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### **Hiroshima Peace Memorial in Early Cold War Japan**

The relationship of a memorial to the site it stands juxtaposed to is often presupposed in conventional thought when considering the function and role the memorial plays in representation of its site. A resultant of this thought is that memorials produce a power-relation of some sort: the memorial subverts the original site and gradually envelops it, in the process appropriating and distorting the site's meaning and significance. The memorial accentuates the site's significance and meaning, wherein the memorial is subordinated to the power and authority of the site and serves as an extension of the site. This is all to say that there is an inherent violence in the act of memorializing a site and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial is no exception.

Hiroshima Peace Memorial, as will be argued, was an invention that sought to capitalize on the potential of Hiroshima's authority in an emerging Cold War global climate because of the collective nuclear experience of survivors (*hibakusha*), vested interests of historical actors, and a concern to control narratives of the atomic bombings. By altering the presuppositions surrounding site and memorial formation, a new mode of thought about their relationship can be interpreted. How can the framework of a Cold War mindset rather than a postwar one shows a gradual change of ideas developing during the Occupation in this mode of thought? A postwar mentality when thinking of Japan after 1945 is insufficient to fully understand the importance of Hiroshima. This issue becomes relevant as methods of definition such as *war memories* are inadequate for interpreting the experiences of *hibakusha* and for understanding Hiroshima's peace memorial.

The power of the hypocenter and its relation to the memorial is the subject of this paper. In the case of Hiroshima and the Peace Memorial, the hypocenter of the bomb (meaning the point on the earth's surface directly below the center of the nuclear bomb explosion) held a physical and psychological power that Hamai Shinso and Tange Kenzo educed and articulated as authority. For Hamai, Tange, MacArthur as well as others in local, Occupation, and the Japanese government, the Cold War's cultural battlefield was present in the foundations of the memorial. Looking into the United States (U.S.) occupation of Japan will explain how censorship and war memories intersected to influence the invention and exercise of atomic memory for Hiroshima and *hibakusha*. Political divisions included the problem of the atomic bombings' aggressor-victim portrayal and who lay at fault for them, which had the potential to bring the issue of Hiroshima's changing image to the interest of the Cold War.

One question can thus be surmised: Is Hiroshima as we know it today, and have since 1955, invented? Is it the ideas of a few influential historical actors that crafted the a-political, internationally focused, pacifist vision of peace that Hiroshima and its political and moral authority projects? The early postwar period defined by the Yalta Agreement projected the Soviet Union and the U.S. to cooperate after the war, yet it quickly fell apart and a Cold War cultural battlefield emerged which would later entail the establishment of a peace memorial to educate those on the bombing of Hiroshima and its residual memory. But beyond this perspective, survivors' experiences were believed to be disruptive to authorities and ergo censored heavily, yet the construction of Hiroshima's memorial near the hypocenter was backed by the same authorities.<sup>1</sup> Why would the need to create a space for these experiences to be shared and exchanged become a priority?

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<sup>1</sup> Lt. Col. A.G.D. Harold Fair. SCAPIN 33 to Supreme Commander Douglas MacArthur, September 19, 1945. Rules 2, 4.

### **Part One: Atomic Memory and Hiroshima Peace Memorial's Foundations**

The traditional starting point for the beginning of an international peace memorial in Hiroshima, has been thought of in three events: December 1945 when Hamai became deputy mayor, and formed the Restoration Bureau;<sup>2</sup> in 1947 when Hiroshima's then mayor Hamai, wrote to other cities around the world, hoping to gather aid to transform Hiroshima into a city of peace;<sup>3</sup> and finally, in May 1949, with the National Diet passing The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law (HPMCL).<sup>4</sup> Hamai's eminent position as mayor permitted his extensive push to re-invent Hiroshima. He recognized foreign aid as crucial to Hiroshima's development, successfully convincing Occupation authorities to envision Hiroshima as a "Peace City." These three points are, all arguably correct to some degree, though I do not think the importance lies in a solid date, but rather their importance as a process of compounding contributions, which build into Hiroshima's Peace Memorial.

The result was a success, with donations and international support for the project coming from over one hundred cities, and official backing for the city.<sup>5</sup> On the occasion of the first peace festival, on August 6, 1947, Douglas MacArthur sent a message that was read at the festival:

*For the agencies of that fateful day serve as a warning to all men of all races that the harnessing of nature's forces in furtherance of war's destructiveness will progress until the means are at hand to exterminate the human race and destroy the material structure of the modern world. This is the lesson of Hiroshima. God grant that it be not ignored.*<sup>6</sup>

For a festival of peace, MacArthur's message might seem out of place, as his words impress an air of violence and destruction onto the festival's meaning. However, MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), represented the highest position for a

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<sup>2</sup> Shinso Hamai, *A Bomb Mayor: Warnings and Hope from Hiroshima*, trans. Elizabeth W. Baldwin (Japan: Publication Committee for the English Version of A-bomb Mayor, 2010), 56-59.

<sup>3</sup> Takahashi Yoshida, *From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace* (Maine: Merwin Asia, 2014), 23.

<sup>4</sup> The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law, 1949.

<sup>5</sup> Yoshida, *From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace*, 24.

<sup>6</sup> New York Times, "MacArthur Points to Hiroshima Lesson," *New York Times*, August 6, 1947, 13.

military commander in East Asia, and afforded the festival legitimacy and recognition. The message acknowledged Hiroshima as a tragedy, but a tragedy with a lesson attached to it, or, more specifically, attached to Hiroshima *the city*. As opposed to Hiroshima in the sense that entails the city, its survivors, and human agency in destruction, MacArthur places the city foremost as the lesson, not the people. SCAP centers on Hiroshima as a physical site of acknowledgement, and pressed a lesson to be learned from it. But there stands the question as to why SCAP would be interested in this acknowledgement of peace, and furthermore, how exactly was SCAP's proposed lesson to benefit the Occupation authorities? To answer these questions, a background of how *hibakusha* could *not* express their experiences, is in order.

Before the end of the war, plans involving suppression of information were solidified, and the U.S. Office of Censorship, within the War Department, was formed, in preparation the occupation for Japan.<sup>7</sup> When U.S. occupation forces arrived in Japan, in late August 1945, information concerning the bomb, began to be censored by American authorities. Sadako Kurihara, in an interview with Monica Braw, stated that, "We were not allowed to write about the atomic bomb during the occupation. We were not even allowed to say that we were not allowed to write about the atomic bomb."<sup>8</sup> Regarding censorship, Sadako's experience was not uncommon, an unfortunate reality for *hibakusha*, especially for those who wished to publish their experiences.

Occupation authorities were aware of the uncertainty encompassing experiences of the atomic bomb, and the possibility of a negative collective consensus formed by *hibakusha*. Sadako's experience as a poet is a testament to this, and juxtaposed to MacArthur's statement, situates the objectives of Occupation censorship in Hiroshima: to cast a wide enough net, that

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<sup>7</sup> Monica Braw, *The Atomic Bomb Suppressed* (New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc, 1991), 21-24.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 7. Cited as: Interview with Sadako Kurihara, Hiroshima, June 26, 1978.

most information can be obtained, disseminated, and monitored by authorities.<sup>9</sup> In the case of information being passed through the censor, it was to be structured, according to restraints. Adhering to stipulations, abundant in their generality, served to catch in that wide net cast, the articulations of *hibakusha* experiences.<sup>10</sup>

MacArthur's letter recognizes this uncertainty from the perspective of the U.S. military. Omitting the countries involved and circumstances that led to the dropping of the bomb, the U.S. eludes mentioning its role, and adheres poignantly to the stipulations of the Press Code. Applying this to the experience of *hibakusha*, we see that their experiences, constituted an infraction, of many of the rules set forth by the Press Code. Thus, for SCAP, the atomic bombing subsisted as a challenge to the U.S. presence in Japan and East Asia. Though only if its atomic memory could not be tangibly guided. Because the situation of atomic attack and subsequent occupation, presented an enigma that authorities found themselves in. Sadako and many other *hibakusha* were censored, due in part to Occupation authorities being unaware of how *hibakusha* would react to the atomic bomb.

The situation portrays a certain anxiety coming from Occupation authorities, their reaction to this anxiety, extends in the form of extreme censorship. From an American perspective, in a larger context of the Cold War's cultural battleground, the image of the U.S. being the only nation to utilize nuclear weapons, was concerning. This narrative, would not win the hearts and minds of those it seeked to, and would be ammunition for the USSR's cultural front. The U.S. perceived changing the postwar image of *Hiroshima as victim*, to a Cold War *Hiroshima as peace*, would shift controversial discourse over the utilization of nuclear weapons,

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<sup>9</sup> SCAPIN 33, September 19, 1945.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

away from them.<sup>11</sup> In effect, narratives and discourses entailing blame for the atomic bombings, could be influenced, if not controlled, once there was a concrete, physical space established for educating and promoting peace.

The endeavor to remake Hiroshima was not strictly a structural enterprise, but involved historical actors and human agency. Hamai, and the pacifist peace movement, played a key role in the establishment of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. Hamai, influenced by multi-layered pacifism prevalent during the postwar era, was a regular speaker at peace rallies and utilized this type of peace during his tenure as mayor. Having elected officials actively participate, and U.S. authorities allowing the festivals to run, therefore gave this vision of peace political space, and the ability to spread internationally. August 6, 1947, at the same peace festival that MacArthur's message was read aloud, Hamai issued a peace declaration, stating the will of the people of Hiroshima to the world:

*Today, on the second anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, we, Hiroshima's citizens, renew our commitment to the establishment of peace by celebrating a Peace Festival at this site, and expressing our burning desire for peace... This horrible weapon has brought about a "Revolution of Thought," which has convinced us of the necessity and the value of eternal peace. That is to say, because of the atomic bomb, the people of the world have become aware that the global war in which atomic energy would be used would lead to the end of our civilization and extinction of mankind.<sup>12</sup>*

These rallies, festivals, commemorations, etc. laid the building blocks for a consolidated, physical, place of memory to be established.<sup>13</sup> With international support, the creation of Hiroshima as a city of peace seemed to Hamai to be possible. He then sent his support to the Japanese Diet to gain funding, and, in 1949, the Diet and occupation forces paid out close to ¥400 million for the urban planning of Hiroshima to include these features.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ann Sherif, *Japan's Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) 25.

<sup>12</sup> Hamai, *A Bomb mayor*, 96-97.

<sup>13</sup> Sherif, *Japan's Cold War*, 24-25.

<sup>14</sup> Hamai, *A Bomb mayor*, 127, 131-134.

Throughout the occupation era, Hiroshima transformed its image, and legally designated as a city of peace, with the passing of The HPMCL in 1949. Construction of a memorial park and museum went underway, with the financial support and supervision of both the American and Japanese national governments.<sup>15</sup> The mayor's role in the foundation of the Hiroshima's new role cannot be understated. Hamai put forth mechanisms, in the process for a vision of Hiroshima, which would culminate in the passing of this law, and the product of a new Hiroshima for Japan as it transitioned into a more active role in the Cold War. He gathered international support, appealed to peace movements, and solicited the Japanese Diet and Occupation authorities, for funds to construct this vision for Hiroshima.

As Sherif notes, the decision to allocate a large amount of funds for the re-orientation of Hiroshima's image, was not without ulterior motivations.<sup>16</sup> Both the U.S. and Japanese governments, sought opportunities to re-orient their international images, as the Cold War became a larger, objective reality, that a postwar frame of consciousness would be inadequate to accommodate. These motivations, were precisely oriented around the shifting of national discourses and resolutions, leading to invented national images. Both Japan and the U.S., found these invented perspectives to be of strong interest, and for each respective position, served different purposes.

From the perspective of the Japanese government, re-consideration of the national image as a defeated nation and victim of nuclear aggression, was a primary goal that presented itself in this new discourse of Hiroshima's role.<sup>17</sup> Hiroshima was granted roughly ¥400 million for reconstruction efforts, not only because the city government was low on funds and incapable of

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 132-133, 166.; Yoshiteru Kosaki, *Hiroshima Peace Reader*, trans. Akira and Michiko Tashiro, Robert and Alice Ruth Ramseyer (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, 1983), 43-44.

<sup>16</sup> Sherif, *Japan's Cold War*, 7, 25, 28-30, 34, 43.

<sup>17</sup> Yoshida, *From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace*, 84.

revenue collection, but because it was advantageous towards for outside influences to direct it. A transition in the narrative of Hiroshima from the effects of the bomb and blame toward discourses of peace took place.<sup>18</sup> This was markedly different from early interpretations in which, Hiroshima held no significance to the national government as its role beyond the immediate postwar was not clear. As Japan's Cold War position gradually transposed, from a defeated nation-state now to be a key ally for the U.S., Hiroshima's memorial of peace would, in effect, contribute to the superseding of Japan *as aggressor and loser*, to Japan *as a pacifist and victim*.<sup>19</sup>

For the U.S., the project of Hiroshima affirmed the mission of the Occupation: to *use* the government of Japan in purporting the position of U.S. hegemony in East Asia, which dovetailed with the supplanting of Japan's wartime government, by one patterned by American values.<sup>20</sup> Although the Occupation ended in 1952, before the memorial could be established, SCAP's personal messages read aloud at festivals, signaled the observed importance and value such a memorial could have for the U.S. image beyond the Occupation. The image of Japan *as aggressor and loser*, to Japan *as a pacifist and victim*, was, for SCAP, developing more significance, as international relations shifted with the conclusion of the Chinese Civil War and tensions in Korea building. These broader political and cultural implications, formed the framework for how Hiroshima's political and social authority would develop during the occupation, and affect its development.

Though the memorial construction finished in 1955, the framework and its background, had been established in the Occupation, a time when censorship of *hibakusha* was extremely

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<sup>18</sup> Yoshiteru, *Hiroshima Peace Reader*, 44.

<sup>19</sup> Yoshida, *From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace*, 84.

<sup>20</sup> U.S. War Department, *Summation of Non-Military Activities in Japan and Korea No. 1*, by W.H. Van Dine, 15 Feb 1946, 7.



prevalent, which subsequently retracted completely in the Occupation's aftermath. In 1955, when the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum opened, it split between a large park to the north, and a museum complex just south of it. The museum itself was divided again, into two parts, the west half holding accounts and exhibits including objects collected after the bombing, such as twisted metal pieces, clothing, and other assorted objects.<sup>21</sup> Many pieces had been material goods, things that ordinary people would use regularly, that placed the banality of everyday people as the victims of atomic warfare. The human death and suffering that can be envisioned for visitors in a humanizing light, and not as a political or nationalist message.

On another note, it can also help to understand what types of messages they *did not* want to convey. The censorship experienced by *hibakusha*, was detrimental to knowing just how they interpreted the bombings, and their victimization, in the immediate aftermath of the bomb. Arguably, the result of censorship by Occupation and Japanese authorities, was a success. It muddied the discourse over who was at-fault, and insulated the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs, from becoming a political weapon. Censorship ended in 1949, coinciding with the HPMCL's passage by the national Diet on July 7.

Hiroshima's Cold War transformation, into a city of peace, the historical actors involved in that transformation, the influence of the hypocenter on memory, the Peace memorial and site of atomic memory all converged to extract the site's authority. The relationship of the site to the memorial, how the Hiroshima Peace Memorial has historically gathered its influence, its authority will be questioned. Hamai became Hiroshima's first elected mayor after the bombing, and oversaw the re-construction of Hiroshima, and Tange Kenzo, the architect that developed the Peace Park area in Nakajima district. Both played instrumental roles in re-creating Hiroshima's

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 81.

image, and for developing physical site of atomic memory as well. Because of their personal motivations, and efforts to perpetuate a style of peace projected by the memorial, they offer insight into the ideas of those invested in the invention of the memorial.

### **Part Two: The Peace Memorial and Origins of Authority**

In Yoshida's book, *From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace*, the poet Makimura Ko, during his visit to Hiroshima, stated that it was an interesting choice to have the Memorial Park and Museum placed as close to "ground zero" as possible.<sup>22</sup> Looking into the relationship of where memorials were placed in relation to their sites shows this to be fairly common among memorial complexes. For instance, on the sites of war memorials associated with World War Two, there are remarkable similarities in structure. Nazi German concentration camps, such as Dachau and Auschwitz-Birkenau, contain memorial and museums which are placed directly on or adjacent to the site. The same can be stated for Yasukuni Shrine, a Shinto shrine in Tokyo that houses war-dead, some of whom being high-level war criminals from World War Two, holds the Yushukan museum adjacent to the shrine itself.<sup>23</sup> Even for memorials of recent memory, the September 11<sup>th</sup> Museum in New York, is on the grounds of the site. The Holocaust Museum in New York, stands as a counterpoint to this idea, as it is not on the site of any place where the Holocaust occurred and yet it is still a powerful place for visitors to experience.

For many in this broad panorama of memorial sites, it makes perfect sense to have a memorial about the place's significance, next to or placed on the site. It would not become just a place to educate those who visit, but provide a space for artifacts and discussion over the memorial's significance. However, why is it important to have them placed in proximity to each

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<sup>22</sup> Yoshida, *From Cultures of War to Cultures of Peace*, 26. Cited as Makimura Ko, *Makimura Ko Shishu* (Collection of the Poems of Makimura Ko), (Kochi: Kusa no ie, 2003), 169-70.

<sup>23</sup> "History of the Yushukan," Yushukan Museum, accessed February 23, 2022, <https://www.yasukuni.or.jp/english/yushukan/index.html>

other? I will, in this section of the paper argue that, at least in the case of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, the site encompasses a political, social, and cultural authority attached to temporal memory, and that the memorial, juxtaposed to it, serves as an extension on this authority.

Looking at maps of urban planning for Hiroshima during the occupation, showed that approval from occupation forces, and funding from the national government, would be needed to rebuild Hiroshima's image.<sup>24</sup> An urban development plan had to be in place, which was to be approved and funded by these agencies. In August 1948, a competition for architects to submit their designs, for a peace memorial in the Nakajima district of Hiroshima, the closest area to the hypocenter was put forth. Tange, an associate professor and architect, previously developed a land-development project for Hiroshima in 1946, submitted his plan for a large-scale reconstruction proposal for not just the Nakajima district, but for Hiroshima as a whole.<sup>25</sup> In his proposal, Tange stated that he wanted not just to reflect the official idea of Hiroshima in one area, but the entire city itself should be devoted.<sup>26</sup> Tange's massive plan was overall rejected, but a downscaled portion of it for the peace memorial park was accepted, and became the foundation of the memorial constructed in 1955.<sup>27</sup> Influenced by the same multi-layered pacifist movement as Hamai, Tange aided in the creation of the physical dimensions for the site, and was inspired by an aspect of pacifist peace, which opposed politicized divisions inspired by Cold War dominant political strains. This universalist vision of peace, where the fault of the bomb was on no one, or as it was sometimes pressed to find blame, on all of humanity, defined itself as a third

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<sup>24</sup> No Author Indicated. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law and Commentary, 1952.

<sup>25</sup> "Peace Park Project" by 丹下健三 in *Peace-City Hiroshima* (Tokyo: Dai-Nippon Printing), undated (circa. 1948).

<sup>26</sup> Carola Hein, "Tange Kenzo's Proposal for Rebuilding Hiroshima," in *Cartographic Japan*, ed. by Karen Wigen, Sugimoto Fumiko, and Cary Karacas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 204.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 205; Hyunjung Cho, "Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the Making of Japanese Postwar Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education* 66, no. 1 (Dec. 2012): 75-76.

way between the binary of Cold War rhetoric. Politicized strands were in the theoretical camps of socialists, liberals, and even Japanese nationalists, who all placed blame on a single offender, different to each camp.<sup>28</sup>

For socialists, the blame was on the U.S. for utilizing a nuclear weapon, and because of the U.S.'s stance in opposition to the Soviet Union. Those who supported the predominantly American vision, for a lack of a better term, sought to place blame on the Japanese state for misleading their citizens, and not accepting surrender to prevent the bombing. Japanese nationalists often combined elements from both viewpoints. The fault of the U.S. and the Japanese state, dovetailed with their vision that Japanese citizens were victims of both nation-states. With these different sentiments, and groups projecting their versions of atomic memory, the occupation and state authorities' approval, and the Japanese government's financial support, backed the development of the city's project.

This support did not come free of concessions, authorities took active roles in determining what and how the memorial would be constructed. It is hard to understand the full picture of involvement by Occupation authorities because censorship had obscured it, however, pieces of what they considered essential to conveying their version of peace, can be gleaned by their requirements and interactions with city management. Taking an active role in the construction of peace was a priority for SCAP, and thus GHQ, as well. For instance, General Headquarters (GHQ) officials sat as judges on the committee to vote for the placement and design of the memorial. This committee functioned as a division of city management, which held the authority to make decisions about the memorial, including what it would include, budget considerations, and where it would be placed, eventually settling on the Nakajima district.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Sherif, *Japan's Cold War*, 206-208.

<sup>29</sup> Yoshiteru, *Hiroshima Peace Reader*, 44.

Nakajima was a requirement for proposals, despite other areas which could have been selected, since much of the city was still undeveloped from the bombing.<sup>30</sup> The decision to make Nakajima district the memorial was, in the context of authority and memory, intentional. The site was not chosen at chance, and as Tange's plan for re-development insisted, established that the memorial could have been anywhere in the city's urban center. This belief is supported by the fact that Nakajima was a requirement for GHQ, and local committee members. The intentionality of the site, can then be understood as a convergence of factors developed during the occupation era. The competing actors and agencies, with their versions of peace, fought for the dominance to establish a collective consensus that would be presented through the memorial. Censorship proved to be formidable to any ideas that did not fall in line with the Occupation's expectations of the memorial, it created a virtual roadblock, which prevented circulations of ideas against it.

*A-Bomb Mayor*, a memoir put together to form a cohesive book in 1967, offers an answer to these developments in the form of the civil servant Hamai Shinso's circumstances during his time as mayor of Hiroshima. Hamai states that it was an explicit goal of his, and the committee, to have the memorial as close to the hypocenter as possible.

*We had chosen to situate the park in Nakajima Hon-machi because it stood next to the hypocenter and had been a charming riverside neighborhood since olden days. We wanted Peace Memorial Park to be a waterfront park.*<sup>31</sup>

Gathering from this passage, the hypocenter itself held a clear significance on the authority of Hiroshima's would-be message, it seems that Hamai, and GHQ, were aware of the potential they could capitalize on. Those potentials being: an authority in Japan on nuclear weapons prohibition as the Cold War began; dominance over topics, such as radiation effects and proliferation; how *hibakusha* and the world *should* view the bomb. This last example, seems to

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<sup>30</sup> Hein, "Tange Kenzo's Proposal for Rebuilding Hiroshima," 204.

<sup>31</sup> Hamai, *A-Bomb Mayor*, 1967, 65.

have the most potential, as memory is educed and extracted from the site by the memorial. Expanding this last potential to be in place with the perspective of the memorial, writers of the bomb would have to write in a way that conforms to the view of Hiroshima. This view, which exports the authority of atomic memory away from the memorial, would continually shape the vast majority of people, aimed at those who could not travel to Hiroshima and view the memorial. First-hand testimonies, written accounts, artwork, or other cultural pieces effectively exerted a global consensus as *Hiroshima's* message. If implemented properly, it would make the memorial's vision of peace seem monolithic.

This monolithic vision, would plant itself at the memorial complex, adjacent to the hypocenter, not directly under it where the atomic dome stood. For the committee, the atomic dome was a remnant of the blast, and therefore would stand as part of the memorial.<sup>32</sup> The atomic dome became part of a twofold mission, in which it stood as the physical site - the reminder of the hypocenter, to which the memorial would serve as the extension conveying its authority. Placing the Nakajima district as the site of the memorial, intentionally posits it in proximity to the bomb's hypocenter, resulting in power educed in the form of authority, to the memorial. This power stems from the hypocenter, as the site of atomic memory drawn from the consciousness of *hibakusha*. The memorial then functions as a conduit for this authority, while the museum argues on behalf of the site, against any contestation through the deployment of artifacts, exhibits, important guests, and events.

When the memorial complex opened in 1955, Hiroshima was now an *official* and *physical* place for pacifist peace, to be envisioned, displayed, and exported, onto a global audience. The memorial complex now served three functions for GHQ and Japanese authorities:

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 224-225, 230.

the establishment of Hiroshima as a city of peace and its vision as unquestionable; the suppression of other strains of peace movements, in favor of the pacifist vision; a success for U.S. officials in controlling atomic memory narratives from impairing U.S. relations.

### **Conclusion**

The immediacy between the hypocenter, atomic dome, and memorial park are to be understood as intentionally placed to impose an authority on memory production. GHQ censorship, over the atomic bomb in Occupied Japan limited discourse over it, and worked to create a void in memory production. Simultaneously, the reconstruction of Hiroshima's image resulted in a physical site that overlapped, presenting opportunities for discourse over the atomic bombings to occur. With the convergence of these two factors, a vision of the atomic bomb developed, which shifted blame away from the U.S., provided channels for *hibakusha* to engage with the memorial, and attributed to the parallax of Japan's postwar identity of aggressor to its Cold War victimhood.

This transition away from the postwar toward a Cold War identity, represents a conceptual transition that the international community, and Japan itself, experienced in the late 1940's. Central to this transition was Hiroshima, its redefinition as a city of peace from a place of destruction, was a process brought on by this transition. More closely however, the creation of its peace memorial park was the crowning achievement of the city, not its newfound status. In this paper, the notion of the memorial, as a tool for memory production at a conceptual level, and the significance of the site as the fountain spring of power has been explored. Furthermore, it is put forth that in the case of the Peace Memorial of Hiroshima, the site becomes interlinked with the memorial physically as a means of extracting the power of the site. In the introduction, the notion of an inherent violence in the act of memorializing a site was put forth. For Hiroshima's

memorial park, the plurality of possibilities and discourses, in their interactions for dominance over the location, construction, and message of the site, constitute this violence.

Exploring the function of the memorial and site, with the product of their proximity has led to a viewpoint of intentionality and contingency, not inevitability and eventuality. There is nothing inevitable about the path and type of message that the Hiroshima Peace Memorial incorporated. The memorial, in all its facets, was invented by historical actors seeking to direct its message. Hamai Shinso pursued a change in Hiroshima's image because he felt inspiration from the multi-layered pacifist movement, and his experience as a *hibakusha* to mold the memorial in this image.<sup>33</sup> Tange Kenzo, inspired by the same pacifist message as Hamai, was the architect of the foundation of peace, and directed the city fully toward it. GHQ, or more precisely, SCAP, had vested interests in the construction of the memorial. How *hibakusha* would perceive the atomic bombing of their city, became a question that was unanswerable for Occupation authorities, until the Peace City Act of 1952. In a Cold War global cultural battlefield, the broader implications that could result from a negative collective conviction, kept *hibakusha* censored from their experiences for much of the Occupation.

Attempting to pull these strands together, many supporting and conflicting points have unfortunately been left unexplored. Hamai Shinso's memoir was utilized extensively in the writing of this essay, but he was challenged, and supported, by many of his peers at many points in the construction of Hiroshima's image. For instance, Nitoguri, a chairperson on the city council, was described by Hamai as an instrumental person in the passage of the Peace City Act by the Japanese Diet.<sup>34</sup> An inclusion of Nitoguri ultimately falls outside of the boundaries of the analysis of the memorial site. It is my hope that in any case this essay has provided the reader

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 92-93, 226-227.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 124-129.



with a new angle of insight, into the creation, contrivancy, and export of Hiroshima Peace Memorial's atomic memory reproduction.

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