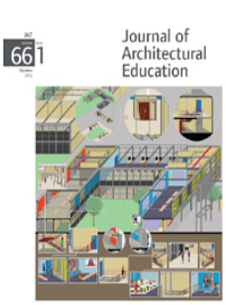

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Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the Making of Japanese Postwar Architecture

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, designed by Japanese architect Kenzō Tange, is an eloquent visual account of the vexed nature of postwar Japan's contested history. It played an important role in the contentious debates over postwar internationalism and an emerging Japanese nationalism among Japanese architects and critics, and catalyzed the development of a new "non-Western" modern architecture.

Introduction

Widely circulated as an iconic image of postwar Japan, Yasuhiro Ishimoto's photograph of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park (1949–1955) seems to convey the spirit of a new beginning (Figure 1). The splendid modern structure, standing triumphantly on the ravaged site of the bomb's epicenter, encapsulated the society's collective aspiration to put the past behind it and start anew.

In Japan, "postwar" (*sengo*) is more than a temporal category; it is a prevailing "structure of feeling" shaped by the defeat of 1945 and subsequent global Cold War geopolitics.[1] Like Germany after the war, postwar Japan was built on what historian Carol Gluck has called "the mythic sense of starting over of 1945," a strongly willed discontinuity with the nation's wartime memories and imperial legacy.[2] For architects and critics, all of whom were extremely eager to unshackle themselves from a troubled past, it was urgent to establish a legitimate style of postwar architecture, distinct from wartime precedent.

The initial trajectory of postwar Japanese architecture was synonymous with the triumphant resurgence of a modernist style, which had been largely forsaken during the war. At the inception of the postwar period, during the U.S. occupation (1945–1952), many Japanese—architects and critics included—understood Japanese tradition to be indelibly tainted by a nationalist and imperialist history and in need of radical reformulation. After the occupation, however, attitudes about Japanese culture and tradition began to shift.

In this essay I will argue that the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park represented a new direction for postwar architecture. Midway through the project, Tange would link modernist architecture to traditional Japanese culture in a new "prototype" that has since been reiterated, revised, and reconsidered. Initially, the Hiroshima project was an emblem of the postwar hegemony of international modernism, with an emphasis on the rational use of industrial materials and a rejection of historical or regional references. As the project progressed, however, it came to incorporate a resurgent interest in Japanese tradition and became a focus of the "tradition debate" by the mid-1950s.

The postwar debates about modernism and tradition went beyond stylistic issues to the core of Japanese intellectual discourse on the war and its aftermath. If the dominance of international modernism in the immediate postwar period represented an escape from a troubled history, the growing interest in traditional elements in the post-occupation era echoed a regained self-confidence and the renewal of nationalistic sentiment among the Japanese. My research situates the Hiroshima project within these debates about modernism and tradition, and the broader sociopolitical and intellectual climate of Japanese postwar society between 1949 and 1955.

Tange's Wartime Career: Continuity and Discontinuity

Despite Tange's fame as a hero of "postwar" Japanese architecture, he first rose to prominence during the war. Tange made a dazzling debut on the wartime architectural scene by winning three nationwide competitions in a row: the People's House Design Competition (1941), the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Commemorative Building Competition (1942), and the Japan-Thai Cultural Hall Competition (1943). Although none of these projects was realized, they were saturated with propaganda and imperialist undertones. Take, for example, the 1942 competition for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Commemorative Building, a notorious example of wartime propaganda that represented "the heroic aim and the sublime intention of the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," the bloc of Asian nations led by the Japanese militarist government.[3] Tange's prizewinning design featured a commemorative zone at the foot of Mount Fuji, the ultimate symbol of Japanese nationalism (Figure 2). The main commemorative hall, a reinforced concrete structure, drew primarily from traditional architectural elements. Its imposing gabled roof and the nine protruding windows strongly recalled the massive roof and decorative logs called *katsuogi* of the Ise Shrine, a Shinto shrine that was inexorably associated with the imperial authority of wartime Japan.[4]

Tange's embrace of Japanese traditional elements was, of course, not just a matter of personal taste but was closely tied to wartime cultural nationalism. As the Asia Pacific War got under way, the international style drew widespread condemnation for its "less patriotic" or even "anti-Japanese" character. Architects turned to tradition as an alternative to international modernism. Thus 1930s architecture saw the dominance of "Japanese

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Figure 1. Kenzō Tange's Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Exhibition Hall, photographed by Yasuhiro Ishimoto, undated. (Photograph courtesy of Tange Associates.)

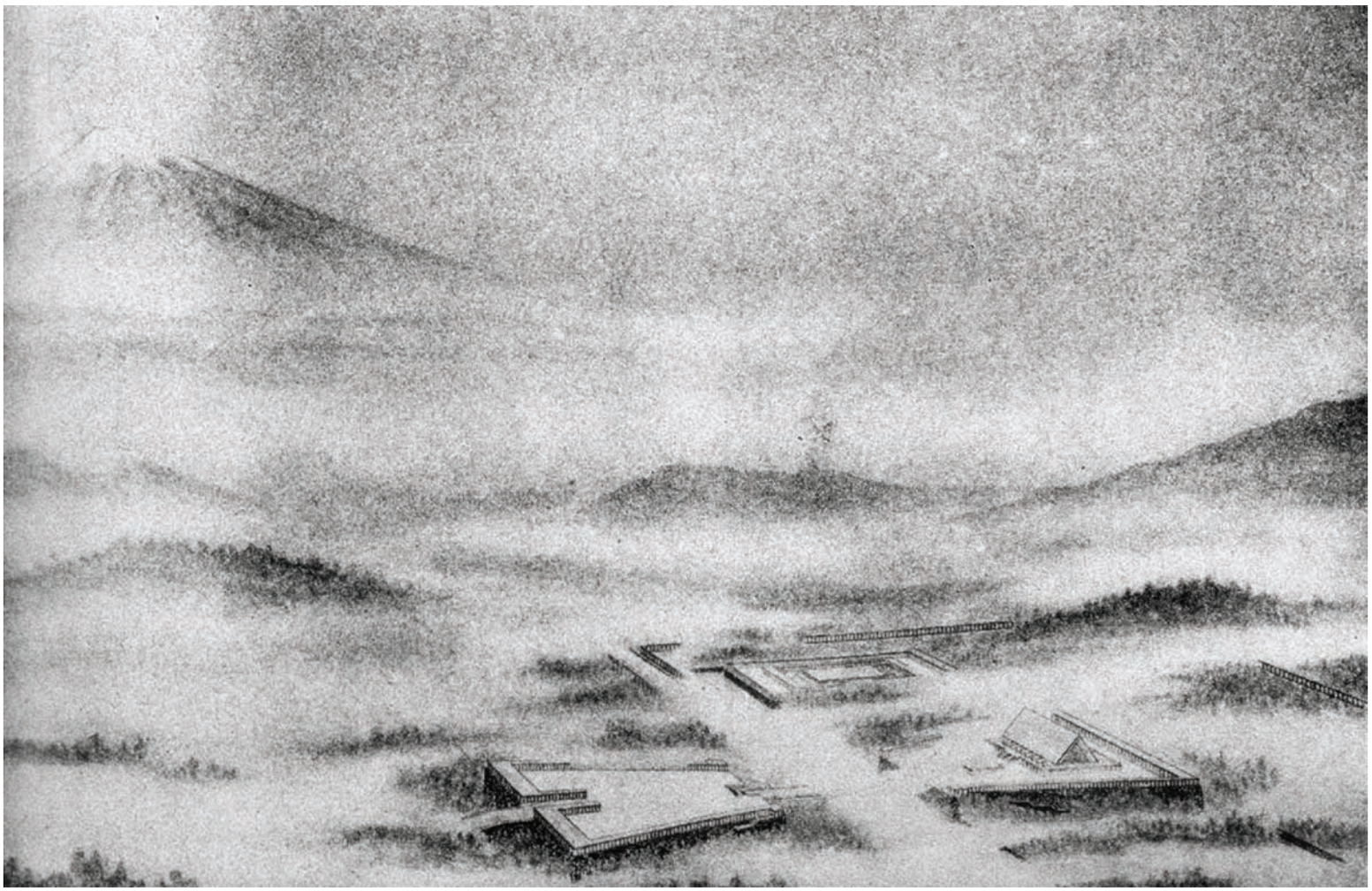

Figure 2. Competition entry of Kenzō Tange's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Commemorative Building, 1942. (Photograph courtesy of Tange Associates.)

taste" (*Nihon shumi*), a hybrid style combining modernist structure and traditional ornamentation.[5] Japanese taste was often called the "imperial crown style" or *teikan yōshiki* in a pejorative sense because it employed traditional tile-and-gabled roofs as the main decorative element without considering their suitability to modern materials and structures. Although Tange was critical of the eclectic use of tradition in *teikan yōshiki* building, he relied upon references to Japanese tradition as a powerful means of differentiating his architecture from Western modernist design.[6]

In his reply to a 1942 questionnaire regarding the preferred architectural style and policy for the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, Tange stated:

> We must ignore both Anglo-American culture and the pre-existing cultures of the Southeast Asian races. To admire Angkor Wat is the mark of an amateur. We should start out with an unshakable conviction in the tradition and the future of the Japanese races. Architects were given the task of creating a new Japanese architectural style in order to contribute to the supreme and inevitable project of the foundation of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.[7]

Thus the architect's lifelong ambition to formulate a Japanese-style modern architecture emerged during the war; that said, Tange's ambition registered a desire that was shared by many Japanese at the time. Tange's strong belief in the superiority of the Japanese race and its cultural tradition recapitulated the nationalistic thought of the era, particularly the romantic view of Japanese identity and tradition of the Japan Romantic School (*Nihon Roman-ha*). In his retrospective essay titled "The Age of Compé," published in 1985 in *Kenchiku zasshi*, Tange recalled that he was influenced by Yojūrō Yasuda, a leading member of the Japan Romantic School, who was eager to discover the essence of Japanese-ness.[8] The Japan Romantic School's "ethnic nationalism" was deeply embedded in a larger intellectual and cultural discourse of "overcoming the modern" (*kindai no ch koku*) prevalent in wartime Japan.[9]

Tange's successful pre-1945 career was a political liability in postwar architectural circles, wherein architects and critics alike tried to negate the legacies of prewar architecture. One of the earliest efforts to reexamine Tange's wartime activities was made by critic Masami Naka in the 1960s.[10] Yet, Tange was by then an untouchable

"state architect" whose designs, such as the Yoyogi Olympic Stadium (1961–64) and Osaka Expo '70 (1966–1970), represented the postwar achievements of the nation. Most of the critical acclaim Tange received in the 1960s and 1970s either regarded his early work as a rupture in his otherwise blameless career, or simply treated it with silence.

During the 1980s, Tange's wartime career would enter into Japanese critical discourse when Shōichi Inoue's series of essays shed new light on Tange's propagandistic projects. According to Inoue, the so-called "new style of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" was not an aberration that was promulgated by the military government, but an example of the architect's interest in moving beyond Western modernism by turning to Japanese traditional elements, anticipating the "postmodern" practices of hybridization and historicism.[11] Although Inoue's claim was not well accepted in mainstream architectural circles, in part due to its politically sensitive nature and some scholarly inaccuracies, it does describe Tange's ambition to challenge the universal framework of Western-dominated modernism and to pursue the alternative languages of "other modernisms" or "postmodernism." [12] Recent studies by Jacqueline Kestenbaum, Terunobu Fujimori, and Hajime Yatsuka acknowledged an obvious continuity between Tange's wartime and postwar designs, and agreed that his pre-1945 practices served as the seedbed of various architectural vocabularies that would prove useful throughout his entire career.[13]

My study is indebted to this recent scholarship and its critique of the "starting over" myth that has framed discussions of postwar Japanese architecture. Of course, there is no radical discontinuity between prewar and postwar Japan. However, an overemphasis on historical continuity can obscure real changes in Tange's strategies for dealing with Japan's traumatic past as well as his own wartime career. In the following sections of this article, I will focus on the postwar shifts in Tange's design strategies, as he moves from an unmitigated rejection of the troubled notion of Japanese tradition to its reformulation in favor of a new identity for his postwar designs.

Monument for a New Beginning

In 1946, Tange, then a fledging professor at the University of Tokyo, went to Hiroshima at the request of the War Damage Rehabilitation Board. His decision to volunteer to work on the contaminated site of the nuclear blast was regarded as an act of bravery as well as an act of contrition for his wartime collaboration. Tange conducted a survey to assess the damage of the city and proposed a land-use plan that was partially integrated in the official Hiroshima Reconstruction Plan of 1947. He saw this ravaged Japanese city as a tabula rasa, a rare opportunity to implement a radical new order without the constraints of an existing urban structure and pattern of land ownership. His reconstruction plan was a utopian project that was based on a functional zoning system, with an emphasis on green areas.[14] This plan featured a large-scale park complex near the bomb's epicenter that was to be developed into the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in the near future.

The Park was the first official attempt to memorialize the unprecedented use of the atomic bomb and to commemorate the end of the destructive war.[15] In May 1949, the architectural journal *Kenchiku zasshi* announced a competition brief for the Hiroshima park.[16] The objective of this competition was "to respond to the worldwide movement for the establishment of a symbolic peace city."[17] The competition brief indicated that the park complex should include various facilities including a peace hall, a conference hall, an exhibition space, a bell tower, and offices, among other structures. A specific style was not designated, except for the stipulation that the design should suit the environment of the surrounding area. A total of 132 entries were submitted and the competition jury was held in July. The first prize went to Tange's team.

Tange's involvement in the city's reconstruction plan allowed him to conceive of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park as the "core of Hiroshima" from an urban planner's perspective (Figure 3). Hideto Kishida, a competition juror and Tange's mentor at Tokyo University, wrote in the commentary that Tange's proposal was characterized by its axial composition and harmony with the comprehensive urban structure.[18] It included the existing 100-meter-wide boulevard as an access road and incorporated the monumental ruins of the Atomic Bomb Dome (the former Industrial Promotion Hall, destroyed by the nuclear attack) as the apex of the central north-south axis.

Figure 3. Kenzō Tange, prizewinning proposal for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, site plan, 1949. (Photograph courtesy of Tange Associates.)

The project was made possible by the "Hiroshima Peace City Construction Law," which granted Hiroshima special status as a "Mecca"

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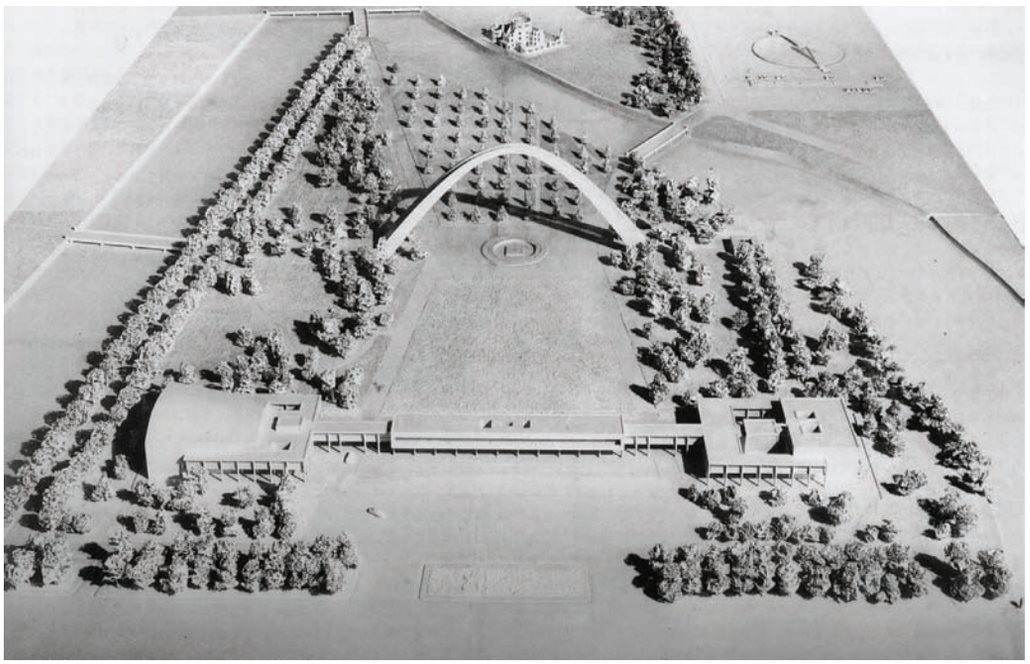

Figure 4. Kenzō Tange, prizewinning proposal for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, model, 1949. (Photograph courtesy of Tange Associates.)

of world peace. On the occasion of the passage of the law in August 1949, Shinzō Hamai, mayor of Hiroshima, defined the civic ambitions of the city's reconstruction: "the people of Hiroshima decided definitely to stand for peace and wanted to demonstrate it to the world by molding their ruined community into a monument of permanent peace."[19] The effort reflected a shared interest between the U.S. occupation force and the Japanese government. While the former wanted to dissociate Hiroshima's disaster from the U.S. military's use of the atomic bomb, the latter hoped to deny any causal relationship between the bomb and Japan's aggression in its Asian colonies. A number of scholars have argued that the peace narrative supported the ideology of "starting over," and required a deliberate amnesia about the wartime traumas of both Hiroshima and Japan's Asian colonies.[20]

This deliberate shift in the perception of "Hiroshima," from a painful reminder of destruction to a hopeful monument of world peace, was well illustrated in Tange's statement in his prize-winning proposal. According to the architect, "Peace is not naturally given from the gods, but it should be searched for. This facility is not meant to commemorate peace in an abstract way, but it is for actively producing peace. I hope that my building works as a factory for peace."[21] Here, peace was associated with the future while death and destruction were conflated with the past. Sachio Ōtani, Tange's collaborator, claimed that "the aim of the Hiroshima project was not to mourn the dead, which was a past-oriented and backward-looking act, but to commemorate peace, which was a future-oriented and forward-looking act."[22] The official peace narrative thus corresponded to what historian Lisa Yoneyama has called "an obsession with the future" in narrating Hiroshima, an ideological strategy that has undergirded the instrumental rationality of Japan's postwar recovery.[23]

Tange's layout of the park embodied this future-oriented ideology in its narration of the tragic history of Hiroshima. On the central north-south axis, four main facilities were aligned—the Atomic Bomb Dome, the arch for prayers (later changed to a cenotaph), the plaza for peace gatherings, and the Peace Memorial Complex (composed of the Exhibition Hall, the Main Hall, and the International Conference Center). The park was designed to lead visitors counter-chronologically from the future (represented by the Peace Memorial Complex) to the past (symbolized by the Atomic Bomb Dome). Visitors approached the park on the 100-meter-wide boulevard and entered the park through the reinforced concrete buildings of the Peace Memorial Complex. They then passed the plaza, the arch, and the dome along the axis. The splendid modern structures of the Peace Memorial Complex not only served as a gateway to the park complex but also functioned as a viewfinder through which to contemplate the cenotaph and the Atomic Bomb Dome (Figure 4). The visitors' only view of the skeletal ruin of the Dome would be through the frame made by the pilotis of the imposing modern structure of the Exhibition Hall. Enclosed and dwarfed by this monumental structure, the powerful symbol of the horrific disaster was transformed into an unthreatening and even romantic relic from the past.

Ironically, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, a symbolic monument of the new Japan, had its precedent in Tange's wartime project of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Commemorative Building (1942). These two projects shared a nearly identical plan; the commemorative zone located at the foot of Mount Fuji in Tange's 1942 design was composed of four building blocks that would be laid out within an isosceles triangle (Figure 5). At the center of the triangle's base was the main hall, which would serve as a gateway to the commemorative space, with two buildings placed symmetrically on each side of it. The central axis extended from the entrance structure in a straight line toward a commemorative monument.

Similarly, the Hiroshima project was based on symmetrical placement and axial composition. The Exhibition Hall, which functioned as the entrance to the park complex, was located in the middle on the central axis, and two buildings, the Main Hall to the west and the International Conference Center to the east, were placed symmetrically in alignment with the museum building. The location of the arch was similar to that of the commemorative monument in Tange's wartime proposal. Drawing on these parallels, critics such as Shōichi Inoue, who ignited the contentious reexamination of wartime architecture in the 1980s, provocatively pointed out that Tange realized his majestic monument for Greater East Asia at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, albeit on a much reduced scale.[24] Subsequent to this controversial claim, commentators noted the long-overlooked similarity between Tange's wartime

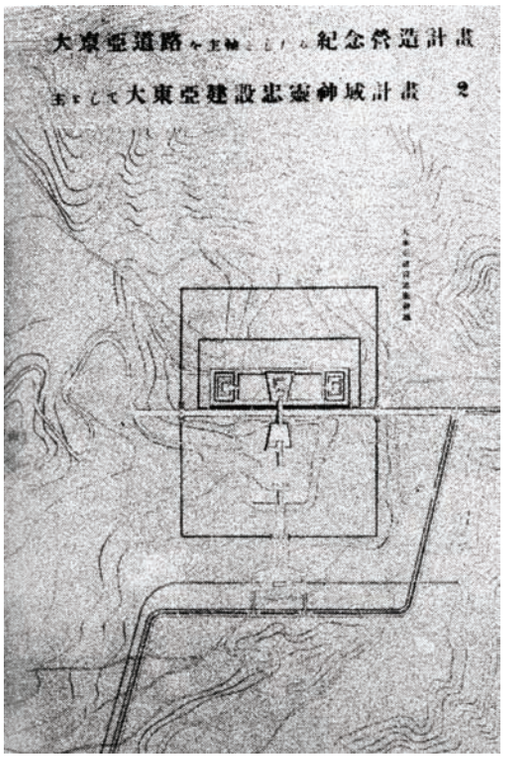

Figure 5. Kenzō Tange, competition entry, Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere Commemorative Building, plan, 1942. (Drawing courtesy of Tange Associates.)

and postwar designs, and they began to view Tange's seamless transition from a propagandist for imperial Japan to the honored memorialist of a peaceful, democratic nation as a symptom of the society's collective amnesia about its enduring imperial legacy.[25]

The widespread failure to recognize the relationship between Tange's wartime and postwar work resulted, in no small part, from some obvious stylistic differences between his projects before and after the war. If Tange's wartime proposal drew intensively on traditional Japanese motifs, the proposal for the Hiroshima project strictly followed international modernist style. The unornamented, raw concrete structure of the Hiroshima project reflected the influence of "Brutalism," a postwar style that was favored both in Japan and Europe for its economic efficiency and "honest" expression of materials. More specifically, the Hiroshima project adopted a flat roof, pilotis, and louvres (windows with vertical or horizontal slats), all of which were signature Corbusian elements. Although Tange had admired Le Corbusier since his days as a student, the direct influence of Le Corbusier on the Hiroshima project can be understood in terms of Tange's visit to Le Corbusier's Unité d'Habitation in Marseille in 1951. A 1953 article published in *Architectural Forum* emphasized the elements of international modernism in the Hiroshima design by noting that "this development proves how strongly international architecture has appealed to young Japanese architects and how well they use it."[26]

Tange was not alone among Japanese architects in his rehabilitation of international modernism. As architectural historian Cherie Wendelken has convincingly argued, the popularity of international modernism reflected the emergence of the universal ideals of humanity and democracy in immediate postwar Japan, ideals which were the antithesis of the nationalistic discourse of race and tradition of the recent past.[27] In this regard, Tange's adoption of a modernist style participated in the concerted effort of Japanese architects to break with the nation's imperial past and to reenter the international architectural community. Ultimately, the Hiroshima project brought Tange tremendous international fame and initiated a new phase in his career; no longer the young architect of unbuilt imperial monuments, he was now the father of postwar Japanese architecture.

A Rising Past: The Emergence of Japanese Tradition

The Hiroshima project was constructed over a relatively long period of time, from 1949 to 1955, as funding for the project ebbed and flowed. During this relatively short period, Japanese society underwent dramatic social, political, and intellectual change. The project had been initiated under the Allied occupation, when representation of the atomic bomb tragedy was strictly censored and the narrative of Hiroshima was channeled into the commemoration of world peace.[28] After the occupation ended in 1952, however, the dominant narrative of Hiroshima as a city of world peace began to be challenged by anti-nuclear and anti-U.S. movements that were often associated with a rising nationalism. To some extent, the country's regained political autonomy was responsible for a growing interest in Japan's cultural identity and traditional values, which had been suppressed in the immediate postwar era.

A collaboration with Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988), the famed Japanese-American sculptor, played a significant role in the emergence of Japanese tradition in the Hiroshima project. During his sojourn in Japan from 1950 to 1952, Noguchi encouraged the Japanese people to "discover Japan" and to reevaluate their cultural roots. His approach to Japanese culture and tradition can be characterized by an attitude that art historian Ryū Niimi terms "modern primitive": Noguchi understood "primitive" Japan through a "modernist," Euro-American lens.[29] At the request of Tange and the mayor of Hiroshima, Noguchi was invited to participate in the Hiroshima project in 1950. He designed the two bridge railings at the entrance of the Hiroshima park and, more importantly, undertook the design of a cenotaph to the nuclear victims, a sculptural work that would invest the park with a hint of Japanese tradition.

Noguchi's engagement in the Hiroshima project led Tange to make a number of changes to his original proposal. He decided to abandon the large-scale commemorative arch (120 meters wide and 60 meters long), which Hideto Kishida criticized as a mere copy of Eero Saarinen's Gateway Arch at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (1948), and commissioned Noguchi to design the cenotaph.[30] Noguchi's model of the cenotaph did not refer to Western examples but was derived from early Japanese art and culture. It consisted of two facing structures: a rectangular platform serving as a liminal space and a dome-like arch serving as the main sanctuary. The main sanctuary featured an underground space into which visitors would have been able to descend through a stairway to face a granite box inscribed with the names of nuclear victims (Figure 6). The parabolic contour of the sanctuary was widely understood to recall various Japanese traditional artifacts, such as ancient

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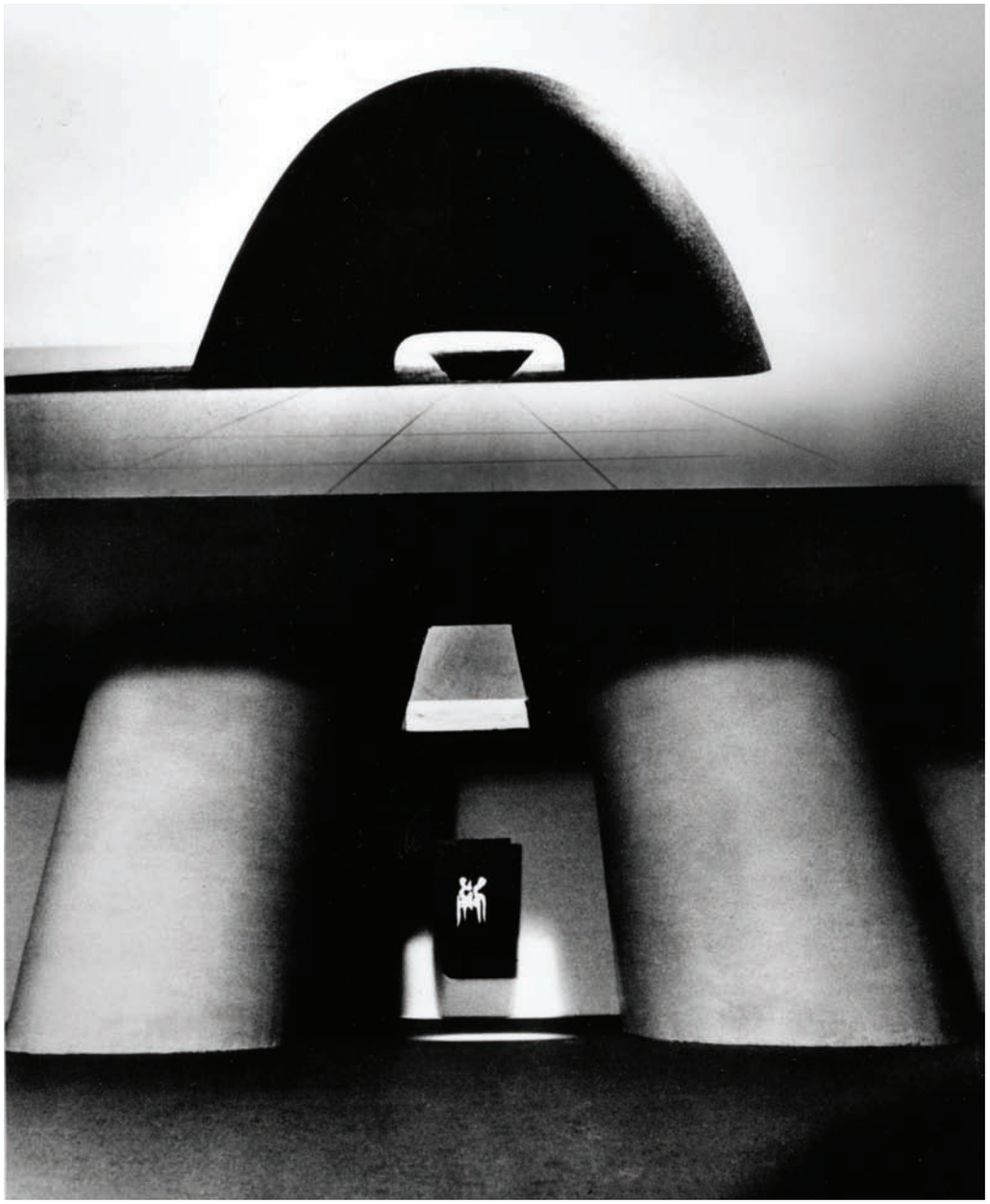

Figure 6. Isamu Noguchi, proposal for the Memorial to the Dead of Hiroshima, 1951 (two views of the "cenotaph.") ©Isamu Noguchi/ ARS, New York-SACK, Seol, 2012. (Photograh courtesy of Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum.)

curved beads called *magatama*, terracotta tomb figurines called *haniwa*, or the bronze ceremonial bell called *d taku* (Figures 7–8).[31] Despite Noguchi's enthusiasm and Tange's support, however, Noguchi's proposal was not accepted by the committee of the Construction of the Peace Memorial City—in part because members of the committee thought it was inappropriate to entrust a citizen from the nation that dropped the atomic bomb with the design of a memorial to its victims.[32] Consequently, Tange hurriedly took over this aspect of the project again and completed the cenotaph by combining his original arch and Noguchi's rejected model (Figure 9). Expressing regret over the rejection of Noguchi's proposal, Tange stated "it was my pleasure to meet Noguchi in the construction process. We discussed Japanese tradition, and I was influenced by how he confronted tradition in his work."[33]

Despite Noguchi's failure to gain an official role in the design of the memorial, his ideas had an important influence on the "Japan tradition debate" (*Nihon dentō ronsō*), a collective effort to redefine Japanese culture and tradition undertaken by a diverse range of intellectuals, artists, and architects during the mid-1950s. One of the earliest postwar discussions of Japanese identity in architecture occurred at the 1953 symposium published in the architectural magazine *Kokusai kenchiku* under the double titles "Kokusaisei, fūdōsei, kokuminsei" and "Nationalism vs. Internationalism."[34] The emergence of "nationalism" in the symposium title, a term that had been taboo in earlier years, signaled the demise of the triumphant trajectory of international modernism in postwar architecture. The participants included four leading architects of the time, Isoya Yoshida, Junzō Sakakura, Kunio Maekawa, and Tange, as well as three members of the magazine's editorial staff, Tsutomu Ikuta, Ryūichi Hamaguchi, and Kazuto Tanabe. While Maekawa and Sakakura expressed an aversion to the rehabilitation of "Japaneseness" as a problematic concept tainted with wartime nationalism and Japan's imperial legacy, Tange and Yoshida expressed concern about the worldwide dominance of international modernism.[35] Tange, who was skeptical of homogeneous internationalism, tactically blurred the strict boundary between internationalism and nationalism by asserting that a truly international architecture should reflect the specific economic and technological conditions of Japan along with localizing factors such as climate (*fūdōsei*) and tradition (*dentō*).[36]

When the Hiroshima project was completed in 1955, it became a focus of this debate on traditions in architectural discourse. The January 1954 *Shinkenchiku* article marked one of the first attempts to discuss the Hiroshima project in terms of Japanese tradition. Here, Tange implied that there was a resemblance between the pilotis structure of the Exhibition Hall and a traditional wooden storehouse with a raised floor.[37] A year later, in the same journal,

critic Noboru Kawazoe, then the editor-in-chief of *Shinkenchiku* and a key figure in the tradition debate, specified the Shōsōin, the eighth-century imperial storehouse built on wooden pillars, as a significant source for Tange's design of the reinforced concrete structure raised upon pilotis.[38] Kawazoe also pointed out the close affinity between the horizontal louvre projecting the Exhibition Hall and the exterior surface of the Shōsōin's log construction.[39]

These formal analogies between modernist and Japanese traditional architecture were nothing new. As early as the 1930s, architects and critics alike, including influential German architect Bruno Taut, tried to reevaluate Japanese tradition through the lens of modernism and to find a direct analogy between modernist and Japanese architecture.[40] Prior to the Hiroshima project, a few notable buildings, such as Antonin Raymond's Reader's Digest Building (1949–1951) and Junzō Sakakura's Modern Art Museum in Kamakura (1951), demonstrated earlier efforts to translate the Corbusian model into the context of traditional post-and-beam construction. Although Tange would have been aware of both projects, his ambition was not limited to the development of formal affinities between modernist and traditional design. Rather, he intended to formulate a new Japanese architecture that would "reflect the possibilities and diversities of reality" of postwar Japan.[41] This new architecture would be embedded in the larger urban and social fabric of postwar Japan, and not depend upon allusions to Western precedents.[42]

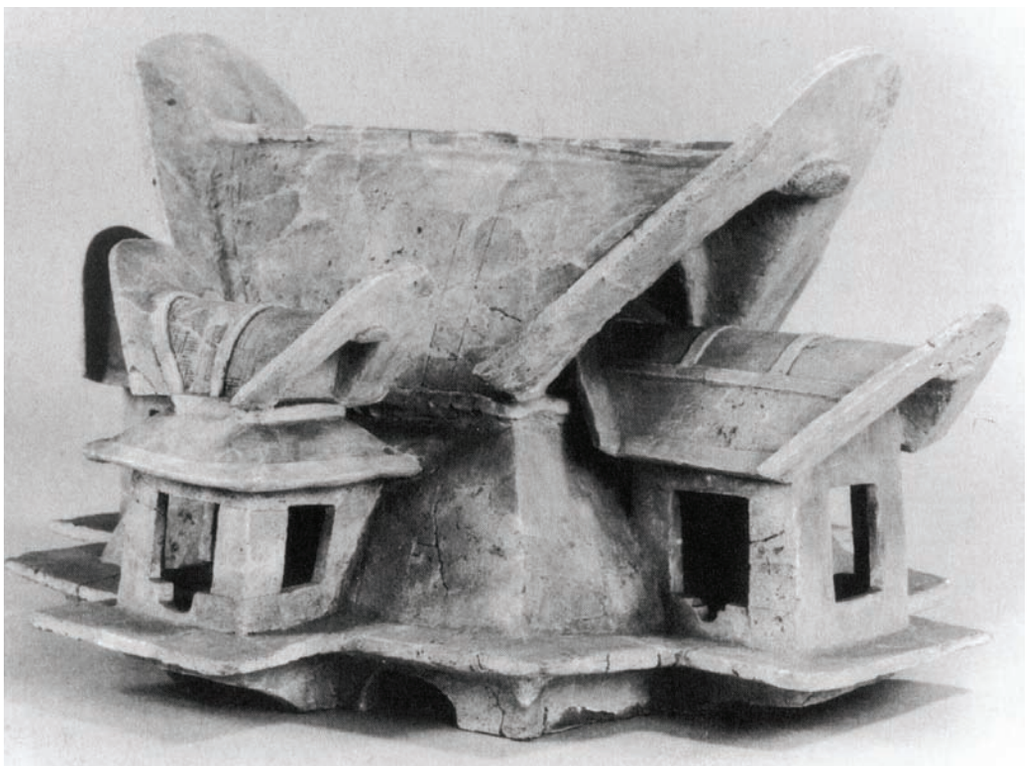

Figure 7. *Haniwa* figure of house, clay, from the Kofun period (300CE–710CE), height 47.8 cm. (Photo courtesy of Tokyo National Museum, http://webarchives.tnm.jp/archives/, accessed 25 July 2012.)

Figure 8. *Dōtaku*, from Kagawa prefecture, Yayoi period (300BCE–300CE), bronze, height 42.8 cm. (Photo courtesy of Tokyo National Museum, http://webarchives.tnm.jp/archives/, accessed 25 July 2012.)

In the 1954 *Shinkenchiku* article I discussed earlier, Tange described the Hiroshima project as a "prototype," a powerful image that would represent the nation's phoenix-like rebirth.[43] Through various iterations of the design, he continued, "the prototype came to emerge in our minds as a vague but powerful image. Gradually, I felt this possible image might be the Ise Shrine"[44] (Figure 10). The introduction of Japanese tradition, and in particular Ise, into the Hiroshima project was not simply a

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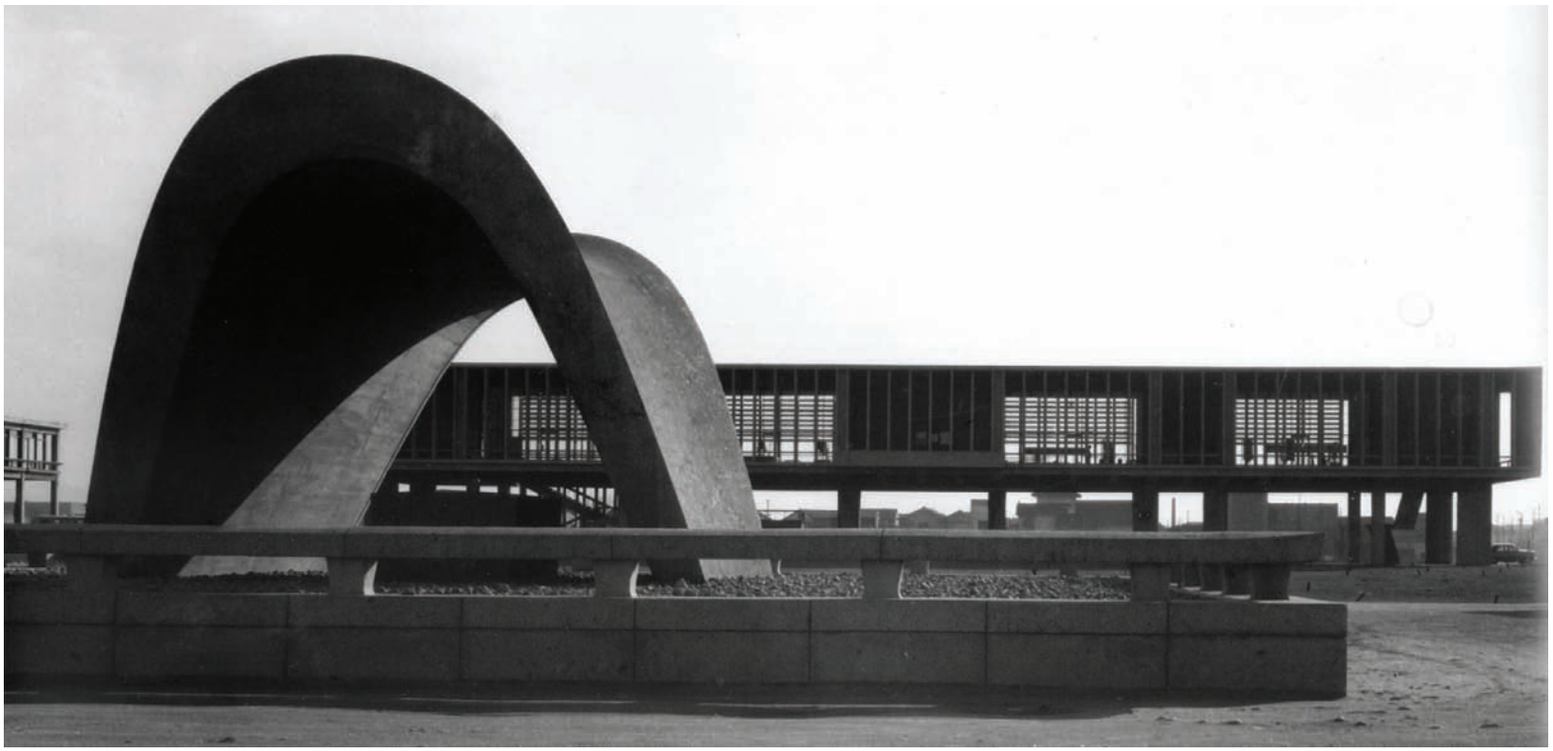
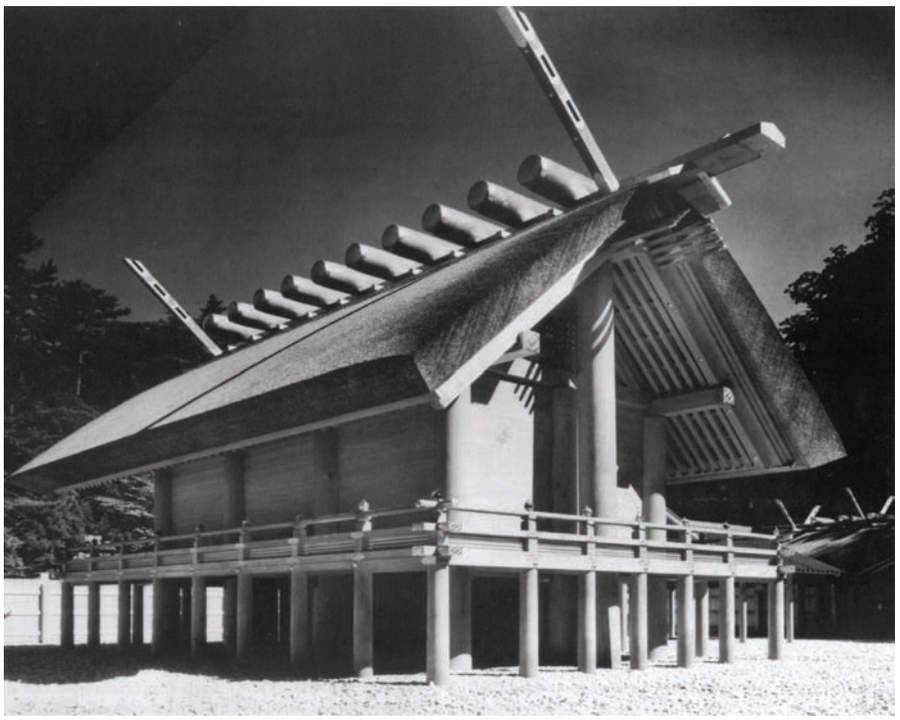


Figure 9. Kenzō Tange, Memorial to the Dead of Hiroshima (the "cenotaph," redesigned in response to the Noguchi proposal), photographed by Yasuhiro Ishimoto, 1952. (Photograph courtesy of Tange Associates.)

Figure 10. Main Shrine at Ise, located in Mie prefecture, photographed by Yoshio Watanabe, undated. (Photograph courtesy of Yoshio Watanabe.)



stylistic tactic. Kawazoe pointed out the dilemma that Tange faced in his adoption of the traditional motifs of the Ise Shrine as follows:

> Tange was obliged to struggle with Ise in the chaotic situation after the war. Ise is the oldest and greatest building of the national heritage. But at the same time, it is a symbol of the imperial system. Tange had to resist it and still hoped to represent the will of the nation, which was associated with Ise.[45]

The dilemma of Ise was not reserved just for Tange, but was the fundamental issue for the tradition debate itself. As Kawazoe has acknowledged, the "Japan tradition debate" itself risked being regarded as a postwar version of the debates within the Japan Romantic School.[46] The main players in the tradition debate, including Tange and Kawazoe, resolved this difficulty by constructing a new genealogy for Ise, looking to a more remote past, an untainted terrain of authenticity upon which to justify the postwar architectural creation. This search turned to the prehistoric civilizations of Jōmon and Yayoi. While Jōmon, the prehistoric culture from 10,000 B.C.E. until 300 B.C.E., was seen as an indigenous plebeian culture characterized

by vitality and dynamism, Yayoi, from the end of Jōmon until 300 C.E., represented the sophisticated culture of the aristocracy inspired by the advanced civilization of the continent. It was Tarō Okamoto (1911–1996), the godfather of the Japanese avant-garde and a core member of the tradition debate, who articulated the Jōmon and Yayoi model into an aesthetic dichotomy, a variation of the Apollonian-Dionysian split. In his classic essay "Thoughts on Jōmon," published in the art magazine *Mizue* in February 1952, Okamoto criticized the widely circulated view that associated the nature of Japanese culture with the elitist and elegant aesthetic of Yayoi, and advocated the vital and populist energy of Jōmon as the authentic origin of Japanese art and culture.[47] In the wake of the occupation era, the primal and bold nature of Jōmon would serve as an antidote to the passive, commercialized, and overly refined aesthetic of Japonica, the "version" of Japanese tradition that had been popularized in the West.

Although Tange was familiar with Okamoto's "Thoughts on Jōmon," Tange, unlike Okamoto, appreciated both Jōmon and Yoyoi traditions equally and considered their relationship a "creative tension" that produced something new.[48] From 1953, when he visited the ceremonial reconstruction project of Ise Shrine, Tange became interested in rewriting the Ise's genealogy not in terms of the imperial system but in terms of a pre-imperial Jōmon and Yayoi synthesis. This effort resulted in the publication of a monumental book titled *Ise: The Prototype of Japanese Architecture*, a collaborative work by Tange, Kawazoe, and photographer Watanabe Yoshio.[49] This book showed evidence of the presence of both the Jōmon and the Yayoi in Ise; the main shrine represented the "feeling of stability and fulfillment" of the Yayoi period, while animistic clay figurines and fantastically shaped rocks scattered in the shrine precinct were associated with the "dark pool of nature's secrets" of the Jōmon period.[50]

Tange argued that the origin of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park can be traced back to the Jōmon and Yayoi model via Ise. If the refined pilotis and the well-balanced proportions of the Exhibition Hall were often associated with the cultural order of Yoyoi, its robust appearance and rough concrete materiality easily evoked the chaotic vitality of Jōmon.[51] However, Tange was careful not to confine the Jōmon and Yayoi principle to any particular building materials or architectural styles. Rather, he approached the relationship between Jōmon and Yayoi in terms of class distinctions; the Jōmon represented the vitality of the unprivileged, oppressed people, whereas the Yayoi symbolized the aesthetic of the ruling class and aristocracy.[52]

Tange believed the Hiroshima project required a particular sympathy with the Jōmon strain of Japanese tradition because it stood for a people's architecture, a monument of postwar democracy. As Jōmon was the plebeian culture of the people, so the Hiroshima park was, for Tange, a place for the nameless masses, a public plaza derived from the "Greek agora."[53] Its democratic nature was embodied in the Exhibition Hall's entry plaza, an architectural expression of "social solidarity," in which people gathered and interacted with each other."[54] Tange's championing of Jōmon resonated with the rise of the idea that "people power" would be the new protagonist of a democratic postwar political order, in contrast to the imperial order and its aristocracy. As architectural historian Jonathan M. Reynolds has argued, the architects of the mid-1950s wrote of an alternative tradition centered on "the people" rather than on an authoritarian imperial regime.[55] By doing so, he continued, "the authority of tradition which had been deployed to preserve the status quo in the 1930s and 1940s could be co-opted after the war to challenge the discredited wartime political and cultural order and to advance new democratic social ideals."[56]

However, Tange's use of the "people" (he used either citizens (*shimin*) or the general public (*kōshū*)) in the Hiroshima project was less informed by a politically radical discourse than by the nationalistic discourse of *minzoku*. In the 1950s, the emergence of the Volk consciousness of "Japanese people," or *minzoku*, was noteworthy. According to literary critic Takeuchi Yoshimi, the term *minzoku* had been taboo and "the very existence of the Volk was thought inevitably to be evil" in scholarly and political domains immediately after the war.[57] In this regard, it was fair for a contemporary critic Ryūichi Hamaguchi to argue that "a crowd gathered in a gigantic plaza in this postwar design recalled the imperial subjects who prayed for the completion of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."[58] While the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was far from a scene of political demonstrations, it was a state monument that would transform individuals into national subjects; this time those subjects belonged to a democratic rather than a totalitarian regime.

Legacy and Influence

As postwar Japanese architects and critics alike called for a Japanese-style modern architecture distinct from both the eclectic wartime style and international style modernism, the most urgent task was to reinvent nationalistically tinged notions of tradition and construct a new model for Japanese architecture that would be culturally authentic and contemporary. It is my contention that Tange became an emblematic figure in this effort through his continued engagement in a dialogue between tradition and modernism, an effort that began in his early wartime work for the imperial regime, and continued to gain momentum after the war.

Tange's reconciliation of Japanese culture with postwar global realities gave impetus to 1960s avant-garde practices such as the Metabolism movement. The Metabolists, an experimental architectural group, made a stunning debut at the 1960 World Design Conference under the tutelage of Tange and Kawazoe. They proposed the idea of flexible and renewable architecture as a reaction against the rigid rationalism of the modern movement.[59] Metabolist theory and design would translate a global interest

continued

in megastructure into the language of Japanese culture and tradition. The Metabolist emphasis on temporality and changeability in architecture was informed by vernacular wooden buildings, in which individual elements could be selectively removed and repaired, and by Buddhist teachings about impermanence and change.[60] Paradoxically, this discourse based in tradition became instrumental in reaching an international audience intrigued by the exotic qualities of Japanese culture.

Alongside the Metabolists, Arata Isozaki was another rising star on the world stage inspired by Tange's notion of "Japan-ness." During his apprenticeship in Tange's office from 1954 to 1963, Isozaki participated in Tange's research on the unique qualities of space in Japan.[61] According to Tange and his colleagues, Japanese space was governed by the dynamic ambience of lively neighborhoods called *kaiwai*, embodied in traditional festivals (*matsuri*), rather than the static, monumental organizations of Western urban design.[62] Isozaki would use these ideas about traditional Japanese space to develop the "invisible city," a model of cybernetic architecture enabled by the development of communications and information technology.[63]

The most important legacy of Tange's Hiroshima project lies in its tactical synchronization of the Japanese and the international. By inventing a notion of Japanese tradition and culture unencumbered by the imperialist past, Tange and his followers could find new ways of negotiating the modern, constructing what Rem Koolhaas has recently termed "a post-Western aesthetic."[64] This new aesthetic would provide an alternative to an exhausted Western modernism and have a global influence.[65]

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Notes

1. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), 128–35.
2. Carol Gluck, "The 'Long Postwar': Japan and Germany in Common and in Contrast," in *Legacies and Ambiguities*, ed. Ernestine Schlant and Thomas Rimer (Washington, DC: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1991), 64–67.
3. Mamoru Yamada, "Dai tōa kenchiku bunka kensetsu o tantō suru kenchikuka no sōgō deki jikaku," *Kenchiku Zasshi 56*, no 688 (July 1942): 2.
4. Kenzō Tange, "Recollections: Architect Tange Kenzō, Part 2," *Japan Architect* 60, no. 5 (May 1985): 12; Jonathan M. Reynolds, "Ise Shrine and a Modernist Construction of Japanese Tradition," *Art Bulletin* 83, no. 2 (2001): 323–24.
5. For the popularity of Japanese taste style, see Jonathan M. Reynolds, *Maekawa Kunio and the Emergence of Japanese Modernist Architecture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 74–134; Jacqueline Kestenbaum, "Modernism and Tradition in Japanese Architectural Ideology, 1913–1955" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1996).
6. "Kokusaisei, fūdōsei, kokuminsei: Gendai kenchiku no zōkei o" megutte," *Kokusai Kenchiku* 20, no. 3 (1953): 4.
7. Kenzō Tange, "Dai tōa kyōeiken ni okeru kaiin no yōbō," *Kenchiku Zasshi 56*, no. 690 (September 1942): 744.
8. Kenzō Tange, "Kompe no jidai," interview in Fujimori Terunobu, *Kenchiku Zasshi* 100, no. 1229 (1985): 24–25.
9. For more discussion of the Japan Romantic School, see Kevin Michael Doak, *Dreams of Difference: The Japanese Romantic School and the Crisis of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
10. Based on a series of essays published from 1963 to 1965 in the architectural journal *Kenchiku*, he published a controversial book. Masami Naka, *Gendai Kenchikuka no Shisō Tange Kenzō Ron* (Tōkyō: Kindai Kenchikusha, 1970).
11. Shōichi Inoue, *Ato, Kitchi, Japanesuku: Daitōa no Posutomodan* (Tōkyō: Seidōsha, 1987).
12. Left-wing commentators, such as Shūji Funo and Uzō Nishiyama, criticized Inoue's work as a reactionary effort to rehabilitate wartime fascism. See Shūji Funo, "Kokka to postomodanizumu kenchiku," *Kenchiku Bunka* 39, no. 451 (1984): 18; Uzō Nishiyama, "Tokushū Ushinawareta Shōwa 10 nendai o yonde," *Kenchiku Zasshi* 100, no. 1231(1985): 38.
13. Tange Kenzō and Fujimori Terunobu, *Tange Kenzō* (Tokyo: Shinkenchicu-Sha, 2002), 74-113.
14. Carola Hein, "Visionary Plans and Planners: Japanese Traditions and Western Influences," in *Japanese Capitals in Historical Perspective: Place, Power, and Memory in Kyoto, Edo, and Tokyo*, ed. Nicolas Fiévé and Paul Waley (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 327–31.
15. Although there was a nationwide competition to design the Hiroshima Catholic Church in 1948, this religious project cannot be regarded as the nation's official monument to commemorate Hiroshima's tragedy because it was sponsored and guided by international Catholic organizations.
16. *Kenchiku Zasshi* 64, no. 751 (May 1949): 32.
17. Ibid.
18. Hideto Kishida, "Hiroshima heiwa kinen kōen oyobi kinenkan kyōki sekkei tōsen zuan shinsahyō," *Kenchiku Zasshi* 64, no. 756 (October 1949): 37–38.
19. Kenzō Tange, "Hiroshima keikaku, 1946–1953," *Shinkenchiku* 29, no. 1 (January 1954):12–17.
20. For the political implications of the peace narrative, see Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 18–21; Thomas Chung, "Amnesic Remembrance: Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park," *Scroop* 17 (2005): 90–101.
21. Kenzō Tange, "Hiroshima heiwa kinen kōen oyobi kinenkan kyōki sekkei tōsen zuan," *Kenchiku Zasshi* 64, no. 756 (October 1949): 42.
22. Sachio Ōtani interviewed by Terunobu Fujimori, "Senji modanizumu kenchiku no kiseki, Tange Kenzō no jidai 01," *Shinkenchiku* (January 1998): 86.
23. Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 75.
24. Inoue, *Ato, Kitchu, Japanesuku:Daitōa No Posutomodan*, 192–297.
25. Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*, 3; Arata Isozaki, *Japan-ness in Japanese Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 17–18; Chung and Kobayashi, "Amnesic Remembrance," 95.
26. Ryūichi Hamaguchi, "Postwar Japan," *Architectural Forum* (January 1953): 142.
27. Cherie Wendelken, "Aesthetics and Reconstruction: Japanese Architectural Culture in the 1950s," in *Rebuilding Urban Japan After 1945*, ed. Carola Hein and Jeffry M. Diefendorf (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 192–94. For more discussion of the cultural and intellectual climate of the immediate postwar society, see Victor Koschmann, "Intellectuals and Politics," in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 396–403.
28. For censorship on representations of the nuclear tragedy, see John W. Dower, "The Bombed: Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japanese Memory," in *Hiroshima in History and Memory*, ed. Michael J. Hogan (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 124–34.
29. Ryū Nimii, "The Modern Primitive: Discourses of the Visual Arts in Japan in the 1950s," in *Isamu Noguchi and Modern Japanese Ceramics: A Close Embrace of the Earth*, ed. Louise Allison Cort and Bert Winther-Tamaki (Washington, DC: The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution in collaboration with University of California Press, 2003), 93.
30. Kishida, "Hiroshima heiwa kinen kōen oyobi kinenkan kyōki sekkei tōsen zuan shinsahyō," 38.
31. Isamu Noguchi, "A Project: Hiroshima Memorial to the Dead," *Arts and Architecture* 69 (April 1953): 16.
32. Noguchi's design was rejected, in part, because of his American citizenship. Kishida was strongly opposed to Noguchi's design of the cenotaph since he thought that it was inappropriate to entrust a citizen from the nation that dropped the atomic bomb with the design of a memorial project to commemorate the victims. Hideto Kishida, "Hiroshima no hi," in *En* (Tōkyō: Sagami Shobō, 1958), 85. For the debate over Noguchi's cenotaph, see Bert Winther-Tamaki, *Art in the Encounter of Nations* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press), 128–29; Bert Winther-Tamaki, "The Rejection of Isamu Noguchi's Hiroshima

Cenotaph," *Art Journal* (December 1994–February 1995): 23–27.
33. Kenzō Tange, *Genjitsu to Shōzō: Tange Kenz*ō, 1946–1958 (Tōkyō: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1966), 91.
34. "Kokusaisei, fūdōsei, kokuminsei: Gendai kenchiku no zōkei o megutte," *Kokusai Kenchiku* 20, no. 3 (1953): 3–15.
35. Ibid., 4–6.
36. Ibid., 3–13.
37. Ibid., 13–14.
38. Noboru Kawazoe, "Tange Kenzō no nihon teki seikaku," *Shinkenchiku* 30, no. 1 (January 1955): 63–64. Kawazoe published this essay under the pen name Kazuo Iwata.
39. Ibid.
40. For more discussion on Bruno Taut in Japan, see Kestenbaum, "Modernism and Tradition in Japanese Architectural Ideology, 1913-1955," 78–131.
41. Tange, *Genjitsu to Shōzō: Tange Kenz*ō, 1946–1958, 29–30.
42. Ibid.
43. Tange, "Hiroshima keikaku, 1946–1953," 12.
44. Ibid.
45. Kawazoe, "Tange Kenzō no nihon teki seikaku," 62–69.
46. Noboru Kawazoe, *Kenchiku 1 Kawazoe Noboru Hyōronshū Tai 1 Kan* (Tōkyō: Sangyō Nōritsu Tanki Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1976), 10.
47. Tarō Okamoto, "Thoughts on Jōmon," *Mizue* (February 1952), 3–10; Okamoto's essay was recently translated into English with an introduction by Jonathan M. Reynolds, Tarō Okamoto, "On Jōmon Ceramics," trans. Jonathan M. Reynolds, *Art in Translation* 1, no. 1 (2009): 49–60.
48. Kenzō Tange et al, *Katsura: Tradition and Creation in Japanese Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 34.
49. Kenzō Tange, Noboru Kawazoe, and Yoshio Watanabe, *Ise: Nihon Kenchiku No Genkei* (Tōkyō: Asahi Shinbun, 1962). This book was soon translated in English and published by the prestigious MIT Press. Kenzō Tange, Noboru Kawazoe, and Yoshio Watanabe, Ise: Prototype of Japanese Architecture, trans. Eric Klestadt and John Bester (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965). For more on the Ise publication, see Yashushi Zenno, "Finding Mononoke at Ise Shrine: Kenzo Tange's Search for *Proto-Japanese Architecture*," *Round 01 Jewels* (Japan: Acetate 010, 2006), 104–17; Reynolds, "Ise Shrine and a Modernist Construction of Japanese Tradition," 316–41; Wendelken, "Aesthetics and Reconstruction: Japanese Architectural Culture in the 1950s," 196.
50. Tange el al., *Ise: Nihon Kenchiku No Genkei*, 30.
51. Kawazoe, *Kenchiku 1 Kawazoe Noboru Hyōronshū Tai 1 Kan*, 10.
52. Tange, *Genjitsu to shōzō: Tange Kenzō, 1946–1958*, 22–26.
53. Tange, "Hiroshima keikaku, 1946–1953," 4.
54. Kenzō Tange, "Gendai ni oite kindai kenchiku o ikani rikai suru," *Shinkenchiku* (January 1955), 16.
55. Reynolds, *Maekawa Kunio and the Emergence of Japanese Modernist Architecture*, 215.
56. Ibid.
57. Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Kindai shugi to minzoku no mondai" (September 1951), reprinted in *Takeuchi Yoshimi zenshū 7*, eds. Yoshimi Takeuchi, Iikura Shōhei, and Hashikawa Bunsō (Tōkyō: Chikuma Shobō, 1981), 28¬–29.
58. Ryūichi Hamaguchi, "Sōritsu no shūnen kinen zadankai: Dezain (1936–1955)," *Kenchiku Zasshi* 71, no. 833 (1956): 17.
59. For Metabolist theory, see Noboru Kawazoe at al., *Metabolism 1960: Proposals for a New Urbanism* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1960).
60. Kishō Kurokawa, *Metabolism in Architecture* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977), 23–40.
61. Beginning in 1961, Isozaki participated in the research project of *Toshi Dezain Kenkyū Tai* (City Design Research Group), initiated by Tange and critic Teiji Itō. In 1968, the collective urban study of the City Design Research Group resulted in a volume called *Nihon No Toshi Kūkan (Japanese Urban Space)*. Toshi dezain kenkyū tai, *Nihon No Toshi Kūkan* (Tōkyō: Shōkokusha, 1968).
62. Ibid., 25.
63. Arata Isozaki, "Mienai toshi," in *Kūkan-e* (Tōkyō: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1975), 400.
64. In the recently published oral history of the Metabolism, Rem Koolhaas described the Metabolists as the first non-Western avant-gardes who pursued a "post-Western aesthetic." Rem Koolhaas and Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Project Japan: Metabolism Talks* (Köln: Taschen, 2011).
65. Florian Urban, "Japanese 'Occidentalism' and the Emergence of Postmodern Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education* 65, no. 2 (2011): 89–102.