifting regimes. The threat of historical forgetting emerges not only in the absences and forced silences, but also in the adoption of a passive gaze towards our extant memorial infrastructure.

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For a good portion of my childhood, my father was invested in the production of a documentary centered on a *hibakusha*, Yamaguchi Tsutomu, who had the terrible misfortune of experiencing both atomic bombings. It is this work that brings me to the serious inclusion of Nagasaki, which has rarely been accorded the historical engagement it deserves and demands. My mother has always been my greater supporter, reminding me of my worth and my ability whenever doubt begins to creep in.

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Introduction

In the southwestern prefecture of Miyazaki, there stands a colossal stone tower, over 35 meters tall, fashioned with setbacks that endow it with dramatic heft and an air of triumph (Figure 0.1). When it was first unveiled in 1940, the monument was dubbed the Hakkō Ichiu Tower (*Hakkō ichiu no tō*). The slogan *hakkō ichiu*, engraved on the face of the tower, derives from the *Nihon shoki*, a text dating from 720 CE that served as the official history of the ancient Japanese state. During the early 20th century, it was resuscitated, reformulated, and co-opted by imperial Japanese officials as a rallying call for the colonial project of forming the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.¹ The archaic phrase clunkily translates to “the eight corners of the world under one roof,” referring to the empire’s paternalistic goal of constructing a pan-Asian bloc that could rival and resist the hegemony of the West.²

Built using 1,789 stones donated by organizations located across Japan and the world, the monolith was erected as part of the empire-wide celebrations surrounding the 2,600th anniversary of the ascension of Emperor Jimmu, the mythological founding emperor of Japan who has been construed as the origin of an unbroken line of succession extending to present day.³ The majority of the stones sourced from abroad came from colonial outposts. Some have been traced back to

¹ Walter Edwards, “Forging Tradition for a Holy War: The ‘Hakkō Ichiu’ Tower in Miyazaki and Japanese Wartime Ideology,” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 29, no. 2 (2003), 291.

² Within the text of the *Nihon shoki* itself, the term is said to have been used by Emperor Jimmu during his campaign to overtake the Yamato province (present-day Nara prefecture). Jimmu’s journey began in the Hyūga province, which corresponds to the present-day Miyazaki prefecture, where the tower is located. Upon reaching Kashiwara, in present-day Nara, he designated the site as the place “from which to unite the whole realm, and place the eight corners under [a single] roof,” and proceeded to ascend the throne. The word “one” was not present in the original text of the *Nihon shoki*, and added later in the 1930s when the expression was appropriated by state Shinto ideologues and disseminated across mass media and popular culture. See Edwards, 291.

³ For a focused study on the extensive and multimodal celebrations that took place in 1940, see Kenneth J. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan at Its Zenith: The Wartime Celebration of the Empire’s 2,600th Anniversary* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

buildings of historic value in China, Manchuria, Taiwan, and Korea, suggesting that they may have been seized by military forces as spoils of war.⁴

After the surrender of Japan and the takeover of Allied Occupation forces, the monument emerged unscathed, but bearing a new name: the Tower of Peace (*Heiwa no tō*). Its visage remains nearly unchanged. The *hakkō ichiu* engraving, first removed by Occupation authorities, was quietly reinstalled in 1965, while the surrounding area was renamed Peace Plateau Park (*Heiwadai kōen*) in 1957, as part of a post-war effort to boost tourism in the prefecture.⁵ Though local groups have in recent decades undertaken extensive historical research and advocacy work to bring to light the violence and contested narratives embedded in the structure, these measures have been met with little legislative success.

The unease evoked by the remarkably fluid transition in nomenclature encapsulates one of the key mnemonic crises undergirding wartime memory. “Peace” (*heiwa*) has seemingly naturalized itself in the discourse of the post-colonial memoryscape in Japan, coloring both nationalist self-understanding and international perception.⁶ How, then, did the term come to be such a cursory, catch-all stamp of approval that could be applied to even the most unabashedly overt monuments to Japan’s expansionist project? While peace and war are conventionally read as forces in diametric opposition to one another, I seek to complicate the Manichean treatment of these two concepts in post-war Japan and instead, read them as co-constitutive ideological

⁴ Edwards, 297-99.

⁵ Ibid, 321; Hiroshi Motomura, “Miyazaki’s controversial Peace Tower continues to cause unease,” *The Japan Times*, February 10, 2015, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/02/10/national/miyazakis-controversial-peace-tower-continues-to-cause-unease/>.

⁶ Pacifism is inscribed into the constitution of Japan in the form of Article 9, which stipulates the renunciation of the country’s right to belligerence as sovereign right under the commitment to pursue “an international peace based on justice and order,” and as such prohibits the retention of a standing army. In practice, the latter point remains a technicality, as the Self-Defense Forces, which has third largest national defense budget worldwide, serves as the de facto armed forces of the nation. The possibility of constitutional revision remains a hotly debated issue in Japanese politics.



Figure 0.1. Hinago Jitsuzō, The Tower of Peace (Heiwa no tō), formerly known as the Hakkō Ichiu Tower (Hakkō ichiu no tō), Miyazaki, Japan, 1940. Source: ニッポン旅マガジン <https://tabi-mag.jp/mz0042/>.

forces.⁷ I argue that a more rigorous and critical engagement with “peace” and its operatives is necessary in order to understand the parks not as spontaneous outpourings of reflection in

⁷ This is not to imply that historians have not closely interrogated the trope of postwar Japan as a “peace-loving” nation and the amnesiac tendencies of the state towards colonial and wartime atrocities. Franziska Seraphim has examined the intractable influence of war memory on the development of postwar Japanese politics through the lens of social interest groups, while John Dower’s history of postwar Japan’s “cultures of defeat” captures the experiences myriad of groups across social strata to illustrate the modes of survival, meaning-making, and social action pursued by Japanese citizens in the immediate wake of the war. In Japanese scholarship, Yoshimi Shun’ya has written on an assortment of phenomena such as world’s fairs, communication technologies, and Americanization through threads of continuity spanning across the 20th and 21st centuries. Sociologist Oguma Eiji has examined the production of contemporary Japanese national self-image and the myths of pacifism and homogeneity as a postwar, rather than prewar imperial invention that emerges from a confluence of ideological tensions and retrospective appropriations.

In the specific case of atomic memory, Lisa Yoneyama’s incisive study on Hiroshima has deconstructed the national imaginary of victimhood that shrouds the city to unravel a more complex assemblage of conflicting testimonies, patterns of silence, and colonial entanglements that belie the construction of *hibakusha* (atomic bomb victim) narratives. My study expands from Yoneyama’s call for need to reckon with the fundamental structures of mnemonic narrativization, by examining the ways in which infrastructures of public memory are both physically and discursively formed by the confluence of interests and ideologies that require us to look far before and beyond the event of the bombs.

response to two devastating events, but rather as part of an extended process of managing the ideological burden of fascism and colonial violence through transvaluation and not disavowal.

In the immediate aftermath of war, the conditions of Occupation and the symbolic dominance of the bombs did much to color the tenor of Japanese defeat, intensifying the amnesic tendencies around the legacies of militarism and colonial domination. The act of “peacemaking,” thus, does not merely describe antiwar activism and the pursuit of reconciliation. Rather, it is a conceptual framework for managing the unruly past that relies on the representational tools of an earlier order in order to legitimate its claims.

I take as my subject the Peace Memorial Parks in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the two most prominent memorial sites in Japan constructed under the guiding principle of peace (Figure 0.2, 03). The parks are a useful heuristic for this project for several reasons. First, their emergence proximate to the hypocenters in each city draws an intractable relationship between the nature of the disaster and the (re)built landscape of the cities, enabling us to read memorial-making through the prism of urban reconstruction. The atomic bombs were singular in their targets, but their rhetoric of their impacts spun out into a nationalized discourse of war victimhood and a universalized culture of nuclear anxiety and the perils of technological modernity. Responsibility towards an imagined international community, and a desire to be seen and recognized by a global public is thus built into the ethos of both peace parks. My studies of these two cities examine the ways in which these concerns around post-bomb commemoration were forced to contend with pre-1945 urban histories, artistic practices, and ideological terrains during the construction of the parks.



Figure 0.2. Tange Kenzō, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, 1955. Photo by author.



Figure 0.3. Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park. Photo by author.

Second, the visual disparity between two cities' approaches to representing and memorializing nuclear disaster also provides us with the opportunity to examine how these representational strategies played out across two different media, architecture and public sculpture. The story of Hiroshima will focus on spatial histories, exploring how pre-bomb elements of the urban environment and their symbolic resonances were negotiated and reformulated through the design and construction of the Peace Park. Nagasaki's trajectory allows us to examine the politics of memorialization and reconstruction through the lens of public statuary and bodily discourses.

The Peace Park projects were initiated under the American Occupation but provisionally completed after the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into effect, and continued to expand over the course of decades under changing social contexts and municipal leadership. While attributing particular ideas and decisions to specific authors amidst a complex, networked project is nearly impossible, what is perhaps more productive here is to read against the monumental grain of the parks with an understanding that their construction was propelled through a period of flux and anxiety. The parks were interventions aimed at stabilizing both the mnemonic and urban landscape, acting as nodes from which to conceptualize the past and build out the future.

The invocation of peace not only conveniently effaced the traces of fascism and imperialism in both international and domestic narratives of Japanese history, but also often appropriated the same strategies of representation used to legitimate the previous political order. Fascism, as manifested in Japan, describes a set of structures and processes that arose in reaction to the anxieties of capitalist modernity in the early 20th century, not unlike what took place in Germany and Italy. The production of a timeless myth of a unified ethnic collective was enacted through rituals, educational practices, and cultural expressions that arose amidst the regulatory,

rationalizing regime of the military state.⁸ The debates of whether or not Japan could be considered “fascist” constitute a much broader literature that cannot be addressed in full here. My appellation of fascism here, however, is not in the sense of an established political system, but rather as a mode of cultural production driven by the pursuit of authenticity, consensus, and order in the form of hierarchy, exclusion, and censorship. The aesthetic products of these endeavors did not always succeed in producing the national imaginary they aspired to, and there is no singular “fascist aesthetic” that unifies them. Rather, it is fascism as a participatory, often slippery cultural process of myth-making that arises in the context of this paper.

As Harry Harootunian has argued, in the face of the unevenness enacted by the logic of capitalism, modernism and fascism shared the struggle to find stable representational ground, along with “the desire to resuscitate an aura that was no longer available, which often led to embracing myth, and the effort to construct a conception of semblance.”⁹ By honing in on these officiated spaces of remembrance, I seek to draw out the processes of transvaluation that artists, architects, and bureaucrats used to carry over expressions of collective history and dominant narratives across shifting regimes and social atmospheres. My approach takes into account broader spatial and visual histories pertaining to each site in order to illustrate the extant conditions that color the tenor of nuclear remembrance in these two cities, and the contestations that are unearthed when public space is reconstituted to carry out the duty of collective remembrance.

⁸ See *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, ed. Alan Tansman (Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2009).

⁹ Harry Harootunian, “Constitutive Ambiguities,” in *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, ed. Alan Tansman (Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2009), 87.

Discussions on memory matters regarding post-war, post-colonial Japan and its empire are by no means scarce.¹⁰ Yet the sheer existence of the two cities' Peace Memorial Parks—the primary public spaces where commemorative gathering, public education, reflection, and tourism regarding the bombs take place—are often taken for granted in most discourses surrounding atomic memory. While attention has been paid to the urban presence of the parks (especially in the case of Hiroshima), the curatorial content of the museums, advocacy surrounding the establishment of particular monuments, and the politics of ceremonial events, research on the making of the parks themselves is comparatively scant. Within this topic, there exists an even more prominent lacuna of scholarship regarding the dialectical relation between the two parks.

The starting point of this project is the seemingly elementary question of why these parks present themselves so differently. Both were officially unveiled in August 1955 to coincide with the commemorative ceremonies for the 10th anniversary of the attacks. Despite the obvious overlap in their memorial foci, the parks appear to spatialize, and model to visitors two quite distinct paths of remembering the bombs and envisioning the collective, mythic path towards “peace” that are informed by the urban and cultural contexts particular to each locale.

The Hiroshima Park is laden in concrete, occupying an open and assertively flat expanse in the center of the city along a strip of reclaimed land in the Hiroshima Bay. Most of its

¹⁰ Nearly all extant studies of the museums focus on the exhibitions and curation of the Hiroshima Museum, or include Nagasaki as part of a comparative discussion. See Ran Zwigenberg, “Modern Relics: The Sanctification of A-Bomb Objects in the Hiroshima Museum,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 35, no. 1, 2021, p. 44-62; Jooyoun Lee, “Yasukuni and Hiroshima in Clash? War and Peace Museums in Contemporary Japan,” *Pacific focus* 33, no. 1 (2018): 5–33; Benedict Giamo, “The Myth of the Vanquished: The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum,” *American Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (2003): 703–28; Daniel Seltz, “Remembering the War and the Atomic Bombs: New Museums, New Approaches,” *Radical History Review* 1, no. 75 (October 1999): 92–108.

Both museums (Nagasaki in particular) have become subject to controversy for curatorial changes made regarding the inclusion of histories of Japanese imperial aggression in exhibition materials. Though a study of the museums is not within the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that the curatorial strategies of the museums are perceptibly different, and the Nagasaki museum makes a more visible point of situating the bomb within the scope of the Asia-Pacific War more broadly.

constituent components and spatial scheme were shaped under the direction of Tange Kenzō, who revisited the site over decades to refine the landscape and add new structures. The lucid axial plan is neatly integrated with the urban skeleton of the reconstructed city, creating a central sightline that links together the rectilinear, *piloti*-supported Peace Memorial Hall with an arched cenotaph that neatly frames the blown-out remains of the A-Bomb (Genbaku) Dome just north across the Motoyasu River (Figure 0.4). These elements run perpendicular to the Peace Boulevard, a multi-lane, highly trafficked thoroughway that connects the narrow island upon which the park complex resides with the adjacent landmasses.

The Peace Park of Nagasaki emerges from far more precipitous terrain in the Urakami district, an area closely historically associated with the city's Catholic community. This legacy came to figure heavily in the memorial language and culture surrounding Nagasaki, as evidenced by the popular phrase "Hiroshima rages, Nagasaki prays," (*ikari no Hiroshima, inori no Nagasaki*) coined in the 1950s.¹¹ The core monument is a titanic seated male bronze, whose surface is treated in a blue patina (Figure 0.5). The Statue of Peace (*Heiwa kinen zō*), designed by Nagasaki-born sculptor Kitamura Seibō, presides over an open plaza with the air of a deity, eyes closed and arms outstretched in perpendicular fashion. Few scholars have treated the statue as an object worthy of serious critical attention, and public opinion on the work has been notoriously mixed.

Yet a closer inspection of the two narratives reveals important points of synchrony. Both Tange and Kitamura were intimately shaped by the ideological atmosphere and material conditions of total war, and these avenues of influence are made visible in the palimpsestic layers of memory embedded in the parks. These "imperial ghosts," per Anne McClintock, attest to the

¹¹ Chad Diehl, *Resurrecting Nagasaki: Reconstruction and the Formation of Atomic Narratives*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018), 5.

very operations of the “administration of forgetting” upon which the production and promise of peace is carried out by municipal authorities in the process of urban reconstruction.¹² The dual attention towards sculpture and architecture also helps to elucidate the kinds of disciplinary questions and the epistemological ground being negotiated by two creative disciplines in the aftermath of total war.

In giving ample consideration to both cities, this project also seeks to confront the historiographic imbalance between the treatment of Hiroshima and Nagasaki within both academic scholarship and broader cultural consciousness. The enduring strength of the slogan “No More Hiroshimas” points to the dominance of the city in the popular discourse surrounding atomic warfare. Nagasaki, on the other hand, is rarely at the center of vernacular statements, political events, creative productions, or mass media portrayals of nuclear violence in Japan and abroad. When mentioned, it is almost always situated within the formulation “Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” rather than on its own. Visits by foreign dignitaries and tourists alike tend to focus on Hiroshima rather than Nagasaki, such that an encounter with Hiroshima appears to constitute sufficient exposure to the nuclear tragedy.¹³

¹² Anne McClintock, “Imperial Ghosting and National Tragedy: Revenants from Hiroshima and Indian Country in the War on Terror,” *PMLA* 129, no. 4 (2014): 819–29.

McClintock’s formulation is applied in the context of American aggression in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as part of an extended continuum of violence under American imperialism, whose “administration of forgetting” seeks to naturalize mass terror and deny political guilt as necessary measures for the so-called safety of the nation-state. Yet I believe this concept is just as viable when considering the ways in which human tragedy and urban devastation was mobilized by the Japanese state as a mode of reconfiguring national identity.

¹³ On local sentiments towards Obama’s omission of Nagasaki from his itinerary, and the broader sidelining of the city’s experience in favor of Hiroshima see Takase Tsuyoshi 高瀬毅 “Obama wa Nagasaki ni konakatta – 71-nen me no Nagasaki ‘Saigo no hibaku toshi’ no imi” オバマは長崎に来なかった—— 71年目の長崎「最後の被爆都市」の意味 [Obama didn’t come to Nagasaki – Nagasaki, the “last city to be bombed” 71 years later] *Yahoo Japan*, August 9, 2016, <https://news.yahoo.co.jp/feature/284/>. Nagasaki *hibakusha* Ihara Toyokazu remarked in puzzlement that no survivors from Nagasaki were invited to the occasion, and members from the Nagasaki Youth Delegation were only hurriedly invited to Hiroshima on the eve of the president’s visit.



Figure 0.4. The A-Bomb Dome, as seen in the distance through the legs of the cenotaph in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. Photo by author.



Figure 0.5. Kitamura Seibō, Peace Memorial Statue (*Heiwa kinen zō*), 1955. Photo by author.

Scholars working on the atomic history of Nagasaki, including Chad Diehl, Gwyn McClelland, and Tomoe Otsuki have meaningfully addressed the marginalization of Nagasaki and its impact on the formation of nuclear narratives, while simultaneously treating the history of the city and its residents on their own terms.¹⁴ Building off of their work, I seek to rebalance this skewed terrain not through a pointed emphasis on Nagasaki, but instead by staging the peace parks in a dialectical relation that focuses on the ways in which the two cities approached the task of memorial making given the particular social and historical conditions of their urban contexts.

Moments of unevenness are not uncommon across events of large-scale, public disaster. Trauma does not neatly align itself with the temporal constraints of event-based narratives, and within the image-laden conditions of modern society, the most grandiose spectacles tend to ingrain themselves in the fabric of collective consciousness. The spectacle of atomic disaster obfuscates finer-grained narratives that fail to fit into the dominant paradigm of national suffering and apocalyptic threat, while vastly abstracting and generalizing the nature of disaster. Such visual bias manifests even at the scale of the two mushroom clouds. Though the distinction is recognized by few, viewers should note that that the widely circulated image of the mushroom cloud is the product of the plutonium “Fat Man” bomb detonated over Nagasaki, which was perceived to be more picturesque than the photograph of the “Little Boy” uranium bomb deployed in Hiroshima.¹⁵

The dominance of atomic disaster in the national memory culture of Japan not only effaces the countless other instances of collective trauma and cataclysm under total war, but also

¹⁴ See Chad Diehl, *Resurrecting Nagasaki* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018); Gwyn McClelland, *Dangerous Memory in Nagasaki* (London: Routledge, 2019), and Tomoe Otsuki, *God and the Atomic Bomb: Nagasaki's Atomic Bomb Memory and Politics of Sacrifice, Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (PhD diss, 2016).

¹⁵ Namiko Kunimoto, *The Stakes of Exposure* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minneapolis Press, 2017), 12.

serves to flatten the intricacies of remembrance even within the scope of nuclear disaster. Fights to erect monuments in remembrance of Korean and Chinese victims of the bombs, the social stigma and ailments faced by survivors and their kin, and the cycles of displacement faced by marginalized populations in the aftermath of urban ruination illustrate the perilous mechanisms of what Rob Nixon describes as “slow violence.”¹⁶ While this project begins at the level of the hypervisible, the analysis following seeks to understand monumentalism as a tool of narrative domination and mnemonic effacement, looking at the ways in which architectural and artistic apparatuses are instrumentalized by the state to operate against—and often find themselves challenged by—the fluid and fickle sways of memory.

A history centered around the mushroom cloud also runs the risk of operating in isolation from relational narratives, and the recurring moments of convergence and divergence that extend far beyond the specific dates conjured by mentions of “wartime” and “postwar”. The term “transwar” has been implemented by historians of East Asia to challenge conventional treatments of wartime and colonial rule as moments of rupture in Japanese history, and instead argue for a more expanded reading of trajectories of change and development, typically running from the 1920s and 30s through to the 50s and 60s.¹⁷ This not only allows for the integration of the afterlives of warfare and colonialism to be incorporated into the field of memory, but also enables us to challenge the notion of peacemaking as a discourse brought into existence and given form solely by the events of atomic violence.

¹⁶ Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

¹⁷ See *Transwar Asia: Ideology, Practices, and Institutions, 1920-1960*, eds. Reto Hofmann and Max Ward (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021); Andrew Gordon, “Society and Politics from Transwar through Postwar Japan” in *Historical Perspectives on Contemporary East Asia*, eds. Andrew Gordon and Merle Goldman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Jessamyn R. Abel, *The International Minimum: Creativity and Contradiction in Japan’s Global Engagement, 1933-1964* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2015).

None of this is not to deny the devastating singularity of the bombs, or their insurmountable impact on communities local and global. Rather, it is to examine critically the bureaucratic processes of meaning-making that exploit moments of disaster as opportunities for ideological re-invention and the production of political spectacle. While these efforts were part of the more urgent project of restoring urban health, memorial-making is itself an instrument of the state that can be used to fuel the trajectory of reconstruction. Nuclear disaster was subsumed into a larger project of reinventing the nation and refashioning its global reputation from a war-mongering empire to a peace-loving model for the 20th century. Images of the effaced cities made the threat of nuclear apocalypse hauntingly immediate, but also instilled in observers a blanketing perception of a *tabula rasa*, where cities could be constructed anew under the thematic umbrella of modernity.

While the Asia-Pacific War has often been treated by historians of Japanese art as an era of “artistic emptiness” (*bi no kūhaku*), a number of recent publications have taken seriously the creative productions and lived experiences of artists during the war, across the ideological spectrum and throughout the empire.¹⁸ Asato Ikeda, Aya Louise McDonald, and Ming Tiampo, the editors of *Art and War in Japan and its Empire 1931-1960*, maintain that the persistent issue of war responsibility has “stifled” Japanese art historical scholarship on war art from both the right and left—the former characterized by a resistance to acknowledging atrocities, and the latter unable to free itself from the post-Anpo sentiment of victimhood under its own government, the Occupation, and the atomic bombings.¹⁹ Namiko Kunimoto has posited that Anglophone art historical scholarship in particular has tended towards equating the postwar with

¹⁸ Hirase Reita 平瀬礼太, “Sensō ni niau chōkoku” 戦争に似合う彫刻 [Sculpture fit for war], in *Chōkoku 1* 彫刻 1 [Matters of Sculpture 1], ed. Odawara Nodoka 小田原のどか (Tōkyō: Topofil, 2016), 73.

¹⁹ Asato Ikeda, Aya Louisa McDonald, and Ming Tiampo, eds. *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire, 1931-1960* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 14.

the trauma affiliated with the atomic bombs, whose specular dominance has in large strokes colored the reading of a vast and not always cohesive generational cohort of Japanese artists.²⁰

It is no doubt true that radical thought and practice had little space to operate under the oppressive shadow of imperial ideology and censorship, and many artists and designers were compelled to work in service of the nation in order to maintain their careers. Such participation came to cast an unyielding shadow over the careers of figures like Tsuguharu Foujita, the bohemian Montparnasse painter turned ardent war artist, who was ostracized by many of his compatriots after the war. Yet the practices of many creatives, including those whose careers flourished after 1945, were acutely and indelibly shaped by the conditions of war. For those who worked in service of the empire, these historical trajectories are often relegated to a biographical timeline or a footnote. Their propagandistic works are treated as inevitable and necessary measures taken during a period of strict aesthetic constraint, and dismissed as crude aberrations unworthy of scholarly attention.

In architecture, mention of the “postwar” largely conjures images of the utopic ways of living proposed by the Metabolists, the dizzyingly rapid development of cities, and the ever-present negotiation of “Japanese-ness” that characterizes the evolution of Japanese modernism. Akin to the trends found in art history, many architectural histories gloss over the wartime years as a period of material and expressive restriction, and the residues of war are often used as a starting point for analyzing the rapid industrialism and zealotry for construction and experimentation observed in the decades following. Tange, too, is historicized as *the* representative architect of the postwar generation, with the Hiroshima project serving as an early

²⁰ Kunimoto, 12.

illustration of his ongoing efforts to articulate a distinctly Japanese language of modernism that drew from precursors rooted in premodern tradition.

While the Peace Park is undoubtedly a landmark project in the history of postwar Japanese architecture, it should be read as a node within an extended historical continuum of mutating influences and ideologies. As figures who bore witness to decades of upheaval and change, Kitamura and Tange not only benefit from being read through a transwar framework, but demand it. The notions of remembrance encoded in their memorials, as the following chapters illustrate, are the product of a confluence of interests and ideas that do not always abide by the demands of historical periodization.

I begin first by examining the ways in which nuclear discourse was constrained and shaped during the Occupation through two episodes: a case study of the debates around the proposed censorship of a *hibakusha* (atomic bomb victim) testimony, and an examination of the formation of the Hiroshima Peace Commemoration City Construction Law and the Nagasaki International Cultural City Construction Law. These moments, whose effects trickle down from the level of the state, help establish the discursive atmosphere from which the parks materialized. Chapter two turns to the emergence of the Hiroshima Peace Park and the plotting of post-war memorial infrastructure along the spatial and symbolic foundations laid out during the wartime regime, and the structures of power that enabled the park's mnemonic imperative to cohere. The following chapter proceeds to examine the distinct urban history of Nagasaki, including its legacies of transnational encounter and Catholicism, and how municipal leaders appropriated aspects of this local history in the process of reconstruction the city. It then considers the mnemonic dimensions of the Peace Statue, situating it within a history of commemorative statuary and bodily discourses in wartime and postwar Japan. The final chapter briefly places the

parks within the context of the broader political and cultural terrain of postwar memory in Japan. I touch upon a number of physical memorials that illustrate some of the issues miring post-war, post-imperial memory politics in East Asia, and the social role of monuments amidst these debates.

CHAPTER 1: A tale of two cities

On July 9th, 1949, a headline in the *Nagasaki minyū* read “Victory against Hiroshima,” followed by the subheading “Let’s keep up the work and not lose, says Mayor Ōhashi.”²¹ The cheekily phrased news item refers to the numerical difference in the results of the 1949 municipal referenda for the Hiroshima Peace City Construction Law and the Nagasaki International Cultural City Law. The two special laws were drafted by each municipality as part of an effort to rally for additional funding under the exceptional circumstances of their destruction. Part of these funds would come to serve as the basis for the formation of the Peace Parks in each city. Nagasaki boasted a remarkable 99% of the 81,645 voters in favor, while Hiroshima trailed slightly behind with 92% of 79,230 voters supporting the law.²² This marginal difference, of course, had no bearing on the results of the referenda, and both laws were successfully passed with minimal resistance. The article reports that Nagasaki Mayor Ōhashi Hiroshi spoke on the phone with Hiroshima Mayor Hamai Shinzō to confirm his city’s “win” before proudly declaring to municipal officials that the results were a product of the “heart-wrenching” efforts of residents, who were now en route to building a proud “international cultural city.”²³

The competition was friendly in nature, and its primary intent was to boost local morale and civic participation. Each city’s law was not contingent on the other, and both were projected to pass. Yet the staging of Hiroshima and Nagasaki against one another, pitted in a race to reconstruct their landscapes in the face of a global public, alludes to the pervasive tension that

²¹ “Bunka toshi hō seiritsu su” 文化都市法成立す[The Cultural City Law passes], *Nagasaki minyū* 長崎民友, July 9, 1949.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

continues to plague both local and global perspectives on the memorial narratives of these twinned cities. This anxious atmosphere, mired by the unrelenting push for international recognition conducted by authorities, colors both the physical and discursive landscape of the two parks.

As Chad Diehl has suggested, the “greatest threat to Nagasaki hibakusha memory” may indeed be the mnemonic hegemony of Hiroshima, which took hold not long after the end of the war.²⁴ While Hiroshima moved swiftly to claim the sweeping, grand title of the first city to suffer at the hands of an atomic weapon, officials in Nagasaki conceptualized their reconstruction through the lens of international trade and cultural exchange, refashioning its urban legacies into a narrative apt for a modern city and touristic destination.

The divergence between Hiroshima and Nagasaki’s memorial trajectories can be understood in part by the mere bifurcation of disaster, which produced a rhetoric of a “first” and “last”. Hiroshima could lay claim to the sweeping, grand title of being the first city to suffer at the hands of an atomic weapon, and officials swiftly moved to incorporate this identity into the language of reconstruction and urban reinvention. To be the last, however, is not a fact of the matter, but rather a condition reliant on the assurance from the very powers that produced the atomic threat. This state of endless suspension, and the shaky political ground it rests upon, would haunt the memorial landscape that emerged from Nagasaki in markedly different ways from Hiroshima.

Indeed, the selection of Nagasaki as the second city to be bombed was the result of a last-minute decision; the plutonium bomb was originally intended to be deployed in the city of Kokura, to the northeast of Nagasaki. Hiroshima, along with Kokura and Niigata, had been

²⁴ Diehl, *Resurrecting Nagasaki* 6.

preemptively placed on a list of reserved areas and subjected to comparatively far less air raids in order to allow American forces to glean the most accurate assessment of the extent of damage a single weapon could inflict. The relative flatness of the city made it a cruelly useful model for gauging the success of the weapon. Nagasaki, on the other hand, had been the target of five air raids, the first of which took place on August 11, 1944. Even as late as August 1, 1945, a wave of incendiary bombs aimed at the Mitsubishi ship and railyards fell upon the city, killing approximately 200 residents and destroying nearly 250 buildings.²⁵

Owing to low visibility conditions on the morning of August 9th, the B-29 Bockscar strike plane slated for Kokura shifted course, turning south to Nagasaki before dropping the bomb three quarters of a mile off the intended target of the Mitsubishi Steel and Arms Works.²⁶ As word of the events of Hiroshima had spread by this point, the Army Air Forces drafted propaganda leaflets to warn the citizens of the next city of the coming shock—a measure that, as Alex Wellerstein writes, was “as much an act of psychological warfare as a humanitarian warning.” In a cruel twist of bureaucratic violence, the papers rained down on Nagasaki the day after the bombing, owing to poor internal communication within the bombing crews.²⁷ At the meeting between Emperor Hirohito and military officials where the decision to surrender was finalized, Vice Admiral of the Imperial Navy Hoshina Zenshirō described the Nagasaki bombing as “an appendix,” relegating it to the margins of even the instrumentalist discourse surrounding the strategic weight of the bombs.²⁸

²⁵ Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 総務省, Nagasaki-shi ni okeru sensai no jyōkyō (Nagasaki-ken) 長崎市における戦災の状況 (長崎県) [The state of war destruction in Nagasaki City], https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/daijinkanbou/sensai/situation/state/kyushu_02.html.

²⁶ Alex Wellerstein, “Nagasaki: The Last Bomb,” *The New Yorker*, August 7, 2015, <https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/nagasaki-the-last-bomb>.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Rinjiro Sodei, “Hiroshima/Nagasaki as History and Politics,” *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 3 (1995): 1119.

While such administrative failures and decisions mean little when considering the actualities of the violence that transpired on the ground, the air of uncertainty embedded in Nagasaki's atomic narrative would come to color its postwar trajectory of urban reinvention as well. Hiroshima's status as a clear target was rooted in its strong military legacy, a pre-bomb urban history that officials made a conscious effort to downplay in order to emphasize the post-1945 city as a model of urban renewal, international cooperation, and liberal democracy. Even within this imbalanced scheme, however, the twisted spectacle of the bombs at the culmination of the war encoded them as unflinching evidence of Japanese victimhood. As John Dower unnervingly puts it, Hiroshima and Nagasaki effectively became "perverse national treasures, of a sort."²⁹

Yet if we are to consider chronological status as a metric of memorial value, the citizens of Hiroshima were not the "first" to be exposed to an atomic weapon, but rather the first to suffer from a *deployed* one. This distinction is raised in order to call attention to the indigenous populations who resided in the vicinity of the Trinity Site in July of 1945. Countless others were displaced during the construction of Manhattan Project facilities in Los Alamos, New Mexico and Hanford, Washington. Both native and governmental witnesses reported seeing a light ash fill the atmosphere for four to five days following the test, and surrounding communities have been plagued with radiation-related ailments for generations since, with little political and medical attention given to their plight.³⁰ The conceptual treatment of the atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as bookends of a historical aberration, or for Jacques Derrida, part of a

²⁹ John Dower, "The Bombed: Hiroshimas and Nagasakis in Japanese Memory," *Diplomatic History* 19, no. 2 (1995), 281.

³⁰ Tanya H. Lee, "H-Bomb Guinea Pigs! Natives Suffering Decades After New Mexico Tests," *ICT News*, September 13, 2018, <https://ictnews.org/archive/h-bomb-guinea-pigs-natives-suffering-decades-after-new-mexico-tests>.

“fabulously textual” phenomenon that relies on structures of information, language, and codes, in turn renders the two cities the sole occupants of a nuclear imagination.³¹ The anxious obsession with firsts and lasts brackets the two cities within a closed discourse, effacing the existence of external events that undermine its coherence, and flattening the complex narratives and lived realities that arose from each city and extended far beyond the scope of August 1945.

Like Auschwitz and Chernobyl, “Hiroshima” has come to stand for a thing larger than itself, describing not a physical site or a community so much as a universal expression of the apocalyptic potentials of technological modernity and bureaucratic evil. “Hiroshima is everywhere,” Günther Anders declared, plunging both the event and the city into the realm of ubiquity.³² The phrase “No More Hiroshimas” reconfigures our focus away from the instrument of destruction and towards the city as victim, whose suffering is in turn posited as a call to action for a collective humanity under threat. By teasing out the moments of narrative elevation and suppression in the bureaucratic construction of post-atomic memory, my analysis works within the bounds of the cities to place pressure on the naturalized assumption of the parks’ relationships to “peace”—whether as sites of its production, or as representations of the thing itself. This chapter explores just some of the ways in which atomic discourse was controlled and conditioned from above during the years of Occupation to provide the backdrop for the context in which the plans for the parks began to take shape.

³¹ Jacques Derrida, “No Apocalypse, Not Now (Full Speed Ahead, Seven Missiles, Seven Missives),” *Diacritics* 14, no. 3 (Summer 1984), 23.

³² Anders, to his credit, expressed some reserve with his usage of Hiroshima as *the* representative metaphor for his theoretical formulation, arguing after his visit to Nagasaki that the phrase “Nagasaki and Hiroshima” would be more appropriate than “Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” While there was room for debate regarding the strategic necessity of Hiroshima, the bombing of Nagasaki, Anders asserted, was a mere gesture of aggrandizement that was morally unjustified in all respects. Nevertheless, the centrality of Hiroshima maintains in his discourse, owing to its utility in marking the “dawn” of a new era. See Jason Dawsey, “After Hiroshima: Günther Anders and the history of anti-nuclear critique,” in *Understanding the imaginary war: Culture, thought, and nuclear conflict (1945-90)*, ed. Matthew Grant and Benjamin Ziemann (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2016).

Bounding the atomic narrative: censorship under the Occupation

Hiroshima and Nagasaki's exceptional status was not recognized by reconstruction agencies in the early postwar years. 215 cities had suffered from bombings, and in December of 1945, the Policy for the Reconstruction of War-damaged Areas was finalized, establishing formal guidelines and aims regarding construction standards and land-use planning regulation.³³ In this early legislation, forty-one cities were designated to receive national reconstruction funds—Hiroshima ranked sixth on the list, while Nagasaki was placed at the meager position of thirty-first.³⁴ The immediate need for shelter and stability nationwide naturally trumped all other symbolic or cultural demands.

Though today, the mnemonic resonance of the atomic bombs far eclipses that of the wide-reaching devastation wreaked by the Allied firebombing campaigns, this early lack of differentiation was in part a coefficient of censorship measures enacted by the Occupation.³⁵ While the atomic bombs themselves were not included on the list of topics prohibited from publication in the press, public discussion of the bombs was highly regulated, and most images depicting urban destruction and human suffering were swiftly suppressed. Information regarding the long-term health and environmental effects of the bombs too, was tightly suppressed and contained within the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC), an agency ostensibly established out of a collaboration between American and Japanese national health councils, but

³³ Carola Hein, "Rebuilding Japanese Cities After 1945," in *Rebuilding Urban Japan After 1945*, ed. Carola Hein et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 2.

³⁴ Diehl, 14.

³⁵ Cary Karacas and David Selden have compiled resources and archival matter concerning the air raids at japanairraids.org, in tandem with ongoing research concerning the practices of memorialization and patterns of forgetting that mire the history of the firebombings. See also Mark Selden, "A Forgotten Holocaust: US Bombing Strategy, the Destruction of Japanese Cities & the American Way of War from World War II to Iraq," *The Asia-Pacific Journal Japan Focus* 5 no. 5 (May 2007) for an examination of the shifting cultural and politics meanings surrounding the history of aerial power in American warfare, weaving together the atmospheric attacks observed in the contexts of WWII Japan, the Vietnam War, and the Iraq War.

fundamentally controlled by U.S. agencies. The ABCC conducted extensive research on *hibakusha* bodies and withheld findings from both victims and Japanese doctors. Many survivors described these practices as intensely dehumanizing encounters, where they were treated more as specimens rather than patients.³⁶ Any attempt to single out Hiroshima and Nagasaki as special cases could have been read as gestures that undermined the needs of the dozens of other cities ravaged by war. American authorities also feared that heightened attention to the irradiated devastation of the A-bombed cities would pose a threat to the logic of a “responsible” victory that legitimated the dropping of the bombs and justified U.S. military presence.

These preoccupations are also illustrated in the internal notes by the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD)—which oversaw the release of Japanese press, entertainment, and other visual and textual matter—concerning the 1949 publication of Nagai Takashi’s *The Bells of Nagasaki* (*Nagasaki no kane*). Written by a Catholic physician who became the de facto face of Nagasaki’s *hibakusha* community, the text was subject to intense scrutiny and debate, and described by one official as a “masterpiece of censorship action.”³⁷ In a lengthy back-and-forth, reviewers debated whether or not his vivid recollections would “directly or by inference disturb [sic] the public tranquillity [sic]” and exacerbate anti-American sentiment and suspicion among the Japanese, even while admitting it was “well-written” and would “undoubtedly sell well.”³⁸

During the early stages of these discussions, Chief of Intelligence Charles A. Willoughby made

³⁶ Monica Braw, “Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Voluntary Silence,” in *Living With the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden (Armonk, New York and London, England: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 159.

³⁷ TJH to RMS “On book ‘Nagasaki no Kane’ by Nagai Takashi,” June 3, 1948, excerpted materials from declassified documents concerning Nagasaki no kane, Gordon W. Prange Collection, College Park, MD.

³⁸ Gen Willoughby to Col Dodge, Col Bratton, Lt Col Koster, Exec Officers, “Censorship of Book on Bombing of Nagasaki,” January 10, 1948, excerpted materials from declassified documents concerning Nagasaki no kane, Gordon W. Prange Collection, College Park, MD.

See Chad Diehl, “Chapter 3: Writing Nagasaki” in *Resurrecting Nagasaki* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018) for a detailed overview on the discourse and politics surrounding the publication of *Nagasaki no kane*.

the implicit yet obvious point that given the temporary condition of occupation, it was inevitable that this text would eventually reach the public. The main issue at hand, he noted, was whether or not it would be worth suppressing it while the Allied forces still had power to do so, or to let it be printed after their departure.³⁹ These allusions to temporal flux and the cultural persistence of ideas illustrate the extent of the GHQ's recognition of the provisional nature of their power, and their internal negotiations on how it might be best wielded within a limited timeframe. Within this scheme, the CCD allowed the publication to move forward but demanded changes that they hoped would in turn benefit the GHQ's political narrative.

The primary condition posed by the CCD entailed the addition of an appendix by the author that detailed the atrocities committed by the Japanese Imperial Army in the Battle of Manila. The awkward inclusion of this passage, Willoughby insisted, was necessary for providing the "other side of the story" in order to support the narrative that the bombs were necessary for bringing an end to the heedless fighting. Its placement at the end of the book would, in theory, leave readers with the final image of Japanese aggression and divert attention away from the image of bomb so painstakingly described in the pages prior.⁴⁰ Nagai's reflections also cloaked the bombs in the Catholicized language of atonement, construing Nagasaki as the sacrificial victim for the collective sins of humankind. Occupation authorities found utility in this formulation, as it could be framed as further legitimation for treating the bombs as retributive action for Japan's military aggression, and a diffusion of responsibility into the realm of a denationalized collective humanity.

Nagai and his publishers eventually conceded to the demands, and the book—including the appendix "The Tragedy of Manila" (*Manira no higeki*)—was published in 1949 after over a

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Diehl, 107-8.

year of negotiations. As presaged by the censors, it went on to become a best-seller. Its success was in part also fueled by the GHQ's willingness to allot enough paper for an astonishing 30,000 copies at its release—another means by which American authorities selectively empowered and silenced cultural discourses to reinforce their agenda.⁴¹ In the English-language preface, Nagai stated that his work was not “a scientific account nor literary writing,” but a “human record.”⁴² He added that he had not included any images and clinical descriptions in this publication, nor did he conduct any autopsies or collect any specimens.⁴³ Though the declaration presumably seeks to assert the power of the written word and the potent immediacy of bearing witness to disaster, it nevertheless suggests that a degree of authorial agency has been ceded, and that only certain forms of testimony were viable and legitimate in the public narrative of the bombings. The bodily realities of victims would not—and could not—hold a place in this narrative.

In 1947, the CCD began to shift from pre- to post-publication evaluations, and by October 1949 the agency was dissolved. Though this change suggests that formal restrictions began to loosen, the post-publication strategy and the replacement of liberal officers by more conservative technocrats who imposed censorship in increasingly arbitrary and unforgiving manners heightened anxiety among left-leaning writers and presses.⁴⁴ These measures fell in line with the “Reverse Course” (*gyaku kōsu*) strategy taken by the GHQ beginning in January 1947 with General MacArthur's prohibition of a nationwide labor strike against Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru slated to take place on February 1st.⁴⁵ Shifting from the original motives of democratizing and demilitarizing the nation, GHQ authorities turned their attention towards

⁴¹ Ibid, 109.

⁴² “‘The Bells of Nagasaki’ (‘Nagasaki no Kane’) Preface (By the Author) Pages 6-7,” excerpted materials from declassified documents concerning Nagasaki no kane, Gordon W. Prange Collection, College Park, MD.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 432.

⁴⁵ Nick Kapur, *Japan at the Crossroads, Conflict and Compromise after Anpo* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 9.

economically and militarily strengthening Japan to serve as a bulwark against the rising tide of communism.⁴⁶ The brunt of GHQ efforts turned to focus on supporting the Yoshida cabinet's violent red purges and suppression of left-wing media, and American involvement in the conservative leadership's domestic matters would continue well after occupation forces departed in 1952.⁴⁷

Through these strategic interventions, many of which were hardly visible to the public, Occupation authorities carefully calibrated the nature and boundaries of public discourse surrounding memory in the atomic bombed cities in the early years following the war. The body of Nagai's text remained relatively intact, but the nature of its delivery, and the discursive framing of its narrative was manipulated to maximize its utility for both Japanese and American audiences. Furthermore, the author and his publisher were well aware of the pushback a work of this nature, written by a prominent *hibakusha*, was poised to receive in the hands of the CCD. Such self-conscious narrative adjustments are implicitly present in the production of post-atomic narratives across scales and perspectives. As Jonathan Abel points out, "there is never censorship without self-censorship."⁴⁸ The work of censorship is best understood not through polar possibilities and unidirectional gestures, but rather as a messier enterprise of concurrent, intertwined forces of representation that are in continuous dialogue, extending far beyond the

⁴⁶ Nagai was an avowed anti-communist from the 1930s until his death in 1951, and continuously published writings on the dangers of communism and its threat to Christianity and Japanese prosperity. It was in the interests of Occupation leaders to keep Nagai's career afloat, as his rhetoric would prove useful amidst the political atmosphere of the post-Reverse Course shift. Nagai also expressed the hope that the book would rouse American sympathy for the plight of Nagasaki, just as texts like John Hersey's *Hiroshima* had drawn widespread attention to Hiroshima.

⁴⁷ U.S. agencies were closely involved in several post-Occupation military and political projects, including legislation passed in 1954 to reformulate the National Police Reserve into the Japan Self-Defense Forces and centralize police forces, and the 1955 unification of the Liberal and Democratic parties under Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke in order to form the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

⁴⁸ Jonathan Abel, *Redacted: The Archives of Censorship in Transwar Japan* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2012), 32. The longer history of censorship was also critically intertwined with the state censorship that took place under imperial rule. See Abel's book for a transwar history of this discursive regime and its archival legacies.

moment of publication.⁴⁹ The intertwined forces of external and internal censorship, which mutate over time and shifting political contexts, should be acknowledged as being a persistence presence that implicitly shapes the formation of atomic remembrance narratives and the visage of the peace parks.

Territorializing the “peace city”: The 1949 reconstruction laws and post-atomic urban identity

Following the culmination of the war, the slogans “Construct a Nation of Peace” and “Construct a Nation of Culture” almost immediately began to inundate Japanese media and society, making its way into festivals, legislation, advertisements, and the classroom.⁵⁰ Atomic energy was construed in both Japan and abroad as part of a binary logic of modern science that endowed humans with the moral responsibility of either continuing to use atoms as weapons of mass destruction, or instead as productive sources of energy. Given the conditions of Japan’s defeat, and Occupation and creation of the pacifist constitution, the upwards development promised by the “good” uses of the atom were conflated with an anti-war sentimentalism. The “atoms for peace” rhetoric would become the driving mantra in the country’s turn to nuclear energy in the 1950s, prompted by the encouragement of the United States Information Agency.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 177.

⁵¹ In December of 1953, President Eisenhower delivered his “Atoms for Peace” address to the United Nations, and soon after, a contested but ultimately massively successful exhibition of the same title opened at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Exhibition Hall touting the multivalent properties of the atom and its promises to improve modern life.⁵¹ The exhibit was part of an expansive propagandistic effort to convince Japan that nuclear energy was a useful and even necessary instrument of technology in order to function as a modern nation, and was also tied up in a parallel effort to build an American-financed nuclear power plant in Hiroshima. See Ran Zwigenberg, “The Coming of a Second Sun”: The 1956 Atoms for Peace Exhibit in Hiroshima and Japan’s Embrace of Nuclear Power,” *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 10, no. 6 (February 2012), <https://apjif.org/2012/10/6/Ran-Zwigenberg/3685/article.html>.

Though it was well understood that Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been subjected to weapons of a nature never before seen, it took until 1949 for this exceptional status to be crystallized in legislative form. It was the special reconstruction laws, mentioned at the start of this chapter, that catalyzed the park-making processes in both cities and solidified the incorporation of nuclear trauma into officiated narratives of urban reconstruction. In an effort to convince the national government of the exceptional nature of the damages suffered in their cities, municipal officials in Hiroshima and Nagasaki proposed special laws to the Diet that would entitle them to additional reconstruction funds. Both pieces of legislation included stipulations authorizing the construction of civic infrastructure and cultural institutions, and the transfer of designated nationally owned land to municipal hands. The path to the formation of these laws, however, began to expose the fissures between the two cities.

Hiroshima officials had previously appealed twice to the Diet for reconstruction aid in 1946 and 1948, but both requests were turned down, likely out of concern held by GHQ officials that any special treatment towards the city would have come across as an admission of guilt.⁵² The first postwar Hiroshima mayor, Kihara Shichirō had sought to have former military land holdings be transferred for free to the city, so the expansive plots could be sold to fund reconstruction efforts. Though Kihara received the support of finance minister Ishibashi Tanzan, the two became subject to the GHQ's sweeping purge of public officials suspected of harboring sympathies to the militarist regime, halting the progress of the plan.⁵³ In February of 1949, in pursuit of guidance from legislators with ties to Hiroshima, Nitoguri Tsukasa, chairman of the Hiroshima City Council, met with Teramitsu Tadashi, the Hiroshima-born head of the

⁵² Ran Zwigenberg, *Hiroshima: The Origins of Global Memory Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 46-7.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 48.

proceedings department of the House of Councilors. Sensing the futility of petitions, Teramitsu proposed making use of Article 95 of the newly minted Japanese constitution as a more proactive solution to secure the funding in need.⁵⁴ The article stipulates that any laws pertaining solely to single local public entities required the majority approval of the public entity in question.⁵⁵ The post-1945 emergence of referenda in the constitution fell in line with the GHQ's greater goal of installing new forms of civic participation grounded in democratic ideals, and decentralizing state power and dispersing it into the hands of local governments.

While the approval for funding necessitated the involvement of the state, much of the direction of reconstruction and the language of its execution was carried out at the level of the municipality. By striking a balance between the exceptional regional needs of the city with the collectivized concern and responsibility invoked by the potential for nuclear apocalypse through the invocation of the “peace city” as the guiding framework, Teramitsu suggested, the referenda could be the key to gaining Diet approval via the GHQ.

Officials in Nagasaki had no knowledge of Hiroshima's plans until just before the May 10th Diet meeting, and felt betrayed by Hiroshima's disinterest in collaborating in spite of their shared trauma.⁵⁶ They scrambled to put together a similar proposal before the meeting,

⁵⁴ Ishimaru Norioki 石丸紀興, “Hiroshima wa heiwa toshi/heiwa kinen toshi to shite fukkō/tenkai shitekitaka: Hiroshima no toshi shisō to yōsei sareteiru yakuwari” 広島は平和都市・平和記念都市として復興・展開してきたか：広島都市思想と要請されている役割 [Was Hiroshima Reconstructed and Developed as Peace City or Peace Memorial City?: City Idea and the Requested Role of Hiroshima], *The Annals of Japan Association for Urban Sociology* 日本都市社会学会年報 no. 32 (2014), 35.

Fukushima Yoshifumi 福島義文, “Kenshō Hiroshima 1945～1995 <3> Heiwa toshi kensetsu hō” 「検証ヒロシマ 1945～1995 <3> 平和都市法」 [History of Hiroshima: 1945-1995 (Part 3, Article 1)], August 1, 2012, *Chūgoku shinbun* 中國新聞, <https://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=27163>.

⁵⁵ Chieko Numata, “Checking the Center: Popular Referenda in Japan.” *Social Science Japan Journal* 9, no. 1 (2006), 20. The special laws in Hiroshima and Nagasaki comprise two of the eighteen laws that have been passed under this provision. The referenda conducted under this stipulation are largely for laws that bring financial benefit to constituents without imposing any obligations, and as such tend to all be passed with significant majorities.

⁵⁶ Diehl, 32.

struggling against the Hiroshima officials who were unwilling to pause in their steadfast pursuit of the coveted status of “peace city.”⁵⁷ Self-conscious of their deep-rooted military legacy, advocates in Hiroshima posited that while Nagasaki had a unique, internationalist pre-war cultural history to draw upon, Hiroshima had no clear equivalent. Being able to claim the buzzword “peace” as part of its reconstruction plan, they argued, was a necessary framework for driving the city’s reinvention and giving it a cultural edge.⁵⁸ Nagasaki conceded to these demands and adopted the title of “International Cultural City” in their legislation, bringing them into a category with other Japanese cities such as Kyoto, Nara, and Beppu.⁵⁹ The content of their law, however, made it clear the value “peace” had to the narrative of Nagasaki’s reconstruction as well. The first article reads as such: “The purpose of this Act is to build Nagasaki City as an International City of Culture in order to promote culture at an international scale and achieve the goals of everlasting peace (*kōkyū heiwa*).”⁶⁰ Akin to the English-language slogan of “No More Hiroshimas” (*Nō moa Hiroshimazu*), Nagasaki media and politicians advocated for “Peace from Nagasaki” (*Pīsu furomu Nagasaki*) to enhance the globalized dimensions of their appeals for recognition and aid.⁶¹ No phrase that unified the two cities ever rose the scale of popular use.

⁵⁷ Teramitsu Tadashi 寺光忠 *Chūkai Nagasaki kokusai bunka toshi kensetsu hō* 註解・長崎国際文化都市建設法 [Notes • Nagasaki International Cultural City Law] (Sasebo: Sasebo jiji shinbun-sha, 1949), 9-10.

⁵⁸ Diehl, 32.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 33. The “internationalism” evoked in the phrasing of these other construction laws was more focused on investing in tourism infrastructure to attract visitors from abroad.

⁶⁰ “Nagasaki kokusai bunka toshi kensetsu hō” 長崎国際文化都市建設法 [Nagasaki International Cultural City Law], Law no. 220, 1949, *e-Gov Hōritsu kensaku*, e-Gov 法令検索, <https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/document?lawid=324AC1000000220>. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Law can be found here: https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/document?lawid=324AC1000000219_20150801_0000000000000000&keyword=%E5%BA%83%E5%B3%B6

⁶¹ Teramitsu, *Chūkai Nagasaki* (1949), 14.

As Teramitsu recounted, the use of *kinen* (memorial) in Hiroshima's title also served as a means of differentiating the document from Nagasaki's proposal within the sphere of law.⁶² Thus, it was not only the status of "peace," but also the claim towards remembrance and reflection that Hiroshima officials sought to monopolize in this bifurcated scheme. Jacqueline Kestenbaum has observed in the hand-written notes on the draft of the English translation of the law that the editor (likely Teramitsu) crossed out "the establishment of the peace memorial of Hiroshima" and substituted this phrase with "the construction of the eternal peace commemorating city of Hiroshima."⁶³ The redaction reveals Teramitsu's struggle to translate the word *kinen*, a term that can refer to commemoration, memorialization, and monumental objects. Importantly, the edit expands the scale of the city's memorializing mission. The aim here was not to build an isolated memorial structure or complex, but rather to reconstruct the city in its entirety as an evergreen embodiment of peace. The laws came at a time of shifting policies regarding censorship, and the careful attention to the implications of the English phrasing also allude to the sensitivities that remained regarding the viability of such legislation under Occupation command.

Both cities' laws were passed unanimously in the Diet on May 10, 1949.⁶⁴ They then shifted to the domain of the municipalities, as both laws needed to receive the majority approval of citizens in order to be enacted. Reconstruction committees in both cities vigorously worked to drum up public interest and enthusiasm in the referendum elections. Posters, advertisements, and other print materials incentivized citizens to participate in the referendum by invoking promises

⁶² Teramitsu Tadashi 寺光忠 *Hiroshima heiwa toshi hō* ヒロシマ平和都市法 [Hiroshima Peace City Law] (Hiroshima: Chūgoku shinbun-sha, 1949), 9.

⁶³ Jacqueline Kestenbaum, *Modernism and Tradition in Japanese Architectural Ideology, 1931-1955*, PhD diss., 1996 282-3.

⁶⁴ Diehl, 32.

of peacemaking and stressing the importance of civic participation (Figure 1.1, 1.2). A commemorative stamp produced in Hiroshima features a woman in profile, reclining in a billowing robe as she admires a rose in her left hand (Figure 1.3). Watanabe Saburō, a former official in the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications who created the design, reflected decades later that he had envisioned a “woman who prays for peace” and did not give much thought to the decision to place a rose in her hand.⁶⁵ An equivalent stamp issued to commemorate Nagasaki took a more symbolically recognizable route (Figure 1.4). Three doves flutter across a green backdrop replete with rolling hills, the famed Ōura Church, Meganebashi (an iconic double-arched bridge resembling a pair of spectacles), the Sōfuku-ji temple, and a European-style trading vessel floating in the harbor. Distinctive features of Nagasaki’s built and natural landscape are identified in this scheme, while the doves highlight the implicit thrust of peacemaking that, despite not being mentioned by name, nevertheless undergirded the city’s project of urban reinvention.

Though the lawmaking conducted under Article 95 needed specifically to apply to a limited and defined constituency, the discourse constructed around both laws repeatedly stressed the importance of the reconstruction of these cities for both the nation and the global public at large. “The construction of the Peace City is not a regional issue for a single area, but rather a matter of concern for the whole nation. The progress of the project should be reported to the entire nation via the Diet,” recommended a writer for Road (*Dōro*) magazine in August 1949.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Egusa Noritaka 江種則貴, “Hiroshima rōzu kitte” 広島ローズ切手 [Hiroshima Rose Stamp], *Chūgoku shinbun* 中國新聞広島ピースメディアセンター, April 8, 2001, <https://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/kikaku/Rose/010408.html>.

⁶⁶ Iida Kazumi 飯田一実, “Hiroshima heiwa kinen toshi kensetsu hō shikō ni kanshite” 広島平和記念都市建設法施行に際して [On the occasion of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law], *Dōro* 道路 (August 1949), 230.



Figure 1.1. “Kyō wa tōhyōbi da!” 今日投票日だ！ [Today is voting day!], *Chūgoku shinbun* 中國新聞, July 7, 1949.

Figure 1.2. “Genbaku no mirei ni sasagen kono ippyo” 原爆のみ霊に捧げんこの一票 [This vote is dedicated to the spirits of the atomic bomb victims], *Nagasaki minyū* 長崎民友, July 6, 1949.



Figure 1.3. Watanabe Saburō, commemorative 8-yen stamp, issued on the occasion of the passage of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hiroshima_Peace_city_8yen_stamp.jpg.



Figure 1.4. Author unknown, commemorative 8-yen stamp issued on the occasion of the passage of the Nagasaki International Cultural City Construction Law, Nihon yūbin shumi kyōkai 日本郵便趣味協会 [Japan Postal Service Enthusiasts Society], <http://www.yuubinsyumi.com/shopdetail/000000003853/>.

The Nagasaki legislation emphasized investment in the tourism industry to underscore the “international culture” of the city. In a pitch to encourage voters, Governor Sugiyama of Nagasaki declared “Towards the ‘Nagasaki of the world’ with this single vote”.⁶⁷ Both cities repeatedly emphasized the pursuit of “everlasting world peace” (*sekai no kōkyu heiwa*).

While the laws were by no means ends in and of themselves, they serve as useful benchmarks for tracking the processes by which authorities articulated the conditions and limits of urban reconstruction, and attest to the symbolic weight associated with the status of the “peace city.” Planning and construction efforts sped up after 1949, and Hiroshima Mayor Hamai once described his city’s law as a “magic hammer” (*uchide no kozuchi*)—a proverbial term that refers to a mythological *tsuchi* (hammer) that would grant wishes and produce treasures when shaken.⁶⁸ The title of “peace” ultimately made its way into much of the cultural and civic nomenclature in Nagasaki as well, including the park. Yet the municipal inability to secure this title signified the political weakness of the city against Hiroshima, and some residents expressed confusion at what “international culture” actually entailed for their city.⁶⁹

Teramitsu, who was also involved in drafting Nagasaki’s law, admitted in his accompanying remarks published on June 6 (prior to the referendum) that the actual terms of the aid requested as part of the law were “unclear.” “At the very least,” he continued, “it promises that the citizens of the prefecture and city of Nagasaki will assist in the promotion and completion of the urban reconstruction project to the best of their ability, both materially and

⁶⁷ “Kono ippyo de ‘sekai no Nagasaki e’ Sugiyama chiji ga messeiji” 「この一票で世界の長崎へ」杉山知事がメッセージ [Towards the ‘Nagasaki of the world’ with this single vote’: A message from governor Sugiyama], *Nagasaki minyū* 長崎民友, July 7, 1949, Gordon W. Prange Collection, College Park, MD.

⁶⁸ Fukushima, “Kenshō Hiroshima.”

⁶⁹ Diehl, 33-34.

spiritually.”⁷⁰ The laws are better understood as conceptual frameworks, rather than that concrete logistical measures for reconstruction, that mobilized the material and psychic devastation of the bomb as a premise for reconfiguring urban identity.

Yet the ethos that undergirded their formation tells us crucial details about the municipal struggle to make sense of what it meant to be an atomic-bombed city, and how reconstruction could stem out of the particularities of this condition. The desire to be recognized and receive state funding as a result of this exceptional experience of disaster—one that no other cities in the world could lay claim to—was necessarily mediated by the omniscient presence of Occupation censorship. These very conditions had also curtailed the spread of public knowledge regarding the bombs and their effects. Thus the exceptionalism of the bombs was asserted, in both cities, in an abstract cadence that spoke to a globalized and universalized collective order, without specifying the realities of radiation poisoning that set this weapon apart from other aerial bombs. At the same time, the existence of not one, but two atomic-bombed cities problematized Hiroshima’s attempts to reinvent itself as *the* modern peace city through the lens of nuclear exceptionalism. The struggle to territorialize civic memory, here illustrated at the scale of the state, would continue to percolate into the spheres of the cities as reconstruction efforts began to gain traction.

⁷⁰ Teramitsu, *Chūkai: Nagasaki*, 23.

CHAPTER 2: Constructing the “factory of peace”: the unstable ground of the Hiroshima Peace Park

In 1942, following a series of Japanese military triumphs in the Pacific that seemed to affirm the growing power of the empire against its western adversaries, the Institute of Japanese Architects (*Kenchiku gakkai*) held a competition for a memorial complex to commemorate the founding of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (GEACPS). The competition, then in its sixteenth iteration, was part of an annual series geared towards students and young professionals.⁷¹ Previous briefs focused on smaller-scale residential typologies or cultural themes, and while the winning submissions were not intended to be realized, the projects tended to be theoretically feasible for a young architect working with a small team and a limited budget.

As the conditions of total war heightened and opportunities for conceptual innovation and actual construction grew increasingly scarce, architects began to engage in passionate debates surrounding the role of their discipline within the ideological matrix of the growing empire. Unlike in Germany and Italy, military authorities in Japan took little interest in the production of an architectural language of empire.⁷² The anxieties and frustrations architects felt from the lack of work opportunities and the peripheral status of their practice were channeled into debates and competitions concerning the imagined aesthetics of the imperial order. Thus emerged the idea to call upon the next generation of designers to contemplate how to design, build, and commemorate both nation and empire at the scale of the monumental. The prompt was open-

⁷¹ Kestenbaum, 188.

⁷² The Imperial Crown Style (*teikan yōshiki*), which stood as the normative counterpart to the modernists' vision, was the popular standard for grand civic, religious, and cultural buildings in both the metropole and colonies during the interwar period. However, as Yatsuka Hajime notes, the category did not function as an organized movement or “fascist” mode, and is better understood as a retroactively applied descriptor that encompasses the general aesthetic conservatism of the time.

The lack of military interest in propagandistic architecture instilled among many Japanese architects a bitterness that was compounded by the practices they observed taking place under the German and Italian regimes. As Horiguchi Sutemi, one of the leading ideologues of Japanese architectural modernism, admitted in 1956: “Everyone dreamt of Speer.” As quoted in Kestenbaum, 182.

ended, and no restrictions were placed on scale, site, budget, or materials. It called for a commemorative structure to “suitably represent the heroic aim of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere,” coupled with a modernist warning against derivation: “Do not be enticed by pre-existing notions of ‘commemorative architecture.’”⁷³

Tange Kenzō, a graduate student in urban design at Tokyo Imperial University, submitted an audacious proposal that sought to define a Japanese language of monumentality informed by, and yet patently distinct from precedents in the west. Sited on the foothills of Mount Fuji was a 60-meter tall, reinforced concrete structure with a gabled roof that strongly recalled the form of Ise Shrine, the most sacred site in the Shintō faith (Figure 2.1). Nine skylights lined the ridge of the roof, echoing the nine decorative *katsuogi* logs lined perpendicularly across the roof of Ise Shrine (Figure 2.2). The building was bounded within one trapezoidal half of a raised, hourglass-shaped plaza that was bisected along the narrowed center by a wide road. The path was intended to meld into a direct highway connection linking the site to Tokyo, situating the memorial amidst a symbolic and infrastructural network of imperial power that sprawled across the metropole (Figure 2.3).⁷⁴ His lucid plan and bold appropriation of Ise caught the attention of the jury members, who awarded him first prize in the competition.

⁷³ As translated by Kestenbaum from the competition brief published in the June 1942 issue of *Kenchiku zasshi*. Kestenbaum, 191-2.

⁷⁴ This would essentially place the memorial complex around the midpoint of the Tokaidō, the legendary road linking Tokyo and Kyoto which had long been a source of literary and artistic fascination. Hiroshige’s *ukiyo-e* series “53 Stations of the Tokaidō” is one of the most commonly known visual illustrations of this.

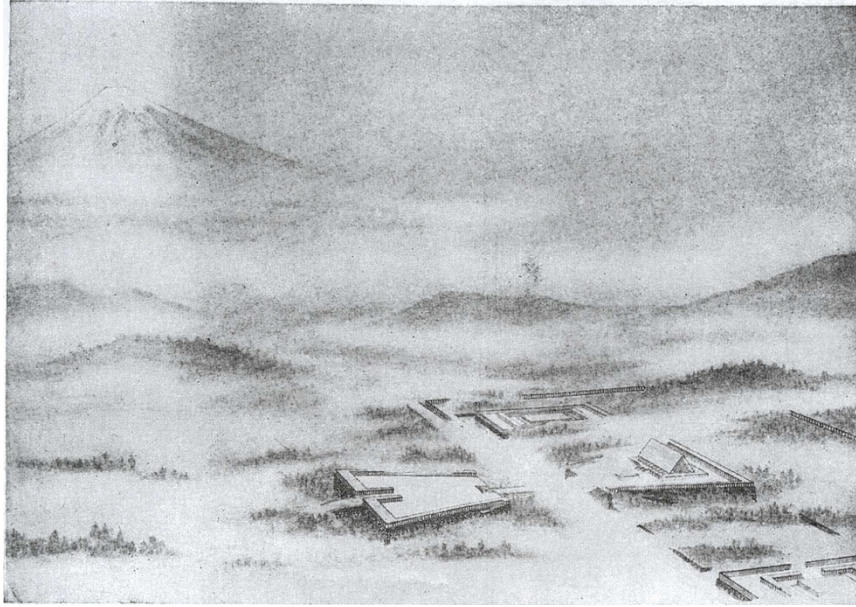


Figure 2.1. Tange Kenzō, Competition entry for Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Memorial Hall, 1942. From *Kenchiku zasshi* 建築雑誌 56, no. 693 (December 1942), 963.

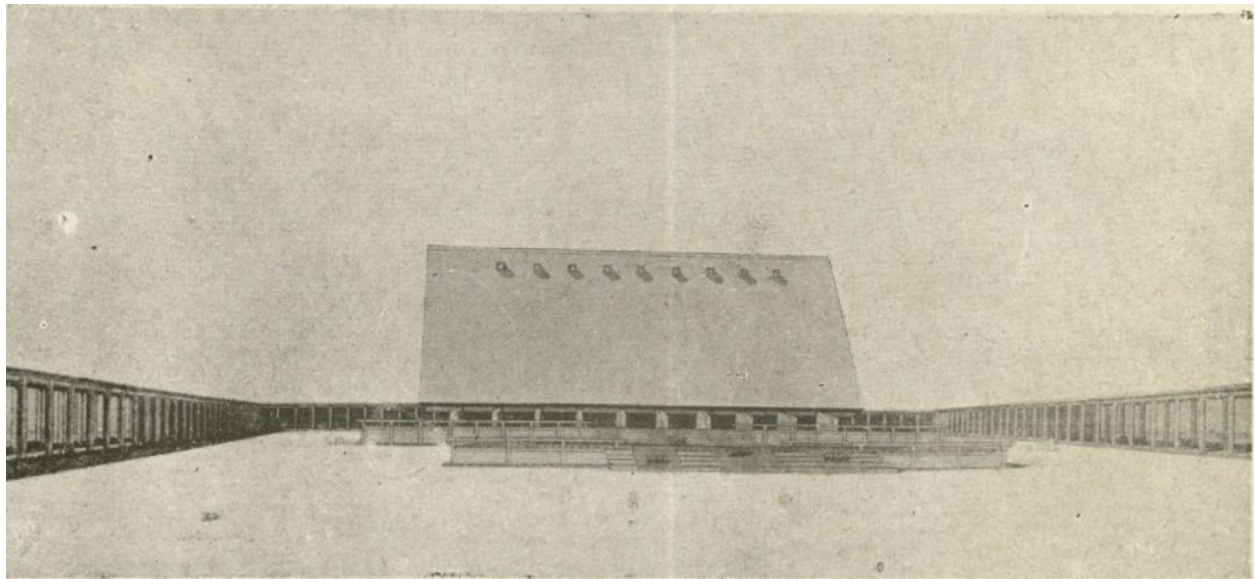


Figure 2.2. Tange Kenzō, Competition entry for Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Memorial Hall, elevation view of shrine structure, 1942. From *Kenchiku zasshi* 建築雑誌 56, no. 693 (December 1942), 965.

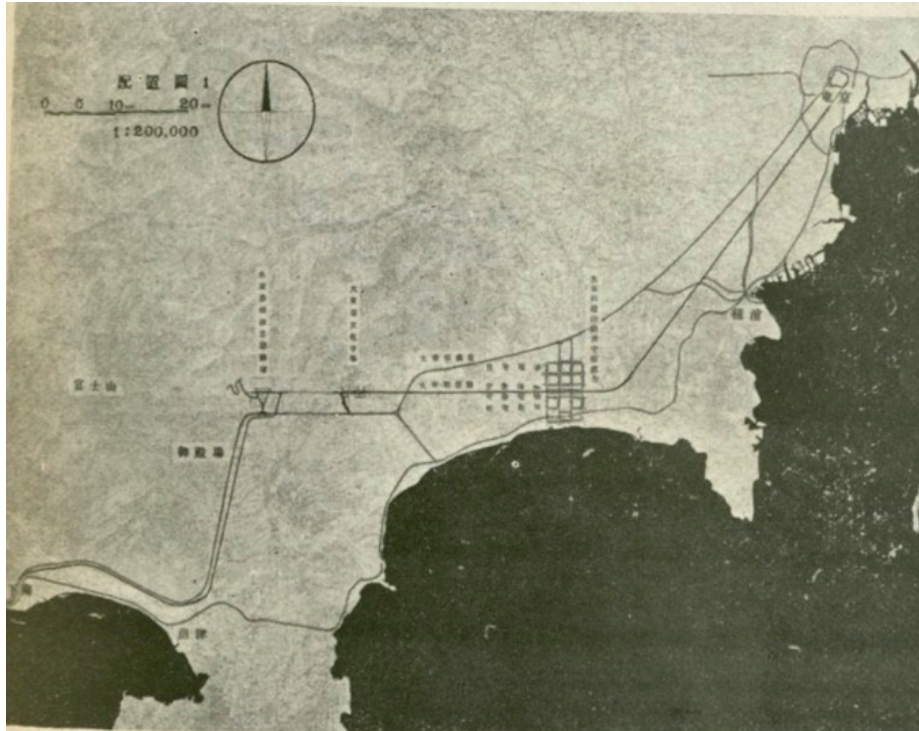


Figure 2.3 Tange Kenzō, Competition entry for Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Memorial Hall, site plan denoting the complex's connection to Tokyo, 1942. From *Kenchiku zasshi* 建築雑誌 56, no. 693 (December 1942), 963.

The accompanying drawing rendered the project through the atmospheric treatment and liberal use of negative space typical of traditional Japanese ink painting.⁷⁵ The mountain rises in the distance, enveloped within a haze that enhances its mythic character. The memorial complex presents itself in deference to the landscape, making no visual claim to overpower or compete with its natural surroundings. The trapezoidal form recalls Michelangelo's piazza for the Campidoglio, while the processional approach and the peaked form and monumental scale of the shrine evoke precedents in ancient Egyptian funerary architectures.⁷⁶ Yet in his accompanying text, Tange scathingly critiqued the “will to dominate...created in Egyptian culture and in

⁷⁵ For a discussion of the fascist aesthetics conveyed via seemingly “apolitical” tropes such as Mount Fuji, samurai, and geisha in Japanese *nihon-ga* painting during the war, see Asato Ikeda *The Politics of Painting: Fascism and Japanese Art During the Second World War* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018).

⁷⁶ These quotations were not lost on the jurors; Maekawa Kunio questioned whether or not the fence surrounding the shrine, likely a reference to the piazza of St. Peter's or the Campidoglio, was truly necessary in this context.

medieval Christian culture.” The absence of an authoritative monolithic structure in the style of European monumentality (*kinensei*), he continued, “is the triumph of the holy country of Japan,” and “the seeds of our great future development are found in historically validated forms.”⁷⁷ This commentary was preceded by Tange’s response to a survey on proposed building styles for the GEACPS published in *Kenchiku zasshi* a few months earlier, where he made the following declaration:

We must develop a new Japanese architectural style that expresses the austere firmness of a god, and the majestic solemnity of a titan. We must ignore Anglo-American and Southeast Asian cultures. To admire Angkor Wat is the act of a dilettante. We must begin with a firm conviction in the tradition and future of the Japanese race. The new Japanese style will be the product of the architectural freedom that works in service of the supreme and inevitable project of constructing the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.⁷⁸

Tange found lacking in Japan a clear representative language of ethnonationalist monumentality appropriate to the political goals of the empire, and sought to assert superiority over and distinction from foreign precedents, whilst implicitly admitting to his country’s lag in monumental construction. Architects and urbanists across regimes expatiated on the potentials and perils of monumentality and its civic role amidst the backdrop of escalating conflict between nation-states.⁷⁹ Tange was but one of them, a young practitioner seeking to insert a unique nationalist language that adequately reflected the pan-Asianist ideological vision of his nation into this broader discourse. Though mired in convoluted logic and aesthetic contradictions, his intentions are clear. The proposal, in this regard, is a sort of twisted prelude to what would

⁷⁷ As quoted in Kestenbaum, 206.

⁷⁸ Tange Kenzō “Dai tōa kyōeiken ni okeru kaiin no yōbō” 大東亜共栄圏における会員の要望 [A member’s wish for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere], *Kenchiku zasshi* 建築雑誌 56, no. 690 (September 1942): 744.

⁷⁹ See Josep Lluís Sert, Fernand Léger, and Sigfried Gideon, “Nine Points on Monumentality” (1943); Lewis Mumford, “The Death of the Monument” (1937).

become the architect's celebrated career-long project of articulating a language of Japanese modernism.

It is then striking to see the hourglass-shaped site, the spiritual core featuring quotations from premodern Japanese architecture, the clarity and openness of the plaza, and the central artery cutting across the complex all revived in the visage of Tange's Hiroshima Peace Park, realized over ten years later amidst radically different circumstances (Figure 2.4). The symbolic nexus of the mountain has been replaced with the architectural detritus of the A-Bomb Dome, while the grand highway is scaled down to an urban throughway that runs across the park, embedding the memorial into the transportation network of the city. The sacred structure commemorating those who had died fighting for the expansionist cause of the imperial regime was now a flat-roofed memorial museum dedicated to the lives lost in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

The correlation between these two sites was long omitted from narratives of both Tange's career and the development of the Peace Park before architectural historian Inoue Shoichi surfaced the issue and brought it under harsh light in his 1987 publication *Art, Kitsch, and the Japanesque*.⁸⁰ While Inoue's interpretations have at times suffered from inconsistency and

⁸⁰ See Inoue Shōichi 井上章一, : *Āto, kitchu, japanesuku—Daitoa no posutomodan* アート・キツチュ・ジャパネスク—大東亜のポストモダン [Art, Kitsch, and the Japanesque: The postmodern of Greater East Asia] (Tōkyō: Seidōsha, 1987); *Senjika no kenchikuka : āto, kitchu, japanesuku* 戦時下日本の建築家——アート・キツチュ・ジャパネスク [Wartime Architects: Art, Kitsch, and the Japanesque] (Tōkyō: Asahi Sensho, 1995).

Inoue's compelling parallel was buttressed by a somewhat convoluted argument suggesting that Tange's approach, which neither abided by the conservative Imperial Crown style or European modernism, transcended fascist affiliations and operated in an independent mode that presaged the postmodern discourses of hybridity. Yet in his 1995 expansion *Senjika no kenchikuka: āto, kitchu, japanesuku* Inoue bluntly claims that Tange should be regarded as a "war criminal" for his ideological complicity in the militarist regime, as evidenced by his designs for the GEACPS Memorial (1942) and the Japan-Thailand Cultural Hall (1943), an unbuilt complex intended to propagandistically flaunt the Japanese arts to the Thai populace following the Japanese invasion of the country in December 1941.



Figure 2.4. Tange Kenzō, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, aerial view looking north. Source: *Mainichi shinbun*, <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20210119/p2a/00m/0na/004000c>.

exaggeration, the explicit address of the project and the call to integrate it into comprehensive readings of Tange's oeuvre nevertheless remains significant.⁸¹

Tange's reputation looms large within the field of Japanese architecture, giving way to a longstanding reticence surrounding a critical engagement with his wartime designs.

Monographic studies of Tange and studies on the development of Japanese modernism tend to bracket the GEACPS as a regrettable product of the times, or a mere formal illustration of Tange's lifelong concerns around articulating a language of Japanese modernism and building for the masses.⁸² Jacqueline Kestenbaum, Hyunjung Cho, and Yatsuka Hajime are among the few who have made conscious efforts to take wartime projects seriously and situate them within the developmental trajectory of Tange's practice and ideas.⁸³ The popular bypassing of this work is further puzzling considering that many scholars have engaged rather rigorously with the postwar techno-rationalist, expansionist dimensions of Tange's Metabolist principles alongside

⁸¹ Inoue, *Senjika nihon no kenchikuka*, 182.

⁸² Architectural historian Toyokawa Saikaku construes the close resemblance between the two designs as simply an illustration of his continued interest in scales of monumentality, reinterpretations of Western architectural precedents through a nativist lens, and deconstructing and re-constructing tradition in the articulation of the modern. See Toyokawa Saikaku, trans. Watanabe Hiroshi, "The core system and social scale: design methodology at the Tange Laboratory," in *Kenzo Tange: Architecture for the World*, ed. Seng Kuan and Yukio Lippit (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2012). Seng Kuan only briefly mentions his wartime successes as being "unfortunately associated with wartime Japan's most notorious episodes," casting the architect as a passive agent. See Seng Kuan, *Tange Kenzo's Architecture in Three Keys: As Building, as Art, and as the City* (PhD diss, 2011). Zhongjie Lin's *Kenzo Tange and the Metabolist Movement* similarly situates Tange's competitions and planning projects from the period simply as early evidence of the architect's continued concern with the management and conceptualization of urban growth. As Florian Urban remarks in a review, despite Lie's commendable knowledge of the Metabolists and their work, "the presentation of Kenzo Tange's pre-war projects exclusively in formal terms leaves the reader uneasy...one would expect a discussion of the relationship between architecture and the oppressive nationalist ideology of this regime, similar to the questions historians habitually ask in the context of architects who worked under Hitler, Stalin or Mussolini, and subsequently attempted to justify or conceal their actions: was the young Tange an opportunist courtier of ruthless totalitarian rulers or rather an apolitical dreamer with a soft spot for big plans?" See Florian Urban, Review of *Kenzo Tange and the Metabolist Movement* by Zhongjie Lin, *The Journal of Architecture* 16, no. 4 (2011): 584-587. It is impossible to answer this with accuracy, but we might surmise that he existed somewhere in the hazy in-between.

⁸³ See Jacqueline Kestenbaum, *Modernism and Tradition in Japanese Architectural Ideology, 1931-1955*, PhD diss., 1996; Hyunjung Cho, "Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the Making of Japanese Postwar Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education* 66, no.1 (2012): 72-83; Yatsuka Hajime, "The 1960 Tokyo Bay Project of Kenzo Tange," in *Cities in Transition*, eds. Arie Graafland and Deborah Hauptmann (Rotterdam: 101 Publisher, 2001): 178-191.

settler colonialist preoccupations surrounding the availability of living space and the hunger for land and resource management. A curious gap then emerges at the 1955 mark, a threshold that marks the escalation of interest in Japanese architectural activities from practitioners abroad and the acceleration of construction projects following the departure of Occupation forces. The Peace Park's assertion of monumentality and rehabilitation may also be read through the lens of this uncertain historical moment, before the upward trend of economic recovery turned into one of explosive growth, catalyzing large-scale building projects across the country.

The nature of Tange's creative output during the war, to be clear, was not out of step with the work being conducted by his contemporaries. Similarly, the postwar drive to mark a clear break with the militarist past and mobilize incinerated cities as testing grounds for exercising new design principles at massive scale of the urban was a common attitude among the modernist vanguard.⁸⁴

One important clarification rarely made explicit in extant scholarship is that the proposal is better understood as a speculative exercise—a “castle in the sand,” as architectural critic Kawazoe Noboru put it—rather than a full-fledged proposal intended to be realized. In order to make explicit the differences in format between the two memorial complexes.⁸⁵ Its publication and appraisal was contained almost exclusively within the sphere of architects, so it is not useful to treat it as something that would have had any degree of recognizability within the general public, even upon the unveiling of the Hiroshima park. The proposal is certainly illustrative of

⁸⁴ See Cherie Wendelken, “Putting Metabolism Back in Place” in *Anxious Modernisms: Experiments in Postwar Architectural Culture*, ed. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejean Leagult (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2000).

⁸⁵ Iwata Kazuo (aka Kawazoe Noboru), “The Japanese Character of Tange Kenzo,” trans. Maiko Behr, republished in *From Postwar to Postmodern, Art in Japan 1945–1989: Primary Documents*, ed. Doryun Chong et al. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2012), 69.

The exception to this is Jacqueline Kestenbaum's dissertation, which delves deeply into the processes and discourses that arose from a selection of architectural competitions held during and after the war.

the jingoistic fervor that permeated cultural production during the era, but it never came remotely close to being realized during the war.

Yet it is this very contrast in circumstances that makes the successful realization of these speculative ideas in the vividly public and internationally recognized 1955 design all the more remarkable and haunting. It testifies to the mutability and potency of these principles of monumentality in the making of Japanese national memory. These “imperial ghosts” of visual and organizational language encapsulate the very syncretism that took place between legacies of war and visions of the future in the municipal production of peace in public space.

The story I wish to tell in Hiroshima is primarily concerned with memory as it is embodied and exercised through the medium of space. After briefly sketching out the geography of the city and the background of the peace park competition, I analyze Tange’s mnemonic system as it relates to conditions of opticality, governance, and cycles of urban development and displacement. This archaeological treatment of Hiroshima’s urban and social conditions reveals the ways in which the project of reconstruction worked amidst, and often came into tension with, the histories and practices that accrued in the city prior to and following the disaster.

The urban foundations of the post-nuclear city

The modern city of Hiroshima, today boasting a population of nearly 1.2 million, expanded out from a castle built at the end of the 16th century on the delta of the Ōta River.⁸⁶ As the population continued to grow during the Edo (1603-1868) and Meiji (1868-1912) periods, the city sprawled out onto strips of land reclaimed in the Hiroshima Bay, and eventually came to serve as a crucial port in the Seto Inland Sea trading route and the administrative, economic, and

⁸⁶ Hiroshima City, “Population, number of households,” as of March 2023, <https://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/site/toukei/12647.html>.

educational center of the region. During the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), the castle became the site of the Imperial General Headquarters, solidifying Hiroshima's reputation as a military city.⁸⁷ From 1888 to 1945, the city was the base of the Fifth Division of the Imperial Japanese Army, making it the center of martial activity in the area, and the Asia-Pacific War it had become a such a prominent meeting point for military leaders and politicians that it began to carry the air of a capital.⁸⁸ The ensuing growth of industry and commerce led to immense growth—between 1894 and 1914 the population nearly doubled, swelling from 87,000 to 163,000.⁸⁹ At the time of the bombing, the population hovered around 350,000. Over 50,000 of the residents were of Korean descent, many of whom had been conscripted by the Imperial Japanese Army as forced laborers.⁹⁰ By the end of 1945, an estimated 140,000 had perished from both the immediate blast and its lingering aftereffects.

The modern city spans along seven arteries in the Ōta River delta, which serve as the organizing principle for the gridded streets run parallel and perpendicular to the adjacent rivers.⁹¹ Formal urban planning initiatives were applied to Hiroshima beginning in 1923 following the establishment of the National City Planning Act of 1919.⁹² As was the case with many other cities during the war, buildings along main thoroughways were razed to create firebreaks in anticipation of air raids, with the hopes that the cleared paths would control the spread of fires,

⁸⁷ Oleg Benesch and Ran Zwigenberg, *Japan's Castles: Citadels of Modernity in War and Peace*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 1-2, 173.

⁸⁸ Fukuma Yoshiaki 福間良明. “*Senseki no sengoshi*”: *semegiau ikō to monyumento* 「戦跡」の戦後史: せめぎあう遺構とモニュメント [The postwar history of “war sites”: ruins and monuments in conflict] (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2015), 23.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Hiroshima City 広島市, “Shisha sū ni tsuite” 「死者数について」 [Regarding the death toll], last modified October 21, 2019, <https://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/soshiki/48/9400.html> (accessed February 20, 2023). See Kurt W. Tong, “Korea's forgotten atomic bomb victims,” *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 23, no. 1 (1991): 31-37.

⁹¹ Ishimaru Norioki, “Reconstructing Hiroshima and Preserving the Reconstructed City,” in *Rebuilding Urban Japan After 1945*, ed. Carola Hein et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 87.

⁹² Ibid.

delineate escape routes, and open up space around important civic buildings.⁹³ These firebreaks, which had already displaced hundreds of households in Hiroshima by demolishing an estimated 7% of residential units, in conjunction with extant topography of the city, would ironically amplify the damage caused by the blast and the ensuing spread of radiation.⁹⁴

When it came to making “peace” visible and manifest, the city of Hiroshima needed to determine a strategy reconstitute its military history in such a way that would not undermine this lofty municipal vision. Hiroshima was the only city in postwar Japan where the local government held a competition for urban reconstruction project.⁹⁵ Though not unheard of, architectural and urban planning competitions are still to this day relatively uncommon in Japan. The remaking of the city through a solicitation for vision-based proposals with clear authorship makes evident the pointed desire of municipal officials to produce a distinct urban identity for the city that could incentive reconstruction while appealing to a global public.

The 1949 Peace City Reconstruction law emphasized the building of a “model modern city,” suggesting that the post-atomic reinvention of the city was not only an inherently modernizing enterprise, but would serve as a reference for cities across the world. As Mayor Hamai declared in an English-language promotional pamphlet on the plans for the construction of the park:

“The reconstructed city aspires to become a center of creative peace movements by providing well-equipped facilities for international peace functions and, at the same time, to become an embodiment of peace such as would befit the world wherein complete

⁹³ Dylan J. Plung, “The Impact of Urban Evacuation in Japan during World War II,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 19, no. 1 (October 2021) <https://apjif.org/2021/19/Plung.html>.

⁹⁴ The US Government Printing Office, “The United States Strategic Bombing Survey: The Effects of Atomic Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, June 30, 1946” (1946), *RWU E-Books*, 7.

⁹⁵ Carola Hein, “Hiroshima: The Atomic Bomb and Kenzo Tange’s Hiroshima Peace Center,” in *Out of Ground Zero: Case Studies in Urban Reinvention*, ed. Joan Ockman (New York: Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture, Columbia University; Munich, New York: Prestel, 2002), 70.

victory of human wisdom will have ousted war and destruction from humanity to give place to well-being, good-will and cultural refinement.”⁹⁶

Extensive redevelopment, coupled with the redistribution of land and wealth to serve the interests of big business and big planning, became the mechanisms through which the narrative of urban reinvention was realized.⁹⁷ Yet “places,” as Svetlana Boym reminds us, “are *contexts* for remembrances and debates about the future, not *symbols* of memory or nostalgia.”⁹⁸ The treatment of post-atomic Hiroshima as “an embodiment of peace” makes visible the fallibility of the municipal project of totalizing the city, which attempted to tame and make static the ceaseless lived realities of the environment and its inhabitants. The grim realities of urban and civic devastation became incorporated into an ethos of renewal and utopic advancement, and the trauma of nuclear disaster and the accompanying humanitarian “lessons learned” were thematically instrumentalized to counteract any vestiges of militarism in the city’s identity and history.

Mapping the hypocenter: tropes and touchstones for relativizing ruination

In contrast to the dispersed and inconsistent damages inflicted by firebombings, the atomic bombs created far more legible, concentric patterns of destruction with clear hypocenters. As most photographs depicting ground-level conditions and human victims were withheld from publication by the CCD, these aerial views, second to the mushroom cloud, were some of the most widely recognized graphic representation of the cities during the Occupation years (Figure

⁹⁶ Hamai Shinzo, “A Message from Hiroshima,” in *Peace City Hiroshima*, MS_PROJ_066_004, The Isamu Noguchi Archives, Long Island City, NY.

⁹⁷ Zwigenberg, *Hiroshima*, 53-54.

⁹⁸ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 77.

2.5).⁹⁹ The spatial and optical ways of knowing and remembering produced by the nature of this violence are important to consider when evaluating the construction of the peace parks.

Distance from the hypocenter was a key metric by which radiation exposure was assessed in medical and legal terms, thus drawing a direct relation between bodily self-understanding and geospatial context amidst a collectively experienced traumatic event. *Hibakusha* recollections almost always make mention of the precise distance they were from ground zero, and such relations often color their own degree of identification with the status of atomic victimhood.¹⁰⁰ Captions accompanying artifacts exhibited in museums and photographs taken in the cities typically make mention of the location and the distance from the hypocenter at which they were found or taken.

The Hiroshima museum features a particularly eye-catching installation located at the entrance of the main permanent exhibition hall, which makes use of a series of video projections that narrativize the events of August 6th at the scale of the urban (Figure 2.5). The animated sequences, mapped over a static diorama around which visitors can stand and gaze down upon the miniaturized city, first cast the expanse in a clear and tranquil atmosphere. A B-29 enters the scene, dropping a bomb that whizzes towards the ground. A blinding flash follows, transitioning to a projection of the conflagrated city. This aerial view thus serves as the entry point for visitors to begin their journey into the horrors of the bomb, after which they progress into a cavernous gallery that shifts the narrative trajectory towards the on-the-ground, lived experiences of atomic disaster. The atomic narrative begins with the god-perspective, and ends with a reminder of the utterly corporeal dimensions of disaster.

⁹⁹ George H. Roeder Jr., "Making Things Visible: Learning from the Censors," in *Living With the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden (Armonk, New York and London, England: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 75.

¹⁰⁰ Yoneyama, 113.



Figure 2.5. Aerial view of Hiroshima, August 1945, United States National Archives (public domain).

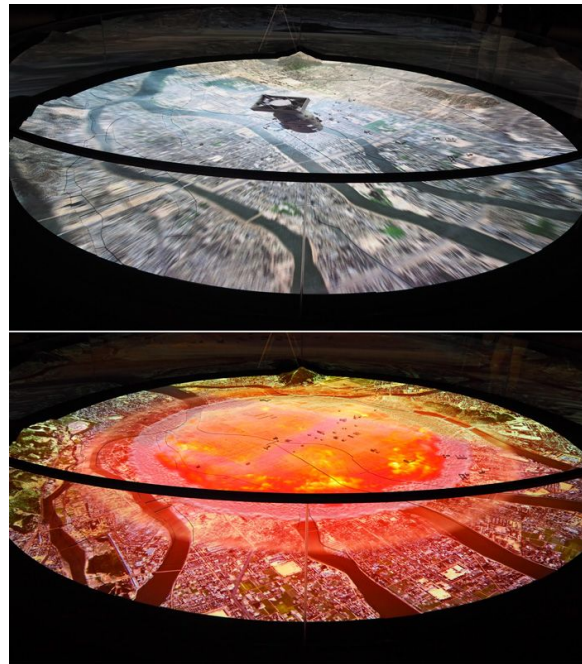


Figure 2.6. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, video installation, © Jiji.

The vantage accorded by aerial mapping not only makes absent human bodies and environmental features, but also dramatically flattens the topography of these urban landscapes. This is particularly important when considering the effects of destruction in Nagasaki, a port city characterized by its steep hills and winding pathways. Though the plutonium bomb detonated in Nagasaki was more powerful than its uranium counterpart deployed in Hiroshima, the siting of ground zero in the depths of the narrow Urakami Valley, and the shielding presence of the nearby Konpira Mountain both played a role in mitigating and delineating the nature of blast damage and radiation exposure.¹⁰¹ The bomb in Hiroshima was aimed at the cartographically distinctive and geographically central T-shaped Aioi bridge in the Nakajima district. It detonated just slightly south east of the target, miraculously leaving the bridge intact but destroying much of the urban center. The rhetorical vantage point of the aerial view, which replicates the clinical, objectifying perspective of the B-29 bomber planes, as Lisa Yoneyama argues, has come to dominate the language of testimony to such a degree that very few representations of the disaster operate outside of a “transcendental” gaze.¹⁰²

That the Peace Parks emerge proximate to the hypocenters of each city, thus, is a crucial element of the spatial inscription of memory in the framework of the city, and the embodied modes of engagement sanctioned by official narratives of remembrance. The parks’ presence in the city maintains the preeminence of the physical trace in the narrative of the bombs, inscribing into the contemporary visitor the historical weight of the literal ground upon which they stand.

¹⁰¹ Diehl, 15.

¹⁰² Yoneyama, 113

This may seem like a rather obvious point to make, and a fairly conventional gesture as far as practices of public memorial-making centered around a geographic nexus of disaster go.

Yet the decision to construct memorial parks at or near the hypocenters of the explosion was not the product of a total consensus among constituents. A representative a commercial district near hypocenter suggested building a zoo in the Nakajima area, while industrialist Kuwabara Ichio, proposed leaving ground zero in a state of ruin in order to inscribe it with a sacred aura.¹⁰³ Calls to relocate the city altogether were also not uncommon; an illustration published in the *Chūgoku shinbun* visualized the reconstructed city as a dense collection of high-rise buildings pushed out along the southern coastline and the mountainside in the north, while the most heavily damaged ground remained a cleared-out expanse, save for the A-Bomb Dome at its center (Figure 2.7).¹⁰⁴ Still others sought to rebuild the area as a residential district, asserting the continued life of the city by not leaving the center uninhabited.¹⁰⁵ Though these proposals failed to garner substantial support, it maintains that the impulse to build out a site of memory from a center defined by the very characteristics of the weapon itself should not be taken lightly. The burned out, flattened landscape of nuclear holocaust becomes the groundwork for producing an open plaza, and the strategic placement of the attack was mobilized into the making of a public city center not present in the pre-bomb cityscape.

The hypocenter of the explosion in Hiroshima, to be precise, is above the site of the former Shima Hospital, just a block east of the A-bomb Dome and across the river from the Peace Park. Compared to the resounding monumentality of the Dome and park, the marker here is surprisingly diminutive; a small plaque, featuring a photo of the ruined site taken by the U.S.

¹⁰³ Ishimaru, “Reconstructing Hiroshima and Preserving the Reconstructed City” (2002), 90.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

Army in November 1945, with a text that plainly describes the events that transpired (Figure 2.8):

Carried to Hiroshima from Tinian Island by Enola Gay, a U.S. Army B-29 bomber, the first atomic bomb used in the history of humankind exploded approximately 600 meters above this spot. The city below was hit by heat rays of approximately 3,000 to 4,000°C along with a blast wind and radiation. Most people in the area lost their lives instantly. The time was 8:15 a.m., August 6, 1945.

The unobtrusive panel quietly dissolves into the backdrop of a commercial street. Both the featured image and the language of the text affix the bomb within a temporal and spatial moment, making no mention or indication of what existed prior, and what followed.¹⁰⁶ The congealment of memorial grandeur in the park and A-Bomb Dome is conversely offset by a smattering of cursory and unremarkable markers placed across the city and within the park grounds.¹⁰⁷

In leaving the central plaza as an open expanse dotted with a lone cenotaph, Tange replicates the slick cartographic imaginary of the B-29's perspective, using the natural boundaries of the river to delineate the boundaries between memorial and metropolis. Tange's park effectively creates a new symbolic hypocenter, from which the peacemaking system emanates and expands.

¹⁰⁶ The plaque does not mention that the current Shima Surgical and Internal Medicine Hospital was rebuilt on the same site as the original hospital by the founding doctor Shima Kaoru in 1948, who had, along with one of the nurses from the hospital, been out of town on the day of the bombing. The hospital is now headed by Shima's grandson.

¹⁰⁷ The dominance of the park also enforces hierarchical relations between isolated monuments based on their spatial relationship to the bounds of the park. A monument to Korean *hibakusha* was originally erected in 1970 amidst a busy intersection outside of the Nakajima Island area. Long a source of discontent for Korean residents due to its less than ideal, peripheral positioning, it was eventually relocated to a site within the park grounds in 1999 after years of protests and petitions.

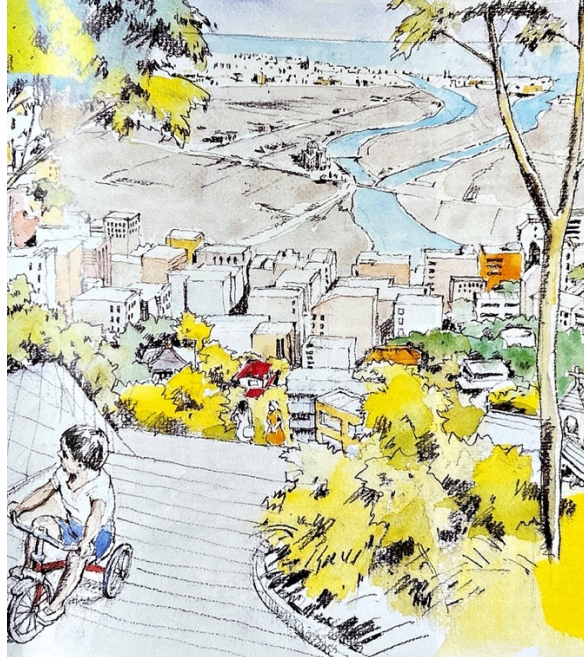


Figure 2.7. Araki Yoshiaki, Proposal for relocating Hiroshima, 1946. From *Reconstruction of Hiroshima: pictorial history of forty years since atomic bombing* 広島被爆40年史：都市の復興 [Hiroshima hibaku 40-nenshi: toshi no fukkō], eds. Ishimaru Norioki et al. (Hiroshima: City of Hiroshima Division of Culture, Planning, and Coordination, 1985), plate I-46.



Figure 2.8. Hypocenter marker, Hiroshima. photo by author.

Tange and Hiroshima: regional sympathies and preliminary research

Born in 1913 in Sakai, a city just south of Osaka, Tange spent his early years in Hankow and Shanghai, where his father worked for the colonial branches of Sumitomo Bank, one of the major *zaibatsu* holding companies that dominated the economic landscape of the prewar era.¹⁰⁸ The family returned to Japan during his elementary school years, settling in his father's hometown of Imabari, Ehime prefecture.¹⁰⁹ In 1930, he enrolled as a boarding student at Hiroshima High School, where an encounter with Le Corbusier's plan for the Palace of Soviets sparked his interest in architecture.¹¹⁰ After enrolling in the architecture program at the prestigious Tokyo Imperial University, Tange worked in the firm of Maekawa Kunio before returning to his alma mater in 1941 to pursue graduate studies in urban planning. In August of 1945, having gotten word that a new weapon of unprecedented power had been dropped on Hiroshima and the war was likely coming to an end, Tange traveled back home to Imabari, only to find the city in charred ruins, his family home reduced to ashes. His parents had perished in the firebombings that engulfed the city during the night of the 5th, just hours before the atomic bomb detonated over Hiroshima.¹¹¹

Shortly after the end of the war, Tange was invited to take part in a large-scale urban study conducted by the War Damage Rehabilitation Board. The research involved assessing the scale and nature of wartime destruction in cities across the archipelago, and producing reports and recommendations on the course of reconstruction. The Tange Lab, in collaboration with the lab of Waseda University professor Moto'o Take, developed land-use plans for Hiroshima and

¹⁰⁸ Tange Kenzō, *Ippon no enpitsu kara* 一本の鉛筆から [From a single pencil] (Tōkyō: Nihon keizai shinbun-sha, 1986), 8.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 47.

the nearby military city of Kure.¹¹² Owing to the teenage years he spent in the city, Tange headed the Hiroshima portion of the research. Nagasaki-born Moto'o, who had worked as a contractor in Nagasaki city and the nearby city of Sasebo, the site of a major naval base, was responsible for the research in Kure, where he drew from his experience planning for shipyards and port cities.¹¹³ The study, Tange reflected decades later, "was of paramount importance for me, enabling me as it did to glimpse the difficulty of rooting contemporary architecture in Japanese reality, behind which we could still discern the weight of tradition."¹¹⁴ Through Tange's vision, the site became a testing ground, this time not for a weapon of mass destruction, but for the experiments of modernist architecture and city planning.

This urban research and personal experience provided Tange with intimate knowledge of the city's architectural needs and spatial history, as well as strengthening his ties to the area. The Tange Lab's drawings from this study reveal a marked interest in the ebbs and flows of population growth and commerce, and pathways of transportation and urban circulation (Figure 2.9). Rejecting a proposed plan for a diagonal road running southwest from the Hiroshima station, Tange was insistent on the need for lucid orthogonal arrangements. His recommendations also included areas designated for parks and cultural facilities, concentrating the commercial areas in the center of the city, and situating the industrial sector in the southern

¹¹² Ishimaru Norioki et al., "Hiroshima no fukkōtoshi keikaku to Tange Kenzō: Hiroshima ni okeru kenchikuka Tange Kenzō no katsudō ni kan suru kenkyū sono 1," 広島の復興都市計画と丹下健三 : 広島における建築家丹下健三の活動に関する研究 その1 [Research on the plan of Reconstruction Hiroshima: A study on the activities of the architect Kenzo Tange in Hiroshima Part 1], *AIJ 日本建築学会計画系論文集*, no. 557 (July 2002), 341. See Ishimaru's article for a detailed account of the planning process and its particular recommendations. Moto'o designed the Nagasaki Aquarium (1959), the Nagasaki Civic Auditorium (1962), and the Peace Fountain (1969) as part of the developments sanctioned under the Nagasaki International Cultural City Construction Law. The aquarium building is now part of the campus of the Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science, while the auditorium was decommissioned in 2015 and later demolished. The fountain, however, remains in place today, situated along the same central axis as the Peace Statue.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Tange Kenzō, "Architecture and the city," *The UNESCO Courier* (March 1985), 5.

and eastern portions of the city, where connections to Kure could be streamlined. In his 1954 report in *Shinken-chiku*, he expressed disappointment with the selfishness of government agencies who competed over the former military land southeast of the castle and prevented the construction of the memorial facilities he envisioned in the area.¹¹⁵ Though the Lab's contributions were inherently limited by the fact that the War Damage Rehabilitation Board had already made many of their decisions regarding street layouts and green space, his regional planning principles nevertheless percolated into the eventual plan, and his role in the city's reinvention solidified following his competition victory.¹¹⁶

The 1949 Peace Park Competition

The competition brief, announced on April 20, 1949, stressed the global demand for a “city of peace” and the responsibility of Hiroshima to fulfill this momentous task.¹¹⁷ Stipulations included a lecture hall with a capacity of 2,500, exhibition and conference rooms, a library, dining hall, a plaza for gathering and recreation, along with landscaping interventions that would collectively make use of the expansive 37,500 *tsubo*, or roughly 11,300 square meter site. Implicit in this call was a desire to counteract both municipal and civilian fears that the bombed-out land would remain barren for decades.¹¹⁸

Tange's team, which included collaborators Ōtani Sachio, Asada Takashi, and Kimura Tokokuni was selected from 145 entries and announced as the winning design on August 6 of 1949 (Figure 2.10).¹¹⁹ The proposal consisted of a flattened expanse that filled out the northern

¹¹⁵ *Shinken-chiku* 1954.

¹¹⁶ Ishimaru, “Research on the plan of Reconstruction Hiroshima,” 345.

¹¹⁷ *Ken-chiku zasshi*, September 1949, 37; Kestenbaum, 286.

¹¹⁸ Kestenbaum, 287.

¹¹⁹ Fukuma, “*Senseki no sengoshi*,” 36.

While Tange's youth is often singled out in the testaments to the evocative and conceptual grandeur of this early career project, we can surmise that his selection within the competition format was not unrelated to the presence of

tip of the Nakajima district and was bounded on the south by a wide boulevard from which visitors would enter the park. Tange's submission integrated cultural facilities, housing, and new commercial developments as part of the memorialization plan, setting them all in kaleidoscopic relation to the hypocenter.¹²⁰ The visitor would first be greeted by the reinforced concrete, *piloti*-supported Memorial Hall, which served as the main exhibition space. Deftly blending together tropes of European modernism and Japanese premodern design, the *pilotis* at once reference the hefty trapezoidal supports of Le Corbusier's Unite d'Habitation (1952) and the raised-floor structures of *azekura*-style construction, notably preserved in the Shōsō-in imperial treasury (c.756-759) in Nara. The assertively rectilinear form of the museum stretches across the horizon, joined at the east and west ends by the Memorial Center (today the entrance hall of the complex), and the Assembly Hall, which were designed in collaboration with local architects.

After walking beneath the rectangular volume, they would proceed through the open expanse to face a slender 60-meter tall arch that spanned 120 meters across the width of the park and framed the ruins of the A-Bomb Dome across the river.¹²¹ The pathways of the park are organized in an hourglass formation that narrows at the arch, widening back out at the northern and southern ends to connect to roadways linking the island to the rest of the city. The plaza was envisioned to hold up to 20,000 people for mass gatherings and commemorative events.

In both his 1946 and 1949 visions of Hiroshima, Tange persistently advocated for lucid street arrangements that contrasted with the tight, overlapping networks of small pathways that

jurors such as Kishida Hideto, his former professor at Tokyo Imperial University and a prominent ideologue in the persistent aesthetic debate surrounding the forces of Western and Japanese tradition on the production of modernism. The insular coterie of the postwar architectural in Japan, much like anywhere else, maintained their lineages through mainstream publications (*Shinkenchiku*, *Kenchiku zasshi*, *Kokusai kenchiku*, to name a few), academic and professional sponsorship, and engagements with leading figures in the allied arts.

¹²⁰ Hein, "Hiroshima: The Atomic Bomb and Kenzo Tange's Hiroshima Peace Center," 72.

¹²¹ Hyunjung Cho, "Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the Making of Japanese Postwar Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education* 66, no.1 (2012), 77.

Early model: <https://hiroshimaforpeace.com/en/architecture-column-1-hiroshima-peace-memorial-museum/>



Figure 2.9. Tange Lab, regional study of Hiroshima for War Damage Rehabilitation Board depicting areas to be designated for commercial, residential, civic, and industrial use, 1946. Source: Kenzō Tange Archive, Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

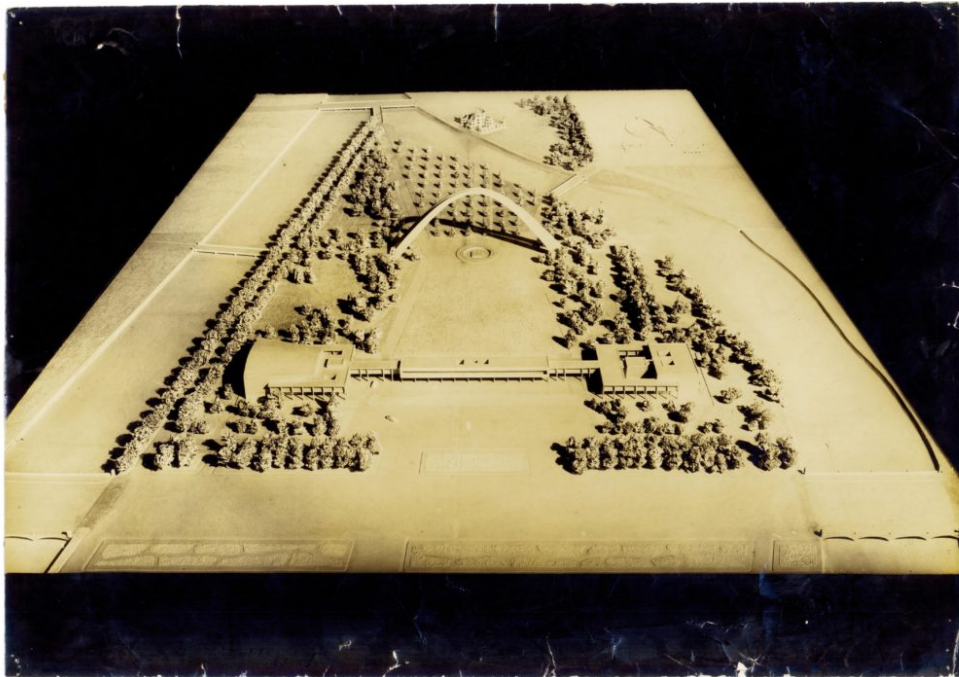


Figure 2.10. Tange Kenzō, model of early proposal for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. Source: Hiroshima City Archives, <https://hiroshimaforpeace.com/en/architecture-column-1-hiroshima-peace-memorial-museum/>.

characterized pre-war Japanese cities, stressing the value of the Greek agora as a model for building out a central arena for public gathering.¹²² The resulting environment is dominated by clear north-south and east-west axes that command the circulatory flows of parkgoers and produce a clear sightline that neatly aligns the A-Bomb Dome, cenotaph, and the Peace Memorial Museum.

While other submissions disregarded or downplayed the presence of the A-Bomb Dome in their proposals, Tange made a pointed effort to integrate it into the symbolic system of his design. Hyper-conscious of its presentation, Tange not only framed the Dome through the legs of the cenotaph and placed it along the central axis of the park, but also took measures in the landscaping of scheme, adding “systemically planted trees, which act as a screen to prevent any ‘over-exposure’ of the Dome.”¹²³ These densely planted sections of greenery accentuate the remarkable emptiness of the park’s center, whose elements all lift themselves upward from the ground. Yet considering that the official competition brief pamphlet published by the city featured an illustration of the ruins on its cover, it seems more peculiar that other proposals did not engage substantially with the presence of the Dome.¹²⁴

Designed in 1915 by Czech architect Jan Letzel, the “Dome” was originally the Hiroshima Prefecture Industrial Promotion Hall (Figure 2.11). The building served as an

¹²² Toyokawa Saikaku, “The Core System and Social Scale: Design Methodology at the Tange Laboratory,” *Tange Kenzō: Architecture for the world*, ed. Seng Kuan and Yukio Lippit, (Baden: Lars Müller, 2012), 15.

¹²³ Rie Maki and Tomoko Niihata, “Landscape Design in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park: Transition of the Design by Kenzo Tange,” *Japan architectural review* 3, no. 2 (2020): 195.

¹²⁴ The actual descriptions of the competition varied slightly across magazine and newspaper articles. Only in October 2021 was a copy of the official guidelines published by the city located by the family of architect and Hiroshima University professor Satō Shigeo. Satō was heavily involved in the 1960s efforts to preserve and maintain the ruins. The marginalia on the cover page of the pamphlet reads “the former Industrial Promotion Hall will remain as a memorial to the bombing.” See “Heiwa kōen konpe yōkō hakken Hiroshima-shi, dōmu hozon kijutsu senmonka ‘ikkyū no shiryō’ 平和公園コンペ要項発見 広島市、ドーム保存記述 専門家「一級の資料」 [Hiroshima City discovers guidelines for Peace Park Competition; Hiroshima City Dome preservation expert calls it a “first-class source material”], *Chugoku shinbun*, October 18, 2021, <https://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=110931>.

exhibition space for crafts and commodities produced locally in greater Hiroshima, as well as from regions across the empire. Yet until the late 1960s, when a city-wide campaign was initiated to address the deteriorating state of the structure, the existence of the ruins remained a contentious topic despite Tange's emphasis on its mnemonic value. Those opposed to its preservation tended to be survivors, who saw in it nothing but a painful reminder of the past, while civic officials saw cultural and touristic value in its symbolic weight.¹²⁵ The funding raised was substantial enough to eventually override the resistance, and today the Dome is a vital fixture of the urban character of Hiroshima.

In contrast to other entries that had focused exclusively on the designated Nakajima plot, Tange envisioned the park as the symbolic core of the city, integrating its memorial rhetoric into the reconstruction of the city itself. The park was not merely a site of reflection and commemoration, but rather a place where peace itself would be produced and projected into the world order. His accompanying design statement read as follows:

The Peace Park carries with it global significance. Peace is not something that comes naturally to us, but something to be actively pursued. The complex we are seeking to build, which consists of a memorial hall, plaza, place for prayer, and atomic ruins will be a *factory for peace* [emphasis added].¹²⁶

A play on Le Corbusier's adage of the house as "a machine for living," Tange's declaration frames the park as an active system, using a machinic metaphor to describe humanity's need to relentlessly labor for peace. Of course, this statement should also be read in part as an effort to align the project with the rhetoric posed by Mayor Hamai and other reconstruction officials. The architectural and urban apparatuses of the reconstructed city would serve as the pragmatic

¹²⁵ Yoneyama, 2.

¹²⁶ Tange Kenzō, "Hiroshima heiwa kinen kōen oyobi kinenkan kyōgi sekkei tōsen zuan" 広島市平和記念公園及び記念館競技設計当選図案 [The Winning Design of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park Competition], *Kenchiku zasshi* 建築雑誌 no. 756 (October-November 1949): 42.

vehicles through which humanity would reorient its social order and ways of living to manifest peace in the postwar milieu. Yet at no point is peace, the product of this system, explicitly defined.

Though initially projected to be completed by the end of 1951, budgetary limitations and resistance from residents of the Nakajima area soon made it evident that the construction process would take longer than planned. At times, the site sat untouched for months on end. In the June 1952 issue of *Kenchiku zasshi*, the magazine described the site as still being nothing but “an empty and ravaged field that carried the name of ‘Peace Park.’”¹²⁷ Many of the original elements envisioned by Tange did not come to fruition in this first stage of construction, though he would return to the park in the decades following to make additions that continued to bolster the park. In retracing the steps of the park’s production, we can begin to unravel a more expansive history of redevelopment and social inequity that spans across and links the consecutive spatial transformations enacted upon the landscape over the course of decades.

Paving the 100-meter road: the Peace Boulevard and its discontents

The north-south axis connecting the museum to the A-Bomb Dome runs perpendicular to a 100-meter wide east-west road dubbed the “Peace Boulevard,” which borders the southern edge of the park (Figure 2.12). The 3,570 meter-long road runs through the heart of the city, linking together five of the city’s islets. It was built upon the skeletal foundations of a firebreak constructed during the war, integrating wartime urban schemes into the fabric of the

¹²⁷ Fukuma, “*Senseki no sengoshi*,” 38.



Figure 2.11. Jan Letzel, A-Bomb Dome, formerly the Hiroshima Prefecture Industrial Promotion Hall. Photo by author.



Figure 2.12. Peace Boulevard along the southern end of the Peace Park. Source: Project for Public Spaces, <https://www.pps.org/places/peace-boulevard>.

reconstructed city. The traces of a civil defense policy implemented through demolition and mass eviction (often residents would be given just a week's notice and no offers of alternative housing) were effectively, and rather seamlessly, reconstituted as part of the organizational logic of the modern "peace city."¹²⁸ After its instrumental purpose was rendered utterly meaningless in the face of a nuclear weapon, the firebreak's renewed form as a boulevard may also be read as a civic attempt to refurnish the land with a language of functionality that would overwrite the planning decisions of the wartime past.

Though the road had already been slated to be incorporated into land readjustment schemes prior to Tange's proposal, the architect had long stressed the value of retaining and building out from the 100-meter road since his early post-disaster assessment research in 1946. When "designed well and filled with greenery," he wrote, "[the road] will become an excellent recreational space bridging the east and west sides of the city."¹²⁹ The title of the "Peace Boulevard" originated from Tange's competition brief, making evident his desire to conduct a vision-driven urban reconstruction plan and imbue the central artery of the city with not only functional, but also symbolic weight.

Recall that Tange's 1942 proposal for the GEACPS Memorial Hall similarly envisioned a massive road, a highway linking the complex to the capital, as part of its plan. Though the Peace Boulevard runs across the southern edge of the park, rather than bisecting the complex through the center, as was the case on the Mount Fuji site, the desire to integrate the plaza as the center of

¹²⁸ See Plung, "The Impact of Urban Evacuation in Japan during World War II." The clearing of land to produce firebreaks began in January 1944. A total of around 614,000 houses nationwide were demolished, forcing over 3.5 million people to evacuate their homes.

¹²⁹ Tange Kenzō 丹下健三, "Hiroshima keikaku (1946-1953) tokuni sono heiwa kakikan no kensetsu keika" 広島計画 (1946~1953) —とくにその 平和会館の建設経過 [Plan for Hiroshima (1946-1953): the making of the Hiroshima Peace Center], *Shinken-chiku* 新建築 (January 1954).

a transportation network still persists. The symbolic core of the imperial expansionist project became reconstituted as a memorial nexus for the modern atomic bombed-city.

In 1952, a set of concrete railings, titled *Tsukuru* (To Build) and *Yuku* (To Depart), were installed along the bridges that connected the park to the adjacent landmasses to the east and west (Figure 2.13, 2.14).¹³⁰ Designed by Japanese-American sculptor Isamu Noguchi at the request of Tange, the railings consist of two tubes that run across the length of the bridges that cross the Motoyasu river to the east and the Honkawa river to the west, punctuated at each bank with larger geometric volumes. In *Tsukuru*, on the eastern side, the railings smoothly sweep upward and are topped by hemispheric forms that open up towards the sky. At the other end of the bridge, the railings are abutted by *Yuku*, two heavy-set posts set in the ground that curve inward, framing the bridge as if to signal a gateway or threshold. One of the few early infrastructural investments in the boulevard, the railings, which remain in place today, situate one's movement from east to west in a temporal progression that thematically maps narratives of life and death, or arrival and departure, upon the circulatory framework of the city. By using rivers and bridges as physical and symbolic framing devices, the park's placement in the Nakajima district becomes further accentuated as something sacrosanct, protected, and interstitial, as if to suggest that one's entry into, and subsequent departure from the park constitutes a transformative encounter.

While twenty-four similar "100-meter roads" (*hyaku-meteru dōro*) had been planned for other cities across Japan, only two others, both in Nagoya, were realized alongside Hiroshima's

¹³⁰ Noguchi initially gave the railings the more visceral titles of *Ikiru* (To Live) and *Shinu* (To Die), which were renamed during construction to avoid overlapping with Kurosawa Akira's contemporaneous film *Ikiru* (1952). Yet considering how Noguchi's cenotaph design was received by the reconstruction committee (to be discussed later in this chapter), it would not be farfetched to consider that such names were incongruous with the lofty, abstracted goals of peacemaking held by officials leading the charge.



Figure 2.13. Isamu Noguchi, Tsukuru, 1951. Photo by author.



Figure 2.14. Isamu Noguchi, Yuku, 1951. Photo by author.

Peace Boulevard.¹³¹ As has been much discussed in case studies of urban redevelopment, topographic cleavages produced by boulevards in modern city planning aid in the implementation of new modes of environmental, hygienic, military, and communications surveillance and control.¹³² The construction of the massive open street, in tandem with the park and other developments, relied on forces of elimination and suppression in order to assert itself as new, open, and pragmatic.

In practice, the development of the boulevard lagged, and the area remained barren for over a decade following the war. Even after being cleared, the road remained unpaved and overgrown with weeds, bearing little resemblance to the visions of monumental and vibrant city blocks conceived by members of the City Planning Committee who had cited European models, such as the Champs-Élysées and the Ringstrasse, as evidence of the beauty and prosperity that such a wide boulevard could bring.¹³³ Instead, it served as a vacuous suggestion of what *could* be, a persistent reminder of the governmental capacity to claim but not fulfill. Control was mediated precisely through effacement, and then neglect, creating an anti-spectacle that made sharply visible the very ironies that belied the project of making peace and rebuilding the city.

The city's focus on road development long been a source of frustration to residents who wished more funding would be devoted to immediate welfare and housing needs. One of the characters in Ōta Yoko's 1953 reportage-based novel *The City of the Setting Sun* (*Yūnagi no*

¹³¹ Ishimaru, "Reconstructing Hiroshima and Preserving the Reconstructed City," 97.

¹³² See David Harvey, "The Political Economy of Public Space," in *The Politics of Public Space*, ed. Setha Low and Neil Smith (New York, Routledge, 2005). The transformation of Paris' boulevards from sites of bloody protest to sanitized and surveilled spaces of urban reinvention and social exclusion during the mid-19th century serves as the most lucid and well-discussed experience.

¹³³ Nishimoto Masami 西本雅実, "Deruta tsuranuku fukkō no ashiato," デルタ貫く復興の足跡 [Tracing reconstruction through the delta], *Chūgoku shinbun Hiroshima Peace Media Center* 中國新聞広島ピースメディアセンター, May 13, 2003, <https://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/abom/03abom/kiroku/index.html>; Ishimaru, "Reconstructing Hiroshima and Preserving the Reconstructed City," 97.

machi to hito to), which traces the experiences of survivors in the Motomachi district, lamented, “I hear there’s a policy to make this town 50% roads. And it’s not just roads, they’re planning on making greenbelts all over the town. It seems that people who already have a place to live are being forced out, while the people who have nowhere to go are coming here.”¹³⁴

Mayor Hamai, who had initially expressed slight reservations about maintaining such an enormous road, received backlash for eventually pursuing the project. This prompted Watanabe Tadao to run against him in 1955 on a platform that pledged to halve the width of the road in order to build additional public housing.¹³⁵ Though Watanabe won the election, his proposal was rejected by reconstruction advisors and remained unrealized.¹³⁶ That the “100-meter road debate” became a prominent enough issue to spark such electoral events, however, attests to the centrality of the issue and the extent to which the concerns were shared among city residents. As photographs from the time illustrate, the linear expanse, devoid of both humans and vegetation, plows through the landscape and disappears into the mountains beyond, while new construction hedges its bounds (Figure 2.15). It took until 1957 for the landscape to begin transforming in meaningful fashion in the eyes of residents. A tree-planting campaign was initiated under the slogan “Dreaming of a Hiroshima 20 Years from Now,” resulting in the addition of 2,500 trees along the boulevard.¹³⁷ What is today a robust, multi-lane road flanked by lush greenways was

¹³⁴ Ōta Yōko, *Ōta Yōko shū dai 3-kan: Yūnagi no machi to hito to* [Ota Yoko Collection Volume Three: The city of the setting sun] (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō, 1982), 11.

¹³⁵ Ishimaru Norioki et al, eds. *Reconstruction of Hiroshima: pictorial history of forty years since atomic bombing* 広島被爆40年史：都市の復興 [Hiroshima hibaku 40-nenshi: toshi no fukkō], (Hiroshima: City of Hiroshima Division of Culture, Planning, and Corrdination, 1985), 100.

¹³⁶ Hamai would return to office in 1959, and continued to serve as mayor until his retirement in 1967.

¹³⁷ Hiroshima City, “Hiroshima-shi no toshi ryoku-ka no rekishi” 広島市の都市緑化の歴史 [The history of urban greening in Hiroshima], last modified October 21, 2019, <https://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/soshiki/138/7330.html>. (accessed February 10, 2023); “Peace Seeds Hiroshima no 10-dai ga maku tane (dai 57-go) Heiwa odori wo aruku,” Peace Seeds ヒロシマの10代がまく種 (第57号) 平和大通りを歩く [Peace Seeds: Hiroshima teenagers plant seeds along the Peace Boulevard (no. 57)], *Chūgoku shinbun*, June 21, 2018 <https://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?junior=2017-3>.

constructed upon the spatial remnants of wartime displacement. In the decades following the blast, it appeared to many as more of a reminder of the physical destruction caused by the bomb than a dynamic public space.

Making peace upon scorched land

Tange's emphasis on panoramic openness in his memorial plan is also significant to consider in light of the visual drama of urban destruction and the incorporation of this affective view in visitors' encounters with the city. During Walter and Ise Gropius' three-month visit to Japan in 1954, Tange brought the couple to Hiroshima, where he gave them a tour of the park during the final stages of the park's construction. Ise reflected on this day in her travel diary: "We were immediately led to the top of the mountains behind the city, and we stood there for a moment stagnized [sic] looking over a broad unearthly view that opened in front of us."¹³⁸ That this elevated vantage point was stressed at the beginning of their visit speaks to the importance of understanding the renewed nature of the park grounds against the sweeping view of destruction encountered by so many in the city. Though nearly ten years had transpired since the bombing, Gropius was still struck by the "unearthly" nature of the city. While she did not describe in further detail the landscape she beheld, we might imagine that part of this reaction emerged in response to the pervasive presence of shantytowns in the urban landscape particularly around the hypocenter.

A photograph in the *Chūgoku shinbun* from 1954 depicts the park in the final stages of its construction makes starkly evident the conditions of the Nakajima area during the period (Figure 2.16). The image is neatly bisected by a horizontal line that crosses the midpoint of the

¹³⁸ Ise Gropius, *Japan Travel Diary*, Box 10, 317, p.245 Houghton Library, Harvard College Library, Cambridge, MA.

landscape. In the foreground is a dense row of wooden homes, punctuated by the spindly trees that remained standing around ground zero.¹³⁹ The museum arises boldly across the upper half of the image, while the cenotaph sits quietly at the center, demarcating the boundary between the two zones. Within this composition, the *pilotis* appear to aid not so much in creating circulatory space, but rather in separating the building from the tainted ground, as if to assert its clarity and order in opposition to the dilapidated residences. The floor-to-ceiling windows of the museum give the structure a transparency not found in the tightly overlapping structures that fill the foreground. Not long after this image was taken, roughly 400 of these homes were razed in order to make space for the 30-acre park and form the cleared sightline between the museum and the Dome.¹⁴⁰

These fragmentary insurances of urban survival against the open expanse of the park testify to the uneven distribution of infrastructural and social investment that had transpired in the decade following the war. The homes in the foreground maintain a haunting presence, signifying the destruction that has already taken place through the already-built museum plaza and cenotaph, and gesturing towards what is to come—their eventual destruction as the concrete masses encroach upon the settlement. The vision of the future city, rising from the ashes of nuclear catastrophe is undercut by an obstinately rooted, lived present that threatens the flatness and rational order evoked by the new development.

In the decades following the war, these ramshackle residences persisted in varying forms as the city continued to grow and develop. They became particularly concentrated around Aioi

¹³⁹ Yatsuka Hajime, “The Social Ambition of the Architect and the Rising Nation,” in *Kenzo Tange: Architecture for the World*, ed. Seng Kuan and Yukio Lippit, (Baden: Lars Müller, 2012), 47.

¹⁴⁰ Hein, “Hiroshima: The Atomic Bomb and Kenzo Tange’s Hiroshima Peace Center,” 72.



Figure 2.15. Peace Boulevard in 1955, seen from Hijiya looking westward (public domain), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hijiya_Hiroshima_1955.jpg



Figure 2.16. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park under construction, c. 1954. From *Tange Kenzō: Architecture for the World*. Edited by Seng Kuan and Yukio Lippit (Baden: Lars Müller, 2012),.48.

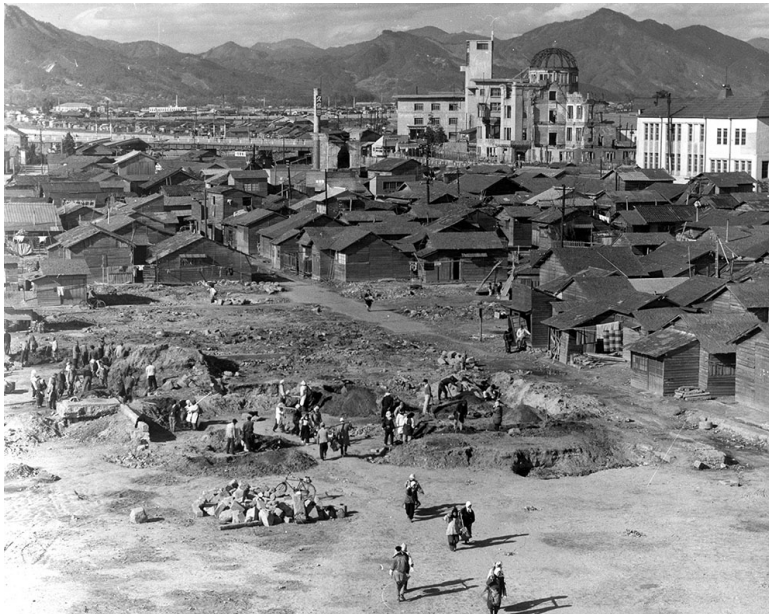


Figure 2.17. Temporary wooden housing built in the Nakajima area in 1946. Source: Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, https://hpmuseum.jp/modules/exhibition/index.php?action=CornerView&corner_id=36&lang=eng

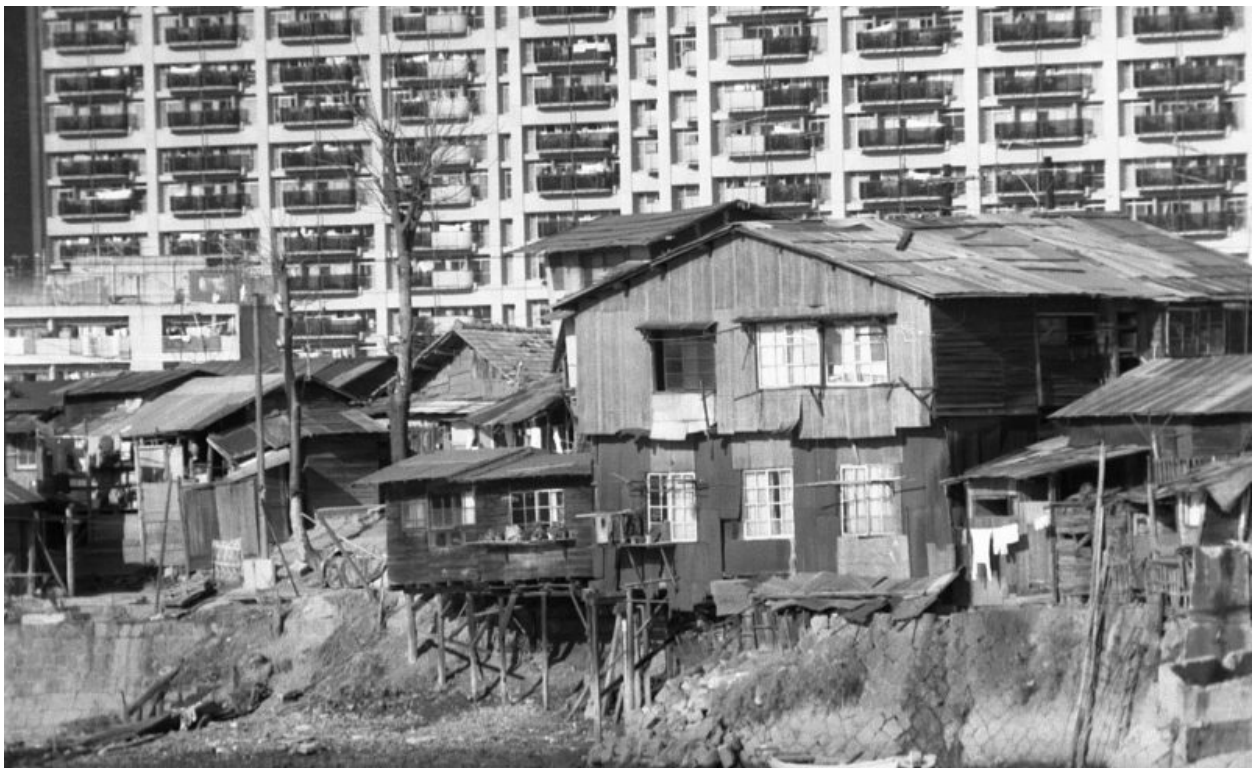


Figure 2.18. Slums around Aioi Street, 1973. Source: Larry Rosensweig, <http://larryinjapan40yearsago.blogspot.com/2010/08/japanese-slum-hiroshima-1973.html>

street, just a few blocks north from the A-bomb Dome (Figure 2.17, 2.18).¹⁴¹ Though plans for housing in the Motomachi area were part of Tange's original vision, budgetary shortfalls continuously slowed down progress on this front, and the hastily built emergency housing units sponsored by the city had fallen into disrepair by 1956. These structures, which had been built upon the formerly military-owned land that was transferred to the city after the 1949 construction law, could not accommodate the rapidly growing population of displaced residents and job-seekers coming from outside Hiroshima, who began to expand into the area surrounding Aioi street. What began as a settlement of approximately 100 households in 1950 grew to over 900 by 1960.¹⁴² The area was originally inhabited primarily by A-bomb survivors displaced by the construction of the Peace Park in the Nakajima neighborhood, ethnic Koreans, and demobilized Japanese troops. As the city's reconstruction continued to progress, the population came to include laborers who had come to the city in pursuit of industrial jobs, and those who had been displaced by ongoing land readjustment activities.¹⁴³ The term "Genbaku slum" to describe the area was only coined in 1964, in article in the *Chūgoku shinbun* calling for the need to provide welfare for atomic bomb survivors.¹⁴⁴

In a 1968 field study of the slums, sociologist Ōyabu Juichi mapped out a portrait of the city as it stood before his eyes:

"In the twenty-two years since the bombing, Hiroshima has risen from the atomic ashes to miraculously become the robust center of the Chugoku region. From the perspective of travelers, ruins are no longer found in the city, and few encounter those who possess

¹⁴¹ Junichiro Hayashi, "The Motomachi District, 65 Years After the Atomic Bombing: Special Report," *Chugoku shinbun Peace Media Center*, July 28, 2010, <https://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=23738>.

¹⁴² Semba Nozomu 仙波 希望, " 'Heiwa toshi' no 'genbaku suramu'—sengo Hiroshima fukkō-ki ni okeru Aioi dōri no seiritsu to shōmetsu ni chūmoku shite" 「平和都市」の「原爆スラム」—戦後広島復興期における相生通りの生成と消滅に着目して— [Genbaku Slum" in "Peace City": Focusing on the Development and Demolition of Aioi Street in Hiroshima in the Post-war Era], *The Annals of Japan Association for Urban Sociology* 日本都市社会学年報 34 (2016), 129.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 130.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 124.

keloid scars. Visitors will go to the Peace Memorial Museum, see objects depicting disaster, and revere the image of ruins in the form of the A-bomb Dome. Archival materials and symbolic ruins have become the manner by which we approach the scarred remnants of the bombs. Countless *hibakusha* fled into the waters of the Ōta River, which today runs quietly along the Peace Park. Facing away from the A-bomb Dome, one crosses the train line at the end of the Aioi Bridge, where they are suddenly faced with a strange sight. On the right, standing like a symbolic manifestation of capital, is the tall black visage of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce. On the left, in utter contrast, are dilapidated barracks lining the east bank of the Ōta River in a tight black wall.”¹⁴⁵

Ōyabu’s account calls to attention the sharp inequities in capital distribution and social investment conducted by governmental authorities through the prism of the built environment, while simultaneously situating these natural and physical features against their temporal distance from the events of 1945. A massive public housing construction project—one of the final grand gestures of infrastructural peace-making initiated by the 1949 law—took place on the site between 1969 and 1978, decisively wiping out the remaining structures and upholding the recurrent cycles of displacement that extended from the pre-bomb era.¹⁴⁶ The project of creating a city of peace, spurred by the atomic attack and the culmination of total war, became entangled with the modernist enterprise of “cleansing” the city through social and environmental modes of control and exclusion.

The primacy of vantage

Photographs taken by Ishimoto Yasuhiro, who is best known for his series on the Katsura Imperial Villa, capture the park during the period of construction through a radically different perspective that reinforces the architectural object-value of Tange’s design (Figure 2.19).

¹⁴⁵ Ōyabu, Jūichi 大藪 寿一, “Genbaku suramu no jyōtai (jyō)” 原爆スラムの実態(上) [The condition of the Genbaku Slums” (Part 1)], *Sociology* ソシオロジ 14, no. 3 (1968), 2.

¹⁴⁶ As Semba Nozomu notes, only 16.1% of former slum residents would end up moving into the newly constructed Motomachi Housing Complex.

Ishimoto's high-contrast, stylized images stage the assertive rationality of the museum.¹⁴⁷ In one shot, Ishimoto stages the camera up against the cenotaph, cropping it slightly off center and shrouding it in shadows, such that it appears as a dark curvature, whose abstract form and fluid contours further underscore the rectilinearity of the museum in the distance (Figure 2.20). The museum, cenotaph, and A-Bomb Dome are all set in synchronic arrangements, each fitting into the spatial apertures crafted by Tange. The structures are surrounded by an empty terrain, devoid of humans and vegetation.

Photography's influence as a medium through which Japanese modernist architectural discourse was both constructed and disseminated cannot be overstated. Ishimoto, along with Watanabe Yoshio and others, played an instrumental role in construing premodern buildings such as Katsura and Ise Shrine as the progenitors of Japanese modernism through their stylized images that highlighted the austerity and formalism of the structures, and the modularity of their forms. The camera's entry into these formerly exclusive—and in the case of Ise, intensely sacred—imperial domains in the wake of Occupation signified a radical transformation in the discursive construction of the buildings, shifting them from private, hazy representations of imperial mystique and power, to lucid evocations of rational modernist principles.¹⁴⁸ What were once mobilized as evidence of the militarist regime's cultural superiority and the unbroken line of the emperor now became proof of the aesthetic origins of a modernist vision compatible with the refurbished image of Japan as a democratic nation.

¹⁴⁷ See Yasufumi Nakamori and Ishimoto Yasuhiro, *Katsura: Picturing Modernism in Japanese Architecture*. Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2010. Tange's editorial involvement with the *Katsura* book and his aesthetic interventions in cropping and arrangement were so heavy-handed that Ishimoto expressed discontent at how excessively his photos had been altered in order to service Tange's ideological agenda of drawing a direct lineage between modernism and its roots in principles of traditional design.

¹⁴⁸ See Jonathan Reynolds, "Ise Shrine and a Modernist Construction of Japanese Tradition," *The Art Bulletin* 83 no. 2 (June 2001), 316-341.



Figure 2.19. Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, 1954. Image courtesy of Harvard University Fine Arts Library.



Figure 2.20. Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, 1954. Image courtesy of Harvard University Fine Arts Library.

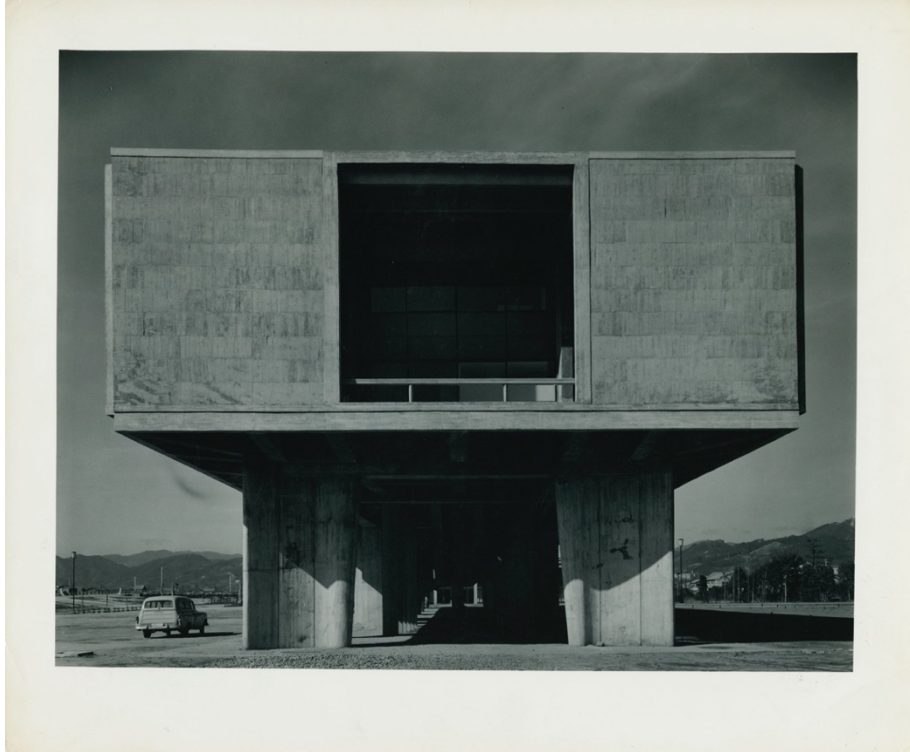


Figure 2.21. Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, 1954. Image courtesy of Harvard University Fine Arts Library.



Figure 2.22. Ishimoto Yasuhiro, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, 1954. Image courtesy of Harvard University Fine Arts Library.

Katsura and Ise were historically rarified spaces. It does not strike the viewer as particularly strange to see them photographed without any figures in sight. The absence of humans also serves to avoid providing any overly historicizing cues, enabling a smoother aesthetic translation between tradition and modernity. Yet the Peace Park, similarly captured sans human presence, was intended to be a public space, designed to serve as the core of the reconstructed city and the “center of people’s lives,” as Tange himself claimed.¹⁴⁹ A lone car parked beside the structure appears carefully staged to accentuate the mammoth scale of the building (Figure 2.21). The view from within the brise-soleil clad memorial hall, looking out on the half-baked city renders the structure a hermetically sealed glass tank (Figure 2.22).

Ishimoto’s photographs of the Peace Park at once make evident the sublime quality of the museum that emerges from the ground of nuclear destruction and the utter dislocation of these forms from the atmospheric and social conditions of their surroundings. The curated optics of the park relied on framing and exclusion, through both built architecture and photographic representation, to produce a compelling spatial encounter that effaced the presence of those who posed a disruption to the vision of modernity put forth by the memorial park.

Mnemonic interruptions

While the 100-meter road, initiated by the city outside of Tange’s proposal, slowly but eventually integrated itself into the architect’s vision of the park, other features of the plan did not materialize as planned. Kishida Hideto pointed out the strong parallels between the arch proposed by Tange in his competition proposal and Eero Saarinen’s Gateway Arch in St. Louis, which had reached Japanese audiences via *Architectural Record* and *Architectural Forum* in the

¹⁴⁹ Tange Kenzo, “Hiroshima heiwa kinen toshi ni kankei shite” *Kenchiku zasshi* (October 1949), 40.

spring of 1948.¹⁵⁰ The form also recalls the unbuilt arch that was planned to mark the entrance of the 1942 Esposizione Universale di Rome, commemorating twenty years of fascist rule. Tange's form fell somewhere in the middle of the catenary curve of Saarinen's plan and the wider, semicircular form of the rationalist EUR arch.

The competition brief stipulated the inclusion of a monument in the form of a bell tower, but Tange had expressed disinterest in designing a Western-style monolith, favoring the unobstructed visibility that would be enabled by a triumphal arch.¹⁵¹ In situating the object at center of the park, Tange perhaps saw its function less so as an isolated monument or a gateway, and more as a physical threshold to signify that visitor's movement from the visions of the future promised by the 100-meter road and the museum, to the firmly rooted past of the atomic ruins.

Kishida, however, was displeased with the ostentatious arch from the beginning. In a set of notes on the finalists published in the fall 1949 issue of *Kenchiku zasshi*, he lamented that the derivative quality of its design "cast an uneasy shadow" on the rest of the proposal, though he clarified that this fault did not undermine Tange's deservedness of the first prize.¹⁵² After all, he admitted, he was not surprised to see arches in several of the proposals following the publication of Saarinen's design, given the impressionability of the young Japanese architects in his midst. The third-place winner, too, included a narrower but nevertheless similar arch in the same location.

¹⁵⁰ Kishida Hideto 岸田日出刀, "Hiroshima heiwa kinen kōen oyobi kinenkan kyōgi sekkei tosen zuan: shinsahyō" 廣島市平和記念公園及び記念館競技設計當選圖案：審査評 [Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Memorial Gymnasium], *Kenchiku zasshi* 建築雑誌 64, no. 756 (October-November 1949), 38.

It is worth noting that the catenary form is found also in the façade of Tange's submission to a 1948 competition for the Memorial Cathedral of World Peace, a Catholic church rebuilt on the foundations of the destroyed Noborichō church, suggesting that the form and the expressiveness of the space it carves out possessed a certain resonance with the spiritual for the architect. Dissatisfied with the results of the competition, jury member Murano Togo eventually opted to design the building himself, which remains in place today in Naka-ku, to the east of the Peace Park.

¹⁵¹ Tange Kenzō, *Kenchiku zasshi* (May 1949)

¹⁵² Kishida, 38.

In pursuit of a fresh perspective after facing his mentor's grievances, Tange turned to Isamu Noguchi, whom he had already requested to design the bridge railings, to devise an alternative cenotaph.¹⁵³ Noguchi eagerly took on the project and pursued a radically different approach to conceptualizing the sacred marker. Instead of reaching skyward, the legs of his heavy-set arch stretched into the subterranean, extending into a chamber of reflection accessed by a set of descending stairs (Figure 2.23, 2.24). Rather than framing the A-bomb Dome and creating a smooth optic relation between the elements along the north-south axis, the arch, in both materiality and form, disrupts this synchrony. The majority of the black granite structure was located beneath the ground, such that only the vertex of the arch was visible at ground level, creating just a small aperture that prevented the formation of the sightline privileged in the original park proposal. The above-ground portion of the cenotaph recalls the wide handles of *dōtaku*, bronze ritual bells dating back to the Yayoi period (400 BCE – 300 CE), indicative of Noguchi's longstanding interest in the affective properties of ancient forms. A spotlight from the chamber below filtered through a trapezoidal skylight just beneath the arch, reflecting off the polished surface of the sculpture. Noguchi conceived of the underground chamber as a "womb," evoking a primordial state of being that was "suggestive...of generations still unborn who would in time replace the dead."¹⁵⁴ The chamber would house a sanctum sanctorum where the names of the dead were to be enshrined in a registry book hidden from public view.

Yet when he presented the design to the park reconstruction committee in April of 1952, it was rejected, accompanied by little explanation. Kishida was particularly vocal about his

¹⁵³ At this point in time, Noguchi was a well-established artist and designer whose 1950 visit to Japan was accompanied by widespread interest from both art and architecture circles and the general public. His marriage to famed actress Yamaguchi Yoshiko (also known at varying points in life as Ri Kōran or Shirley Yamaguchi) during the 1950s made the couple an object of media scrutiny in Japan.

¹⁵⁴ Isamu Noguchi, "Project: Hiroshima Memorial to the Dead," *Arts and Architecture* 70, no. 4 (April 1953), 16.

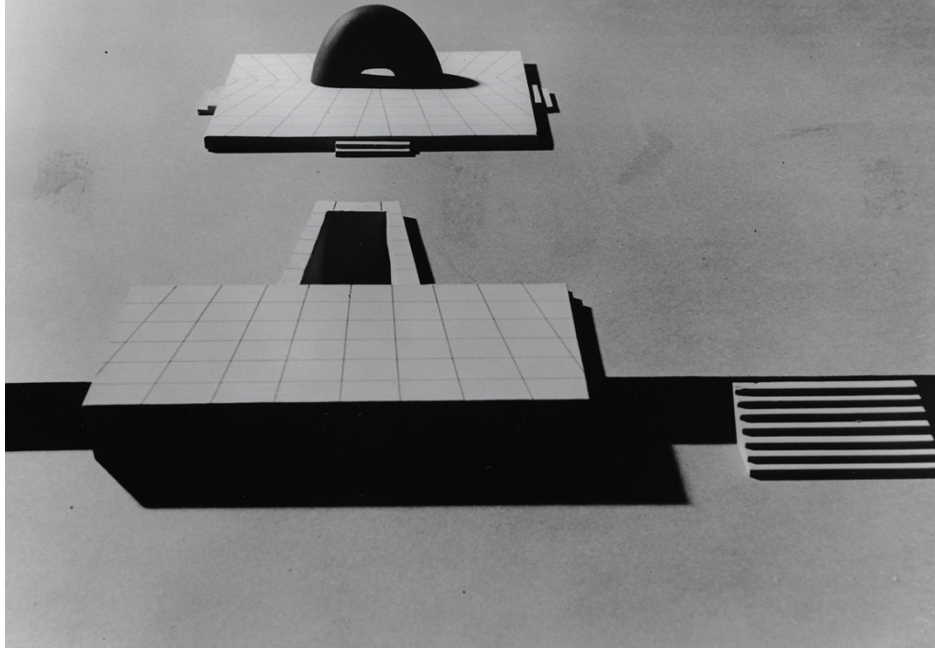


Figure 2.23. Isamu Noguchi, Memorial to the Dead, Hiroshima, model, 1952. ©INFGM



Figure 2.24. Isamu Noguchi, Memorial to the Dead, Hiroshima, section of model, 1952. From Isamu Noguchi, "Project: Hiroshima Memorial to the Dead," *Arts and Architecture* 70, no. 4 (April 1953), 17.

discontent with the project, perhaps due to the fact that Tange, joined by Mayor Hamai, had approached Noguchi without consulting the rest of the committee.¹⁵⁵ The sculptor woefully presumed that his hybrid identity and status as an American national was fundamentally irreconcilable with the project of representing nuclear memory—an effectively nationalized memory.¹⁵⁶ The episode serves, at least on the surface, as an illustration of the limits of the discourse of universalized nuclear suffering, with the backdrop of the Occupation still in place.¹⁵⁷

When looking at Tange’s substitute, hurriedly conceived in a week following news of the rejection, however, it is difficult to imagine that identity politics were the sole—or even primary—reason behind the cenotaph’s failure to materialize. The saddle-like concrete arch, which remains in situ today, is much smaller than both Noguchi’s proposal and Tange’s original concept, and rises from a bed of white gravel located within the reflecting pool running down the center of the park. The catenary openings are stretched outward at the peaks, a nod to the roof forms found in *haniwa*, clay funerary objects produced during the Kofun period (c. 300-600 CE).

¹⁵⁵ “Origin of Proposed Noguchi Memorial for Washington D.C.,” c. 1982, MS_PROJ_067_008, The Isamu Noguchi Archive, Long Island City, NY, <https://archive.noguchi.org/Detail/archival/50483>.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. In an oral history recorded in 1973, Noguchi reflected upon the project in more acquiescent (though admittedly somewhat self-important) terms, admitting “I was given the opportunity to do it because of this surge of interest in me at the time. And I could do anything in a sense, you know. After all, it was rather farfetched after America had dropped the bomb to ask an American to do a Memorial to the Dead; it was just too much.” In his retrospective recounting, he seems to express greater skepticism about the viability of the project, in contrast to the rather disheartened attitude manifested in written reflections from the 1950s. “I mean one had to recognize that it was really....But, as an American I thought: well, I’ll do a little expiation.” Nevertheless, it is evident from archival correspondences that the project lingered in his mind in the decades following. In the late 1970s and early 80s, towards the end of his life, the artist reached out to a number of organizations and agencies in hopes of finding a place where the monument could be realized. Possible sites included the Stanford University campus, Paris, New York, Washington D.C., Mauna Kea, and even Los Alamos Laboratory in New Mexico, the operational nexus of the Manhattan Project.

See “Oral history interview with Isamu Noguchi, 1973 Nov. 7-Dec. 26,” Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-isamu-noguchi-11906>; Misc. correspondence 1977-83, The Isamu Noguchi Foundation Garden and Museum Archives, Long Island City, NY.

¹⁵⁷ For an expanded reading of the politics of Noguchi’s rejection and the symbolic resonances of the memorial, see Bert Winther, “The Rejection of Isamu Noguchi’s Hiroshima Cenotaph: A Japanese American Artist in Occupied Japan,” *Art Journal* 53, no. 4 (1994): 23–27.

Beyond the generalized interest in antiquity, however, there is little resemblance between the two arches. The cenotaph today seamlessly blends into the landscape, appearing to float on the surface of the reflecting pool rather than entrenching itself in the earth.

Noguchi, in conceiving of sculpture as a “a concentration of energies”—a formulation that evokes both an abstract spiritual power and the nuclear fission reactions that obliterated the landscape in question—and creating space where life and death came into intimate tension, aroused discomfort in some viewers.¹⁵⁸ Ōtani Sachio, a member of the Tange Lab, expressed concern over the design after seeing Noguchi work with the clay models: “It looked like he was pulling out the intestines from the chest of a dead person. I thought this plan would not gain sympathy from the Japanese since the artist...was directly expressing the agony that the bombed citizens and the dead victims had to live through.”¹⁵⁹ The granite arch’s refusal to resolve itself, and its invitation for viewers to disappear from the agora in silent mourning ran counter to the mnemonic directive of the park. Perhaps the largest threat it posed, however, was its encouragement of embodied encounter and its affirmation of the persistence of pain—forces that imperil the operative of nuclear bombs to abstract, make invisible, and de-individualize the enactment of violence.

The replacement cenotaph is more amenable to the scale of the human, allowing visitors to stand in front of it in prayer and gaze upon the A-Bomb Dome in the process. This in turn enables the staging of compelling photographs of figures at ceremonial events, best illustrated by an image from Barack Obama’s visit to the city in 2016, the first by a sitting U.S. president

¹⁵⁸ Noguchi, “Project: Hiroshima Memorial to the Dead,” 16.

¹⁵⁹ As quoted in Okazaki Kenjirō, “A Place to Bury Names, or Resurrection (Circulation and Continuity of Energy) as a Dissolution of Energy: Isamu Noguchi’s *Memorial to the Dead of Hiroshima* and Shirai Sei’ichi’s *Temple Atomic Catastrophes*,” *Review of Japanese Culture and Society* 26 (December 2014), 309.

(Figure 2.25). The cenotaph frames Obama and Abe Shinzō as they shake hands, visually crafting a narrative of political unity and agreement. The tidy architectonic construal of peaceful diplomacy provides no conceptual or physical space for the innumerable counternarratives that undergird the complexities of the political encounter to materialize.

In 1964, Tange designed the base for the Flame of Peace as an addition to the park. The angular, bipartite structure is said to resemble the form of two hands joined at the wrist, with palms facing upward. If one faces the sculpture and looks down the central axis towards the south, the “hands” appear to neatly cradle the cenotaph and museum, further enhancing the visual continuity of the park’s constituent elements (Figure 0.2). Wedged in a crevice between the two masses is a circular torch that holds the actual flame. It has been continuously lit since its installation, and is said to only be extinguished when nuclear weapons have been thoroughly and finally eradicated from the world. Such sweeping symbolic time-based assertions are not unusual in the realm of nuclear violence, whose ontological operations are deeply intertwined with notions of deterrence, half-lives, and protracted timelines of suffering that cut across generations and geological strata.

Tange returned to the site decades later to design the National Peace Memorial Hall to Victims of the Atomic Bombing, which was built in the eastern area of the park in 2002 (Figure 2.27). Funded by the state in conjunction with a parallel project in Nagasaki, the memorial hall’s focus is on the experiences of individuals, featuring visual and textual materials relating to victim histories and *hibakusha* testimonies, and an interactive digital database where victims can be looked up by name and neighborhood.¹⁶⁰ In contrast to the skyward thrust of the Memorial

¹⁶⁰ These two institutions were built in accordance with article 41 of the Atomic Bomb Survivors’ Assistance Act (no. 117 of 1994), as part of a litany of reforms enacted to provide support for atomic bomb survivors and their affected descendants in the form of medical treatment, healthcare allowances, and social welfare. The legislation combined and expanded upon the extant Atomic Bombs Survivors Medical Care Law (1957) and the Atomic Bomb



Figure 2.25. Barack Obama and Abe Shinzō during a commemorative ceremony on May 27th, 2016 (public domain), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Barack_Obama_and_Shinzo_Abe_at_Hiroshima_Peace_Memorial_Park.jpg.



Figure 2.26 Tange Kenzō, Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims, 2002. Source: *Shikoku shinbun*, http://www.shikoku-np.co.jp/national/life_topic/photo.aspx?id=20160202000502&no=1.

Survivors Special Measures Law (1968). See “Appendix: Law No.117 of 1994 The Atomic Bomb Survivors’ Support Law,” trans. Yamada Toshinori and Shinohara Tsubasa, *CPHU Research Report Series 35* (May 2022): 126-155, <http://doi.org/10.15027/52464>.

Nagasaki’s Memorial Hall, designed by Kuryū Akira, is similarly subterranean. Two translucent rectangular volumes stretch across a circular reflecting pool and extend downward into the memorial hall, bringing into a diffuse light into the space.

Museum, the circular structure melts into the landscape, guiding visitors towards a subterranean exhibition and reflection chamber. The understated memorial takes on a more intimate character from the museum and its sweeping, artifact and image-based curatorial narratives. The two institutions may perhaps be understood as authorial bookends to the masterplan of the park, visually and conceptually balancing each other out to maintain the well-oiled coherence of the “factory of peace.”

The aspirational bent of Tange’s vision, and the faith he held in the reconstructive potential of Hiroshima is not to be diminished. His deft synthesis of the traditional and the modern, the lucid economy of his layout, and the international acclaim it garnered gave way to new avenues of intellectual encounter and exchange, all while elevating Hiroshima’s status as a modern city in the global imaginary. In the ten years following the war, the city had undergone extraordinary changes and growth, and its population and economy continued to grow and surpass its pre-war levels. The endurance of survivors enabled the city to thrive, and contribute to the maintained politics of anti-war, anti-nuclear advocacy that emanate from the literal and conceptual ground of the city. Yet post-disaster reconstruction, no matter how many good intentions ostensibly undergird its practices, never distributes its benefits evenly, nor is it immune to inflicting harm in the name of progress and social betterment.

The “peace” that is both produced and modeled by the image of the park is in turn the result of an ongoing, intractable coalescence of the past and the visions of the future. The production of the modern city and its “peace infrastructure” was not merely the product of the spatial and social effacements enacted by war, but was inherently reliant on them in order to execute its goals. No matter how much the city sought to discursively distance itself from legacies of warfare, the appropriation of the Peace Boulevard made evident the necessity of

extant organizational structures in order to further the rhetoric of post-disaster renewal.

Technocritical attitudes towards the agent of destruction were reconstituted into a technocratic vision of the city as the center of a universalized peacemaking industry, whose built environment illustrated the dominant mechanisms of this systematized order of urban memorialization.

CHAPTER 3: Ruination and cohesion in the memoryscape of Nagasaki

Located at the southern tip of the Japanese archipelago, the port city of Nagasaki has been historically understood as an important site of transnational exchange and encounter. The tired trope of the “gateway to the West” admittedly holds some ground here, owing to the city’s status as the only permitted site of Western trade during the isolationist policy enforced by the Tokugawa shogunate. This distinctive, but nevertheless essentializing characterization of the city became the bedrock for Nagasaki’s reinvention as an “International Cultural City” in the wake of the atomic bombing.

Nagasaki’s transformation from a sleepy fishing village to a busy trade port was catalyzed in 1567 by the arrival of a fleet of Portuguese Jesuits headed by the missionary and interlocutor Luis d’Almeida.¹⁶¹ Following a series of small scuffles with locals, the Portuguese found an ally in *daimyō* Ōmura Sumitada, who became the first feudal lord to convert to Christianity. After officially opening up the port to international trade in 1570, Ōmura quickly recognized the lucrative opportunities posed by the presence of the Portuguese, and made the extraordinary decision to transfer jurisdiction of the oceanside land under his control to the Society of Jesus in 1580—a move that marks the only other instance of foreign control over Japanese territory apart from the period of Allied Occupation.¹⁶² Though their tenure would be short-lived, the Portuguese were industrious evangelizers, diplomats, and financial brokers, making their presence felt through rigorous and rapid investment in urban infrastructure and planning projects. Within the span of a decade, the settlers had transformed the landscape of the city, adapting strategies used in Lisbon to build directly along the steep hillsides.

¹⁶¹ Brian Burke-Gaffney, *Nagasaki: The British Experience 1854-1945* (Kent, UK: Global Oriental, 2009), 2. This trip followed initial contact made by the Portuguese in 1543 after a ship was driven off course in a storm and landed on Tanegashima, a small island south of Nagasaki and part of present-day Kagoshima prefecture.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

Though initially conciliatory, the shogunate's attitudes towards Christianity quickly began to sour. They reached a nadir in the bloody Shimabara Rebellion (1637-38), a major uprising led by tax-burdened and aggrieved local *rōnin* and peasants, many of whom were Catholic. Harboring suspicions that the Portuguese had armed the insurgents and having assessed that Christianity posed a decisive threat to the social fabric, the shogunate expelled nearly all Europeans from the country. The Dutch, who had little interest in proselytization and had proved their allegiance during the rebellion by siding with the shogunate, were excepted from this mandate. From 1639 until the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853, they were restricted to conducting trade on the small fan-shaped, man-made island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbor.¹⁶³

The city is organized along the mountainous hills and valleys that straddle a narrow inlet flowing into Nagasaki Bay, making it exceptionally well-suited for trade and other maritime ventures (Figure 3.1). Its namesake, the long (*naga*) cape (*saki*) that extends southward from the city center, provided a defensive approach for the natural harbor. In contrast to Hiroshima, the topography of Nagasaki is punctuated by steep hills and valleys, which played a substantial role in determining how the damage of the bomb was dispersed. Though the blast of the implosion-type plutonium bomb was far more powerful than the uranium bomb detonated over Hiroshima, its placement in Urakami region, around 2.5 kilometers north of the city center, concentrated the worst of the devastation within what became to be called “the valley of death” (Figure 3.2). The industrial suburb was at the time home to the greatest population of Catholics nationwide. Over

¹⁶³ Though the *sakoku* isolationist policy has produced an image of Japan as an utterly “closed” country for over 250 years, trade and information exchange was still very much maintained through not only the Dutch channel of Dejima, but through encounters with Chinese, Korean, Ryūkyū, and Ainu peoples as well.



Figure 3.1 Aerial view of Nagasaki. Source: JAXA, <https://www.corc.jaxa.jp/en/earthview/2009/tp091224.html>.

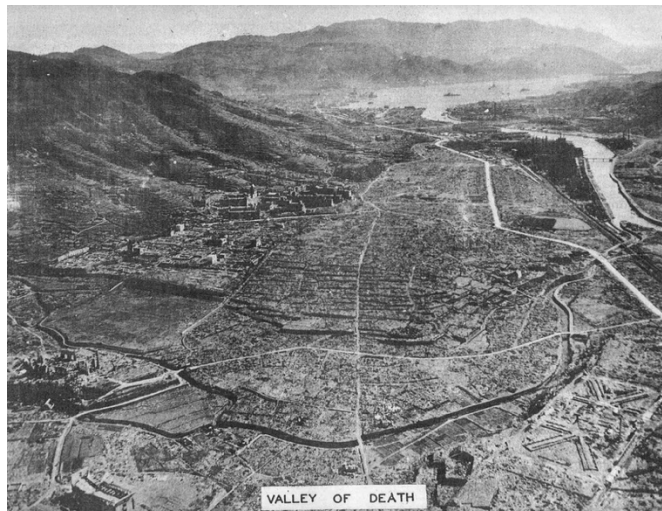


Figure 3.2. U.S. Marine Corps, view of the Urakami Valley looking south in the aftermath of the bombing (public domain).

three-fourths of the Catholic population of 12,000 perished in the bombing.¹⁶⁴ Catholic voices, including Nagai Takashi, whose *Bells of Nagasaki* was discussed in chapter one, came to figure prominently in the narratives of atomic victimhood that emerged from the city.

The bomb's intended target, the Mitsubishi Steel and Arms Works, was located around .75 kilometers south from the hypocenter. In skewing upriver, the explosion also managed to inflict considerable damage to the Mitsubishi Torpedo Plant, sited further north from the hypocenter in the Urakami district. In the mid-sized city inhabited by 240,000 people, 73,884 were declared dead at the end of 1945, and a similar number were reported to be suffering from injuries resulting from the event.¹⁶⁵

Nagasaki possesses a markedly different urban legacy from Hiroshima and other traditional castle cities that served as strategic nodes under the feudal order and carried over their economic and political influence into the Meiji era and beyond. The impulse to actively downplay histories of arms production and related industries did not manifest as strongly as in Hiroshima, if at all. Industrial histories in Nagasaki became diffused into a longer legacy of commerce and international exchange that is frequently touted in tourism materials, while the presence of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries continues to loom large in the city today.¹⁶⁶ Though

¹⁶⁴ Gwyn McClelland, "Catholics at Ground Zero: Negotiating (Post) Memory," *History Workshop Journal* 92 (2021), 130.

The geographic and social separation was pronounced to such a degree that some survivors outside of the area considered the atomic bombing an "Urakami problem," or said "the bomb was dropped on Urakami, not on Nagasaki." This sentiment was also exacerbated by the popular ascendance of Nagai Takashi as the dominant face of *hibakusha* experience in Nagasaki. See Fukuma Yoshiaki 福間良明, *Shōdo no kioku 焦土の記憶* [Memories of the scorched earth] (Tōkyō: Shinyōsha, 2011), 300-301.

¹⁶⁵ Nagasaki City 長崎市, "Hiroshima · Nagasaki no hisai jyōkyō" 広島 · 長崎の被災状況 [Status of damage in Hiroshima and Nagasaki], https://nagasakipeace.jp/content/files/minimini/japanese/j_gaiyou.pdf.

¹⁶⁶ One of the most popular tourist destinations in the city is the Glover Garden, the estate of Scottish merchant Thomas Glover. Glover played an instrumental role in militarizing the rebelling factions during the Boshin War and the subsequent industrialization of Japan under Meiji rule, including serving as an advisor to the Mitsubishi Corporation for several decades. More recently, the abandoned island of Hashima (more popularly known as Gunkanjima, or " Battleship Island"), a once-bustling coal mine that relied heavily on forced Korean and Chinese labor during the war, became revived in the late 2000s as a site of dark tourism. In 2015 it received a UNESCO

Mitsubishi's shipyard and torpedo plant were heavily damaged by the explosion, both industries were resuscitated not long after the war and to this day remain major economic drivers in Nagasaki.¹⁶⁷

These details are laid out not to perpetuate the municipal rift discussed in chapter one, but rather to trace out the particularities by which the foundations of remembrance were laid out in ways distinct from Hiroshima. I seek to engage more constructively with the memory battle between the two cities beyond the conventional treatment of Nagasaki as a less unified, secondary example of urban memorialization against the blinding dominance of Hiroshima's ostensibly unified "peace city" model. In many ways, the two cities were more alike than not, especially when it came to the pursuit of asserting reconstructive success through the form of a coherent whole. Where Tange sought to produce a modern city that integrated memorials as elements of public infrastructure, the protagonists of the Nagasaki park asserted bodily and architectural coherence through monumentalized objects as their dominant mode of municipal memorial-making. The resulting approaches reveal the ways in which narratives of localized urban history, international encounter, and biopolitical governance were calibrated to produce a vision of order that attempted to resolve the sublime terror of atomic violence.

This chapter will begin by a brief discussion of the landscape of the park and its early history, followed by an examination of the tensions surrounding the preservation of the Urakami Cathedral, the focal architectural ruin and symbolic icon of the immediate post-war city. The contested decision made in 1958 to dismantle the remains of the Cathedral and rebuild it on the same site, in nearly the same form, constituted a key episode in the trajectory of Nagasaki's

World Heritage site designation, a process that has continued to be mired in controversy owing to municipal resistance towards the inclusion of histories of forced labor into its exhibition and tourism materials.

¹⁶⁷ Diehl, 173.

urban reconstruction and memorialization. I then shift to a close examination of the production and form of Kitamura Seibō's Statue of Peace, and the politics of triumphal form amidst the shifting discourses of bodily control from the wartime regime into post-atomic Japan.

Remapping the patchworked landscape

As one boards a northbound streetcar from Nagasaki station, it becomes evident that there is no obvious urban core. Without the centripetal pull exerted by a castle, the city never possessed a clear political core. Though commercial activity is more concentrated in the southern region of the city, the population density is nevertheless spread out along the length of the inlet. As in Hiroshima, the park is sited with the nexus of the bombing in mind, further emphasizing the geospatial relationship between uricide and municipal reconstruction.

The eighteen-hectare Peace Park is organized into five “zones” that spread across both sides of Route 206, a major thoroughway that runs along the north-south axis of the city (Figure 3.3). To the west of the road are the “Gathering Zone” and the “Sports Zone,” both of which contain municipal athletic facilities including a baseball stadium, a soccer and rugby field, a pool, and a track and field complex. On the opposite side are the remaining three zones, which are dedicated to memorial-related structures. A monument sited at the hypocenter, along with several other commemorative markers, are located within the “Prayer Zone,” which sits to the west of the “Learning Zone,” where the memorial museum and the National Peace Memorial Hall are located. To the north of the Prayer Zone, on higher ground, is the “Wishing Zone,” a tree-lined park within which the primary icon of remembrance, the Peace Statue, is sited. Nagasaki's Peace Memorial Ceremony, held annually on August 9th, takes place in the plaza in front of the statue.



Figure 3.3 Map of Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park. Source: Nagasaki City, <https://www.city.nagasaki.lg.jp.e.jc.hp.transer.com/sumai/630000/632000/p005153.html>

These subdivisions were not developed during the original construction of the park in the immediate postwar years, but rather emerged as a result of a renovation plan formulated in 1993 in advance of the 50th anniversary of the bombing.¹⁶⁸ Owing to the existing layout of roads and the uneven terrain, the elements of the park cannot be neatly contained within the scope of a single vantage point. Individual monuments too, are scattered throughout the Urakami district, rather than being sited within the boundaries of the park. Visitors must cross streets and change elevations to move from hypocenter to Peace Statue to the museum. The park’s constituent elements are not aligned to abide by an axial order, but instead exist as a collection of discrete visual and spatial encounters that are necessarily mediated by the natural contours of the landscape.

¹⁶⁸ Nagasaki City 長崎市, “Heiwa kōen” 平和公園 [Peace Park], last updated April 13, 2018, <https://www.city.nagasaki.lg.jp/sumai/630000/632000/p005153.html>

The idea to rebuild the hypocenter region as a memorial park with sporting facilities was in place as early as September of 1946, suggesting that that Nagasaki had reached a consensus on the usage of the site earlier than Hiroshima.¹⁶⁹ The particulars regarding the contents and form of the park, however, remained very much up for debate. Around the same time, the city erected a marker at the hypocenter, in the form of the tail end of an arrow staked into the earth (Figure 3.4).¹⁷⁰ At the top of the wooden post were the words “Atomic Bomb Detonation Point.” The enigmatic monument, which only remained in place until 1948, frames the atomic encounter as one of acute punctuation, piercing into the ground to denote a specific point of entry and damage. This stands in contrast to the more conventional expressions of concentric circles and relativized distance. The current iteration of the hypocenter monument, installed in 1968, however, expresses this popular visual metaphor through a black rectangular pillar that is encircled by a series of radiating paved paths (Figure 3.5).

Following the passage of the 1949 International Cultural City Law, plans for building a multi-use International Cultural Center began to materialize. Designed by Satō Takeo, the six-story reinforced concrete structure was sited upon a hill overlooking the hypocenter (Figure 3.6). The front façade was filled with a five-by-six grid of window bays that looked out onto a rectangular reflecting pool. The east and west walls were comprised of stone locally sourced from the Gotō Islands, around 100 kilometers off the western coast of Nagasaki. The rectangular massing and modular windows of the Cultural Center was said to reference to the United Nation

¹⁶⁹ Ōhira Teruhisa 大平晃久, “Nagasaki heiwa kōen no seiritsu” 長崎平和公園の成立 [The formation of Nagasaki Peace Park: Some Fragments of Genealogy of Peace], *Bulletin of Faculty of Education, Nagasaki University, Combined Issue 長崎大学教育学部社会科学論叢* Vol. 1 (2015): 17.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid; “Arayuru shūkyō tsudo itamu,” あらゆる宗教集い悼む [All religions gather to mourn], August 9, 2018, *Asahi shinbun*, <http://www.asahi.com/area/nagasaki/articles/MTW20180809430850001.html>.



Figure 3.4. Early hypocenter marker, Nagasaki, 1946. Source: *Asahi shinbun*, <http://www.asahi.com/area/nagasaki/articles/MTW20180809430850001.html>



Figure 3.5 Hypocenter marker, Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park. Photo by author.

Headquarters in New York, which had been completed in 1951.¹⁷¹ Though the resemblance is paltry at best, the impulse to liken the Center to an architectural entity that served as the very embodiment of postwar liberal international order, described by Wallace Harrison as “a workshop for world peace,” indicates a desire to hold atomic remembrance and international diplomacy as tandem goals.¹⁷² Furthermore, it attests to the municipal desire to affix the building with the weight of global significance.

The memorial hall on the first floor featured a large model of a globe in the center of the room, making explicit the internationalist bent of the institution and the globalized dimension of nuclear remembrance (Figure 3.7). While most of the exhibition spaces on the upper floors were dedicated to presenting artifacts and photographs related to the bombing, the third and fourth floors displayed cultural objects and artworks relating to Nagasaki’s local history of cross-cultural encounter. Within the context of the reconstructed, largely residential dwellings around the hypocenter, the cultural center did indeed take on a monumental character as it towered over the landscape (Figure 3.8). The Peace Statue faced the building frontally, demarcating a space of public gathering in between the two structures.

By the 1990s, however, the cultural hall had fallen into disrepair and was becoming increasingly too cramped to accommodate the scale of visitors. The city initiated a 5.6 billion-yen project to replace the hall with the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, which now houses and displays the majority of the artifacts and archival matter preserved from the bombing (Figure 3.9).¹⁷³ The new museum, which opened to the public in April 1996, has a far greater focus on

¹⁷¹ *The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Damage Records*, Part 3: Rescue and Medical Relief, Chapter 2: International Culture City: available at Nagasaki National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims.

<https://www.peace-nagasaki.go.jp/abombrecords/b030402.html>.

¹⁷² “Art: Cheops’ Architect,” *Time*, September 22, 1952.

<https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,822508,00.html>

¹⁷³ Daniel Seltz, “Remembering the War and the Atomic Bombs: New Museums, New Approaches,” *Radical History Review* 75 (1999), 103.

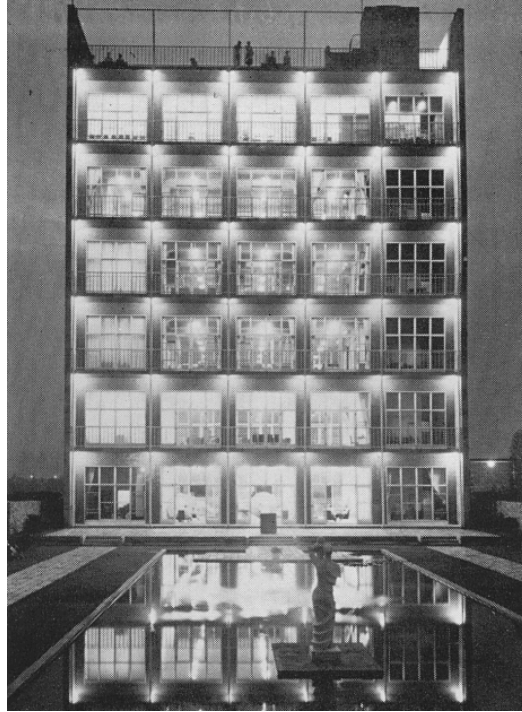


Figure 3.6. Satō Takeo, Nagasaki International Cultural Center, 1955 (public domain).

<https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E3%83%95%E3%82%A1%E3%82%A4%E3%83%AB:%E9%95%B7%E5%B4%8E%E5%9B%BD%E9%9A%9B%E6%96%87%E5%8C%96%E4%BC%9A%E9%A4%A8.jpg>

文化会館概要
南島の静りも豊かな島の町、情緒の町、異域の持つ唯一の近代感溢るの建物である文化館は原爆の悲劇から立上るうとする三十万長崎市民の意志と永く平和の念願を象徴するため島崎文化都市建設法の一事業として昭和二十二年より建設にかかり約四年の歳月を費して昭和三十年二月落成しました。その内部には原爆資料室及び史部長崎の歴史を物語る西洋文化の調査資料、並に近代異域の立たる建築の資料を展示しています。

庭園の一部
本館全体を水周りに享す露池、中央に立つ母子像と共に世界の平和を象徴させています。

文化会館の玄関
(7万有余の原爆犠牲者の供養塔を築いております)

五階原爆資料展示室
原爆資料室には記録写真や原爆投下の時間を物語る柱時計、米軍機からまいいた原爆投下の写真資料、記録に撮られた五等、当時の惨状を物語る資料が展示されています。

六階展示室

二階会議室 (教習人員七五名)
会議室は結婚式、学術研究会及び其の他の会合に利用されています。

博物館には西洋文化唯一の輸入港として近量の日本史上に重要な役割をつとめた歴史資料を多数展示してあります。

一階記念ホール
(中央の地球儀により国際性を持たせています)

入館料

種別	大人	大学、高校生	小、中学生
個人	20円	15円	10円
団体 (5人以上)	1.5円	10円	5円

Figure 3.7. Nagasaki International Cultural Hall welcome guide. Source: Nihon no kobun-ya 日本の古文屋,

https://www.kosho.or.jp/products/detail.php?product_id=286827606



Figure 3.8. Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park unveiling ceremony, August 1955. Source: *Asahi shinbun*, <https://smbiz.asahi.com/article/14602917>.



Figure 3.9. Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum. Source: Discover Nagasaki, <https://www.discover-nagasaki.com/en/sightseeing/126>.

wartime historical context, *hibakusha* experiences, and anti-nuclear activism, shifting away from the Cultural Center's interest in historical material on Nagasaki not directly related to the bombing. The museum was relocated to a site on lower ground to the southeast of the statue, spatially separating the educational facility from the site of gathering and reflection.

Scholars such as Ōhira Teruhisa have argued that the piecemeal, fractured nature of the construction of the park has contributed to the lack of coherent memorial language in Nagasaki. The absence of a monumental record of destruction equivalent to Hiroshima's A-Bomb Dome, Ōhira posits, results in a less defined process of memorial "confinement" (*fūjikome*) in Nagasaki.¹⁷⁴ The vision-driven narrative of the "urban core" that drove Tange's design does not have a clear equivalent in Nagasaki.

The specular dominance of the A-Bomb Dome and the Tange Peace Park's neat packaging of memory into centralized and networked site, in this equation, gain their mnemonic power from the capacity to express atomic disaster as a self-contained totality. Yet the hegemonic imposition of the park as an organizing principle for the reconstruction of Hiroshima, as I have illustrated in the prior chapter, in part acquired its authority through the silencing and effacement of marginal voices and spaces, while rendering itself irreconcilable to memorial interventions that disrupted its spatial and visual unity. Ōhira relates the weakness of confinement in Nagasaki to a lack of clarity regarding the specificity of site and scale in the memorials, preventing any one aspect of the landscape to capture the public imagination.¹⁷⁵ This formulation, however, prevents us from treating dissonance as a source of productive inquiry. The development of each memorial illustrates a distinct accumulation of opinions and desires. The perceived lack of congruence between them not only reveals the fallibility of our own

¹⁷⁴ Ōhira, "The formation of the Nagasaki Peace Park," 22-23.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

representational expectations for memorials to serve as legible manifestations of memory itself, but also obfuscates the potential for reading moments of common expression between them.

Though bureaucratic disorganization, scattered advocacy, uneven terrain, lost records, and the existence of Hiroshima as a foil may have all played a part in this dispersed picture of memorialization in Nagasaki, what is perhaps a more fruitful line of inquiry is the consideration of the allure of monumentality as a product of governance.¹⁷⁶ My focus turns specifically to the contestation over the remains of the Urakami Cathedral, and the construction of the Peace Statue. These two urban fixtures reveal to us the longer histories of layered influences that guide the course of memorial-making, while their representational strategies gesture to different dimensions of coherence—one at the scale of a marginalized but vocal population who discursively placed the bomb within a historical trajectory specific to their community, and the other as evoked through the medium of the body and its shifting ideological connotations from war into the nuclear age.

The crisis of ruination: negotiating the fate of the Urakami Cathedral

If Hiroshima's primary architectural testament to the devastation wreaked by the bomb and the symbolic core of the park system is the A-Bomb Dome, Nagasaki's equivalent is the Urakami Cathedral, a grand neo-Romanesque structure originally located approximately 500

¹⁷⁶ On March 29, 1958, the Nagasaki City Hall was severely damaged by a fire (cause unknown), and the bulk of municipal archives were destroyed. As Tomoe Otsuki has shown, these material lacunae make it difficult to determine the exact causes behind municipal decisions around memorial making, including the reasons behind Mayor Tagawa's change of heart regarding the demolition of the Urakami Cathedral ruins following his trip to the United States. See Tomoe Otsuki, "The Politics of Reconstruction and Reconciliation in U.S.-Japan Relations—Dismantling the Atomic Bomb Ruins of Nagasaki's Urakami Cathedral," *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 13, no. 32 (August 2015).

meters from the hypocenter of the explosion (Figure 3.10).¹⁷⁷ Built on land purchased by Urakami Catholics freed from exile after the governmental ban on Christianity was lifted in 1873, the cathedral was inaugurated in 1914 and completed in 1925 upon the installation of two large belfries.¹⁷⁸ At the time of the bombing, it was the largest church in East Asia.¹⁷⁹

Owing to its brick construction, fragments of the building survived the blast, further imbuing the religious facility with the sacred aura of an ancient ruined temple (Figure 3.11). Elements of the ornamented façade, including the tympanum carvings in the main portal and a handful of smaller rose windows, were still legible amidst the remains, while dismembered statues lay scattered across the grounds. One of the church bells—the namesake of Nagai Takashi’s *The Bells of Nagasaki*—was salvaged from the ruins and re-installed in the right belfry of the new cathedral.¹⁸⁰

The iconic quality of the ruined cathedral provided symbolic and spatial weight to the popular urban narratives associated with the Catholic community, and its lone presence amidst the barren landscape of the city made for a striking image that accentuated the apocalyptic metaphors embedded in nuclear discourse. The clarity of its symbolic resonance made it a popular destination for gathering, remembrance, and tourism beginning not long after the culmination of the war (Figure 3.12). Nagasaki resident and *hibakusha* Takahara Itaru’s photographs are some of the rare visual records of the cathedral remains and their public

¹⁷⁷ The Cathedral is located just east of the Wishing Zone, though it is only visible if one looks out from the threshold of the eastern edge of the park near the Peace Statue, owing to the vegetation in the park and the valley that separates the two areas.

¹⁷⁸ Tomoe Otsuki, “The Politics of Reconstruction and Reconciliation in U.S-Japan Relations—Dismantling the Atomic Bomb Ruins of Nagasaki’s Urakami Cathedral,” *Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 13, no. 32 (August 2015).

¹⁷⁹ Gwyn McClelland, *Dangerous Memory in Nagasaki* (London: Routledge, 2019), 113.

¹⁸⁰ Takahara Itaru, Yokote Kazuhiko, and Brian Burke-Gaffney, *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost*. 長崎 旧浦上天主堂 1945 - 1958 失われた被爆遺産 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2010), 20.



Figure 3.10. Urakami Cathedral, seen from the Peace Park looking east. Photo by author.



Figure 3.11. Hayashi Shigeo, Urakami Cathedral seen from Matsuyama-machi, October 1945. Source: Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/urakami-church-and-environs-seen-from-the-heights-of-matsuyama-machi/5QHT9RPDWvG6kA>.

presence in the city. His images of the May 1949 celebration of the 400th anniversary of St. Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan, a massive undertaking that brought together over 20,000 worshippers and religious representatives from across the world, depict the cathedral ruins as an enlivened site of gathering and commemoration (Figure 3.13).¹⁸¹

Unlike photographs of ruined temples or Japanese *hibakusha*, the image of the church carried with it a particular degree of familiarity for viewers in the West. Though the GHQ withheld their own images and records of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and suppressed related material within Japanese media, they had no jurisdiction over images and observations recorded by non-Japanese and nongovernmental bodies. In the October 15, 1945 issue of *Life* magazine, the featured "Picture of the Week" depicted the head of a stone statue of Christ staring blankly into the camera, flanked by the architectural detritus of the cathedral (Figure 3.14).¹⁸² Carefully staged to invoke pathos, the composition accentuates the iconoclastic metaphors associated with nuclear devastation. Without contextual aid, the image may not have even registered as a depiction of Nagasaki to American readers. The accompanying caption encouraged Christian viewers to contemplate "whether even the urgencies of war should permit such violation of individual life as the atomic bomb had committed," saturating the photograph in a moralizing aura typical of the publication.¹⁸³ Within Nagasaki, the narrative of Catholicism and the presence of the cathedral ruins also served as a familiar touchpoint for many American GIs, who participated in services, holidays, and other activities organized by local churches.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² George H. Roeder Jr., "Making Things Visible," *Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese cultural conflicts in the Nuclear Age*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 91.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ The presence of Occupation forces in the vicinity of the hypocenters varied between the two cities. Though troops assigned to Hiroshima were largely based in the nearby military city of Kure, the forces in Nagasaki were not only greater in number, but also took up camp in the city itself, converting former schools, factories, and municipal buildings for their own use. As such, Allied forces were far more integrated in the daily lives of Nagasaki residents,

The ruination of the cathedral was interpreted by many parishioners as another episode in the cycles of persecution and renewal that had long plagued the Catholic community in Japan since the introduction of Christianity in the 16th century. The history of the Urakami parish is often remembered through the temporal markers of four major *kuzure*, or crackdowns. The fourth, which began in 1867, was considered the most severe. Approximately 3,400 Urakami Catholics were rounded up and exiled in twenty-one detention camps across the country, where they were forced to convert to Shintoism and suffered under torturous living conditions.¹⁸⁵ After the Meiji administration lifted the ban on Christianity in 1873, just 1,900 parishioners made it back to Urakami, where they rebuilt the community with the cathedral at its center. Many Catholic *hibakusha*, particularly those who had lived through the period of exile, saw the bomb and the destruction of the cathedral as constituting a fifth *kuzure*, localizing atomic disaster within the scope of an extended history of communal suffering.¹⁸⁶

In his sermons and texts, Nagai Takashi construed the bomb as a providential signifier of Nagasaki's chosen status as the sacrificial lamb of humanity's ills.¹⁸⁷ The bomb was not divine punishment, he assured his fellow Catholics, but rather "the expression of a divine providence with some deep plan."¹⁸⁸ Despite facing some resistance from believers and non-believers, the interpretation became an extremely popular and well-circulated theodicy that helped Urakami

and consequently played a more active role alongside municipal officials in dictating the trajectory of civic memorialization.

¹⁸⁵ McClelland, "Catholics at Ground Zero," 111.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

A memorial commemorating the "26 Martyrs of Japan," a group of Japanese and foreign Catholics who were arrested in Kyoto in 1597 and forced to march to Nagasaki, where they were crucified on the orders of *daimyo* Toyotomi Hideyoshi, was erected in the city in 1962. The bronze sculpture, which features the twenty-six figures in relief, standing side by side in a horizontally oriented cross, may be understood as a coefficient of the increased investment in the Urakami Catholic Community during the early postwar years, as well a memorial expression that can be read as part of a new sculptural language of commemorative bronzes emerging from the postwar city.

¹⁸⁷ For a discussion of this popular discourse and its reception, see Diehl, "Chapter 3: The 'Saint' of Urakami: Nagai Takashi and Early Representations of the Atomic Experience," in *Resurrecting Nagasaki*.

¹⁸⁸ Gwyn McClelland, "Remembering the Ruins of the Urakami Cathedral," *Journal of religion in Japan* 5, no. 1 (2016): 54



Figure 3.12. Takahara Itaru, children playing at the ruins of the Urakami Cathedral, 1953. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 24.



Figure 3.13. Takahara Itaru, Commemoration for 400th anniversary of St. Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan, May 1949. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 3.

Catholics find some semblance of meaning in the senseless tragedy, translated the experience to the scale of collective humanity, resonated with Catholics abroad, and aided in narrativizing the political discourse of the nation's transition into a peace-loving country.

Catholic leaders resented the presence of the ruins, viewing them as an unyielding reminder of trauma, and sought to reconstruct a new church as an assertion of the perseverance of the community. The parish also had practical concerns, as the temporary church was proving to be uncomfortable, vulnerable to the elements, and unable to accommodate the growing population of Catholics.¹⁸⁹ Despite this, many non-Catholic citizens and municipal representatives pushed to have the ruins preserved as a memorial to the bombing, citing the role of the ruins as a necessary reference point for retaining the trauma of the bomb in public consciousness. During each of the nine meetings held by the municipal Atomic Bomb Remains Preservation Committee between 1949 and 1958 concerning the fate of the cathedral, members consistently voted in favor of preserving the ruins.¹⁹⁰

Yet following a 1956 visit to the United States after receiving an invitation from St. Paul, Minnesota to form a sister city relationship, Mayor Tagawa Tsutomu shifted his stance on the ruins from preservation to demolition. Though committee members and citizens alike begged Tagawa to preserve them as testaments to the disaster, it appeared that certain forces in the U.S.—likely both political and religious—had encouraged Tagawa to efface the ruins and reconstruct the church in order to uphold the positive trajectory of U.S.-Japan relations.¹⁹¹ The decision also followed a tour of the States by Nagasaki Bishop Yamaguchi Aijiro, who received an honorary doctorate from Villanova University and visited several Catholic communities

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 56. By late 1948, the Urakami community had grown to 4319 members.

¹⁹⁰ Otsuki, "The Politics of Reconstruction and Reconciliation," 2015.

¹⁹¹ For a more detailed account of this event see Otsuki, "The Politics of Reconstruction and Reconciliation in U.S.-Japan Relations," 2015.

across the country in order to raise funds for the church's reconstruction. After amassing tens of thousands of dollars in pledges, Yamaguchi, along with his American backers, wielded substantial say in deciding the fate of the ruins.¹⁹² The demolition proceeded swiftly after Tagawa gave the final approval in early March of 1958, and the new building was completed in October of the following year. During this period, Takahara Itaru returned to the site to photograph the demolition process. Capturing workers in the process of tearing down pillars and carrying out blackened, dismembered statues on stretchers, Takahara's images re-inscribe a kind of spiritual death upon the site, thirteen years after bombing (Figure 3.15, 3.16).

Though Tagawa's change of heart is difficult to trace accurately owing to a fire in the Nagasaki City Hall that destroyed much of the building and its archives just two weeks after demolition efforts commenced, we might nevertheless imagine that the politics of U.S.-Japan relations bore at least some influence on the fate of the building. One might consider that, as Erika Doss has noted, "ruins have never held much of a presence in America," where their presence may be read as an interference to the ideals of progress and reinvention inscribed into nationalist discourse.¹⁹³ Furthermore, the involvement of the Catholic Church placed the ruins

¹⁹² Otsuki, "The Politics of Reconstruction and Reconciliation," 2015.

The debate regarding the Urakami Cathedral coincides with the timeline of events surrounding the question of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin, another illustration of the social and cultural challenges of post-war ruin management.

Sympathy for the Christian cause fits more broadly into a pattern of selective American investment in postwar Japanese reconstruction initiatives. Early on in the Occupation, officials encouraged the spread of Christianity in Japan as part of an effort to dispel State Shintoism, integrate American-style social principles, and curtail communist fervor. In June of 1949, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kaneshichi Masuda announced that the U.S. would be contributing an estimated \$50 million in private capital to aid in the reconstruction of the two cities. \$12 million was marked for the establishment of Christian universities, accompanied by other stipulations regarding the funding of churches and Christian schools. MacArthur himself was heavily involved in the founding of the International Christian University (ICU) in Tokyo. Nevertheless, the Christianization of Japan was largely unsuccessful, perhaps because of the very irony posed by the introduction of a belief system into a social order that was perceived by American forces to have descended into militarist fervor due to the lack of separation between church and state.

See Diehl, *Resurrecting Nagasaki*, 37; Okazaki Masufumi, "Chrysanthemum and Christianity: Education and Religion in Occupied Japan, 1945–1952," *Pacific Historical Review* 79 no. 3 (August 2010), pp. 393-417.

¹⁹³ Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 173.



Figure 3.14. Ruins of Urakami cathedral, 1945. Source: *Life Magazine*, <https://www.life.com/history/hiroshima-and-nagasaki-photos-from-the-ruins/>.



Figure 3.15. Takahara Itaru, demolition of former Urakami Cathedral, 1958. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 43.



Figure 3.16. Takahara Itaru, belfry of the former Urakami Cathedral with the Peace Statue in the distance, 1958. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 27.

within a more complex, globalized value system that did not have an equivalent in the case of Hiroshima's A-Bomb Dome, a secular institution that had been primarily used as a commercial and art exhibition space prior to the bombing.

The post-atomic dome in Hiroshima lent itself to becoming a mnemonic repository because its pre-atomic history was of little cultural import to the memorial narratives that arose from the bombings. The bomb rendered it devoid of any functional use, and its symbolic weight arose purely from its status as a ruin. After all, it only became a "dome" when its exterior was stripped and its surroundings incinerated, giving it monumentality by way of violent subtraction. In Nagasaki, however, the object of ruination was already imbued with spiritual value, and associated with a particular community both prior to and after the disaster. The atomic damage in turn produced a surfeit of meanings and a fractured memoryscape that could not be resolved with a dominant narrative of curated ruination.

Preservation, as Jorge Otero-Pailos writes, "demonstrates the power of the state to sustain its built heritage, and ultimately to demonstrate the endurance of the state itself. The mnemonic value of historic places is contingent on the state's power to make them last beyond their original functional viability."¹⁹⁴ The refusal of the Urakami Catholics to allow their site to become de-functionalized—and in turn, their presence effaced—illuminates a key crisis in the remaking of urban identity on the grounds of nuclear devastation. The means by which survivors sought to make sense of, narrativize, and situate themselves against the bomb and its effects were by no means unified and singular.

¹⁹⁴ Jorge Otero-Pailos, "Mnemonic Value and Historic Preservation," in *Spatial Recall: Memory in Architecture and Landscape*, ed. Marc Treib (New York: Routledge, 2009), 255.

Many Nagasaki citizens who favored preserving the ruins as is expressed frustration with having once again “lost” to Hiroshima.¹⁹⁵ There is indeed a potent weight that comes with the presence of ruins in the urban fabric of the city, especially when considering that very few prominent architectural testaments to the devastation caused by firebombings or environmental disaster exist in the urban landscapes of Japan.¹⁹⁶

Yet the reliance on ruination as the defensive buttress against collective forgetting also illuminates the inevitable shortfalls of tasking monuments with the burden of remembering. While the preserved ruins in Hiroshima ground the landscape in the historical moment of 1945, they are ultimately contained within the mnemonic system of the park, standing as an officially sanctioned testimony and a visual referent against which to assess the material and social growth of the metropolis—and in turn, the nation—that arises in its midst. In Nagasaki, however, the reconstruction of the church, for Catholic survivors, was located in a far more extended historical trajectory that did not rely on 1945 as the lone turning point, and the structure itself does not aspire to serve as an architectural point of relativism against the growth of the park and the city at large. As Andrew Herscher writes, in treating “violence as *itself* a mnemonic form,” we are in turn better equipped to examine how “destruction imposes memory on architecture and renders architecture memorable in entirely novel ways.”¹⁹⁷ The discourses on preservation and monumental ruination that arose in both cities are indicative of the impulse to invest architectural

¹⁹⁵ According to interviews conducted by Gwyn McClelland, many Catholic *hibakusha* today express ambivalence regarding the decision to clear the ruins, acknowledging the value of retaining the material testimony of the disaster even at the cost of resurfacing painful memories. Public opinion among Catholics and non-Catholics, both then and now, should of course not be read as monolithic within each community. See Gwyn McClelland, “Remembering the Ruins of the Urakami Cathedral,” *Journal of religion in Japan* 5, no. 1 (2016): 47–69.

¹⁹⁶ Only since the 3/11 Tōhoku triple disaster have ruins produced by environmental disaster and forced evacuation become objects of memorial heritage preservation under the newly formed category of *shinsai ikō*.

¹⁹⁷ Andrew Herscher, “In Ruins: Architecture, Memory, Counter-memory,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 73, no. 4 (2014): 466–7, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jsah.2014.73.4.464>.

bodies with the authority and responsibility of maintaining and perpetuating memory. By examining these debates not through the lens of municipal success and failure, but rather through the capacity of violence against architecture to disclose the structures of power and historical understandings that shape the flows of memory, we may free ruins from the nostalgic forces that entrap them within an eternal present.

A portion of the ruined cathedral walls were transferred to the hypocenter park, while partial fragments of statues and decorative elements have been preserved in the memorial museum and the reconstructed church, which is nearly identical to the original. One notable relic is the wooden head of a statue of the Virgin, whose charred complexion and hollow gaze evoke a penetrating sense of loss and mourning (Figure 3.17). The bust is now enshrined within a chapel in the reconstructed cathedral. The disembodied form, whose scarred surface makes evident the vulnerability of its material condition, stands in remarkable contrast to the body of the Peace Statue, the most prominent of the visual symbols in Nagasaki's memorial language.



Figure 3.17. Statue of the Virgin Mary salvaged from the ruins of the bombing. Source: Kyodo Photo via *Japan Times*, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2005/08/10/national/nagasaki-cathedral-chapel-enshrines-a-bombed-statue-of-the-virgin-mary/>.

The titan of peace

A towering blue figure sits at the northern end of the Nagasaki Peace Park, gradually revealing its full form as one ascends the escalator located at the southwestern corner of the park (Figure 3.18). The 9.7-meter tall, 30-ton seated bronze statue is set upon a four meter-tall base made of fieldstone. The base was originally planned to be constructed using stones shipped from around the world, signifying the international cooperation that would form the bedrock of peace.¹⁹⁸ Though budgetary constraints prevented this ambitious plan from materializing, the impulse nevertheless recalls the construction practices implemented in the Hakko Ichiu Tower in 1940.

The massive scale of the Peace Statue recalls the iconic *daibutsu* (large Buddha) statues found across Japan, while its physical features and articulated musculature are cast in a vaguely westernized air. At a distance, its scale evokes a template of religious statuary familiar to Japanese audiences, but up close, its appearance seems utterly foreign. Unlike in Hiroshima, where the elements of the park craft a sightline that guides the visitor's gaze straight down the north-south axis, the topography of the Nagasaki park and the stature of its primary monument continuously draw the visitor's body and eye upwards and towards the apex of the figure.

The statue's expression is stoic and impenetrable. His left leg is planted firmly on the ground, perpendicular to the left arm, which is stretched taut, palm open and facing the ground. The softer bend of the right calf echoes the subtle curvature of the right arm, which gestures upwards, a slight bend hinting at his relaxed muscles. The right hand, too, lacks tension, fingers unclenched as the index signals towards the sky. The titan is sheathed in a gauzy fabric that

¹⁹⁸ Kimishima Ayako 君島彩子, "Heiwa monyumento to kannon zō: Nagasaki-shi heiwa kōen nai no chōzō ni okeru shinkō to keishō" 平和モニュメントと観音像—長崎市平和公園内の彫像における信仰と形象— [Peace Monuments and Kannon Statues: Faith and Shapes Seen in the Statues of Nagasaki Peace Park], *Religion and Society* 宗教と社会 24 (June 2018), 101.

drapes across his left shoulder and lap, slinking around and tucking under his right leg, which bends and rest upon the seat. The cloth does not indicate status or identity, nor is it distinctive enough to provide any hints towards determining a specific historical or mythic referent.

The statue is located at the end of a procession lined with Victorian-style lamp posts and memorials donated by foreign governments. The *mélange* of statues, all vaguely dedicated to themes of peace and anti-nuclear violence, endows the environment with signifiers of internationalist harmony and diplomatic goodwill. The statue is also framed along this axis by two arcs of water arising from the Peace Fountain, designed by Nagasaki-born architect Moto’o Take and completed in 1969 (Figure 3.19).¹⁹⁹ The concave orientation of the fountain’s water patterns is said to echo the movement of the wings of a dove, and doubly reference the city’s sobriquet as the Port of Cranes, a name that derived from the shape of the peninsular coastline. The organization of the circulation paths, the placement of the statue at the northern end of the park and flanked by a cluster of trees, indicates its function as a final destination to be approached frontally—an altar at the end of a nave, so to speak.

Tange’s Peace Park project was a pioneering debut for a young practitioner keenly attuned to the machinations of his discipline at the scale of the international. Kitamura’s, on the other hand, was a late-career magnum opus for an artist whose career had been entirely domestic and rooted in academism. Kitamura was an industrious and prolific sculptor, tirelessly working

¹⁹⁹ Shimada Yoshiko 嶋田嘉子, “Shōwa-ki ni katsudō shita kenchikuka Moto’o Take (1910-2005)” 昭和期に活躍した建築家 武基雄 (1910~2005年) [Moto’o Take, an architect active during the Shōwa period (1910-2005)], *Nagasaki shinbun* 長崎新聞, April 20, 2015.

Moto’o also designed the Nagasaki Aquarium (1959) and the Nagasaki Civic Auditorium (1962) as part of the Nagasaki International Cultural City construction initiatives. The facilities were closed and dismantled in 1998 and 2015 respectively.



Figure 3.18. Kitamura Seibō, Peace Statue, Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park, 1955. Photo by author.



Figure 3.19. Moto'o Take, Fountain of Peace, Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park, 1969. Photo by author.

until his death in 1987 at the age of 102.²⁰⁰ Both had personal ties to the locales in question, and both had also departed from these roots in pursuit of higher opportunities in Tokyo.

Kitamura was born in Minamishimabara, a small city in the eastern peninsula of Nagasaki prefecture, as the son of a prosperous agriculturalist.²⁰¹ An ardent devotee of the True Pure Land Buddhism (*Jōdo Shinshū*) sect, Kitamura's father was a hobbyist sculptor who carved religious statues. The younger Kitamura's formative years were spent observing his father's work and later joining him in his home studio.²⁰²

After a brief illness forced him to drop out of a teaching school in Nagasaki, Kitamura enrolled in the Kyoto City School of Fine and Applied Arts in 1903 and continued his studies at the Tokyo Fine Arts School (now Tokyo University of the Arts, or Geidai for short). While in Geidai, he realized his preference for Western-style modelling (*chōso*), or working with clay and plaster to create molds for bronze sculptures, over wood carving (*mokuchō*), a method he perceived to be more traditional and antiquated.²⁰³ Kitamura began to gain recognition after participating in a series of competitions, and in 1921, at the age of thirty-five he became a judge for the preeminent state-run exhibition organized by the Imperial Art Academy (Teikoku bijutsu-

²⁰⁰ “The doctors say I’ve got thirty more years,” he declared on the occasion of his 100th birthday. “Ogenkideseune ‘nonki bō’ de man hyakusai,” お元気ですね「ノンキ坊」で満百歳 [Looking well: ‘the carefree fellow’ at 100 years], *Mainichi shinbun* 毎日新聞, December 12, 1984.

²⁰¹ Michael Lucken, “The Peace Statue at Nagasaki,” in *Japan’s Postwar*, ed. Michael Lucken, Anne Bayard-Sakai and Emmanuel Lozerand, trans. J.A.A. Stockwin (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 183. During the Shimabara Rebellion (1637-38), the Hara Castle of Minamishimabara was the site of a major siege by rebellious peasants and ronin.

²⁰² Tōno Yoshiaki 東野芳明, “Kitamura Seibō,” 「北村西望」 [Kitamura Seibo], *Bijutsu techō* 美術手帳 256, (August 1965), 50.

²⁰³ Lucken, “The Peace Statue at Nagasaki,” 182.

The neologism *chōso* finds its origins in a 1895 article by the prominent critic and art historian Ōmura Seigai (1868-1927), who combined “carving” (*chō*) and modeling (*so*) to express sculpture as a “pure” rather than “applied” art that integrated craftwork with aesthetic consciousness and differentiated itself from the extant term *chōkoku*, which only alluded to the acts of carving and engraving. Though the latter term is far more commonly used today, the desire to delineate a categorical distinction between artisanal and fine arts indicates the burgeoning influence of European notions of artistic hierarchy and imbues the term *chōso* with a cosmopolitan air. See Tanaka Shūji, and Toshiko McCallum, “Sculpture,” in *Since Meiji: Perspectives on the Japanese Visual Arts, 1868-2000*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (University of Hawai’i Press, 2012), 290.

in).²⁰⁴ Two years later, he was appointed professor at his alma mater, Geidai, and in 1925 was appointed a member of the Imperial Art Academy.²⁰⁵

Throughout the 1920s and 30s, Kitamura took on a number of prominent commissions to depict military heroes, local leaders, and religious subjects, solidifying his status as a leading contemporary sculptor whose work fell neatly in line with the aesthetic precepts of state-building in interwar Japan. Though Kitamura's work, akin to fellow *chōso* artists, owes partial debts to the unshakable influence of Auguste Rodin on early 20th-century Japanese sculptors, he never traveled to or studied in Europe. Tanaka Shūji suggests that in contrast to contemporaneous Western-style (*yōga*) painters who strongly asserted the Western foundations of their work, sculptors like Kitamura may have believed their work to be primarily informed by traditions of ancient Buddhist sculpture.²⁰⁶ Kitamura retired from Geidai in 1944 at the age of 60 and subsequently relocated to a village near Chichibu, Saitama to flee the war. After 1945, he returned to Tokyo and began working on sculptures of female goddesses dedicated to the theme of “peace,” along with works memorializing soldiers who died in battle and their families.

In October of 1950, the Atomic Bomb Materials Preservation Committee (Nagasaki-shi genbaku shiryō hozon iin kai), a special task force convened by the city to conduct research on damages and strategize avenues of civic memorial-making, held a meeting in Tokyo to solicit

²⁰⁴ Nagasue Masao 永末真砂夫, “Geijutsu ni ikiru Kitamura Seibō,” 芸術に生きる北村西望 [Kitamura Seibo, living in the arts], *Jinbutsu ōrai* 人物往来 5 no. 11 (November 1956), 75.

As a state-sponsored organization under the current Agency for Cultural Affairs, the Academy and its annual exhibition has gone through a number of name changes over the decades in accordance with shifts in political contexts. The Bunten, short for Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture Art Exhibition (Monbushō bijutsu tenrankai), was renamed the Imperial Art Exhibition (Teikoku bijutsu tenrankai, or Teiten) in 1919 after the establishment of the Imperial Fine Arts Academy, then New Bunten (Shin-bunten) in 1937 after undergoing organization restructuring, and ultimately changed to the Nitten (Nihon bijutsu tenrankai, or Japan Art Exhibition) in 1946 during the Occupation, which has remained the title to this day. The Imperial Art Academy was also renamed the Japan Art Academy during the same period.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Tanaka Shūji, “Sculpture,” trans. Toshiko McCallum, in *Since Meiji: Perspectives on the Japanese Visual Arts, 1868-2000*, ed. J. Thomas Rimer (University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 299.

opinions from Nagasaki-born sculptors, painters, architects, and city planners regarding the construction of a civic monument.²⁰⁷ Kitamura, who was in attendance, enthusiastically approached the committee members with a proposal for a bronze statue that would echo the monumental presence and historical import of the 15 meter-tall Nara Daibutsu and stand as an eternal declaration of the city's commitment to peacemaking. Kitamura's proposal was met with enthusiasm from nearly all committee members, who swiftly proceeded to offer a formal commission in the following month.²⁰⁸ The *Nagasaki minyū* drummed up enthusiasm for the project by declaring it “Another landmark for Nagasaki” (*Nagasaki ni mata meisho hitotsu*), alluding to the existing landscape of touristic entertainment in the city, and situating the statue within this historical schema.²⁰⁹ Where Hiroshima sought to frame its “peace infrastructure” as the cultural centerpieces of a new city built upon a tabula rasa, the International Cultural City's approach fused together the old and the new as a means of celebrating urban uniqueness and renewal.

Unlike in Hiroshima, there was no open competition for the design of the park or the central monument, and it appears that the work was intended to be perceived as a standalone object of veneration, rather than a constituent element in a system of designed spaces and memorials. However, the committee noted receiving positive feedback from numerous interest groups including the International Culture City Construction Council and the Rotary Club, and

²⁰⁷ Ōhira, 17; *Heiwa kinen zō no dekiagaru made* 平和祈念像の出来上るまで [The making of the Peace Memorial Statue], (Nagasaki: Nagasaki Prefectural Teacher's Association and Peace Statue Construction Cooperative, 1955), 8.

²⁰⁸ Araki Takeshi 新木武志, “Nagasaki no sensai fukkō jigyō to heiwa kinen zō kensetsu” 長崎の戦災復興事業と平和祈念像建設 [The Reconstruction Effort and Construction of the Peace Statue in Nagasaki], *Genbaku bungaku kenkyū tokushū “sengo 70-nen” renzoku wākushoppu* 原爆文学研究 特集「戦後 70 年」連続ワークショップ (2015), 192-3.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 192.

consulted alumni of the Nagasaki Prefectural Women's Junior College for assurance on the appropriateness of exhibiting a semi-nude male figure in public space.²¹⁰

The project was funded largely by donations solicited from the public, and when the original budget of 30 million yen was exceeded by another 20 million, the artist made contributions from his personal funds to further the progress of the statue.²¹¹ A civilian organization dubbed the Peace Statue Construction Cooperative was tasked with soliciting donations from supporters both domestic and overseas, spearheading initiatives such as the “one yen per person” campaign, which called upon students and teachers at secondary schools across the nation to donate one yen each.²¹² In order to accommodate the tremendous size of the sculpture, Kitamura had a custom studio built with 12-meter high ceilings in Inokashira Park in western Tokyo.²¹³ Following an agreement made with the local municipality in exchange for the use of the land, Kitamura donated the studio and nearly three hundred works to Musashino City after the completion of the statue.²¹⁴ It remains in situ today as a museum dedicated to the artist’s work.

The sculptor’s intended meanings are conveyed with didactic clarity, inscribed upon the backside of the base in his idiosyncratic script (Figure 3.20):

That nightmarish war
A miserable, hair-raising tragedy
The intolerable feeling of looking back on parents on children
Who on earth could remain without praying for peace?

²¹⁰ *The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Damage Records*, Part 3: Rescue and Medical Relief, Chapter 2: International Culture City, <https://www.peace-nagasaki.go.jp/abombrecords/b030402.html>.

²¹¹ Ibid; Tomoe Otsuki, “Reinventing Nagasaki: the Christianization of Nagasaki and the revival of an imperial legacy in postwar Japan,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 17, no.3 (2016), 410.

The exact amount Kitamura contributed remains unclear. For reference, the 168-million yen Nagasaki International Cultural Hall, completed the same year, was funded through a combination of funding from the national, prefectural, and municipal governments.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Kitamura originally envisioned a statue closer to 12 meters, and was forced to shrink the work down due to budgetary limitations.

²¹⁴ Lucken, “The Peace Statue at Nagasaki,” 189.

This statue was born
To pioneer the movement for worldwide peace
A wise and holy visage like a mountain
that evokes the fortitude and bravery of a healthy man
His height 32 *shaku* [9.7 meters]
The right arm gestures towards the atomic bomb
The left, to peace
His face prays for the martyrs of war
A man who transcends race
At times Buddha, at times a god
Representing the greatest decision and passion in Nagasaki since the city's inception
Now a symbol of mankind's highest wishes



Figure 3.20. Kitamura's inscription on the base of the Peace Statue. Photo by author.

The fervent tenor of the poetic passage makes evident the sculptor's emotional investment in the project. Each appendage operates as its own self-contained and seemingly cogent signifier. The dual religious identities evoked by the figure's face and its god-like comportment allows it to fulfill the needs of two imagined communities at once while evading any overt resemblance to an existing icon. The urna on his forehead, framed by a wavy cowlick, produces a strange representational dissonance, as if a western-style wig has been awkwardly

foisted upon the head of a bodhisattva. This racial and spiritual indeterminacy, adopted perhaps to satisfy the conflicting desires and varied perspectives of an imagined global audience, ultimately produces an irresolvable monument owing to its binarizing vision of hybridity.

It is worth noting that there was a relative boom in the production of contemporary *daibutsu* and monumental statues of the bodhisattva Kannon both during and after the war.²¹⁵ Kitamura's impulse to revive the monumentality of Buddhist thus fell in line with concurrent trends in commemorative sculpture, but the manner of his execution signified a radical shift. To see this scale of sculpture evoked in the form of a male nude, in an ostensibly secular context, was unprecedented. Yet while such a striking representational turn may have been necessitated by the foremost horror of the bomb, there remains a persistent anxiety evoked by the spiritual authority maintained by the figure, who is himself "praying for peace". Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis, during their visits to the city in 2019 and 1981 respectively, explicitly averted the plaza in front of the statue, where most commemorative events are held.²¹⁶ While the reasoning behind this decision has not been disclosed by the Vatican, it is difficult not to imagine that there may have been concerns regarding the optics of the pope speaking in front of the statue, given its quasi-spiritual, idol-like presence. Members of the Urakami Catholic community have also been outspoken critics of the statue, including the late chief priest Kawazoe Takeshi

²¹⁵ Tanaka Shūji 田中修二, "Chōkoku to chihō: Asakura Fumio to Kitamura Seibō no bai kara" 彫刻と地方—朝倉文夫と北村西望の場合から [Sculpture and Provincality: An Essay on the case of Fumio Asakura and Seibo Kitamura] in *Chōkoku 1* 彫刻 1 [Matters of Sculpture 1], ed. Odawara Nodoka (Tōkyō, topofil, 2018), 396.

Kannon statues in particular were erected in masse after the war as memorials to commemorate the deceased and pray for peace. Kitamura designed a number of these statues, including one in aluminum installed in 1978 outside the Hiroshima City Central library. Notable *daibutsu* and Kannon statues erected during this period include the Beppu Daibutsu (1928), the Takaoka Daibutsu (1932), the Takasaki white-robed Kannon (1936), the Ryōzen Kannon (1955), and the Tokyo Bay Kannon (1961).

²¹⁶ Yamasaki Takeshi 山崎 健, "Inori to ishitsu na kyodai geijutsu heiwa kinen zō hōō ha konkai mo tachiyorazu" 祈りと異質な巨大芸術 平和祈念像 法王は今回も立ち寄らず [Prayer and the strange giant artwork: Pope once again omits Peace Statue from his visit], *Nishinippon shinbun* 西日本新聞, October 27, 2019, <https://www.nishinippon.co.jp/item/n/554327/>.

who insisted on never stepping foot in front of the Peace Statue, “finding it impossible to pray in front of that massive work, no matter how much it insists on standing for peace.”²¹⁷

The Nagasaki public and its discontents

The statue is frequently problematized in public discourse regarding memorialization in Nagasaki. In comparison to the civic memorials in Hiroshima, it has been subjected to far more extensive, and often blatant criticism regarding its appropriateness for the subject at hand, its perceived aesthetic appeal (or rather, its lack thereof), and the exorbitant funding that went into its production. This skepticism and suspicion has been normalized in discussions of the statue, and the generalized distaste for the monument is often mentioned even in passing descriptions of the work. In a 1995 essay, novelist Hotta Yoshie wrote that “there are few things as horrible as that statue in this world...it does not represent peace, but rather war, and fascism itself...I pity the people of Nagasaki who must suffer in the presence of that statue. The city of Nagasaki made a truly unbelievable decision.”²¹⁸ Such potent sentiments did not only emerge decades after the installation of the monument. Just two days after the statue was unveiled to the public, *hibakusha* and anti-nuclear activist Fukuda Sumako penned the following poem:

Everything became intolerable
The huge statue of peace that stands tall in the atomic field is fine
That’s fine
But couldn’t they have done something with the money?
“The stone statue is inedible; it does not feed the hungry”
Do not say that we are selfish.
Barely surviving ten years after the bombing

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ As quoted in Kosaka Satoko 小坂智子, “Kōkyō kūkan no chōkoku wo megutte – ‘Heiwa kinen zō’ no toikakeru mono” 公共空間の彫刻をめぐる - 《平和祈念像》の問いかけるもの - [Questions of Sculpture in the Public Space: On Kitamura Seibo’s *Peace Sculpture*], *Nagasaki kokusai daigaku ronsō* 長崎国際大学論叢 4 (January 2004): 83.

This is the unflinching heart of a *hibakusha*²¹⁹

Fukuda, who wrote in great detail of the social stigma, suffocating poverty, and physical ailments she suffered in the years following the bombing, recalled gazing upon the statue while she herself felt “like her torso was about to fall apart.”²²⁰ Her bodily dis-identification with the monument makes harshly evident the incongruity between the monument’s promises and the lived realities of its beholders.

Critiques regarding the misappropriation of funds are not infrequent in post-disaster contexts. Yet this discontent might have been punctuated further by the artist’s own continued assertions of the amount of money he himself had poured into the project. “Of course, I had absolutely no thoughts of profiting off of this,” Kitamura proudly declared in a 1956 interview. “I threw all my savings into this, and if I was still not able to complete the work, I would have tasked it to my descendants.”²²¹

Indeed, according to records from the Nagasaki National Peace Memorial Hall, the 50 million-yen (increased from the initial budget of 30 million) statue was funded almost entirely through public donations, save for the stone pedestal and other minor details, which were financed by the city government.²²² A civilian organization dubbed the “Peace Statue Construction Cooperative” was tasked with soliciting donations from both the local citizenry and

²¹⁹ Hisashi Tomokuni 久知邦, “‘Samoshī to itte kudasaimasu na’ Fukuda Sumako-san no omoi genbaku wo seotte” さもしいといって下さいますな» 福田須磨子さんの思い 原爆を背負って(30) [‘Don’t call me selfish’ Sumako Fukuda, carrying the weight of the bomb], *Nishinippon shinbun* 西日本新聞, August 6, 2020, <https://www.nishinippon.co.jp/item/n/624208/>. Thank you to Chad Diehl for the phrasing corrections in the translation.

²²⁰ Fukuma Yoshiaki 福間良明, *Shōdo no kioku* 焦土の記憶 [Memories of the scorched earth] (Tōkyō: Shinyōsha, 2011), 300-301.

²²¹ Nagasue, 77.

²²² *The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Damage Records*, Part 3: Rescue and Medical Relief.

The Nagasaki International Cultural Hall, which was planned and built concurrently with the statue, was fully funded by the national, prefectural, and municipal governments. The allocation of financial responsibility for a public art piece to civilians, a common practice in memorial-making, perhaps provides the illusion of a communal, “cultural” undertaking whilst partially absolving the complicity of authorities involved in the making of the project.

from overseas groups. These contributions comprised up over half of the final expenditures.²²³ The illusion of civic participation and democratic goodwill that undergirds much of public monument-making in turn problematizes questions of ownership and representation amidst the particular communities that monuments declare themselves to be aligned with.

In Mizuta Kuwajirō's 1995 survey of monuments major and minor in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the author laments that contemporary tourists have taken to treating the statue as a mere photo-op, "increasing only its 'tourism-value' while its worth as a reminder of Nagasaki's status as an A-bombed site gradually diminishes."²²⁴ His description of Tange's contributions to Hiroshima, are more lengthy and vivid, discussing in greater detail the architect's axial planning and declared vision, while omitting any matters related to reception and engagement. Laudatory texts too, often make mention of the existence of dissenting voices (and subsequently dismiss them) as a means of strengthening the artistic and historic value of the statue. A profile on Kitamura published in 1956 celebrating his career achievements wrote that while critics of the sculptor might find his style "exaggerated" or his gesture of peacemaking a mere paper tiger, seeing the statue in person would surely convince them otherwise.²²⁵

Kitamura's fraught alignments with the wartime regime appear to have been a rather openly acknowledged pressure point from the inception of the project, and the sculptor himself reflected upon his shifting subject matter as mere products of the given era rather than a source of shame or remorse. The prominent left-wing art critic Hariu Ichirō castigated Kitamura for not expressing even an ounce of reflection or remorse regarding his wartime work, even after

²²³ Ibid; Tomoe Otsuki, "Reinventing Nagasaki: the Christianization of Nagasaki and the revival of an imperial legacy in postwar Japan," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 17:3, 411.

²²⁴ Mizuta Kuwajirō 水田 九八二郎, *Hiroshima • Nagasaki e no tabi: Genbaku no ishibumi to ikō ga kataru* ヒロシマ・ナガサキへの旅—原爆の碑と遺跡が語る [A Journey to Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Monuments and Ruins of the Atomic Bomb], (Tōkyō: Chukō bunko, 1993), 167.

²²⁵ Nagasue, 77.

reaching a hundred years of age: “His repugnant sculptural traces are to be found polluting numerous sites across the country.”²²⁶

Though Kitamura’s career suffered due to the removal or relocation of many of his public sculptures during the Allied Occupation, his late-career interviews betray a rather matter-of-fact attitude towards his wartime practice. In a 1965 interview, the eminent publication *Bijutsu Techō* (Art Journal) described Kitamura as someone who

made symbols of war during wartime, and symbols of peace during peacetime...his works express the facts of history and the progression from Meiji to Showa like a government-approved textbook. These statues do not have the sparkling gaze of the Happy Prince entrusting his jewels to the swallow [a reference to the Oscar Wilde short story]. Their eyes remain open to the sky, staring into the void of history.²²⁷

The interviewer, art critic Tōno Yoshiaki, does not hold back from expressing his unease with Kitamura’s practice, and admits to the artist that the model of the Peace Statue he saw in Inokashira Park did not evoke a sense of “peace” in him. Kitamura laughs and gives him a non-answer, remarking that while “many people have seen it differently, this statue is not something just to commemorate peace in Nagasaki, but rather to pray for peace at a global scale.”²²⁸

After Tōno interrogates the sculptor on the seeming dissonance between the themes of militarism and peace covered in his oeuvre, Kitamura simply stated that he had no intention of making war-related pieces again, but was merely, as he continued to do, “producing lasting works of art to inspire and move (*kandō*) audiences.”²²⁹

Yet while these popular and critical responses are crucial to our understanding of social resonance of the statue and the subsequent lack of serious scholarly attention it has accrued, my

²²⁶ Yamasaki, “Inori to ishitsu na kyodai geijutsu,” *Nishinippon shinbun*.

²²⁷ Tōno, “Kitamura Seibō,” 47. This interview was conducted for a special issue titled “The art world elite, 20 years after the war” (*Sengo niyūnen-me no kadan no erīto*), hence the focus on his trajectory from wartime into the present.

²²⁸ *Ibid*, 50.

²²⁹ *Ibid*, 49.

approach seeks to move beyond the reception-based analysis of the monument. An exclusive focus on affective responses runs the risk of leading to conceptual dead ends in terms of artistic analysis, and has consequently led few scholars to take this object seriously as a memorial object that is both shaped by and effects ideological frameworks regarding sanctioned avenues of remembering and narrativizing atomic history.²³⁰ A closer examination of the circumstances of its emergence, situated within the ideological discourses surrounding sculpture and the body in wartime and postwar Japan, enables us to produce a far richer platform for contemplating how narratives of nuclear remembrance are scripted, sanctioned, and challenged.

Material bodies of the nation

Public sculpture, like architecture, was critically shaped by the material conditions and demands of total war. The proliferation of bronze statuary in public space dates back to a “statumania” boom beginning in the late 19th century. Meiji leaders, looking to urban nation-building practices in the West, began zealously installing statues of great men of history in public spaces across the country.²³¹

Though the 1920s saw a boom in sculpture making, with over 350 monuments erected over the decade, the outbreak of war in the Pacific brought upon severe restrictions in material use for two and three-dimensional artists alike.²³² As war efforts intensified and raw materials

²³⁰ With the exception of scholars such as Hirase Reita and Michael Lucken, few have taken the object as a serious topic of inquiry, and most mentions of it in texts on Nagasaki memory treat it as an index of municipal failure and the silencing of *hibakusha*. See Hirase Reita, *Dōzō junan no kindai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2011), *Chōkoku to sensō no kindai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2013), and Michael Lucken, “The peace statue at Nagasaki,” in *Japan’s Postwar*, eds. Michael Lucken, Anne Bayard-Sakai, and Emmanuel Lozerand, trans. J.A.A. Stockwin (London: Routledge, 2011).

²³¹ Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 123-124.

²³² Sven Saaler, *Men in Metal: A Topography of Public Bronze Statuary in Japan* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 202. The construction of monuments in colonial outposts and other occupied territories also served as a means of exerting control and making visible the goal of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere via the medium of public space.

became increasingly scarce, the state turned to bronze statuary as a resource that could be constituted into industrial matter. Official restrictions on bronze use and the prohibition of the production of new works in bronze were enacted in 1938 and 1940, though state-sponsored projects were deemed exempt from regulation and taxation. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government also considered works in progress exempt from restrictions placed on the use of bronze. Sculptors were encouraged to work in alternative materials such as wood, plaster, stone, and terracotta.²³³

Amidst these deteriorating conditions, Kitamura took it upon himself to advocate for the preservation of the nation's arts, in all their greatness, and reassure his fellow compatriots that these emergency measures were by no means an indication of artistic decline or defeat. In October of 1941, Kitamura published a rambling, impassioned manifesto in an art journal calling for the need for research and conservation efforts surrounding sculpture, the threat these new restrictions posed for the welfare of sculptors and their assistants.²³⁴ Though Kitamura's work was deeply entrenched in propagandistic practice, he nevertheless made use of his esteemed standing to assert the value of his discipline in spite of the state's directives. Furthermore, his lamentations are also driven by a self-conscious need to defend the historical and cultural value of sculpture against other media. The material bulk of sculptures in relation to paintings, the time-intensive labor involved, limited viewership, along with the scarcity of merchants who specialized in the field were cited by Kitamura as reasons for the disadvantaged position of

Statue-building was a particularly robust enterprise in Taiwan and Manchuria. Many of these works were not subjected to the same requisition practices that took place in Japan and managed to survive at least until 1945. Their fates have varied widely and are often difficult to track with accuracy; while many have likely been destroyed at different points in time, some were taken into hiding and have re-emerged in the decades following.

²³³ Hirase Reita, "War and Bronze Sculpture," in *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire, 1931-1960*, ed. Asato Ikeda et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 232.

²³⁴ Kitamura Seibō 北村西望, "Ippo saki ni kita chōsōkai no shintaisei" 一足先に來た彫塑界の新體制[The new system of the sculpture world], *Bijutsu shinpō* 美術新報 4 (October 1941), 4.

sculpture in the art world.²³⁵ Indeed, much of the contemporary scholarship on war art has focused overwhelmingly on the work of *sensō-ga* painters, proving that Kitamura's anxieties about sculpture's cultural standing were well placed, and carried over well into the postwar.

This cultural struggle, however, is then framed by Kitamura as part of the larger sequence of tribulations that must be overcome in service of the nation's success: "We are more than willing to accept this ordeal as part of our training as artists. We have come to the conclusion that we must continue to preserve and study the arts, even if it means eating only porridge, in order to prepare for the great leap forward in our nation's fortunes after the war is over."²³⁶

Kitamura inserts bodily struggle and sacrifice into the language of artistic labor, asserting both the social value of sculptors and his own allegiance to the nation.

In March of 1943, the Platform for the Emergency Recall of Bronze and Other Materials (*Dōzō tō no hijō kaishū jissshi yōkō*) was issued, officially stipulating the destruction of public bronze statues for material reuse.²³⁷ The campaign saw precedents in Nazi Germany and its occupied territories, where the call for metals was often combined with the elimination of symbols of oppositional ideologies from public space.²³⁸ Though the Japanese iteration was focused primarily on the requisition of metals rather than the suppression of particular images, the act of removal was nevertheless imbued with patriotic fervor. A special committee of bureaucrats and prominent artists, including Kitamura, was convened in August of the same year to conduct a mass review of bronze statues across the nation to determine which works would be

²³⁵ Ibid, 5. It is perhaps worth noting that unlike in painting, photography, architecture, and design, no significant avant-garde or modernist factions emerged across the transwar period in the field of Japanese sculpture.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Hirase, "War and Bronze Sculpture," 233.

²³⁸ Saaler, 220. See Elizabeth Campbell Karlsgost, "Recycling French Heroes: The Destruction of Bronze Statues Under the Vichy Regime," *French Historical Studies* 29, no. 1 (2006): 143–181 for a discussion of the ideological and logistical forces driving the Vichy regime's statue-melting campaign, and the debates surrounding aesthetic quality and cultural nationalism were surfaced during the process.

exempted from the recall.²³⁹ Kitamura was thus placed in the difficult position of evaluating the cultural and artistic worth of sculptures by himself and his colleagues, while balancing his responsibilities to the imperial project.

The results of the survey were compiled in a report released in December. 8,344 of 9,236 surveyed works were selected for removal, 613 were placed in a category of “removals where doubts existed,” and just 279 were considered worthy of being retained.²⁴⁰ The absence of the vast majority of pre-1945 statues, the relative scarcity of works produced during the period of total war, and the lacunae regarding the provenance of both extant and destroyed statues make for scholarly challenges.

The distinction between public sculpture (*dōzō*) over art sculpture (*chōkoku/chōso*) is important to note here.²⁴¹ The state’s conscious interest in melting down public sculpture rather than art sculpture demonstrates that statue removal constituted not merely an act of resource extraction, but also an ideologically invested performance that invoked bodily sacrifice as the scale of the monumental. That is to say, the “great men” of history who occupied and articulated public space were themselves, even in death, sacrificing their corporeal forms in service of the nation and modeling such ideal behavior in realm of public space. The text of the 1943 platform explicitly stated that the act was intended to encourage “patriotism” and “further commitment to

²³⁹ Lucken, “The peace statue at Nagasaki,” 183.

²⁴⁰ Michael Lucken, “Remodelling Public Space: the fate of War Monuments, 1945-48,” in *The Power of Memory in Modern Japan*, eds. Sven Saaler and Wolfgang Schwentker (Kent: Global Oriental, 2008), 144. Statues were further divided into four categories: (1) relating to the imperial family and other royal figures, (2) Buddhist statuary, objects of worship or materials used for prayer, (3) items designated as National Treasures or art objects of import, (4) statues venerated by citizens.

See Saito Yu, “[Research Notes] People’s reactions against government-side requests in World War II: A case study of removing bronze statues in Tokyo University,” *Journal of the University of Tokyo Archives* 40 (March 2022), 1-21.

²⁴¹ Hirase, “War and Bronze Sculpture,” 233.

the war effort” among citizens.²⁴² It was not only living bodies, but also metal ones that were now being animated and mobilized for war.

Though Kitamura’s reputation was somewhat tarnished owing to his wartime activities and the disappearance of much of his oeuvre, one of his more notable pieces managed to survive in darkness and re-emerge in the decades following 1945. An equestrian statue of Yamagata Aritomo, former Prime Minister and the prime architect of the modern Japanese military, designed by Kitamura once stood proudly at the entrance gate of the former Ministry of the Army (Figure 3.21).²⁴³ Installed in 1930, the statue’s continued existence even through the 1943 Emergency Recall testifies to its symbolic worth, considering that fewer than a hundred statues of historical and quasi-historical (e.g. Emperor Jimmu) figures are believed to have survived the war.²⁴⁴

In 1946, however, it became subject to yet another removal policy, this time in association solely with the symbolic value of the monument rather than its material worth. Under orders from the GHQ, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government conducted a review on various monuments suspected of exhibiting militaristic themes. Kitamura’s statue became a topic of intense debate between Japanese and GHQ officials who—albeit anachronistically—argued that Yamagata was the person most responsible for “setting Japan on the course which led to her

²⁴² “Dōzō tō no hijō kaishū jisshi yōkō” 銅像等ノ非常回収実施要綱 [Platform for the Emergency Recall of Bronze and Other Materials], March 5, 1943, Ref.A03023598500, 国立公文書館アジア歴史資料センター Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR), National Archives of Japan, <https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/das/meta/A03023598500>.

²⁴³ Yamagata presided over the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors and the Imperial Rescript on Education

²⁴⁴ Saaler, 225.



Figure 3.21. Kitamura Seibō, Equestrian statue of Yamagata Aritomo, Hagi, Yamaguchi. Source: Wayfarer Daves, <https://www.wayfarerdaves.com/?p=5430>.

recent disaster,” and were he alive, “would probably be the leading figure in the War Criminal trials.”²⁴⁵ The debate was eventually conceded after the Japanese contended that the statue of Yamagata, along with another equestrian statue of Ōyama Iwao, a contemporary of Yamagata who served as Supreme Commander of the Manchurian Army and later Chief of the Army General Staff, were “important pieces of art” that could fall under the jurisdiction of the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum.²⁴⁶

The statue was brought down from its pedestal and relocated to an empty lot in Ueno Park behind the museum—a denigrating act that nevertheless revealed the state’s resistance to fully relinquish its militarist underpinnings. As the work fell into a state of neglect, private organizations began petitioning the Diet to have the statue relocated to Yamagata’s home prefecture of Yamaguchi, or to invest in its preservation in Tokyo. Both efforts were to no avail. Kitamura thus took it upon himself to move the statue to his garden museum in Inokashira Park in 1962, where it remained for three decades until the local government of Hagi, Yamaguchi petitioned to have the work restored and relocated to the town’s central park, where it stands today. That works such as this statue take on new lives in outside of the capital, or, in the case of the Tower of Peace in Miyazaki, continue to persist in the absence of significant pushback and widespread recognition at a national scale, further speaks to the insularity of regional politics and provincial histories against the dominant centrality of Tokyo.²⁴⁷

The monumentalism of the healthy body

²⁴⁵ Ibid, 245.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 245-6.

The statue of Ōyama has since been relocated (and re-elevated) to a more prominent location in Kudanzaka Park, near the administrative and political heart of the city.

²⁴⁷ See Louise Young, *Beyond the Metropolis: Second Cities and Modern Life in Interwar Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013).

The presentation of a coherent body—and a virile male one at that—as the vehicle of nuclear remembrance must be understood as an extraordinarily striking gesture. To represent peace, or visualize the harbinger of peace as a vaguely Westernized, nude titan amidst the drastically shifting cultural and political conceptions surrounding bodily health in the wake of warfare and nuclear terror signaled a desire to cast the postwar body through the language of masculinist triumph. Yet its seemingly literal declaration of the triumph of peace belies the collage of both wartime and postwar sociopolitical forces shaping its visage and mnemonic power. The adoption of this particular form is deeply intertwined with and responsive to the politics of the body as they traverse the transwar decades. The statue itself should be read not as an isolated performance of a single artist’s great vision, but rather as a complex confluence of the shifting desires and anxieties surrounding the tenor of nuclear remembrance, played out across the medium of the human body.

Sculpture served as one of many representational vehicles through which the wartime regime conducted biopolitical methods of control in order to build an obedient, productive, and patriotic citizenry. Under the framework of the “healthy citizens movement” (*kenmin undō*), the Japanese state carried out a dizzying array of activities to manage the bodies of imperial and colonial subjects alike (Figure 3.22). Not unlike the ethnic cleansing, fitness, and fertility-related policies carried out in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, these directives illustrated the modern state’s capacity to exercise what Michel Foucault called “the right to live and let die.”²⁴⁸ As scholars such as Yoshikuni Igarashi and Sabine Frühstück have illustrated, bodily metaphors and gendered tropes served as key instruments of the state’s efforts to produce men fit for combat

²⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, “*Society Must Be Defended*”: *Lectures at the College de France, 1975-76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana (New York: Picador, 2003), 241.

and women capable of rearing healthy and obedient subjects to serve the growth of the nation-state.²⁴⁹

Kitamura too had extolled the virtues of physical exercise from the perspective of a sculptor, as evidenced by a 1935 essay in the high-end women's lifestyle publication *Home Life* (*Hōmu raifu*). After a meandering string of thoughts on the fit bodies of ancient Greek athletes, his dabbles with *kendō* martial arts (which he proudly declares brought him back to the body of his thirty year-old self), and the comprehensive benefits of radio calisthenics, he leaves the reader with the following moralizing precept: "Those who seek physical beauty need to train the body as well as the mind. Taking negative action or possessing an impure heart will defeat the purpose of taking precious time away from work to exercise."²⁵⁰ Kitamura's directive is couched in the rationalizing language of technological modernity, positioning exercise as a subsidiary activity that should not interfere with one's labor (presumably in service of the nation), but that is nevertheless necessary in order to achieve a richer, more fulfilling life. In equating mental order with physical beauty and chastising deviance, Kitamura uses a familiar rhetorical

²⁴⁹ seeYoshikuni Igarashi
Sabine Frühstück

²⁵⁰ Kitamura Seibō 北村西望, "Kendō to kenkōbi" 剣法と健康美 [Kendo and Healthy Beauty], *Hōmu raifu* ホーム・ライフ (October 1935): 68.

Kitamura makes frequent mention of his *kendō* practice during this period, as evidenced by another piece from 1935 where he describes his daily routine of exercising with the *Kashima Shintō-ryū* method of martial arts, and the value it provides for his aging body. Kitamura discusses the physical motions and benefits of the sport in extreme detail, inflected by his own sculptural eye, while waxing about the spiritual importance of the method emphasis on waiting for the opponent to approach and echoing their movements, rather than recklessly engaging in attack. See Kitamura Seibō 北村西望, "Watashi no nikka" ("My Daily Routine"), *Tōei* 投影 11, no. 11 (November 1935), 23-4.

It is worth noting that *kendō*, along with other martial art forms, was banned by the GHQ for its perceived militarist connotations. Calisthenics were also touted by nationalist ideologues across the 1920s and 30s as a means of activating and realizing the spirit of the nation through physical exercise and training. The National Health Exercise Program, launched in 1928 as part of the commemoration of the ascension of Emperor Hirohito, persists today in the form of "Radio Taisō," a popular exercise routine broadcast on public television and radio, and frequently conducted in schools. Health, in large part owing to his longevity and persistent career, would come to constitute a substantial part of the cult of personality created around Kitamura. Though this is better understood as more circumstantial than intentional, it is nevertheless intriguing to examine the degree to which Kitamura's own body is invoked in discussions of his practice, whether by the artist's own doing or by the writers in question.

formulation found across contemporaneous authoritarian regimes to reinforce the relationship between political obedience and bodily fitness.

In late 1942, Kitamura, along with fourteen other sculptors from the Japan Federation of Sculptors participated in the “Healthy Citizens Sculpture Exhibition.” Taking place just a few months prior to the bronze requisition campaign, the exhibition was commissioned by the Imperial Rule Assistance Association as part of an effort to model ideal bodily forms to the general urban populace through the medium of artistic sculpture. The three-month exhibition was shown at a total of eleven major cultural venues and department stores across Tokyo, and the sculptures were paired with passages written by poet members of the Japan Literary Society.²⁵¹ Through this multimodal presentation within the dazzling environments of capital indulgence and imperial splendor, the sculptures were exposed to hundreds of thousands of spectators, many of whom likely came upon them by chance. In contrast to the statues of spiritual beings and historical figures found across public spaces, the pieces in the exhibition asserted themselves as artistic objects, representing the beauty of the human body through ideal tropes.

The form of the Peace Statue draws from a number of precedents in Kitamura’s work, but the most legible reference is his 1930 work *Healthy Beauty (Kenkō bi)*, which has been reproduced in varying iterations (Figure 3.23). The anonymous, muscular male nude is similarly seated with his left leg planted on the ground, the right crossed in his lap. In contrast to the Peace Statue, however, his posture is more relaxed, slouching slightly and resting his arms upon his knees in a contemplative, self-assured manner. The figure looks towards his left with an

²⁵¹ Hirase Reita 平瀬礼太, *Chōkoku to sensō no kindai* 彫刻と戦争の近代 [The modern age of sculpture and war], (Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2013), 83-4.

The exhibition venues included the Mitsukoshi department store in Nihonbashi, Ginza, and Shinjuku, the Kabuki-za Theatre, the Tokyo Theater, the Imperial Theater, Meiji Theater, Asakusa International Theater, Toho Theater, and the Sanseido bookstore. These locations were scattered across the city, suggesting that exposure to the exhibition was likely substantial and wide-reaching within the capital.



Figure 3.22. Poster from Nagasaki prefecture extolling the virtues of *kenmin undō*. The five points in order read: 1) elevate the imperial national spirit, 2) minimize and eliminate the spread of tuberculosis and venereal disease, 3) marry while young, 4) rationalize daily life, 5) birth and raise children to have at least five people per household. Source: Japan Archives Association, <https://jaa2100.org/entry/detail/041067.html>.



Figure 3.23. Kitamura Seibō, *Kenkō bi* (Healthy Beauty), installed 1979 in Kawasaki, Kanagawa. Source: @ART, <https://at-art.jp/japan/kanagawa/kawasaki/kawasaki-nakahara/todoroki/%E5%8C%97%E6%9D%91%E8%A5%BF%E6%9C%9B-%E5%81%A5%E5%BA%B7%E7%BE%8E/>.

inscrutable gaze.²⁵² Kitamura's enduring fascination with chiseled male forms thus extends well before and beyond the conception of the Peace Statue, and in turn situates the Nagasaki monument amidst a long legacy of ideological meaning-making surrounding the bodies of nationalized subjects.

The specific figure model for the Peace Statue can be traced back to Yoshida Hiroichi, a former captain in the 55th division of the Imperial Japanese Army who fought in the New Guinea and Burma campaigns.²⁵³ After the war, Yoshida became a professional weightlifter, boasting a stature of 184 centimeters and clocking in at 85 kilograms. A six-time middleweight national champion, Yoshida bore the flag of the Japanese team at the second Asian Games in 1954 in Manila.²⁵⁴ A photograph of Yoshida taken in the 1950s reveals the clear reference points utilized by Kitamura (Figure 3.24). His broad shoulders and tightly cinched waist are accentuated by a wide black belt, while the cross-like contours separating his articulated pectorals are lucidly visible in the final statue. Yoshida's assertively fit body serves as not only a reflection of the wartime ideal of male soldier, but also as a continued assertion of the health and coherence of the nation, emerging intact and even stronger from the wreckage of war. His status as a national athlete further cements the symbolic weight of his fortitude. A former captain in the Japanese army on the site of what was once a fierce battleground, participating in one of the most prominent cultural diplomacy events in Asia, makes for an apt illustration of the layered and contentious landscape of post-war, post-imperial politics in the region.

²⁵² A similar pose is found in Kitamura's *Great Nichiren* (*Kaiketsu nichiren*), which depicts the Buddhist priest and founder of the eponymous branch of the faith in impassioned prayer, his facial features contorted as he vigorously points his right hand into the space of the viewer.

²⁵³ "Sensen o ikinuita tsuyo-sa to yasashi-sa: Kishu hansen no arubamu" 戦線を生き抜いた強さと優しさ 旗手反戦のアルバム [The strength and kindness that survived the war: A flag-bearer's anti-war album], *Yomiuri shinbun* 読売新聞, August 9, 2020, <https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/s/ims/yoshidaalbum/>.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

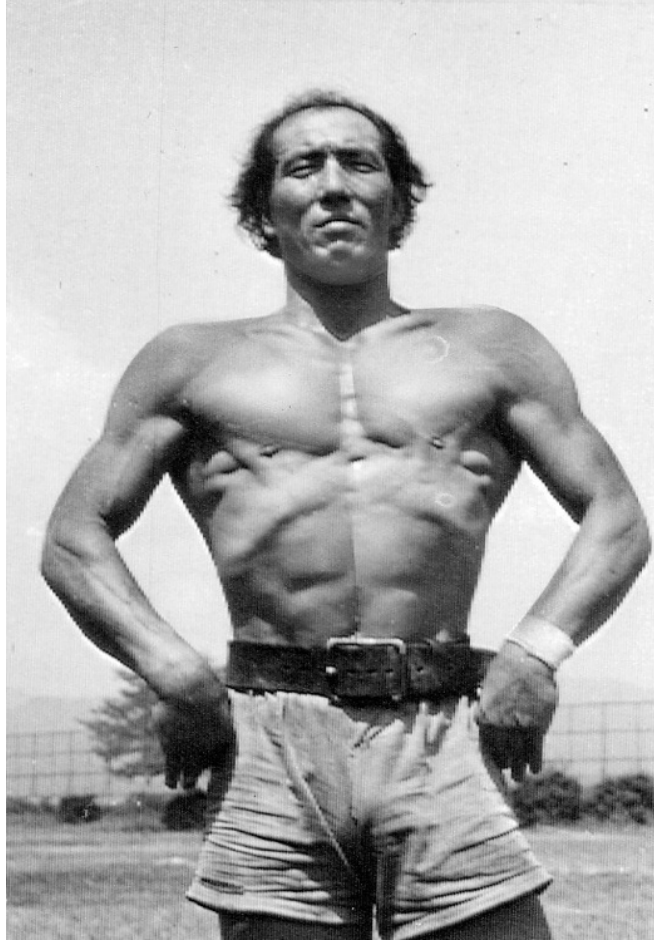


Figure 3.24. Yoshida Shigeru, c. 1950s. Source: *Yomiuri shinbun*, <https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/national/20200809-OYT1T50034/>.

Strengthening and irradiating the postwar body

The presentation of the coherent male body is not merely a potent gesture to assert in response to the bodily devastation wreaked by war. When we turn to consider the corporeal resonances of the statue within the context of the mid-1950s, it is essential to situate the work within the aftermath of war, the GHQ administration, and the public outcry that arose in response to the 1954 Lucky Dragon #5 incident.

The collective exhaustion and despair that had begun to sink in throughout the populace in the final years of war naturally carried over into the postwar. Along with material losses, food shortages had been placing drastic pressures on the populace even prior to Pearl Harbor, and by

the end of the war, starvation had become a widespread reality for millions of civilians and demobilized soldiers. Statistics showed that children were on average physically smaller in 1946 than they had been in 1937.²⁵⁵ Lived manifestations of Kitamura's "healthy beauty" were nowhere to be found.

Just as the body served as a canvas for mapping and producing nationalist ideology under the wartime regime, it similarly became a site of reconstruction and reinvention in the postwar years under different social and political forces. The pathologization of Japanese bodies under the GHQ's project of demilitarizing and modernizing the nation shifted the biopolitical paradigm of from equating health with jingoism, to instead asserting that fit bodies were democratic ones. Landscapes and bodies were doused with DDT to inhibit the spread of infectious diseases, a humiliating experience for many Japanese citizens that only further stressed the shame of defeat.²⁵⁶ Penicillin also became widely implemented, while sex workers were rounded up and forced into physical examinations as part of an effort to track and curb the spread of venereal diseases.²⁵⁷ The scientific dominance of the American forces, already demonstrated by their wielding of the atomic bombs, continued to inscribe itself upon the bodies of Japanese civilians through medicalized practices of control.

Furthermore, while Kitamura also produced female figures, both standing and equestrian, under the thematic framework of peace, the decision to render the Peace Statue in Nagasaki in an unflinching male form attests to the desire to re-affirm masculinity in the national order after the departure of the GHQ. The dehumanizing practices implemented by Occupation authorities were incorporated into a broader portrayal of Japan as a feminized, submissive nation against the

²⁵⁵ Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, 92.

²⁵⁶ Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945-1970* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 65-68.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

masculinist bulwark of the United States—a trope best illustrated by the widely circulated image of Emperor Hirohito and General MacArthur on the occasion of their first meeting on September 27, 1945 (Figure 3.25). The awkward, staged photograph set the bodies of the two protagonists side-by-side, accentuating MacArthur’s towering form and relaxed stature against the stiff comportment of the emperor. What Yoshikuni Igarashi dubs the “United States-Japan melodrama,” consisting of both “humiliation and the heroic acceptance of humiliation,” is embodied in the corporeal tension between the two figures, while the myth of the emperor’s sacrifice for the nation is further reified through the medium of the body.²⁵⁸ The Peace Statue’s emergence in 1955 thus operates not only as a marker of reconstruction and urban renewal, but also as a reclamation of the fortitude and masculinist order that was displaced by the Allied regime, and transformed to fit the political rhetoric of the postwar nation.

Though knowledge surrounding the aftereffects of nuclear radiation in Hiroshima and Nagasaki had by this point spread substantially throughout the nation after the end of the Occupation, it was not until 1954 that the anti-nuclear movement began to truly gain momentum and become a conscious source of anxiety for citizens across the country. On March 1, 1954, a hydrogen bomb a thousand times more powerful than the “Little Boy” dropped on Hiroshima was detonated at Bikini Atoll exposing Marshall Island residents and hundreds of fishing vessels in the vicinity to nuclear fallout. In particular, the twenty-three Japanese crew members of the tuna trawler *Daigo Fukuryū Maru* (Lucky Dragon #5), who were located just 150 kilometers from the epicenter, became the flashpoint for the general public’s uproar over the American test.²⁵⁹ All suffered from radiation poisoning following the event, and the chief radioman,

²⁵⁸ Ibid, 30-34.

²⁵⁹ Yoshimi Shun`ya and Shi-Lin Loh. “Radioactive Rain and the American Umbrella.” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 71, no. 2 (2012), 324.



Figure 3.25. Gaetano Faillace, Emperor Hirohito and General MacArthur, at their first meeting, at the U.S. Embassy, Tokyo, 27 September, 1945 (public domain), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Macarthur_hirohito.jpg.

Kuboyama Aikichi succumbed from complications relating to the exposure six months later. The event was widely publicized in both domestic and international media, and catalyzed anti-nuclear sentiment and fear in the Japanese populace almost immediately. News outlets wrote in visceral terms of the atmospheric qualities of the “black rain” and the bodily states of the victims. The *Yomiuri shinbun*, two weeks after the blast, described a fisherman as possessing “an eerie face burned black and festering” as “fluid-like pus ran out of his ear holes and eyes.”²⁶⁰

Bodily concerns also extended into the realm of consumption, as evidenced by the nationwide “tuna panic” (*maguro panikku*) that transpired after the catch delivered from the Lucky Dragon set off a Geiger counter in the Tsukiji Fish Market on March 16.²⁶¹ Though nearly all the fish in question were recalled before reaching consumers, the fear of contamination nevertheless caused sales to tank and forced seafood restaurants to close for several days. Concerned housewives took on a leading role in the grassroots nuclear disarmament movements that sprung up across the country.²⁶² The most prominent local movement arose in the Sugunami Ward of Tokyo, where residents initiated a petition calling for the prohibition of hydrogen bombs. The campaign rapidly gained traction, collecting nearly 270,000 signatures by the end of June, and exceeding 30 million by August 1955.²⁶³ Such is the context for the heightened ceremonial activity surrounding the two cities that year, for the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the bombings was now compounded by a burgeoning antinuclear consciousness that magnified the scale of nuclear violence and bodily anxiety to the scale of the quotidian. Nagasaki and Hiroshima were resurfaced and appropriated as evidentiary claims to the country’s

²⁶⁰ Aya Homei, “The Contentious Death of Mr. Kuboyama: Science as Politics in the 1954 Lucky Dragon Incident,” *Japan Forum* 25, no. 2 (2013), 215.

²⁶¹ Toshihiro Higuchi, *Political Fallout: Nuclear Weapons Testing and the Making of a Global Environmental Crisis*, (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2020), 41.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 42.

²⁶³ Orr, 48.

antinuclear pacifism, and the newly formed Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (Gensuikyō) assumed a leading role in narrativizing the two cities as the emblematic martyrs of atomic victimhood.²⁶⁴

If we further consider the ascension of this statue against this social and cultural backdrop, it becomes all the more challenging to not view the virile form as a visual assurance of the security and stability of the national body, and a municipally sanctioned retaliation against the bodily threats posed by nuclear weapons past and present. Though Kitamura's work was conceived prior to the Bikini Atoll test and its references are found in works that precede the bombs, it nevertheless serves as striking declaration to make in 1955. Amidst a milieu of "expansive uncertainties (economic, environmental, gendered, and national)," the titan asserts itself as an unperturbed, "non-anxious" body, per Namiko Kunimoto's formulation.²⁶⁵ Its fit, unscarred form betrays no traces of the ruination and disarray that imperiled the bodily consciousness of Japanese citizens amidst the flux of Occupation and ensuing postwar. It makes no attempt to understand the conditions of disembodiment, suggesting that "peace" will reveal itself through the body of a nation that coheres in prayer for a common goal. Yet while the statue's assertion of coherence made no reference to the physical bodies in its midst, the reconstructed body of the Urakami Cathedral maintained the insistence of the continued health of the Urakami community, even at the expense of the memorial desires of non-Catholic survivors. The memories of the scars would maintain within the parish, but the architectures of their community would not echo the conditions of the interior.

²⁶⁴ See James Orr, "Chapter 3: Hiroshima and *Yuitsu no hibakukoku*: Atomic Victimhood in the Antinuclear Peace Movement" in *The Victim as Hero* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000).

²⁶⁵ Kunimoto, *The Stakes of Exposure*, 16.

Kitamura expressed his desire for his sculpture to rise to the level of a national treasure, impressing upon the country a legacy that would endure for millennia.²⁶⁶ Yet in 1980, when asked in an interview about how he thought the goal of perpetual peace would be achieved, he laughed and replied, “That will never happen. Human nature is, after all, avaricious.”²⁶⁷ Kitamura recognized the fallacy of investing monuments with the responsibility and expectation to produce, and his caustic statement is intriguing in its embrace of the absence of true resolution.

Rather than mobilizing abstraction and incorporating traces as tools of urban reinvention, as had been done in Hiroshima, the memorial structures of Nagasaki illuminate the tensions and conflicting desires that emerge in the production of ambivalence. In lieu of a hegemonic organizing principle, the monuments around Nagasaki’s hypocenter operate in their own spheres. Each draws from a complex symbolic field to produce a semblance of coherence, that in turn belies the contesting narratives of remembrance that hold the monuments in perpetual tension.

²⁶⁶ Kitamura, “Heiwa kinen zō to watashi no kimochi” 平和祈念像と私の気持ち [My feelings on the Peace Memorial Statue] in *Heiwa kinen zō no dekiagaru made*. 平和祈念像の出来上るまで [The making of the Peace Memorial Statue] (Nagasaki: Nagasaki Prefectural Teacher’s Association and Peace Statue Construction Cooperative, 1955), 20.

²⁶⁷ Otsuki, “Reinventing Nagasaki,” 410.

CHAPTER 4: The *longue durée* of memorial-making

At the entrance of the Yūshūkan Museum in Yasukuni Shrine stands a bronze statue of a kamikaze pilot looking towards the sky (Figure 4.1). His feet are firmly planted in the ground, shoulder width apart, while his arms rest confidently at his hips. The chin strap of his helmet is unclasped, blowing freely in the wind to endow the statue with an air of naturalism. Originally designed by Kitamura in 1950 as a dedication to his Geidai students who volunteered to serve in the Imperial Japanese Navy as suicide attack pilots, it was enlarged and recast by one of his former students and installed at the museum in 1999.²⁶⁸ In the entrance hall of the museum is a smaller bronze by Kitamura, titled the *Goddess of Peace (Heiwa no megami)* (Figure 4.2). A female nude holds a torch in her left hand as she straddles a galloping horse. The dynamic tableau reads as a counterpart to the male iteration of peace in Nagasaki, who remains firmly seated and serene, urging his beholders to pray and model his comportment. The goddess' mouth is open as she twists her body to look behind her, as if calling out to her followers to join her in the conquest for peace.²⁶⁹

The museum's premise is to exhibit materials related to Japan's history of modern warfare. The curatorial narrative stresses a revisionist understanding of the past that frames imperial aggression as justified and necessitated by Western imperialism and the paternalistic desire to protect the pan-Asian bloc, and venerates those who died in service as a collective that includes both suicide pilots and Class A war criminals. The post-war liberation movements that took place across the Pacific are presented as the result of imperial interventions and reforms

²⁶⁸ Lucken, "The Peace Statue at Nagasaki," 184.

²⁶⁹ Another layer of iconographic complexity emerges when we see the same composition and form echoed in Kitamura's *Young Oda Nobunaga (Wakaki hi no Oda Nobunaga)* (1970), installed in several sites across the country, including Kobe and Gifu. In the place of the torch is a bow that the *daimyō* has just shot an arrow from, transforming the connotations that emerge from the goddess on horseback.



Figure 4.1. Kitamura Seibō, Memorial Statue for Kamikaze Pilots, Yūshūkan Museum, Tokyo. Photo by author.



Figure 4.2. Kitamura Seibō, Goddess of Peace, Yūshūkan Museum, Tokyo. Photo by author.

conducted before 1945. Nostalgic splendor and sacrificial glory, rather than mournful reflection, color the thematic atmosphere of the exhibits. That the author of the Peace Statue, the primary monument in Nagasaki dedicated to atomic victimhood and the pursuit of eternal peace, would have his works represented prominently in a space mired in controversies for its glorification of Japan's militarist past appears at first glance paradoxical. Yet the glaring incongruity between the discursive construction of peace and war as oppositional forces and the reality of their execution, and the representational ambivalence and lack of clarity between the two concepts is emblematic of much of national memorial culture in postwar Japan. Peace and war, in all their mnemonic permutations, resist being read static and unchanging symbolic representations.

I turn now briefly to two scales of memory—one firmly situated in Tokyo, and another that expands into a transnational field of remembrance—to examine manifestations of imperial and war memory that take shape in spheres outside of the cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These instances not only help to illuminate the normative dominance of the atomic bombs in the discourse of national memory, but they also aid us in situating the peace parks within a greater spectrum of memorial representation in postwar Japan and its former colonies. The capital is divested of the responsibility to remember, while the narrative of nuclear victimhood blankets nearly the entirety of history of the Asia-Pacific War to coalesce in a narrative of defeat that in turn effaces the tracks of imperial history. These forces act in congruence, maintaining a tenuous balance in the public sphere to articulate the character and limits of national memory in Japan.

Sequestration and aggrandizement: anxious and absent memorials in Tokyo

The Peace Parks, in their discursive construal of the atomic bombings as the defining experience of national victimhood, have become the representative *lieux de mémoire* concerning

World War II memory in Japan. It is notable, then, that the capital possesses no significant public memorial to civilian casualties or even urban devastation, given that the firebombings destroyed a quarter of all housing in the nation, left nine million homeless, and killed at least 187,000 civilians.²⁷⁰ Over 100,000 were estimated to have perished in Tokyo alone.

Yet few commemorative traces of this physical and psychic destruction are found in the city today, and those that exist reside in the conceptual and geographic margins. The Center of the Tokyo Raids and War Damage, a small museum that opened in 2002, is housed in an inconspicuous brick building sits on eastern reaches of the city (Figure 4.3).²⁷¹ The collection's origins reach back to 1970, when the civilian-run Society to Record the Air Raids received support from socialist governor Minobe Ryōkichi to gather and preserve artifacts and oral histories relating to the Tokyo air raids. The project expanded into a plan to build a Tokyo Metropolitan Peace Memorial Museum, which quickly began to lose traction under Minobe's successor, LDP governor Suzuki Shun'ichi. Suzuki sidelined the project in favor of investing in flashier construction projects that emphasized Tokyo's status as a global metropolis—including,

²⁷⁰ These statistics are drawn from the Overall Report of Damage Sustained by the Nation During the Pacific War, Economic Stabilization Agency, Planning Department, Office of the Secretary General, 1949, which Bret Fisk and Cary Karacas note are conservative estimates. See Fisk and Caracas, *The Firebombing of Tokyo and Its Legacy: Introduction*, *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* 9 no. 3 (January 2011) <https://apjif.org/2011/9/3/Bret-Fisk/3469/article.html>. The Center of the Tokyo Raids and War Damage, a small history museum founded in 2002, sits on the outskirts of Tokyo, drawing around 10,000 visitors a year. Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum reached a record 1.75 million visitors in 2019, while the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Museum brought in an estimated 600-700,000 visitors annually.

²⁷¹ Yamamoto Tadahito 山本唯人 Gakuchi no umareru basho Tokyo dai kushu · sensai shiryō senta no kokoromi kara 学知の生まれる場所 東京大空襲 · 戦災資料センターの試みから [The Place Where “Knowledge” Is Born: From the Project of the Center of the Tokyo Raids and War Damage], *Japan Oral History Association* 日本オーラル・ヒストリー研究 8 (September 2012), 72.

The Center of the Tokyo Air Raids and War Damage 東京大空襲 · 戦災資料センター, “Introduction” (accessed April 25, 2023), https://tokyo-sensai.net/old/english_page/index.html.

In 2018, fewer than 10,000 people visited the museum. See Motoko Rich, “The Man Who Won’t Let the World Forget the Firebombing of Tokyo,” *The New York Times* (March 9, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/magazine/the-man-who-wont-let-the-world-forget-the-firebombing-of-tokyo.html>.

notably, Tange's megalithic Tokyo Metropolitan Government building.²⁷² Ultimately, the plan was scrapped under ultranationalist Tokyo governor Ishihara Shintarō in 1999, forcing the organization to turn to private fundraising efforts in order to establish the museum.²⁷³

As a concession, the city installed a granite, fan-shaped public memorial covered in flowers in Yokoami Park, a site that already housed a memorial museum dedicated to the victims of the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake (Figure 4.4).²⁷⁴ The area held particular resonance for the memory of the earlier disaster. In the chaos following the quake, residents evacuated en masse to what was then a vacant lot. A firestorm set off by a combination of high winds and cooking stoves (the earth struck around lunchtime) engulfed the field, leaving over 40,000 dead in its wake. With no obvious geographic nexus of disaster like in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the memorial index of the air raids was delegated to a location with a pre-existing structure of relations between site and traumatic event. The addition ironically served to dampen the affective power of both memorials by conflating the events and turning the park into a perilous graveyard of genericized mass civilian disaster.

Memorials related to more contentious aspects of the war effort have also been relegated to the urban periphery, tucked in covert pockets of bustling metropolitan areas. The site of the former Sugamo Prison, best known as the compound where many of the war criminals convicted in the Tokyo Trials were incarcerated—and some executed—is today occupied by Sunshine 60, a mixed-use high rise complex built in the 1970s as part of the sweeping urban redevelopment projects in post-Olympics Tokyo, emblemizing the economic ascendancy of the nation and its

²⁷² Cary Karacas, "Place, Public Memory, and The Tokyo Air Raids", *Geographical Review* 100, no. 4 (October 2010): 527.

²⁷³ Many of the progressive reforms made under Minobe's 12-year leadership were undone during Ishihara's time in office.

²⁷⁴ The temple-like memorial hall and accompanying museum was erected in 1930.



Figure 4.3. Exterior of the Center of the Tokyo Raids and War Damage. Source: Nick-D, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Exterior_of_the_Center_of_the_Tokyo_Raids_and_War_Damage_in_January_2019.jpg.



Figure 4.4. Memorial to the Victims of the Tokyo Air Raids and the Pursuit of Peace, Yokoami Park, Tokyo. Source: Nick-D, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tokyo_air_raid_memorial.JPG.

capital.²⁷⁵ In a nearby park is a diminutive stone marker engraved with the words: “Praying for Eternal Peace” (*Eikyu heiwa wo negatte*) (Figure 4.5). Only the most concerted of visitors would hunch down to read the fine print carved into the reverse side, which describes in simple and terse language the significance of the spot as the site of executions meted out by military tribunal. The marker is “dedicated to such memory, in order to not repeat the tragedy of war.”²⁷⁶

The lackluster end result of a plodding bureaucratic back-and-forth between local residents—who spoke out against the use of public land to glorify military aggression—interests groups of the war-bereaved, and municipal officials, the stone acts as instrument of telling what Carol Gluck describes as “history in the passive voice.”²⁷⁷ Somehow, the executed architects of the militarist order became subsumed into the hazy realm of eternal peace, though their exact relation to the notion remains undefined. These minor institutions and markers—of which there are many, lurking in plain sight—largely emerged in the late 20th century amidst rapid postwar urban development, the bubble economy and its subsequent collapse, and the culture wars of the 1980s under the increasingly conservative, hard-line policies of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. Their ambivalent forms are typically products of tensions and negotiations between

²⁷⁵ During the war, the prison was known for incarcerating a substantial number of political dissidents and captured Allied spies. Among the incarcerated in the postwar was former prime minister and leading architect of the militarist regime, Tōjō Hideki. After all prisoners were either executed or paroled, the prison was decommissioned in 1962 and eventually demolished in 1971.

For a discussion of the Sugamo Prison marker and other contested monuments in postwar Japan (including the Miyazaki Tower of Peace), see Barak Kushner, “Heroes, Victims and the Quest for Peace: War Monuments and the Contradictions of Japan’s Post-Imperial Commemoration,” in *Sites of Imperial Memory: Commemorating colonial rule in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*, ed. Dominik Geppert and Frank Lorenz Müller (Manchester University Press, 2016).

²⁷⁶ Barak Kushner, “Heroes, Victims and the Quest for Peace: War Monuments and the Contradictions of Japan’s Post-Imperial Commemoration,” in *Sites of Imperial Memory: Commemorating Colonial Rule in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Frank Lorenz Müller and Dominik Geppert (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 87.

²⁷⁷ Carol Gluck, “The Idea of Showa,” *Daedalus* 119, no. 3 (1990), 12.

residents, interest groups, and elected officials, who coalescing and conflicting desires often result in visual forms that satisfy no one and construe the past inscrutable.

The most prominent and fraught war memorial in Tokyo, however, was created not after the Asia-Pacific War, but in 1869. It takes the form of a privatized Shintō shrine located in central Tokyo. Originally founded by Emperor Meiji as the Tōkyō Shōkonsha (“shrine to beckon the souls [of the war dead]”) to commemorate those who died fighting for the emperor in the Boshin War (1868-69), the Yasukuni Shrine is broadly dedicated to those who have died in service of the nation in the wars spanning the late 19th and 20th centuries. Yasukuni, which has been privately owned and operated since 1946 after being relinquished from military jurisdiction by Occupation authorities, is most recognized—and most infamous—for its enshrinement of convicted war criminals (including fourteen Class A war criminals convicted in the Tokyo Trials) and the subsequent visits made to the shrine by elected officials (Figure 4.6).

Yet as Akiko Takenaka has argued, the overwhelming weight of “Yasukuni the issue,” as a representative site of right-wing nationalism, historical revisionism, and troubled diplomacy between Japan and its Asian neighbors, construes the physical site solely as a question in need of resolution.²⁷⁸ This orientation obscures us from understanding the fundamental role of Yasukuni as a war memorial, and the resulting ways in which the space aided in the production of militarist ideology and shaped the contours of national memories of the Asia-Pacific War. The site itself is malleable, taking on different social functions over time and shifting its meanings based on its beholders. The Yūshūkan, especially following its renovation in 2002, has also pushed forth its own construal of “peace,” which asserts that the contemporary state of social order and

²⁷⁸ Akiko Takenaka, *Yasukuni Shrine: History, Memory, and Japan's Unending Postwar* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 2.



Figure 4.5. Memorial marking the site of the former Sugamo Prison, Tokyo. Source: Tokyo Past 3, <https://tokyopast3.com/sugamo-prison-mark/>.



Figure 4.6. Former prime minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō visiting Yasukuni Shrine for the sixth time during his tenure, August 2006. Source: Reuters, <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2019/10/18/yasukuni-caught-in-controversy-as-japan-struggles-with-history>.

prosperity enjoyed by Japanese citizens is indebted to the sacrifices of the prior generations who defended the nation during wartime.²⁷⁹

What the Peace Parks and the shrine share, in this regard, is their role as constructed environments where the meanings of defeat, grief, and the anxieties of the nation's military future are negotiated and disseminated. If war defeat problematized Yasukuni's instrumental purpose as a site of honorary enshrinement and sacrifice in the name of victory, it was resolved in the Peace Parks, where loss was recast through the prism of nuclear victimhood. Yet what this messy mnemonic displacement reveals more than anything is our dependency on these structures to make sense of the unruly past, and their capacity to betray us at any moment, slipping out of our grasp to serve as a channel for another group's attempt to work through the shared burdens of history.

Though it casts itself in the ahistorical, spiritual tenor of a shrine, Yasukuni is best understood as a patently modern memorial, made evident in its visage. Following the establishment of the Yūshūkan War Museum in 1882, the army installed a triumphal, 15-meter tall *torii* at the entrance of the shrine complex in 1887, signifying the power of imperial rule and their investment in the military endeavors of the Meiji regime (Figure 4.7). While contemporary visitors may not think twice about the appearance of the gateway, in the context of the late 19th century it might not be a stretch to consider it a radical representation. Though *torii* are ubiquitous across Japan, the impulse to build them at such a scale was a largely modern phenomenon that fell in line with Meiji practices of nation-building through monumentality in

²⁷⁹ Ibid, 171. The term *heiwa-boke* has emerged in contemporary Japan as a way to describe the naivete, ignorance, or even idiocy of the Japanese populace, guided by the assumptions that daily life and large-scale diplomatic affairs in Japan are generally peaceful and tempered relative to other nations, have towards events of both domestic and international strife. This milieu of complacency has come under sharp criticism from cultural and political voices across the ideological spectrum. While the term has often been wielded by hawkish advocates for the revision of Article 9, it has also been used by others in varying contexts to describe the perceived passivity of the Japanese public towards issues of war memory, nuclear disarmament, foreign crises, and public safety.

public space.²⁸⁰ More importantly, the Yasukuni *torii*, rendered in the austere *shinmei* variety with perpendicular, unornamented beams, was constructed in bronze rather than the traditional material of wood.²⁸¹ Casting the archaic form in an industrial material served as a powerful means of asserting the technological prowess of the imperial military and grounding its legitimacy through cultural linkages to antiquity. A larger steel *torii*, built in 1974 as a 25-meter tall gateway to the complex, accentuates and aggrandizes the existing symbolic dimensions of the earlier *torii*. As we saw in chapter two, this material subversion of traditional forms was mobilized by Tange as well, in the enlarged, concrete rendition of Ise Shrine of his Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Memorial. In this regard, it is also useful to draft a more inclusive history of state-sanctioned memorial projects that take seriously the politics of form-building, and the ways in which they inform our perceptions of their symbolic power.



Figure 4.7. Yasukuni Shrine, Dai-ni (Second) Torii, built 1887. Source: Japan Archives Association, <https://jaa2100.org/entry/detail/044026.html>.

²⁸⁰ Fujitani, 122-123.

²⁸¹ Apart from the simpler *shime torii*, which features a sacred rope strung between two wooden posts, *torii* can largely be categorized into two varieties: the simpler, perpendicular post-and-lintel *shinmei torii* and the more ornamented *myōjin torii*, which have lintels that curve upward at the ends, often paired with tapered pillars set at a slight incline.

The invented traditions and manufactured institutions that materialized in the built environment of Tokyo under the late Meiji regime, as Takashi Fujitani has asserted, came to “represent the official version of the present and the possibilities of the future, of the nation’s and the regime’s present and projected power, wealth, and degree of Civilization,” against the continuity of tradition embodied by Kyoto, the symbolic, non-administrative capital of the nation.²⁸² If we extend this formation into the paradigm of postwar memory, Hiroshima and Nagasaki may be read also be read as the sites where the symbolic valences of national victimhood are concentrated and made legible, alleviating the capital from the burdens of a memorial trajectory that threatens to undermine its governing order.

The comfort women issue as public statuary

Issues of war responsibility became prominent topics of debate during the 1990s, coinciding with a global spike in interest surrounding remembrance, reconciliation, and memory justice, and a subsequent outpouring of memorial-making projects—a phenomenon Andreas Huyssen describes as the “inflation of memory.”²⁸³ These preoccupations with memory arose from all nodes of the political spectrum, and in the case of histories related to the Second World War, were also rooted in a collective concern over the dwindling population of survivors, and the subsequent responsibilities associated with inherited trauma. In Japan, the timing was informed not only by the fifty-year juncture point, but also by the death of Emperor Hirohito in 1989.²⁸⁴ Events of mass disaster and cruelty, such as the Nanjing Massacre, and the biological and

²⁸² Fujitani, 90.

²⁸³ Andreas Huyssen, “Monumental Seduction.” *New German Critique*, no. 69 (1996): 181–200.

²⁸⁴ Eras of imperial leadership are used as periodizing frameworks as well as dating markers in Japan. The regnal dating system (consisting of era name, followed by the year of the given emperor’s reign), is still used widely in both official documents and informal contexts, while the eras themselves are referred to as generational cohorts or cultural epochs, loosely analogous in usage to the “baby boomer” and “millennial” groupings found in the west.

chemical violence committed under Unit 731 have become renewed subjects of scholarly, humanitarian, and political interest. The period also saw a spike in the establishment of museums related to war across the country.²⁸⁵ Many of the debates surrounding the nature and even veracity of the events have played out through the medium of school textbooks, legislation, popular media, and monuments.

One such issue that has taken place in the realm of monument culture concerns the Japanese Imperial Army's trafficking of "comfort women," a blanket term used to describe the tens of thousands of women of varied nationalities detained across the Japanese empire and forced into sexual slavery. The "Statue of Peace" or the "Girl of Peace" (*Pyeonghwai sonyeosang*), a bronze statue commemorating the victims of the comfort women system and their continued struggles, has become a popular visual icon of the movement and a flashpoint for political protest and dispute (Figure 4.8). Designed by sculptors Kim Seo-Kyung and Kim Eun-Sung, the original iteration of work, unveiled in December 2011, features a young girl in working-class dress, seated with her hands clenched in her lap.²⁸⁶ Her expression is austere and impenetrable, as she faces head-on the Japanese embassy building in Seoul. Next to her is an empty seat—an invocation of the deceased victims, and an invitation for the beholder to join her in her act of silent protest through embodied interaction.

The representational language of the statue is conventional in its figurative mode and use of bronze, maintaining a degree of familiarity and legibility to the general viewer. The

²⁸⁵ Takashi Yoshida, "Whom Should We Remember? Japanese Museums of War and Peace," *The Journal of Museum Education* 29 no. 2/3 (2004), 16-20.

The heightened investment in these institutions is also, as Yoshida points out, tied to the economic prosperity during the bubble period of the 1980s and early 1990s, which enabled the construction and renovation of numerous museums across the country.

²⁸⁶ See Dongho Chun, "The Battle of Representations: Gazing at the *Peace Monument* or *Comfort Women Statue*." *positions: asia critique* 28, no. 2 (2020): 363-387 for an art historical analysis of the statue and its location amidst the representational conflicts that mire the comfort women struggle.

iconographies of the statue are linked to specific readings, providing the viewer with clear signposts that draft the narrative scaffolding that supports the statue while still leaving open room for affective interaction and interpretation. Yet within this fairly conservative aesthetic mode, the statue firmly shifts away from the triumphalist model of masculinized monumentality through its human scale, its ground-level presence, and its openness to tactile encounter. The statue is often clad in knit hats and scarves, lap blankets, and capes during the winter, gestures of care and material engagement that further accentuate the affective properties of its presence. In many ways, its memorial rhetoric and bodily politics stand as the antithesis to Kitamura's Peace Statue amidst the field of modern commemorative bronzes.

The statue has garnered both popular appeal across transnational audiences and heated criticism from Japanese right-wing politicians and other historical denialists. It has now become one of the central visual icons of the movement, and the accessibility of its symbolism and its resonance with viewers has prompted numerous reproductions to be sponsored, often by diasporic organizations, and installed in localities across the world, transforming the scope of the conflict far beyond the geopolitical boundaries of South Korea and Japan. The presence of the statue has incited a wave of public protests and efforts by the Japanese government to remove the works outside the embassy in Seoul and the consulate in Busan and curtail the spread of replicas abroad, under the claim that they disrupt the terms of the 1961 Vienna Convention.²⁸⁷ The openness of the sculptors to its reproduction and dissemination (nearly 100 versions are said to currently exist), and the malleability of its context enables its meanings to flit between both the national and global, producing new discourses of postcolonial and feminist memory while maintaining the visual specificity of its original Korean references.

²⁸⁷ Chun, 373.



Figure 4.8. Kim Seo-Kyung and Kim Eun-Sung, Statue/Girl of Peace, outside the Japanese embassy in Seoul.
 Source: Jung Yeon-Je/AFP/Getty Images, <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/11/13/563838610/comfort-woman-memorial-statues-a-thorn-in-japans-side-now-sit-on-korean-buses>.

The above examples make up just a fraction of the complex series of ongoing debates surrounding the nature of war memory, its transnational dimensions, and the varied promises of “peace” in the afterlives of the Japanese empire. The “peace” invoked in the monument to comfort women, however, seems cognitively aware of the lack of resolution that characterizes instrumentalizations of peace rhetoric by those in power, and understands itself not merely as a material index of past trauma, but as a testimony to the continued presence of the silenced. Setting the Peace Parks within a broader narrative of memorial-making in post-war Japan and post-imperial Asia enables us to think across scales and modalities. Monument-making is not a medium defined by any semblance of a common aesthetic. Yet when we consider the ways in which these works and sites, produced in varied contexts, push and pull at one other to expose silences, unravel each other’s illusory claims, and emphasize the fundamental ambivalence and contradictions that lie at the heart of “peace”, we can open ourselves up to a more expansive orientation toward understanding memorial operations as dialectic activities.

CONCLUSION

In the late 1950s and early 60s, photographers Domon Ken and Tōmatsu Shōmei were commissioned by Gensuikyō, the anti-nuclear weapon NGO founded in the wake of the Lucky Dragon #5 incident, to turn their cameras towards Hiroshima and Nagasaki respectively to capture the conditions of urban life and hibakusha. Domon's reportage-inflected lens casts his subjects in a realist tenor, documenting both the horrors and mundanity of the rituals of hibakusha and their ongoing medical treatments in Hiroshima (Figure 5.1). Children play in the banks of the Motoyasu River in front of the A-bomb Dome, implicitly assuaging ongoing concerns surrounding the risks of radioactive contamination (Figure 5.2) A solemn image titled *The death of Keiji* captures the titular young child from the foot of the bed, surrounded by family members in a foreshortened perspective that recalls Mantegna's *Lamentation of Christ* (Figure 5.3) The messaging here is rather concrete—the Japanese viewing public, now in the thick of the rapid postwar economic growth and redevelopment, are brought sharply back to the moment of 1945 and forced to confront the obstinate traumas of hibakusha. The plight of silenced victims is brought to light vis-à-vis the camera, invoking pathos in the viewer and humanizing the subjects, who maintain a continued status as victims of the past and inhabitants of the postwar present.²⁸⁸ Domon's end goal is to advocate for their existence in the face of a forgetful national body, incorporating just enough sentimentality to enable a degree of identification between viewer and subject, producing a collectivized sensation of empathetic victimhood.

Tōmatsu's approach in Nagasaki, however, betrays a distinctly different orientation towards the evocation of nuclear pain. Gone are the laughing *hibakusha* families and documentary depictions of the ailments suffered by survivors and their progeny. In their place

²⁸⁸ Frank Feltens, "'Realist' Betweenness and Collective Victims: Domon Ken's Hiroshima," *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* (2011), 74.

are unnerving, high-contrast, closely cropped images of objects, environments, and figures that do not aspire to humanize their subjects so much as foreground the anxiety and disquiet of their conditions. The camera unforgivingly captures the scarred, stretched, and ravaged textures of the victims' skin. The *hibakusha* regard the camera lens with suspicion or remain obscured by shadows (Figure 5.4).²⁸⁹ A beheaded statue of Christ lies upon a blanket of weeds, while a contorted glass bottle, spotlight and suspended in space, is cast with a surrealist tenor that nonetheless roots itself in the thermochemical realities of nuclear power (Figure 5.5, 5.6). The fragmentary and decontextualized bodies and landscapes refuse to resolve themselves in front of the lens, exposed by the harsh light that replicates the flash of the bomb. Aware of the camera's own capacity to invoke visual violence, Tōmatsu's images effectively function as ruins in and of themselves, alluding to the existence of a lost whole by presented themselves as jagged fragments. The traces do not lend themselves to being read through a linear narrative, promising no reassurance of healing or resolution, while also remaining glaringly in place, resisting erasure.

Tōmatsu's insistence on disembodiment, scarring, and fragmentation as the endemic condition of post-nuclear life contrasts sharply with the pathos-invoking gaze and legible iconographies of Domon's documentarian stance.²⁹⁰ The two approaches, published together in the photobook *Hiroshima – Nagasaki Document 1961*, encapsulate the mnemonic disarray that mires the articulation of atomic memory in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the narrativization of

²⁸⁹ One of Tōmatsu's images features the scarred arm of Fukuda Sumako, the *hibakusha* activist who penned the poem in Chapter 3 in response to the Peace Statue. Her head is fully obscured, giving the arm a ghostly presence and making identification impossible without the accompanying caption.

²⁹⁰ Though Tōmatsu was of the generation that came of age in the postwar and would take a leading role in the avant-garde sphere, Domon had been active since the 1930s and 40s as a photojournalist and propaganda artist for publications like the English-language, national tourism board-sponsored magazine *NIPPON*. His involvement in tourism also brought his work to global expos, as exemplified by his photomurals in the Japanese section of the Hall of Nations at the 1939-40 New York World's Fair.



Figure 5.1. Ken Domon. Mr. and Mrs. Kotani: Two Who Have Suffered from the Bomb. 1957. Source: Museum of Modern Art, New York, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/44273>.



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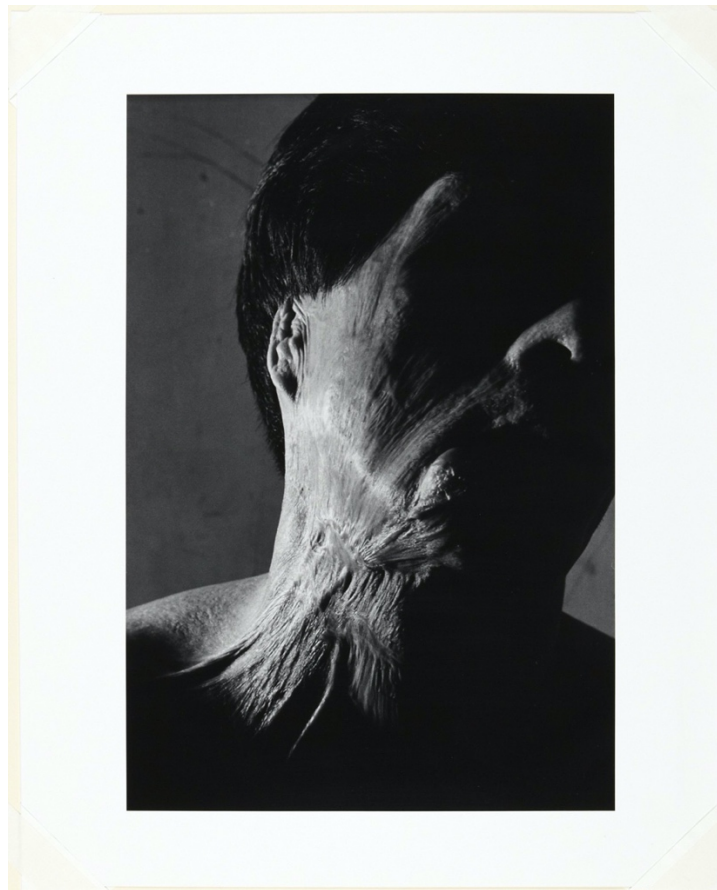


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postwar national memory writ large.²⁹¹ The literalness of the devastation exists concurrently with the indeterminacy of its social and cultural manifestations, making for an unstable memorial terrain that is continuously being formed upon the sedimentary remains of collapsed regimes, repudiated ideologies, and utopic desires for reinvention. These messy, reconfigured spatial and temporal frameworks are the very strategies by which nuclear terror continues to wreak havoc upon landscapes and living beings through both the immediacy of their damage, and the resultant practices of management and control they prompt from human agents.

This project has, in many ways, homed in on the legacies of two “great men,” working on two extensive public works projects, in the two cities that emblemize the terrors of nuclear warfare and inform the victimhood consciousness of the postwar Japanese nation. Yet my hope is that this history, in all its seeming contradictions and bureaucratic messiness, gestures to the layered narratives that spill across these categorical bounds and germinate in the in-betweens, preventing clean ruptures or amnesiac impulses to persist unquestioned. In examining what look to be the most obvious, stable representations of “peace” and the most visible sites of atomic remembrance, I have sought to denaturalize their place in the postwar landscape and situate them within a longer representational history of visual and spatial governance that stretches far beyond the political and temporal boundaries of wartime and peacetime. The more we dissect these fixtures of national memory, which also aspire to a universal order of humanity, the more we come to recognize the fundamental challenges that concern the historicization of war and nuclear holocaust in public memory.

²⁹¹ Both photographers also published their work individually—Domon in *Hiroshima* (1958) *Living Hiroshima* (1980), and *Tōmatsu in 11:02 Nagasaki* (1965). *Tōmatsu* in particular maintained a long-lasting relationship with Nagasaki following his initial trip, returning multiple times to photograph the city and its people before eventually taking up residence for an extended period of time later in his career.

It is worth noting here that there is another significant war memorial in Japan that should be recognized as part of the discourse of national memorial-making in public space. As the site of the largest military campaign in the Pacific that resulted in a staggering civilian death toll of over 100,000 (out of the total losses of approximately 200,000 people), Okinawa possesses its own expansive prefectural Peace Memorial Park and Museum, as well as a number of smaller-scale memorials and museified sites of war activity, such as the former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters.²⁹² Understanding the politics of war memory in Okinawa and their relation to memorial-making at the scale of the national demands a substantially different framework that draws in the long histories of Ryūkyū sovereignty, the recurrent cycles of colonial struggle, and the ongoing perils of American military presence in the Pacific. While this work is far beyond the scope of my current project, there is immense value in setting in tension the valences of “peace” as they carry out at the scale of the Okinawan government with the visions of “peace” put forth by other municipal and national discourses.

In the process of negotiating its own place in a scattered and turbulent postwar international order, the Japanese state, under the Allied Occupation, adopted the language of peace as the mode by which to reconstruct the national imagination in the wake of the atomic bombings. The strategy proved to be, on the surface, tremendously effective, enabling a formulation that would bracket the atrocities committed by the military state and cast the

²⁹² The timing of the emergence of these built testaments also differs, as U.S. control over the islands continued even after 1952, lasting for two more decades until the Okinawa Reversion Agreement stipulated the “return” of the islands to Japan. As a result, most of the memorial-making projects were initiated during the 1970s and onward, in contrast to the earlier timeline of Hiroshima and Nagasaki memorial infrastructure. Though the Okinawa Prefectural Memorial Museum, like nearly all other “peace museums”, projects an antiwar sentiment, it is exceptional in its explicit designation of Japanese imperialism as the root cause of the violence inflicted upon innocent civilians. It maintains that Okinawa possesses a distinct non-Japanese identity that was brought under threat through the imperial state’s long history of forced assimilation and annexation, which in turn set the stage for the devastation that took place during the Asia-Pacific War. See Matthew Allen and Rumi Sakamoto, “War and Peace: War Memories and Museums in Japan,” *History Compass* 11, no. 12 (2013): 1047–58.

collective national order through the shocking experience of nuclear victimhood brought about by Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The assertion of a clean break and an aspiration towards renewal is necessarily contingent upon the vestiges of history, making the pursuit of “peace” a process that is inextricable not only from the conditions of the past, but also the very mechanisms, symbols, and practices that enabled the coherence of a militarist order.

That the projects by Tange and Kitamura both reappropriate facets of imperial logic, and reconstitute these symbols to fit the post-militarist political milieu should ultimately not strike us as a surprise. These sorts of material and conceptual traces are ubiquitous, and the very mundanity of their existence attests to the unyielding currents of forgetting. It is striking, nevertheless, that the two most visible public testaments to the horrors of nuclear terror that are committed to disavowing war are shaped by the very mechanisms that produced the ideology of imperial aggression. In this regard, peacemaking, regardless of its apparent motivations, should be understood as a vacuous, formless act on its own. It must necessarily confront the past in order to take on any semblance of meaning. Through a combination of selective recognition and disavowal, peacemaking slowly begins to take shape, though it remains perpetually at the will of history.

The historical preoccupation with forgetting is often attributed to absences and silences that lack representational form. Yet amnesia poses just as much of a threat when we lose the ability to look critically upon our extant memorial infrastructure, and take their forms to be as lucid, literal, and unchanging as they present themselves to be. This is not a project of iconoclasm or monument-breaking, but instead one of wiping off the dust, reading the fine print, and unsettling our inherited landscapes of memory.

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Figure 3.11. Hayashi Shigeo, Urakami Cathedral seen from Matsuyama-machi, October 1945. Source: Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/urakami-church-and-environs-seen-from-the-heights-of-matsuyama-machi/5QHT9RPDWvG6kA>.

Figure 3.12. Takahara Itaru, children playing at the ruins of the Urakami Cathedral, 1953. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 24.

Figure 3.13. Takahara Itaru, Commemoration for 400th anniversary of St. Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan, May 1949. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 3.

Figure 3.14. Ruins of Urakami cathedral, 1945. Source: *Life Magazine*, <https://www.life.com/history/hiroshima-and-nagasaki-photos-from-the-ruins/>.

Figure 3.15. Takahara Itaru, demolition of former Urakami Cathedral, 1958. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 43.

Figure 3.16. Takahara Itaru, belfry of the former Urakami Cathedral with the Peace Statue in the distance, 1958. From *Nagasaki Urakami Cathedral, 1945-1958: An Atomic Bomb Relic Lost* [長崎旧浦上天主堂, 1945-1958], photographs by Itaru Takahara with text by Kazuhiko Yokote (Tōkyō: Iwanami Shinsho, 2010), 27.

Figure 3.17. Statue of the Virgin Mary salvaged from the ruins of the bombing. Source: Kyodo Photo via *Japan Times*, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2005/08/10/national/nagasaki-cathedral-chapel-enshrines-a-bombed-statue-of-the-virgin-mary/>.

Figure 3.18. Kitamura Seibō, Peace Statue, Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park, 1955. Photo by author.

Figure 3.19. Moto'o Take, Fountain of Peace, Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park, 1969. Photo by author.

Figure 3.20. Kitamura's inscription on the base of the Peace Statue. Photo by author.

Figure 3.21. Kitamura Seibō, Equestrian statue of Yamagata Aritomo, Hagi, Yamaguchi. Source: Wayfarer Daves, <https://www.wayfarerdaves.com/?p=5430>.

Figure 3.22. . Poster from Nagasaki prefecture extolling the virtues of *kenmin undō*. The five points in order read: 1) elevate the imperial national spirit, 2) minimize and eliminate the spread of tuberculosis and venereal disease, 3) marry while young, 4) rationalize daily life, 5) birth and raise children to have at least five people per household. Source: Japan Archives Association, <https://jaa2100.org/entry/detail/041067.html>.

Figure 3.23. Kitamura Seibō, *Kenkō bi* (Healthy Beauty), installed 1979 in Kawasaki, Kanagawa. Source: @ART, <https://at-art.jp/japan/kanagawa/kawasaki/kawasaki-nakahara/todoroki/%E5%8C%97%E6%9D%91%E8%A5%BF%E6%9C%9B-%E5%81%A5%E5%BA%B7%E7%BE%8E/>.

Figure 3.24. Yoshida Shigeru, c. 1950s. Source: *Yomiuri shinbun*, <https://www.yomiuri.co.jp/national/20200809-OYT1T50034/>.

Figure 3.25. Gaetano Faillace, Emperor Hirohito and General MacArthur, at their first meeting, at the U.S. Embassy, Tokyo, 27 September, 1945 (public domain), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Macarthur_hirohito.jpg.

Chapter 4

Figure 4.1. Kitamura Seibō, Memorial Statue for Kamikaze Pilots, Yūshūkan Museum, Tokyo. Photo by author.

Figure 4.2. Kitamura Seibō, Goddess of Peace, Yūshūkan Museum, Tokyo. Photo by author.

Figure 4.3. Exterior of the Center of the Tokyo Raids and War Damage. Source: Nick-D, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons,

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Exterior_of_the_Center_of_the_Tokyo_Raids_and_War_Damage_in_January_2019.jpg.

Figure 4.4. Memorial to the Victims of the Tokyo Air Raids and the Pursuit of Peace, Yokoami Park, Tokyo. Source: Nick-D, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons,

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tokyo_air_raid_memorial.JPG.

Figure 4.5. Memorial marking the site of the former Sugamo Prison, Tokyo. Source: Tokyo Past 3, <https://tokyopast3.com/sugamo-prison-mark/>.

Figure 4.6. Former prime minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō visiting Yasukuni Shrine for the sixth time during his tenure, August 2006. Source: Reuters, <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2019/10/18/yasukuni-caught-in-controversy-as-japan-struggles-with-history>.

Figure 4.7. Yasukuni Shrine, Dai-ni (Second) Torii, built 1887. Source: Japan Archives Association, <https://jaa2100.org/entry/detail/044026.html>.

Figure 4.8. Kim Seo-Kyung and Kim Eun-Sung, Statue/Girl of Peace, outside the Japanese embassy in Seoul. Source: Jung Yeon-Je/AFP/Getty Images, <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2017/11/13/563838610/comfort-woman-memorial-statues-a-thorn-in-japans-side-now-sit-on-korean-buses>.

Chapter 5

Figure 5.1. Ken Domon. Mr. and Mrs. Kotani: Two Who Have Suffered from the Bomb. 1957. Source: Museum of Modern Art, New York, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/44273>.

Figure 5.2. Domon Ken, Bathing in the River in front of the Hiroshima Dome, 1957. Source: Ken Domon Museum of Photography, <http://www.domonken-kinenkan.jp/domonken/hiroshima/>.

Figure 5.3. Domon Ken, The death of Keiji, 1957. Source: Ken Domon Museum of Photography, <http://www.domonken-kinenkan.jp/domonken/hiroshima/>.

Figure 5.4. Tōmatsu Shōmei, Nagasaki, 1962. Philadelphia Museum of Art, <https://philamuseum.org/collection/object/219210>.

Figure 5.5. Tōmatsu Shōmei, Statue of Christ at Urakami Cathedral, 1961. Museum of Modern Art, New York, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/56226>.

Figure 5.6. Tōmatsu Shōmei, Bottle Melted and Deformed by Atomic Bomb Heat, Radiation, and Fire, Nagasaki, 1961. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, <https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/2014.1344/>.

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