

CHANGES IN PLANNING ZONE OF HIROSHIMA PEACE MEMORIAL PARK PROPOSED BY KENZO TANGE AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

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ABSTRACT

*At the 1949 design competition for Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, the plan proposed by Kenzo Tange's group was awarded the first prize. Based on this plan, Peace Memorial Museum was constructed. The museum building, standing on piloti that raise the main floor to allow people to walk underneath it, is famous as one of the most representative postwar buildings in Japan. Tange's initial plan, covering an area slightly larger than the area given as a condition for the competition, included the core area for Peace Memorial Park and the surrounding area that Tange deemed necessary as the background of the park. As his plan was later published in *Kenchiku Zasshi (Journal of Architecture and Building Science)* and exhibited at the Japan Foreign Trade and Industry Exposition (Kobe Fair 1950), the proposed Peace Park zone was expanded toward Central Park (Chuo Koen). In the plan Tange submitted to the 1951 *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne(CIAM)*, the zone was much larger than the initial area and was designated as the heart of the city. By studying these changes in Tange's plan for Peace Park and their significance, this paper will clarify what Tange intended, how Tange's plan was accepted and how it affected the city of Hiroshima.*

1. INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND METHOD

Hiroshima was reduced to ashes by the atomic bombing of August 6, 1945 at the end of World War II. There were many casualties, and the rebuilding of lives in Hiroshima after the war was a huge task. Our focus in this paper is on the physical aspects of the city rather than human casualties.

After the war, the City of Hiroshima drew up reconstruction plans that included roads and parks. Figure 1 shows the locations of the proposed parks. One of the three major parks was Nakajima Park with an area of 10.72 ha near the hypocenter. The postwar reconstruction of the city, however, had stagnated due to financial difficulties. In order to make a breakthrough, Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law was enacted in 1949, enabling special assistance from the central government. With this law, transferring state-owned land to the city was also made possible. When the law was enacted, a competition for planning Peace Memorial Park was held, targeting Nakajima Park, and Kenzo Tange's group was awarded first prize. Based on this design, plans for the execution of the project were developed. Tange's plan initially proposed at the competition gradually changed, however, particularly in terms of the Peace Park zone, as it was published in *Kenchiku Zasshi (Journal of*

Architecture and Building Science) in 1949 and presented at the 1951 Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM).

This paper will discuss the changes to the Peace Memorial Park zone proposed by Tange. Today, the only feasible way to

determine these changes is to collect as many available documents and data related to Peace Memorial Park as possible and to study them in detail.

2. TANGE'S PLAN FOR PEACE MEMORIAL PARK AT THE TIME OF THE DESIGN COMPETITION

At the 1949 design competition for Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, the plan proposed by Tange and his group¹ (hereinafter Tange's plan) was awarded first prize. This plan, published in the October-November 1949 issue of *Kenchiku Zasshi*, included a layout of the park (Figure 2), a bird's-eye view of the area (Figure 3) and design drawings. At that time, Tange's features were as follows: First, the main floor of the museum building, a major structure in the park, was on piloti. This feature was incorporated into the actual building, which is now one of the most representative postwar buildings in Japan.

The second feature was that Tange's plan proposed an "axis" that extended from the center of the museum building through the center of the arched Peace Tower to the A-bomb Dome, then called the "Remains of the Atom-bombed Structure."

There were other noteworthy features in Tange's design, but this paper will focus on the target zone. Tange proposed a park zone that exceeded the area of 12.375 ha indicated as a condition for the competition. Figure 2 shows his plan limited to this area, but Figure 3 shows a larger area extending to Central Park (Chuo Koen).

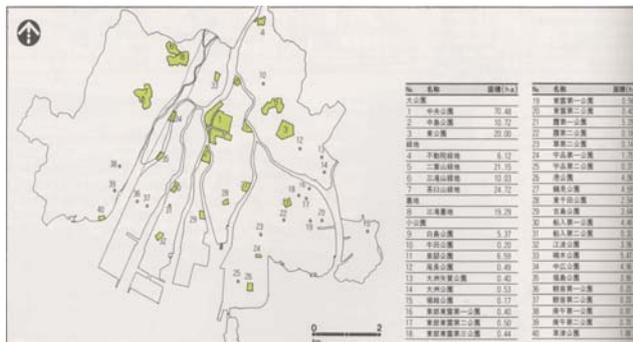


Figure 1: Parks proposed in the 1946 postwar reconstruction plan of Hiroshima drawn by Motomi Nanba et al. (Japanese, 1985), *Pictorial History of Forty Years since Atomic Bombing—Reconstruction of Hiroshima*, 1985, p.48.

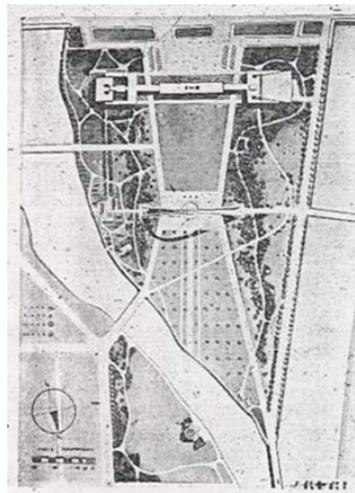


Figure 2- Tange's site plan for Peace Memorial Park, *Kenchiku Zasshi*, October-November 1949, p.40.

¹ Tange's group consisted of Kenzo Tange, Takashi Asada, Sachio Otani and Tokukuni Kimura. These four people were awarded the first prize.

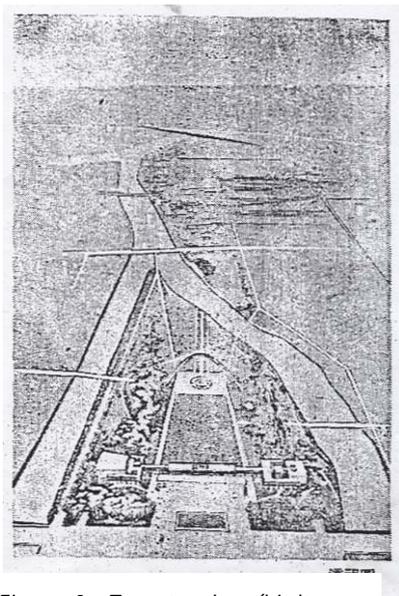


Figure 3- Tange's plan (bird's-eye view), *Kenchiku Zasshi*, October-November 1949, p.42.

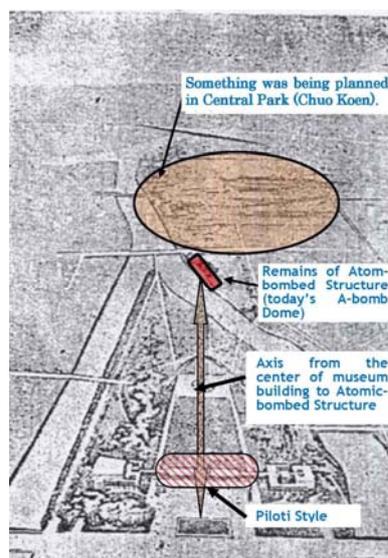


Figure 4- Author's explanation of the plan shown in Figure 3.

As explained in Figure 4, Tange was considering a project to the north of the proposed park area, but the details were not shown. This indicates that Tange regarded Central Park(Chuo Kouen) as an essential part of Peace Memorial Park.

Another feature of Tange's plan shown in Figure 2 was that it was reversed north to south, showing Peace Boulevard at the top and the A-bomb Dome at the bottom.

Furthermore, after this article was published, whenever Tange's plan was presented as the prize-winning design, photographs of a model of the park were always attached, but in this article there were no such photographs. This means that when his plan was submitted for the competition, he had probably not yet made any models.

3. TANGE'S LETTERS SHOWING THE EXPANSION OF THE PEACE PARK ZONE

There remain a total of 23 letters² sent to the city by Tange or by those close to him between November 1949 to June 1951, when Peace Park was actually being constructed based on his prize-winning plan. Many of these letters were addressed to Chimata Fujimoto, a city employee. This paper focuses on how Peace Park zone was expanded or its area determined and on the content of the letters related to this process.

The letters are numbered from 1 to 23. Among them, 3, 5, 9, 13 and 15 were related to the Kobe Fair 1950. (See Chart 1) The details of the exhibition at the Kobe Fair are not known, but the undated letter No. 3 says, "At the Kobe Fair (March 15 to June 15, 1950), in which I am involved a little, I am planning to present exhibits on the peace city or the international city of culture..."

² These letters are kept at the Hiroshima Municipal Archives.

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Furthermore, Letter No. 5 dated March 30, 1950, says, "I asked Ueno Model Shop to make a 1/300 scale model of the Hiroshima Peace Hall." From this letter, it is clear that the model was first made around the time of the Kobe Fair and that Chuji Hirayama, an architectural photographer, was involved. The expansion of the target zone and its scope were not clearly described in these letters.

Chart 1- Reasons for Expansion of the Target Zone (by Ishimaru)

Subject	Reasons for Expansion of the Target Zone	Letter No.
Exhibits for the Kobe Fair	For the first time, Tange's idea went beyond the framework of the Peace Memorial Park.	3, 5, 9, 13, 15
Tange was asked to design the Children's Library at the Children's Center. He accepted and prepared to design it.	The Children's Library was located in Central Park. This resulted in the extension of the axis from the Peace Park to Central Park as well as the expansion of the proposed park zone.	5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 21, 22
With regard to publishing an article in <i>Kokusai Kenchiku</i> (April 1950)	Tange presented his design not limited to Peace Park plan but as the Hiroshima Plan or Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Plan.	5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 15
Presentation at CIAM (CIAM8)	Tange presented his Hiroshima Plan in line with the CIAM's theme, "The Heart of the City."	6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15

Letter No. 5 also says that an article was being prepared on the "concept of creating a peace city," but the details were not explained. From other sources, I found that this was the article published in *Kokusai Kenchiku* in April 1950. Among Tange's letters, the descriptions of the Kobe Fair exhibition appeared earlier than those of this article, but as Tange was engaged in these two projects at around the same time and as the content related to Tange's plan seems to be largely the same, the article in *Kokusai Kenchiku* is referred to in this paper to describe what Tange's plan was in those days.

4. EXPANSION OF THE PEACE PARK ZONE AS LEARNED FROM TANGE'S LETTERS AND THE ARTICLE IN *KOKUSAI KENCHIKU*

The construction of the buildings in Peace Park had not yet begun, but architectural journals ran one article after another on Hiroshima to respond to the great interest in architectural circles. The April 1950 issue of *Kokusai Kenchiku* (hereinafter *Kokusai Kenchiku-A*) published an article titled "Hiroshima Plan: Creation of Peace City" with an English translation. This article included a land-use plan shown on an aerial photograph on which a road plan was drawn; a plan titled "Peace Park Project," which was printed in color; photographs of a model of Peace Park; design drawings; a model of Peace Hall, and some drawings of the Children's Center. There are several features; particularly noteworthy are those related to the layout plan indicated in Figure 5.

Another feature is that the legends are translated into English and grouped in four: Group A centered on the Peace Hall; Group B: Children's Center (Figure 6); Group C: International Recreational Facilities; and Group D: International Cultural Facilities. Particularly noteworthy is Group B, which includes the Children's Main Hall, the library and the Art & Sciences Museum. Tange had prepared detailed drawings for Group B, particularly for the library, as the construction of the Children's Library was becoming a reality. In this location, however, the Children's Cultural Hall had already been constructed in 1948 (Figures 7, 8), but Tange had ignored the presence of this building. Tange had even prepared a 1/400 scale drawing for the library (Figure 9), which is another conspicuous feature of this plan.

The biggest feature of the article in *Kokusai Kenchiku-A* is that the Peace Park zone was greatly expanded to Central Park beyond the area



Figure 5- Tange's layout plan, *Kokusai Kenchiku*, April 1950, p.30.

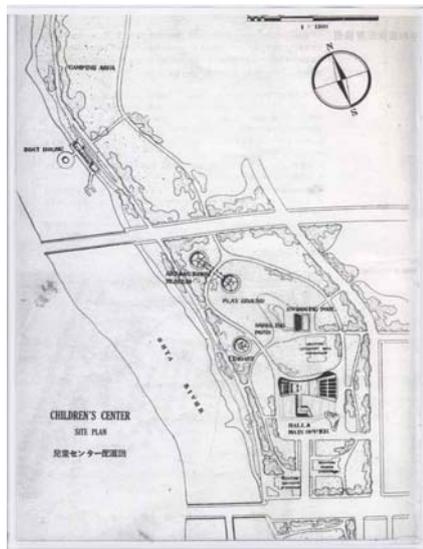


Figure 6- Tange's layout plan of Group B, around the Children's Center, *Kokusai Kenchiku*, April 1950, p.30.



Figure 7- Drawn by an unknown person. The layout plan of Children's Cultural Hall and other facilities, *Hiroshima Municipal Archives Bulletin*, Vol.11, March 1988, p.85.



Figure 8- A photograph of the Children's Cultural Hall, *Hiroshima Municipal Archives Bulletin*, Vol.11, March 1988, p.85.

initially indicated for the Peace Park. This expanded zone was maintained for some years.

The Kobe Fair took place prior to the publication of *Kokusai Kenchiku-A*, but considering the time needed for preparation, Tange was probably engaged in these two projects at the same time. Therefore Peace Memorial Park zone was expanded on these occasions.

5. TANGE'S PRESENTATION AT CIAM IN 1951 AND THE PEACE PARK ZONE

The biggest event that followed was the eighth CIAM, which was held in Hoddesdon in 1951 under the theme of "The Heart of the City." Tange attended this congress to present his Peace Park project. His actual presentation at CIAM is not available, but *CIAM 8: The Heart of the City: towards the humanization of urban life* carries a road plan drawn on an aerial photograph of Hiroshima and a photograph of a model of the Peace Park together with the layout

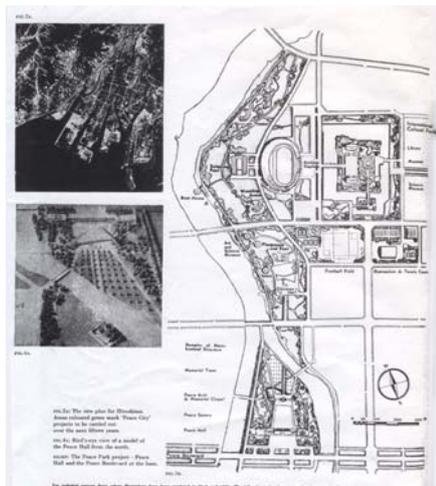


Figure 10- The Peace Park layout plan by Tange with a road plan drawn on an aerial photograph and a photograph of a model of Peace Park in *CIAM 8: The Heart of the City, towards the harmonization of urban life*, 1979, p.137.

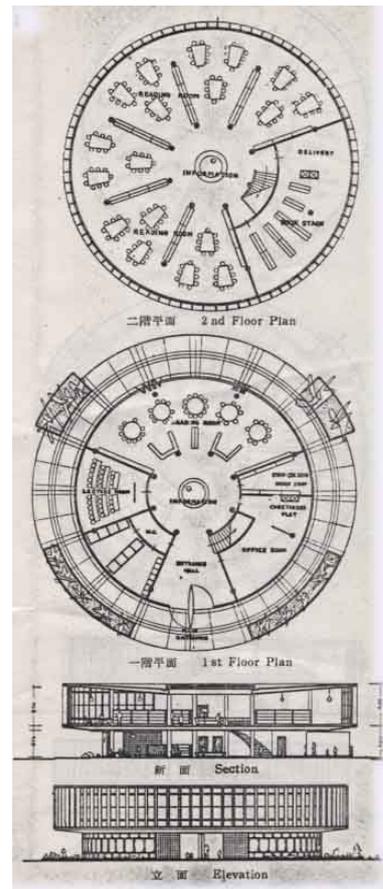


Figure 9- Drawing of the library by Tange, original scale 1/400, 235x85mm. *Kokusai Kenchiku*, April 1950, p.39.

plan. On another page, there is another photograph showing the ruins on the site where the Peace Park would be constructed and a drawing of a festival scene from the Edo period. The layout plan is almost identical to the one in *Kokusai Kenchiku-A*, but the details are slightly different. For example, the legends are not numbered or grouped. The names of the facilities are written directly on the plan. The "Remains of the Atom-bombed

Structure" (A-bomb Dome) is extremely difficult to identify. In Figure 5, the location is indicated with the number 6, but in Figure 10, the name of the structure is written away from its location, and the structure itself is not clearly drawn. The colors are also different. Figure 5 uses green, but Figure 10 is in monochrome for technical reasons. As a note at the bottom explains the change in colors, it is known that the original drawing of Hiroshima presented at CIAM used green.

Several copies of a pamphlet titled *Peace City HIROSHIMA* are stored at libraries in Hiroshima and at the Hiroshima Municipal Archives. The purpose of this pamphlet is not known, but by comparing the layout plan in this pamphlet (Figure 11) with that of *CIAM 8*, the two are found to be identical except for the green color which was applied to the plan in the pamphlet. It is highly likely that the colored version was taken to CIAM.

As the buildings proposed in the plan did not yet exist when Tange attended CIAM, there were no photographs of any building he could present. With only this layout drawing, however, it is said that Tange made a strong impression on the audience. Tange's plan represented the heart of Hiroshima by showing a continuum from today's Peace Park to Central Park, befitting CIAM's theme, "The Heart of the City."

6. TANGE'S ARTICLES IN *SHINKENCHIKU* AND OTHER JOURNALS AND THE PEACE PARK ZONE

An article in the September 1951 issue of *Kokusai Kenchiku* (*Kokusai Kenchiku-B*) featured Kenzo Tange, showing some drawings and photographs of the model of the Peace Hall and the actual buildings under construction but did not include any layout plan for Peace Park. Therefore in this paper, this article is excluded from consideration.

In January 1954, another article was published in *Shinkenchiiku* (*Shinkenchiiku-A*) with some photographs of the museum building,



Figure 11- Peace Park Project designed by Tnge.K., Asada.T., Otani.S. and their associates of the Planning Research Group in *Peace City HIROSHIMA*, 1952, pp.4-5

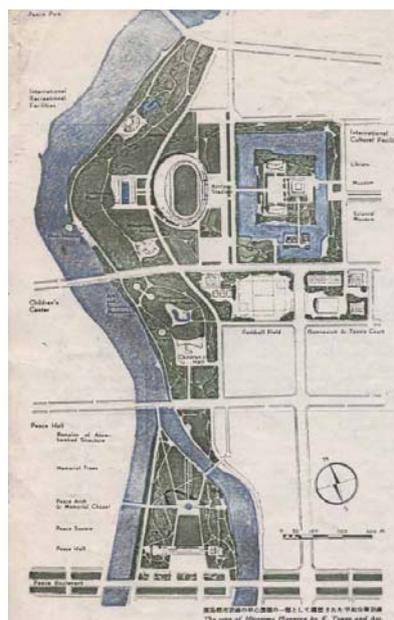


Figure 12- Layout Plan by Tange, *Shinkenchiiku*, January 1954, p.6.

which was almost complete. This conveys the atmosphere of the Peace Park very well. It also includes a city planning drawing and a drawing dubbed "The Core of Hiroshima Planning" (Figure 12). Basically, this drawing is the same as the one presented at CIAM. The reality deviated from the

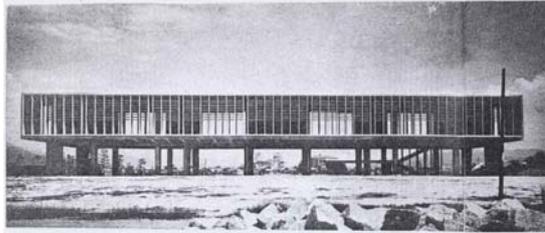


Figure 13- Photograph of Memorial Museum under construction by Chuji Hirayama (1953). *Shinkenichiku*, January 1954, pp.10-11.



Figure 14- Photograph of the Children's Library by Chuji Hirayama, *Shinkenichiku*, July 1954, p.27.

drawing, but Tange maintained his policy of adhering to his plan.

This drawing is titled "Peace Park." Tange continued to call his plan the Peace Park Project. At the same time, he repeatedly explained that this area was the core, or heart, of the city. In this way, he maintained the basic concept presented at CIAM 8.

Shinkenichiku-A featured some photographs of buildings, including the museum building (formerly called the Memorial Display Hall), which was almost complete (Figure 13).

The Children's Library had already been constructed in November 1952 with a donation from the Hiroshima Prefectural Association in California and funds from the city budget. Designed by Tange, this library was built with a mushroom-like concrete shell structure (Figure 14). Many children came here and enjoyed reading books, which were precious in those days. This building was introduced as the "Hiroshima Children Library in Hiroshima Peace Park" in the July 1954 issue of *Shinkenichiku* (*Shinkenichiku-B*).

In this article, Tange said, "This 'home' for children built in one corner of Peace Park is like a shade tree that grew into a building." It is not known whether he believed this area was a part of Peace Park or whether he intentionally called it Peace Park because the name itself was significant. In any case, this was what was actually taking place after the completion as a part of the Peace Park Project.

The June 1956 issue of *Shinkenichiku* (*Shinkenichiku-C*) ran an article with photographs of the museum building and the main building near completion and

some comments on the process of the project. This article by Takashi Asada had the following features: 1) the layout plan of Peace Park was limited to today's Peace Park area, and Tange's previous layout plan covering a wider area was not shown; 2) the Peace Arch was replaced with the cenotaph designed after an ancient clay image of a house; and 3) the building called the Conference Hall at the competition was replaced by the Assembly Hall (Figure 15). "I must state clearly that Tange had unpleasant memories of the planning and construction of the Assembly Hall, which comprises one of the three structures of the Peace Hall and plays an important role in the citizens' social activities," Asada wrote and criticized the fact that the Assembly Hall was not designed by Tange's group but by another architect. This paper does not elaborate on this matter as it is not the main theme.

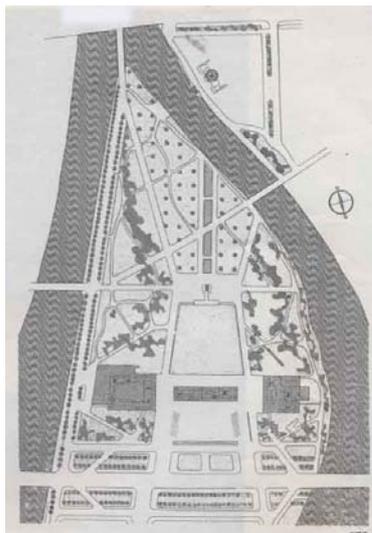


Figure 15- Tange's layout plan of Peace Park, *Shinkenchiiku*, June 1956, p.40.

7. CITY ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE AND THE PEACE PARK ZONE

In this way, the planned area for the Peace Memorial Park changed over the years, but what was the reaction of the city's administration? Did the city think that Tange had expanded the Peace Park zone without consulting the city?

The design drawings by Tange's group are stored in the Hiroshima Municipal Archives. Figure 16 is the layout plan proposed by Tange, drawn on May 25, 1950, showing the entire area, including the Peace Memorial Park and the Children's Center. Figure

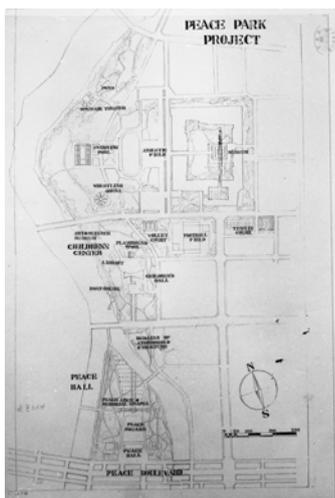


Figure 16- The Peace Park plan of May 25, 1950, proposed by Kenzo Tange, *Hiroshima Municipal Archives Bulletin*, Vol. 23, December 1999, frontispiece 2.



Figure 17- The Peace Park plan of January 4, 1951, by the Planning Division of the Construction Bureau, City of Hiroshima, *Hiroshima Municipal Archives Bulletin*, Vol. 23, 1999, frontispiece 3.



Figure 18- Public housing site map in the Motomachi District around 1949, drawn by Hiroshima Prefecture and City of Hiroshima in 1978, *Commemorative Book for Motomachi District Redevelopment Project*, March 1979, p.11.



Figure 19- Public and illegal housing site map in the Motomachi District around 1966, drawn by Hiroshima Prefecture and the City of Hiroshima in 1978, *Commemorative Book for Motomachi District Redevelopment Project*, 1979, p.6.

17 shows a similar layout plan.

It is explained that this drawing titled “Drawing of the Peace Park Plan” was prepared by the Planning Division of the city’s Construction Bureau on January 4, 1951. These show that the city responded to Tange’s plan very favorably by accepting his proposals and/or by jointly developing plans. The city, however, had not officially asked Tange to include Central Park in Peace Park. There is no evidence to show that the city had carefully studied Tange’s plan either. This led to the confusion over the design concept of Central Park. When it was convenient for the city, Tange’s plan was adopted, but when it was not, other proposals were considered.

The biggest move made by the city was that it decided to allocate a part of the about 70 ha of Central Park as a residential area. Due to the dire shortage of housing, the city had started constructing temporary public houses in this area (Figure 18, 19). They were eventually to be removed, but with a decision to create a residential area here, the park area was reduced to about 40 ha. Thus the coexistence of the residential area and a park became inevitable, and it became impossible for Tange’s plan to be implemented as it was.

This area was later redeveloped, and high-rise apartment buildings were built in the residential area. Tange’s opinion about the establishment of a residential area is unknown, but he had to accept it as it was officially approved by the city.

8. CONCLUSION

At the time of the competition, the Peace Memorial Park zone was limited to the area of Nakajima Park, one of the three major parks to be selected under the postwar reconstruction plan. From Tange's letters, however, it is known that after the competition he expanded the zone to Central Park. Tange was not officially asked to include this area in the Peace Park Project nor did the city officially decide to adopt his plan.

How the proposed the Peace Memorial Park zone changed after the competition is summarized in Figure 20. As this shows, Tange proposed that Central Park be included, but actual Peace Park was developed in the initially suggested limited area around Nakajima Park. The changes to the zone can be explained as follows:

The Kobe Fair took place from March 15 to June 15, 1950, and Tange received a letter of invitation to this fair probably in December 1949. Detailed information about the exhibition is not available, but Tange's presentation was prepared under the theme of "peace city" or "international city of culture" as explained in his letter. Probably on this occasion, Tange expanded the Peace Park zone. He proposed the Children's Center in Central Park and various facilities including the library, the Art & Sciences Museum, the Children's Main Hall, the boathouse, club rooms, etc. This concept was presented in *Kokusai Kenchiku-A* with a layout plan titled "Peace Park Project." The tendency to expand the park zone beyond the initially suggested area toward Central Park was quite natural, considering the axis Tange had proposed in his initial plan. This tendency became concrete when the city asked Tange's group to design the Children's Center, specifically the Children's Library.

The detailed process is not known, but it was Tange's plan proposed in the Peace Park Project that led to the construction of the library.

Tange's plan was deemed to fit the idea of creating the core or heart of the city, which was the theme of the eighth CIAM, indicating that the plan was considered from the point of view of the urban structure rather than from the concept of peace. In this way, Tange's plan expanded the features of Peace Park, while locating his architecture in a wider area. His plan was not entirely realized due to the established institutions and the politics of the city and was implemented in an incomplete manner. But the axis conceived by Tange can exert an influential power beyond Peace Memorial Park.

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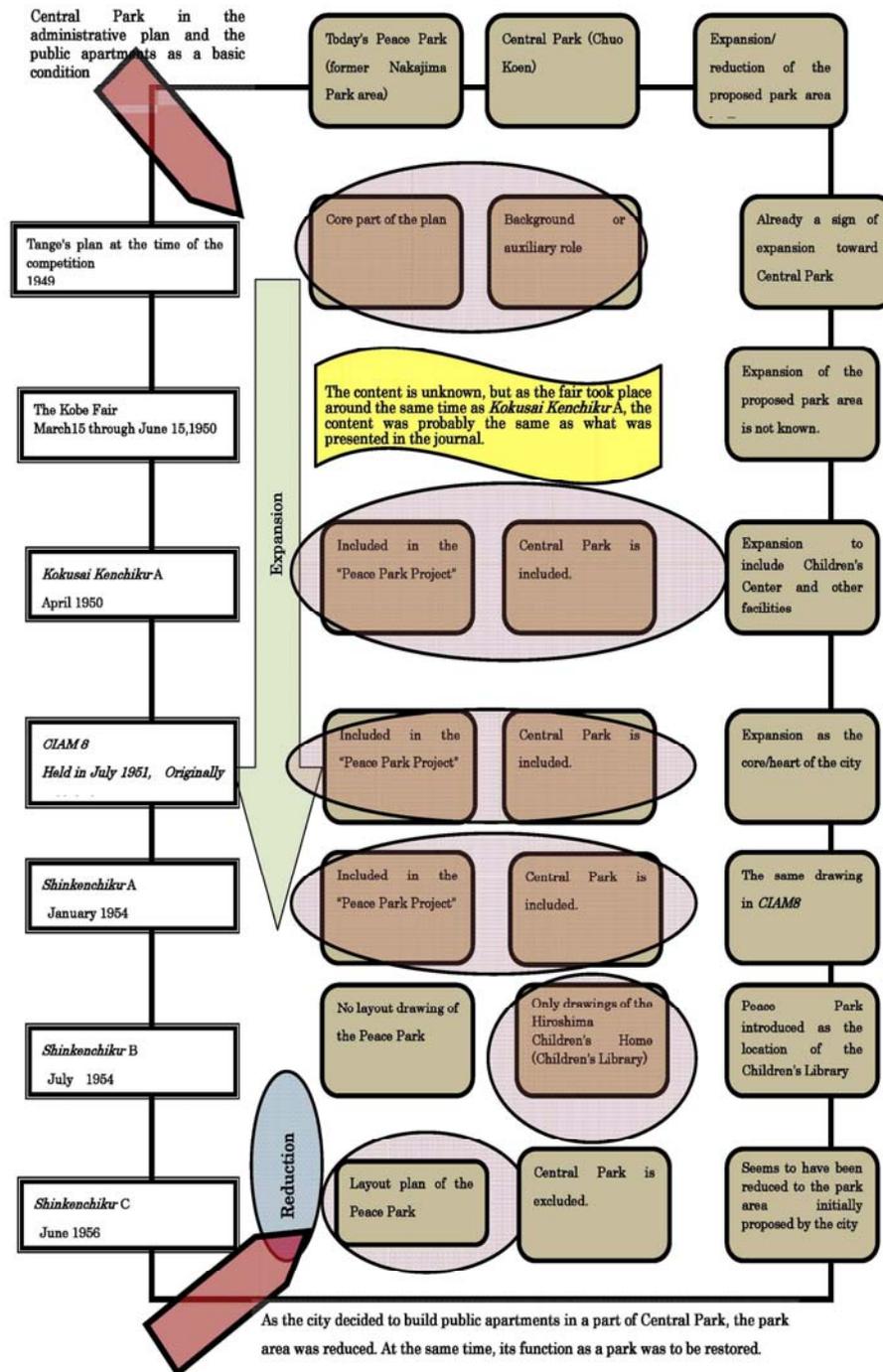


Figure 20- Summary of the target zone for Peace Park Project by Ishimaru.N., February 2012.

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