

## **Hiroshima Castle and the Long Shadow of Militarism in Postwar Japan**

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In 1945 Hiroshima Castle, together with most of central Hiroshima, was incinerated and turned into a graveyard. Tens of thousands of Japanese Imperial Army soldiers perished in the castle, which served as the headquarters for Japan's Western Army. The bomb destroyed not just the physical space of the castle but also the symbolism associated with the site. The castle was long used to promote Hiroshima's identity as a military city. Promotion of tourism played an important role in cementing this identity. After the war, the castle's and Hiroshima's long engagement with the imperial military was forgotten as Hiroshima rebuilt itself as a "city of peace." Significantly, it was now the Atomic Bomb Dome, rather than the castle which served as the city's symbol. Yet, the castle continued to serve as a reminder of Hiroshima's past. I argue that the reconstruction of Hiroshima Castle in 1958, as with other castles throughout Japan, was carried out as a way to demilitarize and disassociate the castle from a modern military role. This move by conservative groups to rehabilitate the castle initiated much debate. Using the castle and the tourism trade around it as a lens, this paper will examine the way local identity transformed as Japan mobilized for empire before the war and tried to exorcise the ghosts of Hiroshima's past after the defeat.

**Keywords:** Hiroshima, castle, tourism, A-bomb, reconstruction, war memory, local identity, militarization, demilitarization, Hiroshima Recovery Exposition

### **Introduction**

Students of Hiroshima's history seldom examine the city before 1945. Whether in popular memory or in academic studies, the city's history usually starts on the morning of 6 August and is mostly framed in relation to the city's tragic encounter with the nuclear age. Studies of tourism in Hiroshima are no exception. The few studies done on the topic, this author's work included, have examined Hiroshima through the lens of dark tourism and in relation

to the A-bomb.<sup>1</sup> But Hiroshima is much more than nuclear *lieu de mémoire*. The American destruction of Hiroshima erased not just the physical city but also its past. The A-bomb eclipsed Hiroshima's former identity, and particularly its long association with the Imperial Japanese Army and the imperial house. Hiroshima had a complex relationship with war and national mobilization. To talk about the city only in terms of the city's victimization by the American use of the atomic bomb runs the risk of ignoring its complex past, where victimization and complicity in Japan's aggression were closely intertwined.

Hiroshima's conversion to peace was carried out in the context of imperial transition. Hiroshima was the site where one empire was symbolically and physically destroyed while another rose to superpower status. From the first Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), when Hiroshima served as the official headquarters and wartime capital of the Meiji emperor, through the end of World War II, Hiroshima's identity was closely associated with Japan's imperial ambitions. The bomb destroyed these ambitions in a display of scientific and military power that became the symbolic foundation of America's new imperial power.<sup>2</sup> In what Lisa Yoneyama has aptly termed a "Heideggerian irony," the Atomic Bomb Dome symbolizes this shift in its historical role as a central edifice of both post- and prewar Hiroshima, albeit in very different forms.<sup>3</sup> The dome replaced Hiroshima Castle as the central symbol of the city. But the castle still occupies a major place on the city's tourist circuits, and is the only symbol of the city (and the only tourist site) that transcended the war.

The destruction of the castle and its rebuilding were symbolically charged acts. As Nunokawa Hiroshi 布川弘 argues, "From the early-modern period onward, the *tenshu* 天守 (keep) of the castle was continuously used as a symbol of the power of soldiers and samurai who occupied the castle [... and] the rebuilding of the keep symbolized the true beginning of the postwar [era]."<sup>4</sup> Tourism was central to the symbolic construction of the castle, and to the larger effort of promoting and solidifying Hiroshima's identity both before and after the war. This identity underwent much change in the mid-twentieth century. In tourist brochures and exhibition guides, the castle and associated sites were depicted, before the war, as a site of military glory, connecting Japan's martial past with its current exploits on the continent. After defeat, the castle was portrayed as a ruin, symbolizing the destruction of militarism; and finally, after it was reconstructed, it was presented as a site of culture and peace, a symbol of Hiroshima's tradition and identity which transcended the bomb. The reconstruction of the castle, this paper argues, was part of a larger trial in reinventing and connecting to Japan's Edo and Meiji periods, which simultaneously skipped over and

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1 Debbie Lisle's treatment of the topic, its excellent analysis of the current discourse notwithstanding, is a typical treatment of Hiroshima as a nuclear site, completely bereft of the longer history of the city. See Lisle 2016, pp. 135–41. Starting with Lisa Yoneyama, a number of scholars have examined aspects of Hiroshima's A-bomb tourism but most have stuck to the postwar era. See Schäfer 2016; Siegenthaler 2002; Yoneyama 1999; Zwigenberg 2013; Zwigenberg 2016. Dick Stegewerns' work on representations of Hiroshima in foreign and Japanese media is a good exception to the trend. See Stegewerns 2012.

2 Whether the bomb also ended the war was another matter. Most historians now reject the assertion that the A-bomb led to the Japanese surrender. See Hasegawa 2007.

3 The building, conspicuous in its European features within the Japanese city, was a symbol of Japan's embrace of a European-inspired modernity. The bomb ended this phase in Japan's modernity, but the building itself was left stranded, torn out of time, while the city around it embarked on its exercise in American-inspired, highly modernist city planning in the fifties. Yoneyama 1999, pp. 2–3.

4 Nunokawa 2014, p. 17.

erased the troubled imperialist era. Furthermore, by reconnecting with the ideal samurai past, the castle builders reinscribed and rehabilitated, on the terrain of tourism and heritage promotion, the masculine and military discourses that were lost with the castle.<sup>5</sup> Using the castle as a lens, I consider Hiroshima's role as a military city up to 1945, then, after a short survey of the transition period under the Occupation, focus on the reconstruction of the castle and the debates that surrounded it.

### **Gunto: Hiroshima's Prewar Military Tourism**

Hiroshima's strategic location on the Inland Sea made it an important site in modern military history. Already at the time of the Restoration wars, Hiroshima was a military center for the shogun's forces that assembled for the first and second Chōshū expeditions in 1864 and 1866, with thousands of men, cannons, and horses pouring into the city.<sup>6</sup> The Hiroshima domain quickly changed sides thereafter and, following the arrival of the loyalist armies, the castle became the site of the Fourth Kumamoto Garrison. The Imperial Army's Eleventh Regiment moved to the citadel's outer perimeter in 1875, thus enlarging the military area, and a parade ground was built on its western side. Another major step occurred in 1888 when the Fifth Division was established in Hiroshima, making the whole Motomachi area of Hiroshima a military zone. The first commanding general of the division was Lieutenant General Nozu Michitsura 野津道貫 (1841–1908). Nozu was later made head of the First Army in the Sino-Japanese War and commander of the Fourth Army in the Russo-Japanese War. His career shows the importance of Hiroshima as a military site, and the prestige of an appointment to the Fifth Division.<sup>7</sup> The division spearheaded most subsequent Japanese invasions of the Korean peninsula and the Asian mainland, making Hiroshima, and especially Ujina 宇品 harbor, a major military center.<sup>8</sup>

Hiroshima's role was more than logistical; it was a central place for sending off troops and celebrating their return. City residents, especially politicians and civic groups (as well as school children and others), took active part in elaborate ceremonies to mark the departure and return of troops.<sup>9</sup> Such "celebrations to welcome the victorious [army]" (*gaisen shiki* 凱旋式), which included military parades, patriotic displays, and popular entertainment, were modeled on German celebrations after the Franco-Prussian War, and were held all over Japan.<sup>10</sup> On these occasions, the *tenshu* was open for a display of captured weapons from Japan's wars, as well as for exhibits about historical events that had taken place at the castle.<sup>11</sup> This bore important implications for the castle. As in Osaka, Himeji, and other cities, the establishment of the castle base meant that the castle was mostly off limits to civilians. Soldiers and their families, however, were allowed on the site throughout the period, on occasions such as units' and battle anniversaries. The military also occasionally opened the castle grounds for public events, not all of which were related to the military. The *tenshu* was opened for visitors every spring at cherry blossom time and was a favorite picture-taking spot

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5 I thank the readers for this insight.

6 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 215.

7 Nunokawa 2014, p. 21.

8 Nunokawa 2014.

9 Nunokawa 2014, p. 24.

10 Mizuno 2015, p. 49.

11 Hiroshima-shi Bunka Zaidan Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 41.

for residents.<sup>12</sup> Other events included the annual celebrations of Japan's military victories over China and Russia, as well as major expositions. The first ever exposition in Hiroshima in 1889, celebrating the incorporation of the city, and various other prefectural industrial promotion expositions were held on the castle grounds through the 1910s and 1920s. These expositions, along with the annual events, combined to produce an association of the castle with the military—and the Fifth Division (Hiroshima's home division) in particular—and with the identity of the city as a *gunto* 軍都 or military city.

Central to these convergences was the presence on the castle grounds of the imperial headquarters buildings. The castle's "moment in the sun" in Japanese military history came in 1894 when, during the first Sino-Japanese War in 1894–1895, the Meiji emperor moved to Hiroshima and established the Imperial General Headquarters (Daihon'ei 大本營) to direct campaigns on the continent. He remained at Hiroshima for the duration of the war, and to show the people's solidarity with the emperor and the soldiers on the continent, the Seventh Imperial Diet also moved to Hiroshima that year. The Hiroshima citizenry proudly marked this occasion every year on 15 September in a festival commemorating the advance of the imperial banner into their city (Taitō Shinten Kinenbi 大纛進転記念日). Until 1945, this day was celebrated on the Western Parade Ground with much military pomp and ceremony.<sup>13</sup> In 1926, then-Prince Regent Hirohito participated in the ceremonies, an event celebrated by the city in special postcards and other memorabilia.

In 1929, the city marked Hirohito's ascent to the throne with the Showa Industrial Exposition. Significantly, although it marked a national event, the president of the exposition was the former lord of Hiroshima Castle, Asano Nagakoto 浅野長勲 (1842–1937), whose appointment emphasized local pride and continuity.<sup>14</sup> Although there were some military displays, the 1929 expo was for the most part civilian in nature. Hiroshima and other prefectures' industries occupied most of the ground, and horse and car races, model planes, and a "children's land" were the main attractions. The children's event displayed a humanoid robot (*jinzō ningen* 人造人間), which was capable of speaking through an operator. It was sponsored by the Mainichi newspaper and proved immensely popular.<sup>15</sup> The military was not completely absent, however. As for other events, the *tenshu* was opened on the occasion of the exposition and featured a historical exhibit with strong military themes.<sup>16</sup> Visitors were encouraged to explore other sites on the castle ground, most of which were related to the Sino- and Russo-Japanese wars. The most important of these was the former Imperial HQ (see figure 1). The exhibit brochure emphasized that, "This city was the most important military locale during the wars of Meiji 28 (1895) and 37 (1904), as well as Taisho (1914), a fact which remains fresh in the memories of the people."<sup>17</sup> Three years later, the theme of the 1932 Current Affairs Exposition (Jikyoku Hakurankai 時局博覧会) was much more somber and almost completely military in nature. Sponsored by the Fifth Division, together with the prefecture, the city, the chamber of commerce, and local newspaper companies, it was part of the nationwide military frenzy that overtook Japan

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12 Hiroshima-shi Bunka Zaidan Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 54.

13 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, pp. 220–42.

14 Shōwa Sangyō Hakurankai Kyōsankai 1930b, p. 2.

15 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 433.

16 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 434; Shōwa Sangyō Hakurankai Kyōsankai 1930a, p. 13.

17 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 9.

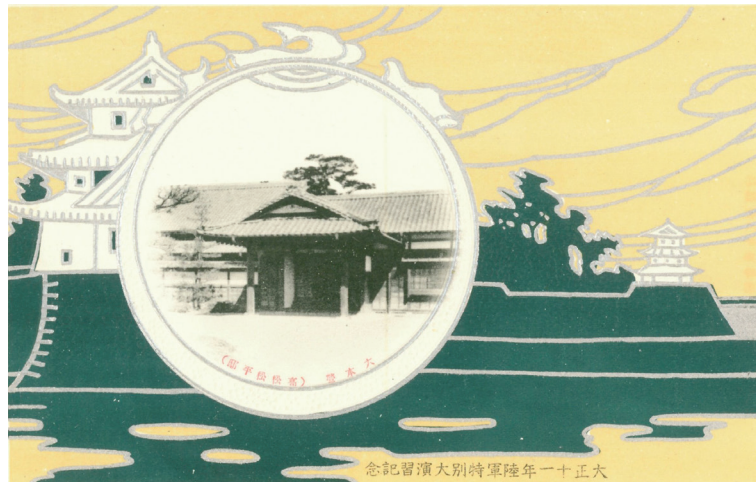


Figure 1. An undated tourist postcard of the Imperial General Headquarters. Courtesy of Oleg Benesch.

following the invasion of Manchuria.<sup>18</sup> This time the president of the expo was not an Asano, but the commander of the Fifth Division. The expo featured artillery pieces, tanks, weapons, and a type thirteen bomber. The exhibit included panoramas of major battles on the continent, and mannequins of the “three human bombs,” and sentries freezing in Manchuria. Bloodstained articles belonging to local soldiers were also on display.<sup>19</sup>

Exhibition brochures often doubled as tourist guides. The expositions drew thousands of visitors to the city and served to promote the city’s image. Tourism was another tool for educating the citizenry and emphasizing Hiroshima’s *gunto* identity, and it played a special role in Hiroshima’s promotion of its image in both the prewar and postwar eras, with imperial and military sites serving as the city’s most important sightseeing spots. This was part of a general Japanese trend of using tourism to promote patriotism. As David Leheny and Kenneth Ruoff demonstrate, tourism and its promotion were intensely political matters in prewar Japan.<sup>20</sup> Japan was virtually alone among developed nations (at least until the rise of totalitarianism) in creating state-sponsored tour packages, building hotels, writing guides, and promoting tourism as a means of both educating its own citizens and promoting its image among visitors from abroad.<sup>21</sup> Under fascism, officials explicitly called for tourism to serve as a tool for “winning the hearts and minds” of citizens of neutral countries, in service of Japan’s war aims in Asia.<sup>22</sup> Foreign tourists were to be won over by Japanese courtesy and charm, which would then in theory positively affect Japan’s image abroad. Domestic tourists, in turn, would take part in “patriotic tourism [as a sort of] dutiful consumerism [...]

18 Young 1999, pp. 55–56.

19 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 234; Hiroshima-shi Bunka Zaidan Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 40. The “three human bombs” referred to three Japanese soldiers who supposedly sacrificed their lives in a suicide mission on the Chinese front. The three became national heroes, though it is doubtful whether their story was true.

20 Ruoff 2010; Leheny 2003.

21 Kenneth Ruoff surveys some of the literature on European fascists’ promotion of tourism in his article on Japanese tourism to the empire. See Ruoff 2014, p. 171.

22 Leheny 2000, pp. 173–74.

exemplifying the concept of self-administered citizenship training.<sup>23</sup> Hiroshima's role was mostly domestic as it had little to offer foreign visitors (who tended to visit the nearby island of Miyajima and skip the city). Domestically, the city was part of a network of newly minted heritage sites, which promoted pilgrimage-like journeys to national sites along with the new leisure activities of Japan's emerging middle class.<sup>24</sup>

Prewar Hiroshima guides heavily promoted memorial and military sites celebrating Japan's victories on the continent, which, besides the castle and the Meiji emperor's former headquarters, included scores of victory gates, memorials, and a large military cemetery. A 1915 guide, *Hiroshima annai* 広島案内, published on the occasion of the Hiroshima Education Exposition, opens with a visit to the Monument to Loyalty (*seichūbi* 旌忠碑), which "commemorates the great deeds of the Hiroshima Garrison soldiers who were martyred in service in the southwest [that is, during the Satsuma rebellion]."<sup>25</sup> Another location listed is the Loyalty Hall (*chūkon shidō* 忠魂祠堂), dedicated to the souls of the martyrs of the three great campaigns, namely the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars, and World War I (figure 2).<sup>26</sup> The guide explores many other memorials and imperial sites, including the First Army War Dead Memorial, the emperor's temporary lodging (from the Sino-Japanese War era), Ujina harbor, and the army's uniform factory, as sightseeing locales.<sup>27</sup> Hiroshima's main attraction, however, was the Imperial HQ and the castle (figure 3). The guide emphasizes the emperor's selfless service during the war: "The emperor arrived on 15 September in the year Meiji 27 (1894), establishing his temporary offices and directing the affairs of state here until 27 April of the following year, as though he himself were at the head of the army. This place shall stand forever as an imperishable monument to those magnificent efforts."<sup>28</sup>

Most prewar guides stuck to the formula established in these early guides. A 1922 illustrated guide to Hiroshima, the *Hiroshima kankōkyaku annai zue* 広島観光客案内図絵, calls Hiroshima both a naval and army *gunto*, with "the great Meiji emperor's sacred ground, the Imperial Headquarters, and the [former] temporary palace," located in Hiroshima Castle. The castle adorns the cover of every guide examined by this author, including this one.<sup>29</sup> The guide also emphasizes the straitened conditions under which the emperor carried out state business: "The emperor carried out the affairs of state within this small, humble single room."<sup>30</sup> The 1925 edition of *Hiroshima annai* narrates the history of Hiroshima and its expansion as it became "one of the great cities of Japan's empire [...] due to the various military campaigns, and thanks to a combination of our force of arms and the divine will."<sup>31</sup> In exploring the imperial sites, the guide again emphasizes the sacrifice of the emperor, saying, "to see the modest simplicity of it makes both body and heart tense up with

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23 Ruoff 2010, p. 83.

24 Tourist promotion along patriotic lines was almost exclusively for domestic audiences. Prewar Japanese guides in English give a brief standard version of the castle and city history, but hardly focus on either as a tourist site.

25 Hiroshima-ken 1915, p. 24.

26 Hiroshima-ken 1915.

27 Hiroshima-ken 1915, pp. 26–27, 30.

28 Hiroshima-ken 1915, p. 29.

29 Hiroshima Kankō Kyōkai 1919. The guide has no page numbers.

30 Hiroshima Kankō Kyōkai 1919.

31 Nakagawa 1925, p. 2.

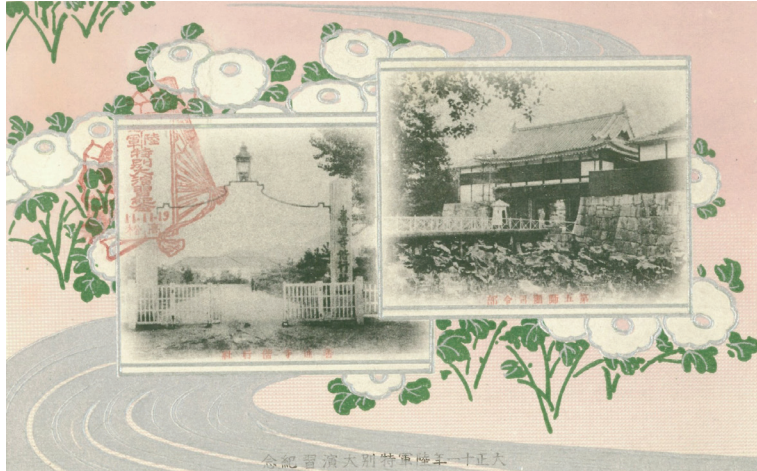


Figure 2. The memorial hall for the war dead side by side with the gate of Hiroshima Castle on a tourist postcard. Courtesy of Oleg Benesch.



Figure 3. Hiroshima Castle on a tourist postcard. Courtesy of Oleg Benesch.

emotion.”<sup>32</sup> Regarding the temporary palace, which was relocated to the castle grounds, another guide from 1931 says, “There is a ceaseless stream of humble visitors nostalgic for the boundless sacred virtue [of the Meiji emperor].”<sup>33</sup> Some of the articles from the Meiji emperor’s funeral were also transferred to the site and put on display.

The emphasis on the imperial sites is very much in line with what Takashi Fujitani calls “mnemonic sites: that is, material vehicles of meaning that either helped construct a memory of an emperor-centered national past [...] or served as symbolic markers for commemorations of present national accomplishments and the possibilities of the future.”<sup>34</sup> Fujitani’s classic study of the Japanese monarchy demonstrates how closely connected such sites were with the rise of the Japanese emperor system, which he views in Foucauldian terms of “ocular domination,” with the past and present emperors “imagined as casting a single and centralizing gaze” over his subjects.<sup>35</sup> Such a lens is useful also for a reading of Hiroshima’s prewar tourist sites, and, given the tragic end of the city, almost inescapable.

The guides also displayed a lighter side, however. A 1929 Showa Exposition guide, for instance, commented that some of the military sites, such as Hijiya Military Cemetery, are “quite boring, so it is advised not to bring children or old folks with you.”<sup>36</sup> Such comments remind the reader of the voluntary nature of such trips, and the many different ways tourists might have related to imperial and military sites. As Kenneth Ruoff notes, “National heritage tourism is something that states as a rule simply do not force their citizens into.”<sup>37</sup> Tourism had significant political value to the state and to Hiroshima, and it certainly cemented the city’s idea of itself as *gunto*, but, while “visits to imperial heritage sites might have been spun as dutiful, it was leisure travel all the same, with travelers partaking in pleasurable diversions.”<sup>38</sup> Visitors had a choice whether or not to visit such sites, and most did so as part of a larger trip to the region which included many other destinations as well.

Indeed, guides also displayed countless other sites, which, unlike the castle area and its various military and imperial shrines, were marketed as places of abundant beauty and charm. The most important of these, then as now, was the nearby island of Miyajima, site of the famous Itsukushima Shrine with its impressive red torii gates. Miyajima was mostly devoid of military sites, but even Miyajima’s shrines could be used to promote patriotism. During the Russo-Japanese War, British nurse Ethel McCaul visited Miyajima. She reported visiting a shrine built by Toyotomi Hideyoshi to commemorate the war dead of his failed invasions of Korea:

[...] we visited the historic hall of “Sengo Kaku” [sic; Senjōkaku 千畳閣], which was built over four hundred years ago by Taikou [太閤, Hideyoshi], as a hall where warriors, before going to battle, could leave written petitions to the god of war that they might be victorious. This ceremony is still continued, for while we were there we saw a great number of soldiers who had come over for this express purpose before starting for the

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32 Nakagawa 1925, p. 42.

33 Hiroshima-shi Kyōsankai 1928, pp. 11–12.

34 Fujitani 1998, p. 11.

35 Fujitani 1998, p. 24.

36 Shōwa Sangyō Hakurankai Kyōsankai 1930a, p. 7.

37 Ruoff 2010, p. 83.

38 Ruoff 2010, pp. 103–104.



front. The prayers are written on little shaped pieces of wood resembling a rice-spoon, and it is no exaggeration to say that there were many thousands hanging in this hall, and many more waiting to go up. It was strange but impressive to see this enormous building filled with these simple tokens of fervent patriotism, and to think that this custom had lasted over three hundred years.<sup>39</sup>

Such a direct connection with Hideyoshi's invasions of Korea is significant in that it created continuity between Japan's past and present military exploits (a correlation which could also, of course, be viewed quite differently by Asian victims of Japan's aggression). Such connections were the mainstay of the army's spiritual education programs for soldiers. The military's education for soldiers emphasized patriotism, imperial loyalty, and self-sacrifice, while appropriating and reinventing historical symbols to support its aims. These included aspects of Japan's idealized feudal past, such as an emperor-focused interpretation of *bushidō*, the "way of the samurai," which was, in fact, largely a creation of the late Meiji period.<sup>40</sup>

Heritage tourism was an important part of this effort by the state to educate soldiers through reinterpretations of history. At the same time, as the Senjōkaku episode demonstrates, soldiers were themselves taking part in the general expansion of domestic tourism. Service in the military brought many lower-class Japanese into contact with Japan's famed heritage and other sites for the first time. The military took full advantage of soldiers' sightseeing, producing over two hundred and fifty military tourist guides for Japan and the empire.<sup>41</sup> The Hiroshima Bay Central Command produced one such guide in 1912. As Katsube Naotatsu 勝部直達 argues, Hiroshima's character as a *gunto* and the central role of the army in the city are made quite clear by the guide.<sup>42</sup> The *Hiroshima chimei sakuin* 広島市地名索引 (Index of Hiroshima's Famous Places) details Hiroshima's many military sites, giving particular attention to the castle, which it connects with the Imperial HQ and its role in Japan's wars.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, in Hiroshima, as in many other castles and heritage sites, Japan's past was mobilized in the service of the imperial state. Visitors both civilian and military associated the castle with Japan's martial heritage, which in turn was connected with its current mission on the continent. Hiroshima's identity as a *gunto* was both physically and symbolically woven around the castle site, which was, together with Miyajima, a pillar of Hiroshima's efforts to promote tourism. The A-bomb and Japan's defeat changed this. Erasing both physically and figuratively the sites of imperial loyalty, the bomb turned the city from a military city to a city of peace. Consequently, both the city's tourism agenda and its castle were completely transformed.

### Where Old Banners Streamed: The Castle as Ruin

At the end of the war, Hiroshima Castle, like much of the surrounding city, was a graveyard. The castle keep had caved in from the force of the blast, and the shockwave and fires destroyed most other buildings, pulverizing and killing the thousands of troops stationed

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39 McCaul 1904, pp. 102–103.

40 Benesch 2014, pp. 150–73.

41 Katsube 1982, p. 2.

42 Katsube 1982, p. 4.

43 Hiroshima-wan Yōsai Shireibu 1982, p. 35.

in and around the castle.<sup>44</sup> The loss of the castle was keenly felt in Hiroshima. Even with the tremendous carnage and destruction wrought on Hiroshima by the A-bomb, the loss of such a familiar marker of Hiroshima's identity was often remarked on as especially painful. The A-bomb did not only kill and maim Hiroshima residents, but also erased their past. This was symbolized by the disappearance of the visible markers of urban geography, of which the castle was the most important. Ogura Toyofumi 小倉豊文 (1899–1996), a university lecturer, wrote that the biggest shock for him after the carnage of the bomb was the disappearance of the city's landmarks, "the temples in Teramachi and the Honganji sect buildings, then the castle itself, which was visible from everywhere [...]. Gone [...] symbols of our town. All gone."<sup>45</sup> Matsumoto Masao 松本正夫, who returned from Henan in April 1946, remembered a scene of total ruin and destruction. Matsumoto recalled that, as a young boy, he would see the white walls of the magnificent *tenshu*, "peerless under heaven" (*tenka ippin* 天下一品), reflected in the river alongside the white-sailed river crafts and merchants selling their wares under the castle's cherry blossoms. As he approached the city center from Yokogawa Station, none of this remained. There was only "death and desolation."<sup>46</sup>

The lost war meant a reorientation of the city's identity. As in the prewar era, tourism played a very important role in the transformation. Debates over tourism were part of a much wider effort to find an acceptable way to talk about the bomb and the defeat within the American-imposed order. The narratives, which I have examined in detail elsewhere, focused on the trope of the destruction as an opportunity to move away from the (errant) militarist modernity of the war era into a bright (Americanized) modern future.<sup>47</sup> These debates were taking place within a framework imposed by the American Occupation's censorship, which forbade open talk of the A-bomb. At the same time, because of their symbolic importance, Hiroshima and Nagasaki became symbols of peace and reconciliation, receiving official acknowledgment from the Japanese government and SCAP of their status, as well as special funds for reconstruction.<sup>48</sup> In this narrative, Hiroshima was transformed by the bomb into a transnational city of peace with a special mission to warn the world of the dangers of nuclear war. Japan's celebrated peace constitution and the discourse of peace made Japanese adherents of what Carol Gluck calls "a cult of new beginnings," which helped them forget what had preceded the end of the war.<sup>49</sup> In one of the more extreme examples of such rhetoric, Mayor Hamai Shinzō 浜井信三 (1905–1968) pronounced in a letter to the president of Carroll College in Wisconsin, "On August 6th 1945 our city of Hiroshima was *born anew*."<sup>50</sup>

In its 1947 yearbook (*Shisei yōran* 市勢要覽), the Hiroshima City Tourist Promotion Section reported the reestablishment of a tourist board with the cooperation of the local Chamber of Commerce. "Hiroshima," it continued, "enjoys a great location on the inland sea, with beautiful nature and ski resorts close by." Then without delay, it added, "Hiroshima was made famous internationally by the atomic bomb, and we can make it a world-famous

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44 Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 4.

45 Ogura 1948, p. 84.

46 Matsumoto 1986, p. 23.

47 Zwigenberg 2014, p. 28.

48 Because of space limitations, Nagasaki's own (in many respects unique) development is not examined here.

49 Quoted in Saito 2006, p. 363.

50 Zwigenberg 2014, p. 14. Emphasis added.

tourist city for both domestic and foreign visitors.<sup>51</sup> At this stage, however, the city was still at a loss as to how exactly to achieve this. The section listed famous sites which were the anchor of Hiroshima's prewar tourism, saying, "In this city we had the [Meiji] Imperial Headquarters, the emperor's temporary palace, the site of the Seventh Imperial Diet, Hiroshima Castle—a national treasure, and the shrine honoring the war dead (Gokoku Jinja 護国神社), all of which were swept away by the fire and calamity of war on 6 August 1945. Now there is almost [nothing] left."<sup>52</sup> These sites, the mainstay of Hiroshima prewar tourism, were not just destroyed but were also no longer acceptable as places of pilgrimage. Hiroshima's atomic sites, however, quickly emerged to take their place.

As Hiroshima tourist officials were finding out, Allied soldiers and others were flooding their city in search of atomic souvenirs and exploring the sites destroyed by the A-bomb.<sup>53</sup> In the 1948 yearbook, the newer "historical ruins" (*shiseki* 史跡) of the A-bomb were already listed side by side with the old imperial sites. "In our city both tourist resources and infrastructure were completely destroyed. But out of the ruins our new tourist resources have emerged."<sup>54</sup> In other words, "We have the objects [and buildings] preserved by the bomb. Ground Zero, the former Aoi bridge, the Industrial Promotion Hall [the future A-bomb dome], the Chamber of Commerce Building, the ruins of the Gokoku Jinja, the ruins of the Imperial HQ, Osaka Bank [site of the famous human shadow ...], the Miyukibashi Gas works tanks. [After all] right now [...] any international tourist's schedule in Japan includes a visit to Hiroshima's *A-bomb historical ruins*."<sup>55</sup> Such a move inadvertently emphasized the continuity between imperial and A-bomb sites. Significantly, however, Hiroshima tourist officials promoted these sites as historical ruins, thus making them into sites removed in time and space, rather than the subjects of a very recent, painful, and controversial history of imperial aggression and total war.

The 1948 *Shisei yōran* was the last time the imperial sites made an appearance in Hiroshima guides and city documents. The only site which was still promoted was Hiroshima Castle. The castle's main function was as a ruin from a bygone age, signifying not continuity of tradition but a break with the past. The barren battlements of the castle quickly became one of the symbols of Hiroshima's destruction. From 1948 to 1958, the official annual summary of city activities featured before-and-after pictures of the castle, contrasting the grand pre-bomb building with the desolation of the abandoned post-bomb ruins.<sup>56</sup> In official city publications, this feeling of loss was quickly reinterpreted and inserted into the city's new rendering of itself as a symbol of world peace. Hiroshima's gaze was firmly fixed on a future of peace and prosperity. The castle, in this retelling of history, was a site of the past, now forsaken. A 1949 English-language guidebook, *Hiroshima Yesterday and Today*, lamented that "Hiroshima Castle, former site of the Imperial Headquarters, was utterly destroyed and nothing remains now but the foundation stones of the castle; the reeds grow thick along the ditches. The desolate scene reminds one of an old Japanese poem:

51 Hiroshima-shi 1947, p. 79. These can also be found in the Hiroshima Memorial Museum document room.

52 Hiroshima-shi 1947.

53 Zwigenberg 2016, p. 628.

54 Hiroshima-shi 1948, p. 100.

55 Hiroshima-shi 1948, p. 101. Emphasis added.

56 See for instance Hiroshima-shi 1949, p. 14; and the first page of Hiroshima-shi 1950 (pages not numbered). These can also be found in the Hiroshima Memorial Museum document room.

*Summer grasses grow/Where old banners streamed/And warriors of glories dreamed.*<sup>57</sup> This distancing of the past made the castle instantly quaint and removed it from the present, further highlighting the theme of transformation, and stripping the site of any potentially subversive contemporary meaning.

In the beginning, however, the site's military past was on open display. Ogura Toyofumi, for instance, saw the A-bomb as a punishment for Hiroshima's sins of militarism: "We have no one but ourselves to blame for letting the military men lead us to war, and accept the dropping of the bomb as the expiation of these sins."<sup>58</sup> Initially, there was an acute awareness of Hiroshima's role in Japan's wars. In an address to the city assembly on 6 December 1945, Mayor Kihara Shichirō 木原七郎 (1874–1951) stated this in no uncertain terms:

As you [are] aware, until now Hiroshima's identity and prosperity was based on the three areas of the military, government, and education. Throughout its history, and especially following the Sino- and Russo-Japanese wars, Hiroshima expanded with every war. Until the end of the Great East Asia War, Hiroshima boasted of its identity as a military city. However, the city was wiped out in one blow by the atomic bomb, and thus *gunto* Hiroshima was completely destroyed and done away with. With [this] one blow, the people's militarism was eradicated, [and] at the same time Hiroshima turned [its efforts] in the opposite direction from [its] *gunto* [identity], becoming a peace education city. This was an opportunity for a fresh start sent from Heaven.<sup>59</sup>

Mirroring such sentiment, an early plan for the site proposed the construction of a full-scale Statue of Liberty atop the now barren *tenshu* base (figure 4). In July 1947, the *Chūgoku shinbun* 中国新聞 reported on a plan by the Japan Peace Culture Society (Nihon Heiwa Bunka Kyōkai 日本平和文化協会), headed by Hiroshima University's Osada Arata 長田新 (1887–1962), to raise a "replica of the Statue of Liberty within the castle's inner moat." Around the statue, Osada suggested building a museum and other facilities. The proposal aimed at showing that Hiroshima and Japan have "abandoned the way of the sword [...] and now strive to become a nation of culture and peace." Osada further connected the castle as a particular site of militarism to the A-bomb and to Hiroshima's postwar mission. "The plans for a peace festival and plaques commemorating the end of the war are but temporary means which can be easily discarded. However, if we build a symbol of peace like the Goddess of Peace (Heiwa no Megami 平和の女神) which towers above Manhattan's shores [...] we will purify the former Hiroshima Castle, site of the military clique that disturbed the peace with their crimes and was [thus] destroyed by Heaven for their sins. We will [then] plant the seedlings of peace and nurture them [...] building a palace for culture, music, and sports [on the site]."<sup>60</sup> The proposal might seem outlandish, but it was debated for a number of months and was supported by the *Chūgoku shinbun* in a January 1948 editorial.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, the

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57 Okazaki 1949, pp. 12–13.

58 Ogura 1948, p. 121.

59 Quoted in Nunokawa 2014, p. 18.

60 *Chūgoku shinbun* 9.7.1947.

61 *Chūgoku shinbun* 8.1.1948.



Figure 4. The 1947 article describing the Statue of Liberty Castle Plan. *Chūgoku shinbun* 9.7.1947. Courtesy of the *Chūgoku Shinbunsha* newspaper company.

castle land’s complex legal standing, and especially the question of legal ownership of the former military land prevented this and other schemes from materializing.<sup>62</sup>

The height of the castle’s role as a center for peace culture was in 1951, when the Sixth National Youth Athletic Competition (Kokutai 国体) took place in the castle.<sup>63</sup> This gathering was held over two months and was the first major national event to take place in Hiroshima after the war.<sup>64</sup> The meet brought together young teams from across Japan and drew visitors from as far as Osaka. It involved athletic competitions, and an exhibition and was treated by the city as a major opportunity for demonstrating Hiroshima’s recovery. Significantly, the Kokutai was also the occasion for the first reconstruction of the castle, examined in more detail below. In a special brochure printed for the occasion, the anonymous authors declared, emphasizing the city’s ongoing transformation and progress, “Castle city Hiroshima! Military capital Hiroshima! Atom Hiroshima! Hiroshima, which was built as a peace city through an unprecedented special law [...] more than 350 years of Hiroshima’s history are expressed most clearly [on this site].”<sup>65</sup> *The Peace Bells*, a

62 For the peace center, see *Chūgoku shinbun* 28.8.1950, and for other initiatives, including a peace tower, see *Chūgoku shinbun* 12.9.1950.

63 The full name was the Kokumin taiiku taikai 国民体育大会 or Kokutai—which abbreviation is identical to the militarist-era name for the national polity of Japan, one of the key terms of imperial propaganda.

64 The Kokutai took place over the course of 64 days, from March 25 to May 27.

65 Hiroshima-shi Junbi Iinkai Jimukyoku.

documentary shot for the occasion, likewise emphasized the “restoration of Hiroshima,” and in a sequence of shots connected the castle site to the A-bomb Dome and other symbolic “A-bomb ruins.” The film was replete with scenes of children’s smiling faces watching the events, as well as countless declarations and speeches proclaiming, “The symbol of peaceful Japan, the sixth annual Kokutai [...] which is held at the center of the world-renowned atom city Hiroshima [...] which is] now restored as our nation’s first peace city.”<sup>66</sup> The temporary reconstruction of the castle was prominent as a backdrop to the events and, although it was not officially designated as such, quickly became the symbolic center for the gathering.

In both postwar and prewar expositions and tourism materials, the castle was an indispensable symbol of Japaneseness and a connection to the regional and national past, often juxtaposed with the modern present. Such continuities were especially clear in Hiroshima’s 1951 Kokutai and the much larger 1958 Recovery Exposition (Fukkō Hakurankai 復興博覧会). The Kokutai’s official journal opened with the emperor’s visit to Hiroshima and his message to the participants. The imperial couple’s tour of Hiroshima, “our city of peace,” was capped by a picture of the humbly-dressed Hirohito waving to his former subjects with the temporary reconstruction of Hiroshima Castle in the background.<sup>67</sup> An earlier prewar visit by Hirohito shortly before his accession to the throne was similarly celebrated, but the commemorative picture showed him in full military regalia, with three biplanes flying over the majestic prewar castle.<sup>68</sup> The emperor indeed supplied a particularly potent symbol of continuity. An imperial visit, by Hirohito or other members of the imperial family, was a part of every major expo. Like the mass entertainment, elaborate commercial exhibits of the nation’s future, and the castles themselves, royal visits became part of the format of expositions that transcended the defeat and the shift from imperial and military grandeur to promises of economic prosperity and peace.

As I have examined in detail elsewhere in my co-authored work with Oleg Benesch, castle sites all over Japan provided the backdrop for such events and played a symbolic role in whichever mobilization—war or reconstruction—the organizers were aiming for.<sup>69</sup> Being the only large public spaces in the heart of Japanese cities, castles played a similar role across Japan. Osaka Castle is another example of such use. After the war the castle served as the site of the Kōwa Kinen Fujin to Kodomo Dai Hakurankai 講和記念婦人と子ども大博覧会 ([San Francisco] Reconciliation [Treaty] Commemorative Women and Children Grand Exposition), aimed at explaining to visitors recent history and women’s new civic role.<sup>70</sup> The Kōwa expo was sponsored by the City of Osaka and two newspaper companies, the *Ōsaka shinbun* 大阪新聞 and *Sangyō keizai shinbun* 産業経済新聞, both of which were controlled by Maeda Hisakichi 前田久吉 (1893–1986). Maeda, who was a veteran newspaperman and was involved in sponsoring expositions before the war, presented the expo as his contribution to the democratization of Japan.<sup>71</sup> The expo was held so that “women and children as well could hold their hands together in welcoming this spring of peace and reconciliation (*kōwa*

66 Sakita 2008, p. 29.

67 Dai Roku Kokumin Taiiku Taikai Hiroshima-ken Junbi Inkai Jimukyoku 1951, pp. 2–3.

68 “Sesshō no Miya Denka Hiroshima gyōkei kinen.”

69 Benesch and Zwigenberg 2019.

70 Kōwa was short for the *San Furanshisuko Kōwa Jōyaku* サンフランシスコ講和条約 (San Francisco Peace and Reconciliation Treaty).

71 Kawaguchi 2007, p. 156.

講和), and [to ensure] the new Japan will properly prosper in the democratic world.”<sup>72</sup> Osaka Castle, a new-old symbol of regional pride, played an important role in the organizers’ schemes. Although only twenty years old at the time, the castle was the site of tradition (much as with its role as the site of the Hideyoshi Pavilion in the Greater Osaka expo), housing the Native Place Pavilion (Kyōdōkan 郷土館) and other exhibits relating to famous Osaka sites. Significantly, the expo brochure emphasized the transition of the castle site from “a closed military zone” into a “place for citizens’ peaceful enjoyment.”<sup>73</sup> Castles were thus once again used in mobilizing the populace through leisure in service of the state’s new identity. Maeda used the very word “mobilization” (*dōin* 動員) when calling on women to support the new peace constitution.<sup>74</sup> Castles, with their supposed antiquity, served as physical reminders of the past, a locus of pride in place, reminding residents of their region’s unique contribution to the nation. Both the prewar and postwar expos employed the same format, tying regional pride to national projects.

### Reconstructions: Celebrations of Recovery in Hiroshima

On 27 July 1955, shortly after his election, Mayor Watanabe Tadao 渡辺忠雄 (1898–2005) spoke to the city assembly about the need to adapt the peace city development plans to the changing economic circumstances of Japan, and his intention to turn Hiroshima into an “industry city.”<sup>75</sup> Watanabe’s move was in line with other cities’ agendas and part of a wider conservative agenda that sought to “overcome” the excesses of the Occupation and normalize conservative rule, economic growth, and a limited return of pre-Occupation values. Castles and castle-building were a part of this dynamic. In Hiroshima, as in many other places, castles were rebuilt as symbols of urban recovery and regional identity. Castles and the exhibitions for which they were built were “safe” sites where conservatives could celebrate regional uniqueness, economic strength, and a reemerging Japanese identity. They were sites where the Japanese relationship to the past, especially to the Edo period, could be reformulated and disengaged from its connection with fascism—sites where the past could be made safe again.

In Hiroshima, the assembly formed a committee in 1955 to draw up plans for his proposed development projects and changes to the city’s identity. It was here that the idea of the Hiroshima Great Recovery Exhibition (Dai Fukkō Hakurankai 大復興博覧会) was first raised. The exhibition was supposed to symbolize the end of the war and supply a boost for the city economy, which was then recovering from the slump that followed the so-called *Jinmu* boom (*Jinmu keiki* 神武景気) of the mid-1950s.<sup>76</sup> The exhibition, Watanabe declared to the committee, was meant “to be a showcase for the flowering of [Hiroshima’s] democratic culture [...] a center of industry, politics, economics, and transportation for the Chūgoku region.” Furthermore, the event would stimulate economic growth and attract tourists to “Hiroshima, the city of water, the Venice of the Far East [...] a castle town with many historic sites, which together [with the castle] include the A-bomb Dome, the A-bomb Cenotaph, the Peace Memorial Museum, [and] historical A-bomb ruins and materials; now

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72 Maeda 1952, p. 97.

73 Maeda 1952, p. 230.

74 Maeda 1952, p. 53.

75 Hiroshima-shi 1985a, p. 467.

76 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 239.

it is the world's 'Hiroshima,' the Peace Mecca, which tourists from Japan and abroad are flocking to see."<sup>77</sup>

Watanabe's conflation of the castle and other A-bomb sites was not unique. As we saw, the castle was part of an array of A-bomb sites from very early on, supplying the background for a new narrative that separated A-bomb ruins and the war into a distant past; it was the only prewar site which made the transition. In the mid-1950s, however, Watanabe went a step further and pushed to rebuild the castle. No longer an A-bomb site, the castle was to be rebuilt as an act of restoration of Hiroshima's prewar grandeur. The castle was built as part of Hiroshima's recovery exhibition, which was the symbolic peak of Watanabe's plan to transform the city.<sup>78</sup> The 1958 exhibition was not the first time the castle was rebuilt. As noted earlier, a mock wooden *tenshu* was built during the Kokutai seven years before, and had been a great success. The city had initially been against that reconstruction, fearing it would be a safety hazard.<sup>79</sup> It was the company that set up the amusement park at the castle site that initiated the idea. The *tenshu* was constructed "exactly how it was before the war."<sup>80</sup> Local lore has it that the carpenter in charge "threatened to commit *seppuku* if the building collapsed."<sup>81</sup> That did not prove necessary, however. The building held, and it drew enormous crowds, demonstrating Hiroshima residents' nostalgia for their "Carp Castle." Many residents rushed to have their picture taken in front of the mock castle. The photographs movingly transmit the festive feeling around the castle keep.<sup>82</sup> Pictures and residents' comments reveal a yearning for the lost past, now buried under the rubble of the bomb and the new concrete buildings of the "Atom City." This attests to the fact that the movement to rebuild the castle was not merely a cynical ploy by right-wing politicians seeking to recreate a sanitized past, but also a response to a genuine yearning by Hiroshima citizens to get something of their city back.

The mock castle keep was heavily damaged in a typhoon a few months after the exhibition and was pulled down. The site subsequently stayed as it was for a number of years, falling into apparent neglect. As one assemblyman complained, the rebuilding of the castle was necessary as "it would double the [castle's] tourism value; it should not be left as is, a place for stray dogs to roam."<sup>83</sup> The city assembly approved the castle and expo budget in March 1957, which left planners only a year to design and build the *tenshu*.<sup>84</sup> The first order of business for the city was to obtain all the necessary permits. The Cultural Properties Committee, which had to approve all construction done on designated cultural properties, proved to be an obstacle and refused to approve the plan. The chairman of the committee stated, "[I] do not necessarily see the value in reconstructing the castle keep and recognizing it as a cultural asset. The castle [in fact] has historical value in its current

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77 Hiroshima-shi 1985a, p. 468.

78 The exhibition was examined in more detail by this author and Fukuma Yoshiaki 福岡良明. See Zwigenberg 2014, pp. 122–27, and Fukuma 2012, pp. 60–61.

79 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 238.

80 Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 6.

81 Chūgoku Shinbunsha 1993, p. 238.

82 Some of these are now kept at the Hiroshima City Archive; reproduced in Hiroshima-jō 2008, pp. 7–8. The Carp Castle was the traditional name for Hiroshima's castle, so named for the many carp in its moat. The restoration in fact involved only the keep (main tower) and not the whole castle.

83 Hiroshima-shi 1985b, p. 228.

84 Handa 1986. Nagoya Castle took five years to build. See Hiroshima-shi Gikai 1957.



form, having been destroyed by the bomb. The *tenshu* cannot be rebuilt as it was, and though there are perhaps some positive aspects to [rebuilding] it as a cultural asset, these are outweighed by the negative [aspects].<sup>85</sup> The committee decided to keep the castle as a ruin and a testament to the destruction of war rather than rebuild it in concrete. The city, which could not get funding without the committee's approval, launched a campaign to change this decision, and as with the shrine to the war dead, they were ultimately successful.<sup>86</sup> The initial much-publicized failure, however, stirred up powerful debates within the city as to the value of the castle rebuilding and the very identity of Hiroshima.

Many of the comments one finds in local newspapers supported the project. One reader captured the mood among supporters:

Hiroshima is getting prettier each day. But my mind is not at ease. I want to see [again] the magnificent city we used to have. Seeing all those modern buildings rising on top of the charred earth of [our former town], many of us clamor for more greenery [...] but what about the way we used to live, the way that was handed down to us from our past? If you think about this, [you will come to see] that the traditional life with which we grew up and which surrounded us is no more in Hiroshima [...] a feeling of hometown (*kyōdo* 郷土) exists in every man's heart, but for us in Hiroshima, our hometown was destroyed by the flash of the bomb [...] seeing the castle ruins reminds [one] of this [... Besides,] this will benefit the next generation's understanding of history and will bring much needed tourism.<sup>87</sup>

Many other readers' letters, however, were more negative. A number of readers argued that the city had better use for its money than rebuilding the castle. "Foreigners and returnees always point to how bad our roads are [...] they should deal with this as well as with inadequate housing and the illegal buildings problem."<sup>88</sup> Another resident echoed the arguments of the Cultural Properties Committee: "For a new era to be built, the castle, which is a reminder of the nightmare (of war), should be disposed of. Even though these castle ruins are a symbol for those who yearn for the past, wouldn't it be better to build cultural facilities on the grounds? An atomic museum, an art museum, an aquarium—[facilities that] are befitting the peace city should be raised [there ...]. This is the wish of us who live in this new age: stop the reconstruction of the castle."<sup>89</sup> Going even further, a 25 May letter from a reader called the castle "an embodiment of the past values of *bushidō*." The letter further pointed out that "it is doubtful [the castle reconstruction] could receive the enthusiastic support of the whole population."<sup>90</sup>

Progressives were generally critical of the castle boom as a whole. For many, it seemed to be a colossal waste of money and, worse still, a danger to democracy. Referring to the contemporary boom in rebuilding castles, the London *Times* reported that the Japanese "might have a sentimental attachment to feudal castles [...] but they are not prepared to

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85 Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 15.

86 Hiroshima-jō 2008.

87 *Chūgoku shinbun* 22.5.1957.

88 *Chūgoku shinbun* 22.5.1957.

89 *Chūgoku shinbun* 29.5.1957.

90 *Chūgoku shinbun* 25.5.1957.

countenance such undemocratic attempts to resurrect a feudal past within their walls.”<sup>91</sup> What kind of “feudal past” was to be resurrected and the very meaning of the word “feudal” were highly contested issues at the time. What the Hiroshima Castle builders were trying to achieve was a change in the relationship of contemporary Japanese to the Edo period. As Carol Gluck has pointed out, under the Occupation, the prewar and Edo periods were lumped together, labeled “feudal,” and rejected. Many on the left were still suspicious of Edo culture, and “its ‘feudal’ tales of revenge, ‘militaristic’ swordplay, and exploitative hierarchy [were] deemed the enemy of American-style democracy.”<sup>92</sup> The return of feudalism was, then, for many, the return of the militarism the castle once represented. While progressives were trying to protect the liberal legacy of the Occupation era, the men who set out to rebuild castles were trying to rehabilitate an idealized feudal past. In this telling of history, the Edo period did not lead to 1930s’ fascism, but was instead refashioned as a lost pacific era—a treasure trove for Japanese culture, and a resource to draw upon for the efforts needed for reconstruction.

The city leadership celebrated the rebuilding of the castle in grand language, showing no such nuance. Significantly, however, the castle’s military past was completely and utterly ignored. At the ceremonies marking the opening of the castle and the local history museum (Kyōdokan 郷土館) that it housed, Yamanaka Tadahiko 山中忠彦, the head of the Hiroshima prefecture Assembly, declared, “Hiroshima Castle shone brightly for over three hundred years as a symbol of Hiroshima and its traditions. One is deeply moved when seeing the Carp Castle keep restored. It is the most splendid [symbol] of Hiroshima’s reconstruction.”<sup>93</sup> The castle was one of the three locations of the expo, together with the modernist building of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, and Peace Boulevard. Hiroshima presented the castle as a symbol of tradition, but also—as physically embodied in the Hiroshima Peace Park and Peace Boulevard—of peace and modernity. The castle signified a supposed rootedness in the past and a continuity with what made Hiroshima Japanese, symbolized so brilliantly by the Edo-period architecture of the castle. On the exhibition poster, this combination was represented by a kimono-clad woman standing in front of a futuristic-looking complex with the “ancient” castle and the Peace Memorial in the background. Other posters featured doves and Isamu Noguchi’s Peace Bridge. This holy trinity of identities (with the castle rebuilding as a benign center of past culture) masked the military function of the castle and its deep involvement in Japan’s imperial endeavors on the continent during and after the Meiji period. For Hiroshima to claim its place as the Peace City, it needed to transcend this militaristic past. By virtue of rebuilding the castle as it did, Hiroshima bridged the gap between a mythologized Edo period and the modern present, erasing in the process the troubling years of Japan’s first trial with modernity, and the wars and atrocities committed during that tragic era. By symbolically placing modern and Edo-period architecture side by side, Hiroshima seemed to emerge out of the supposed innocence of Edo into the bright modern present of the Peace City.

Hiroshima spared no expense in showcasing its modernity. At the opening ceremony on 1 April 1958, “on a perfect spring day and among the festive cherry blossoms,” almost

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91 *The Times of London* 1960.

92 Gluck 1998, p. 273.

93 Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 32.

two thousand dignitaries were gathered at the expo's main site. Messages were read from many others, including Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke 岸信介 (1896–1987), who praised Hiroshima's role in bringing peace and serving as an example for Japan's "splendid recovery." In his speech, Mayor Watanabe emphasized Hiroshima's symbolic place in the world as a beacon of hope for the peace movement and Japan. Watanabe praised the city's contribution "in carrying high the banner of peace and inspiring others," and detailed its great success and economic growth after "[rising] from the atomic desert," expressing his hope that the exhibition "will contribute greatly to the future economic development and the recovery of this city."<sup>94</sup> It is impossible to do justice to the wealth of symbolic and ideological display at the exhibition. Side by side with demonstrations of modern industry, including an American Atoms for Peace exhibit, the exhibition featured displays of military power with a visit from American and Japanese Navy ships, complete with an American brass band and parade; an exhibit of modern domestic wonders such as televisions and other appliances; popular entertainment—including shows by Americanized celebrities like Toni Tani トニー 谷 (1917–1987) and Kosaka Kazuya 小坂一也 (1935–1999) singing country songs and wearing cowboy hats; an amusement park and children's shows; a pseudo-colonial display of a tribesman in his "natural" abode, here in the form of an Ainu artist representing Hokkaido.<sup>95</sup>

Hiroshima's recovery exhibition displayed a reinvented identity side by side with space technology, juxtaposing the bright future of Hiroshima with "the splendor of Hiroshima's past."<sup>96</sup> The closing ceremonies for the exhibition further emphasized connections to the past. On 17 and 18 May 1958, a procession from Hagi in Yamaguchi prefecture traveled to Hiroshima with great pomp and ceremony. The participants in this peculiar convoy dressed as Edo-era samurai and daimyo coming to pay their respects at the castle. The daimyo in question was actually a deputy mayor in full make-up and dress, carried in a palanquin surrounded by "samurai" and cheerful boy scouts.<sup>97</sup> Participants performed traditional dances in front of the futuristic satellite and space pavilions. Crowds thronged the streets of Hiroshima, welcoming the procession and cheering its arrival.<sup>98</sup> These displays of "tradition" allowed the cities involved to safely celebrate "feudal" values, banned during the Occupation, as harmless displays of local color. Local history museums were prominent spaces for this transition. They were filled with swords, helmets, and armor, and celebrated the martial exploits of local lords from the Warring States period. Progressives' criticisms notwithstanding, Japanese masculinity could here be celebrated, and feudalism and *bushidō* rehabilitated as tradition with their modern imperial history conveniently omitted. Thus, the recovery exposition was about much more than rebuilding the present city and castle: it was about repositioning and reinventing the past.

### Conclusion

The effort to efface Hiroshima's military history was ultimately successful. The military's presence in Japan's castles and its role in Hiroshima's past are mostly ignored in

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94 Hiroshima-shi 1959, p. 83.

95 Hiroshima-shi 1959, p. 137.

96 Hiroshima-jō 2008, p. 32.

97 *Chūgoku shinbun* 19.5.1958.

98 Hiroshima-shi 1959, p. 137.

conventional telling of the city's history. Tourism played a large role in this retelling of history. Both in prewar and postwar Hiroshima guides, maps and brochures produced for tourists have explained, interpreted, and have shown visitors the "right" way to view the site. With Japan's defeat, views of the castle and Hiroshima's relationship to war have completely changed and its past has been erased. As P. M. Clayburn accurately discerned, as early as 1965, the castle boom was driven by a very selective reading of recent history: "Now that the period between the Wars is temporarily in bad odor, national pride has focused on the late Tokugawa and early Meiji eras."<sup>99</sup> This effort to refocus national pride on Edo and Meiji was a multi-pronged endeavor with many actors on multiple fronts, not all of which were successful. In some cases, progressives were able to mount campaigns against efforts to rehabilitate the imperial past, which caused extensive debates (if not concrete results). These debates, though now largely forgotten, reveal the contentious nature of the project of castle reconstruction, and the degree to which it was entangled with the larger discussions surrounding reconstruction and identity in postwar Hiroshima and Japan as a whole. Indeed, castles might seem to be innocuous structures. With their focus on the distant Edo period and their romantic, cherry blossom-clad descriptions, they appear to be in Clayburn's phrase, "floating structures," outside of politics.<sup>100</sup> As this article has demonstrated, however, castles and the tourism industry which they benefit and contribute to were anything but detached from politics. On the contrary, the modern history of Hiroshima and other castles demonstrates the persistence of the influence of militarism and of the castles' former military role in the postwar era, as well as the tenacity with which contemporaries have sought to obscure this past.

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